

Using Reflection Groups to Learn How Families and Educators View Their School or District



Training Guide for Using Data to Promote Equity in School Discipline Series

This series includes

- Introduction: Planning and Facilitating Work Sessions to Improve School Discipline
- Work Session: Revising School Discipline Policies and Procedures to Promote Equity
- Work Session: Using School Discipline Data to Pinpoint Concerns and Track Progress
- Work Session: Using Reflection Groups to Learn How Families and Educators View Their School or District
- Work Session: Identifying Strategies to Promote Equity in School Discipline

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Agenda



- 1** Introductions
- 2** Discuss why conducting reflection groups is helpful
- 3** Plan a reflection group to conduct in your setting
- 4** Practice participating in a reflection group

Objectives

- Understand why the perspectives of educators and family members are essential for improving equity in school climate and school discipline.
- Plan a reflection group to learn more about what educators and/or families think about school climate and school discipline.
- Practice conducting a reflection group with peers

Find a partner

- Find a partner
- Read the next slide
- Prepare to share a brief reflection on how it could inform your work



“The best way of formulating a comprehensive discipline policy was involving everyone . . . principal, deans, teachers, parents, students, and community members at large, and ask[ing] them what they could see as the problem. If that was done, then everyone would be supportive.”

(Murkuria, 2002, p. 444)

Goals for school discipline

Optimal
learning
conditions

Welcoming and inclusive

Teaches social and emotional skills

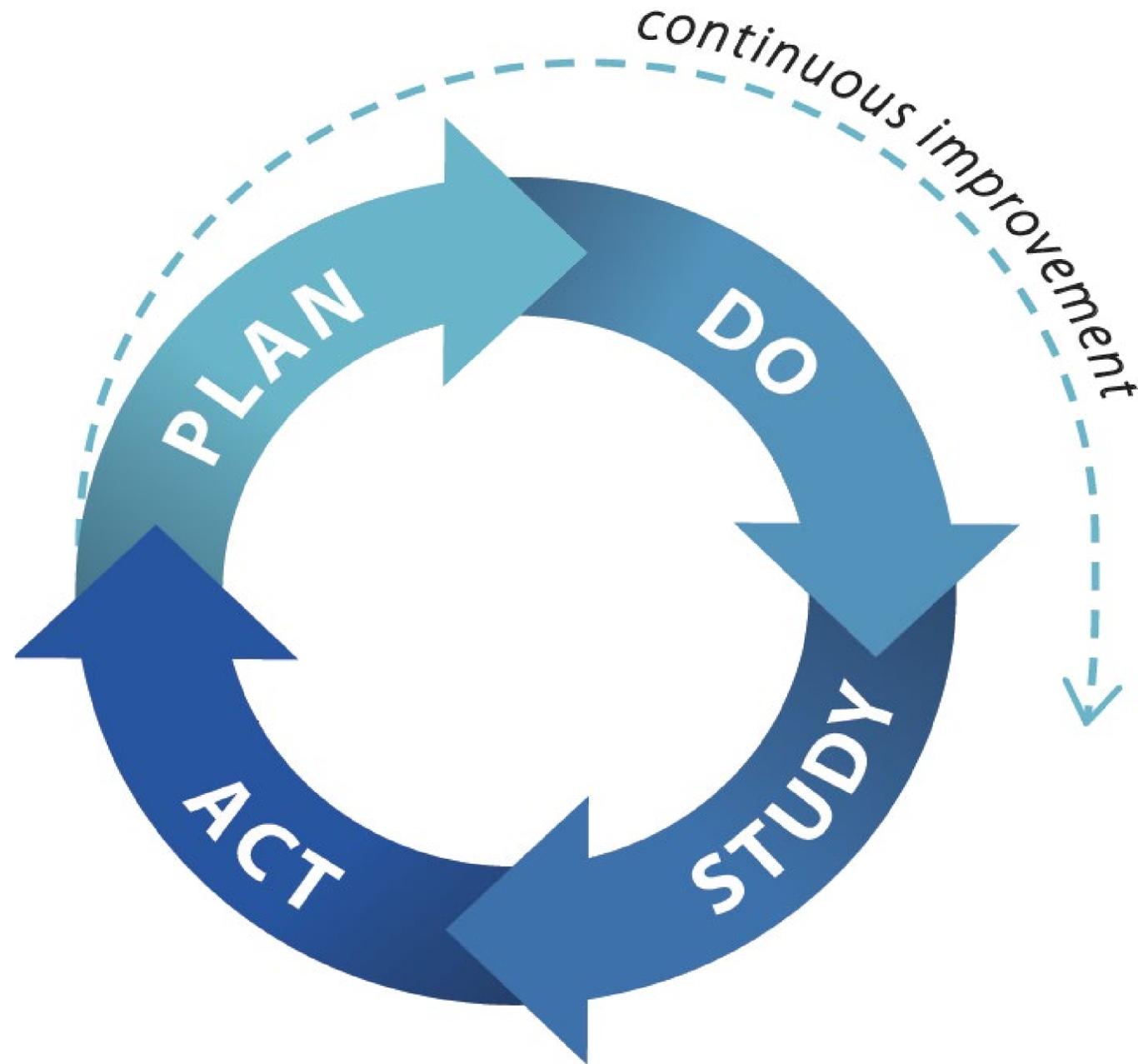
- Respect differences
- Cross-cultural communication

Physically and psychologically safe

Plan-Do-Study-Act

Using data to pinpoint concerns

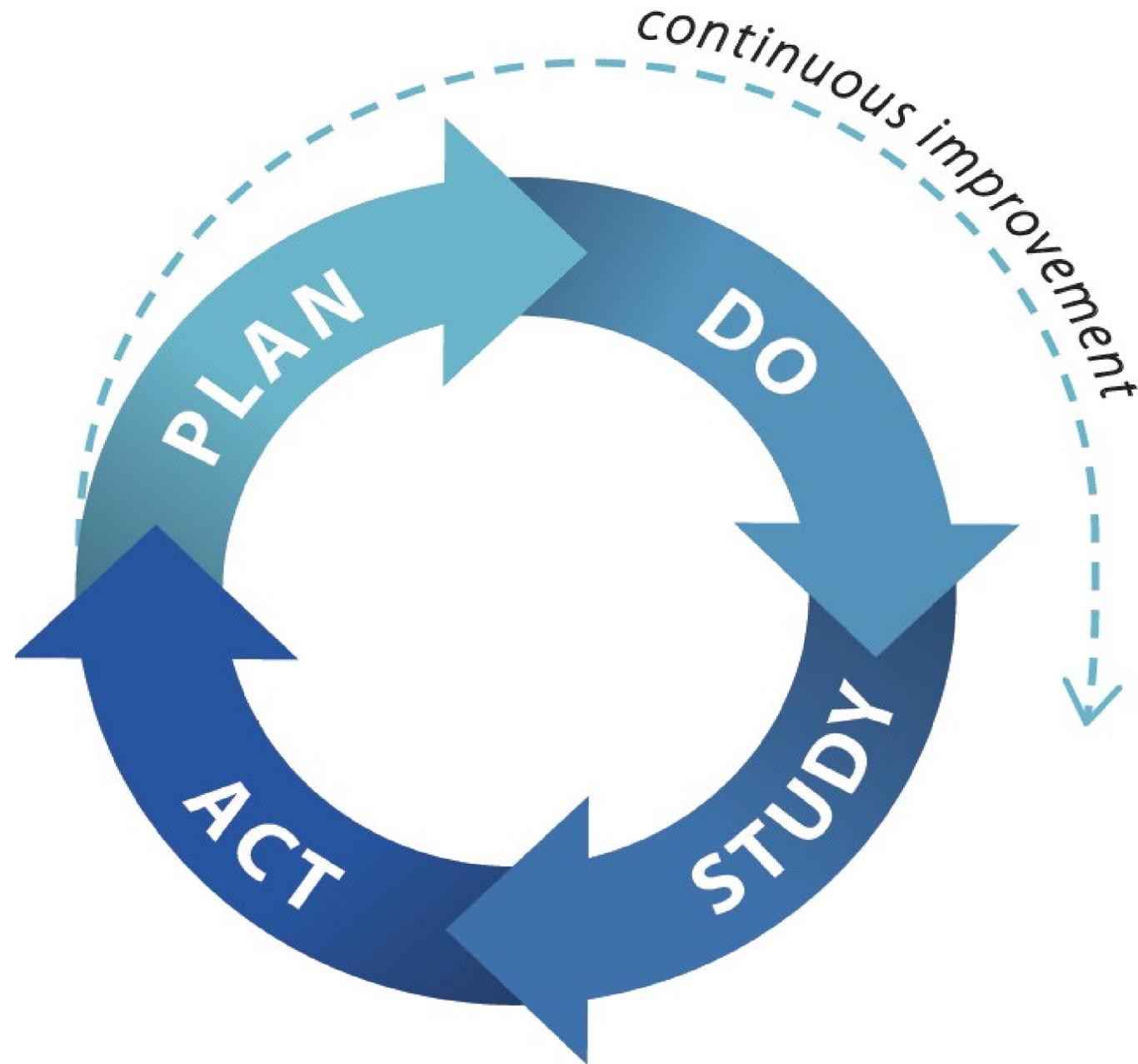
Plan-Do-Study-Act



- Plan** Identify root causes, develop goals, create an action plan, and choose indicators to track progress
- Do** Implement the action plan and collect indicator data to monitor the fidelity of implementation and track progress
- Study** Evaluate progress, review what you learned, and determine what adjustments, if any, are needed
- Act** Adjust the action plan if needed

(Deming, 1987; Nishioka et al., 2017)

Plan-Do-Study-Act



PLAN

Choose indicators to track progress

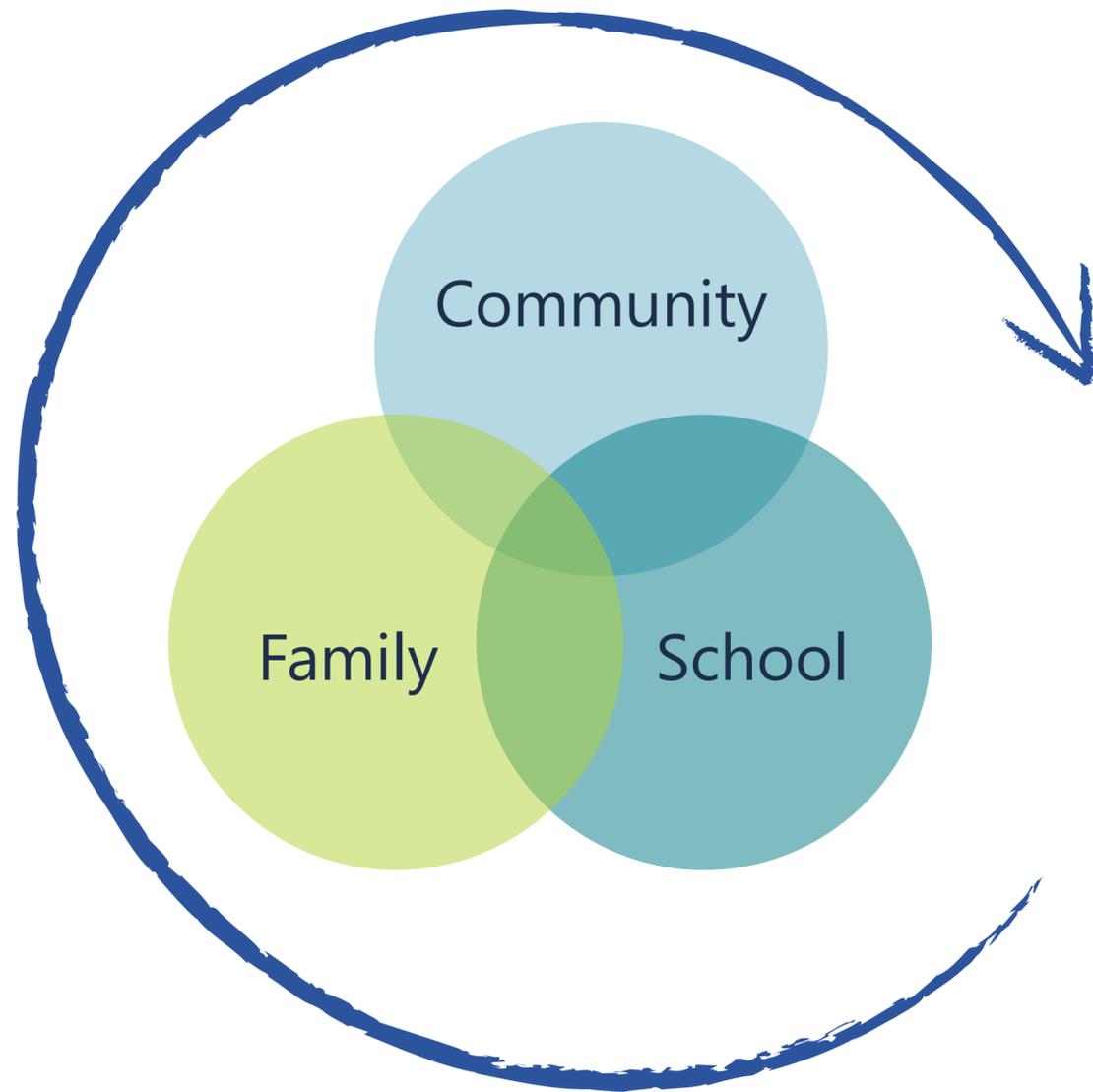
Identify root causes, develop goals, and create an intervention plan

(Deming, 1987; Nishioka et al., 2017)

Families are essential partners

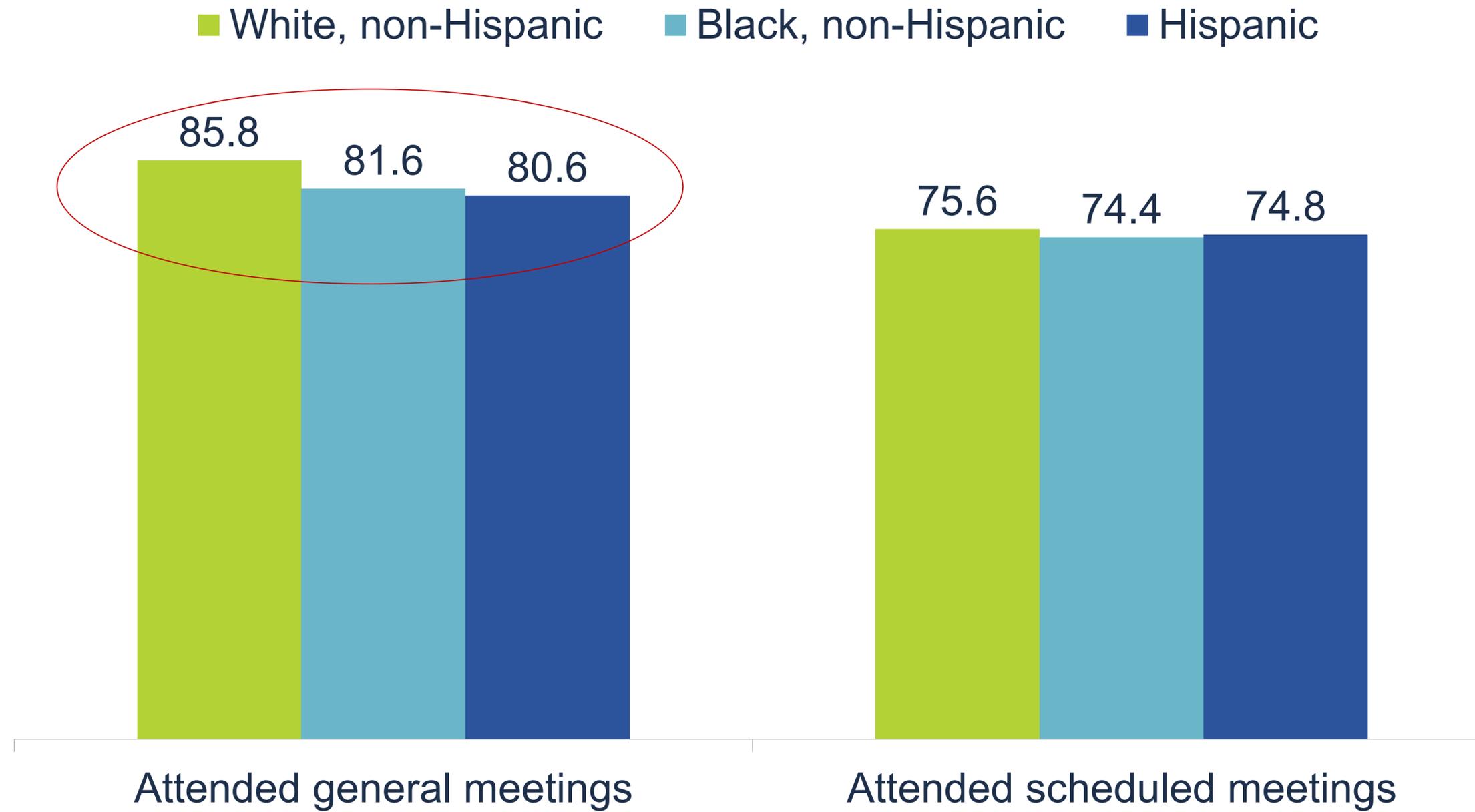
- Help develop schoolwide and classroom expectations
- Provide a cultural lens on school and classroom improvement decisions
- Discuss discipline concerns about their child, sooner or later

Family engagement



- Educators, families, and community members plan goals and collaborate
- Focus is on building relationships and partnerships
- Challenges
 - Building trust
 - Limited time
 - Scheduling conflicts

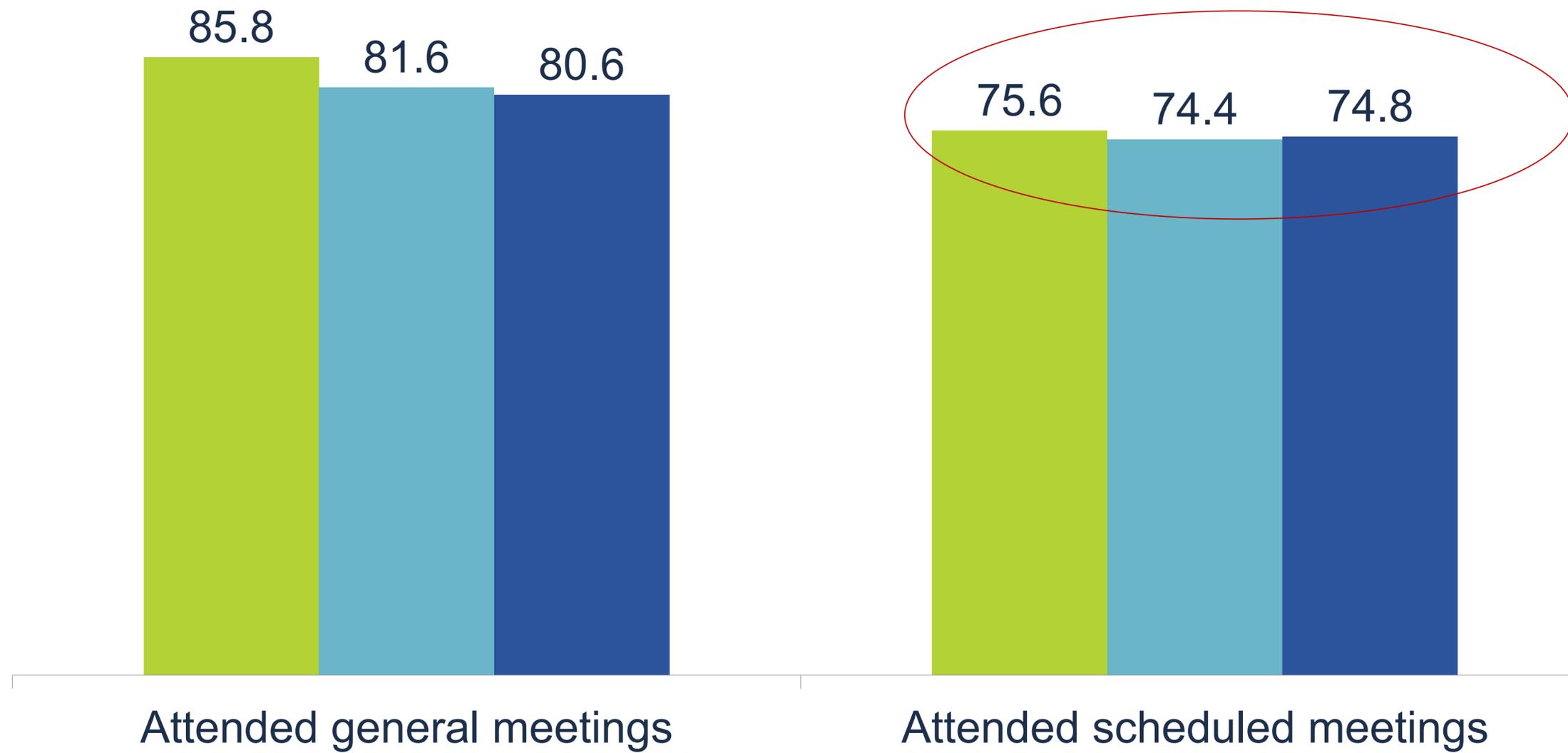
Who attends school meetings?



(Noel, Stark, Redford, & Zukerberg, 2013)

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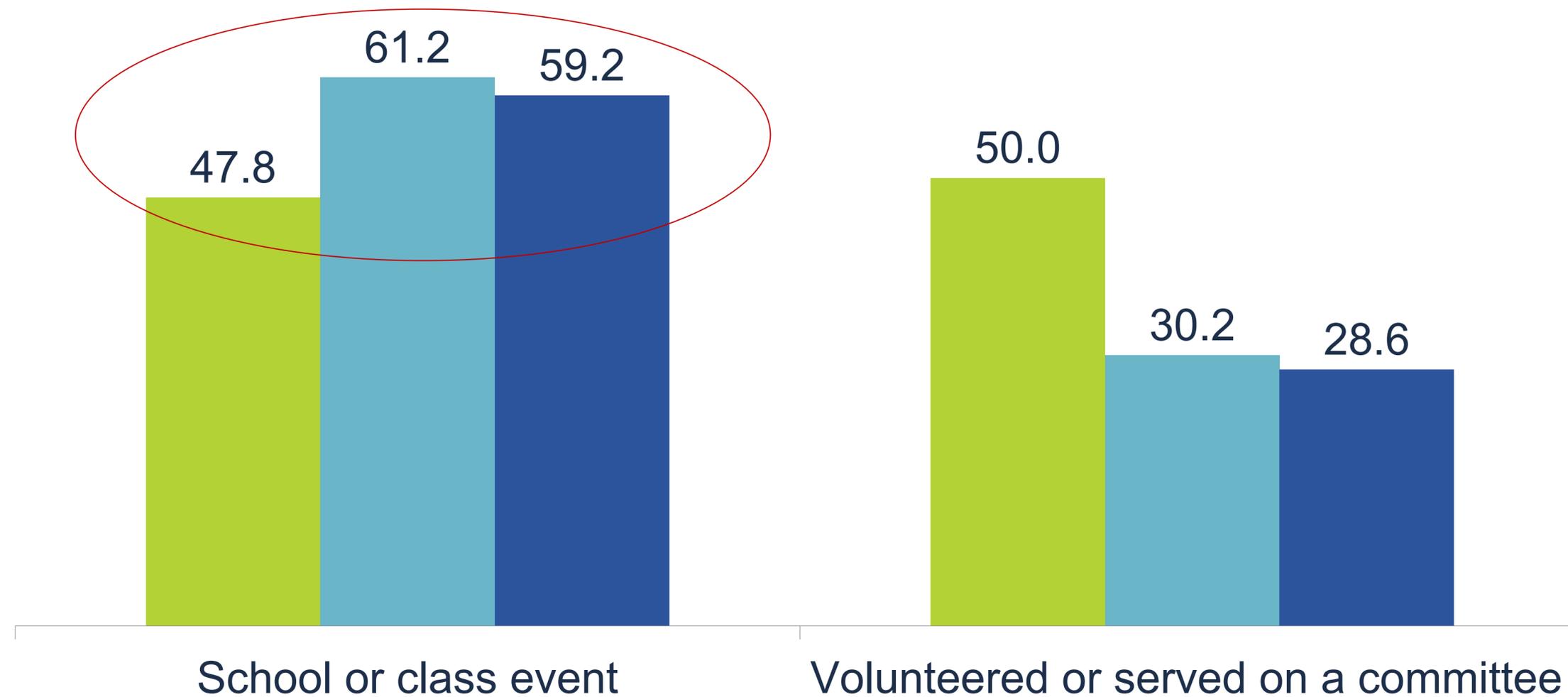
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(Noel, Stark, Redford, & Zukerberg, 2013)

Who attends school events or volunteers?

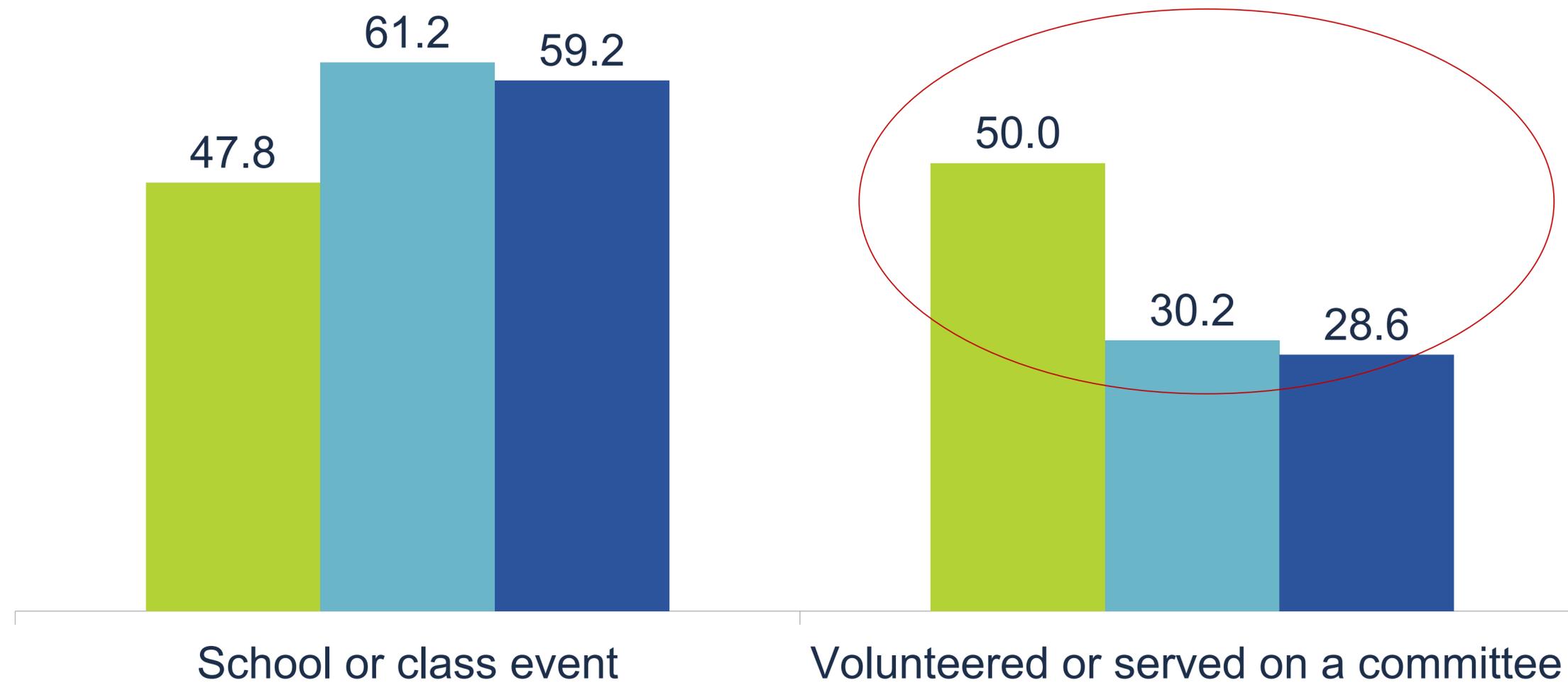
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(Noel, Stark, Redford, & Zukerberg, 2013)

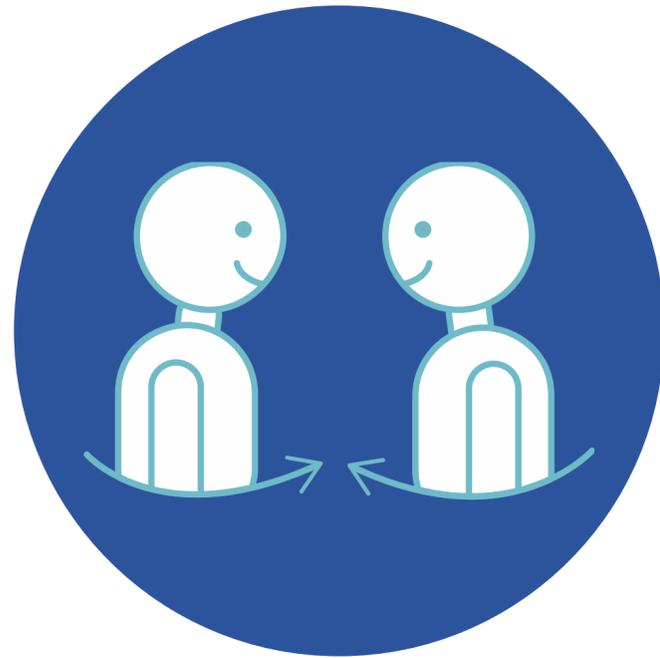
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(Noel, Stark, Redford, & Zukerberg, 2013)

Turn and talk



- Why do you think some families volunteer and engage with schools more than others?
- What type of information could reflection groups provide that could help improve school discipline efforts?

Reflection Group Planning Work Session

Learning How Families and
Educators View Their School and
District

How can reflection groups help?

- Providing an opportunity to learn what people think about your school climate
- Offering a safe and respectful place for people to share their ideas and experiences
- Giving voice to families and others who do not usually share their opinions with the school system
- Learning about the cultural background of students and ways to welcome them to your school

Planning a reflection group work session activity

In this activity, your team will ...

- Work together to plan a reflection group in your own community
- Walk through the following steps as a team:
 - Determine the purpose
 - Create a team and choose a facilitator
 - Review the protocols
 - Select and invite participants
 - Schedule date, time, location, and other logistics

The purpose of a reflection group is to provide a voice to individuals who do not regularly get to share their thoughts, ideas, priorities, concerns, or experiences.

Determining the purpose of the reflection group

Determine the purpose of the reflection group

- Is there an underlying concern?

Lay groundwork for the conversation

- What information does the team hope to gain?

Creating a team

Choose a team

- Do you have any educators and/or parents who already know one another and work well together?

Name a facilitator

- Who should facilitate the reflection group?

Participants and logistics

Who will participate in the reflection group?

Who will make the arrangements?

- Arrange location, snacks, and childcare if needed
- Invite participants and arrange accommodations as needed
- Schedule a one-week check-in

Protocols

Review the protocols

- Do any of the questions need to be clarified, edited, or adapted for your setting?
- Do you anticipate challenges related to any of the following?
 - Obtaining written or verbal consent
 - Causing participants concern or distress
 - Explaining and/or following the reflection group agreements
 - Taking a confident and empathetic position to deal with difficult situations that may arise
 - Following up on participants' input and requests

Let's Practice!

Learning What Families and
Educators Think About School
Climate and Discipline

Reflection group agreements



- School staff members are here to listen
- We hope everyone will participate
- There are no right or wrong answers
- We will respect everyone's ideas and privacy
- Safety concerns will be reported to the principal

Getting started

- Review Reflection Group–Educators (handout 5)
- Discuss team member’s reactions to the questions
 - Are the questions respectful and strengths-based? Why or why not?
 - Do the questions address important features of school climate?
 - How could the questions help start conversations about school climate and discipline in your school?

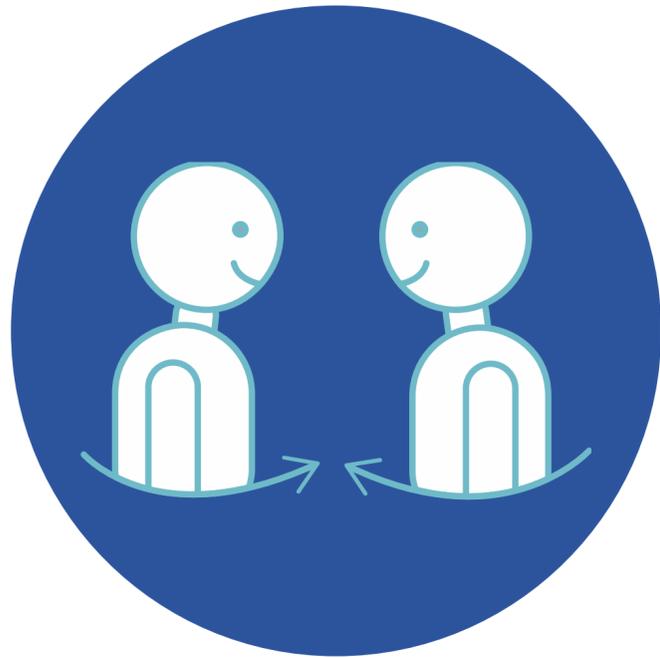
Reflection group materials

- Review the reflection group protocol for educators (handout 5)
- **Discuss with your neighbor**
 - One thing you found useful
 - One thing you would like to improve
- **Turn to your other neighbor and discuss the same things**

Questions to think about as you watch

- What is one benefit of the reflection group?
- What surprised you about the conversation?
- What challenges do you need to think about when planning or conducting a reflection group at your school?

Turn and talk



- Discuss the following questions with your team?
- Who will summarize the common themes and list the recommendations?
- How will these be shared? How will you ensure the privacy of the reflection group participants?
- Who will receive the summary of common themes and recommendations? How will the summary be shared?

Additional thoughts?

- What has been one “a-ha” moment from today’s discussions?
- What steps does your team plan to take to learn more about the perspectives of families and educators?
- What is a challenge you may encounter in conducting reflection groups and how might you solve it?

Questions? Comments?



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REL Northwest at Education Northwest
101 SW Main Street Suite 500
Portland, OR 97204-3213

ies.ed.gov/ncee/edlabs/regions/northwest



relnw@educationnorthwest.org



@relnw



1.800.547.6339

