SURVEY SAYS:
School Climate Data Can Drive School Improvement.
Tangible and intangible factors help create a safe and enriching environment.

Climate surveys can do more than simply tell whether a school has a positive environment—they can also help educators and policymakers understand potential root causes of low school performance, so they can diagnose problems and design solutions that improve student outcomes.

Why Is This Important?
Positive school climate and positive student outcomes are strongly linked.
- On average, schools with a positive climate have higher academic achievement.
- Students with higher levels of engagement have lower levels of depression and drug and alcohol use.
- Students in schools with a positive climate have higher levels of self-esteem.

How Do I Get Started?
Well-designed climate surveys produce valid and reliable data.
- Some surveys are free, including the U.S. Department of Education’s ED School Climate Surveys (EDSCLS) and the Delaware School Climate Survey.
- Districts and states can use this data to identify areas for improvement, as part of a system linking consequences to school performance, or as a way to present results in school report cards.

What Should I Measure?
For school improvement or accountability, consider measures that:
- Include aspects that promote students’ success, such as engaging students, school safety, positive peer interactions, and supportive student–teacher relationships.
- Focus on characteristics that a school can influence, rather than those that are impossible or costly to change, such as students’ demographics or physical environment.
- Are likely to get a high response rate, to ensure that results represent the student body. A survey should not be so long that respondents won’t take or complete it.

https://ies.ed.gov/ncee/edlabs/regions/midatlantic/
Endnotes


