

Strategies for Educators to Support the Social and Emotional Needs of Students Impacted by the COVID-19 Pandemic and the Demand for Racial Justice

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Region 15 Comprehensive Center

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Webinar Series: Supporting the Social and Emotional Needs of Educators and Students

- **April:** Strategies for Districts to Support Self-Care for Educators During the COVID-19 Pandemic (archived)
- **Today:** Strategies for Educators to Support the Social and Emotional Needs of Students Impacted by the COVID-19 Pandemic and the Demand for Racial Justice: Plans for Reopening Schools
- **September:** The State Role in Encouraging Social and Emotional Learning in Schools in Response to the COVID-19 Pandemic (working title)



Today's Speakers



Dr. Christina Pate



Zoë Jenkins



Emanuelle Sippy



Veronica Crespín-Palmer



Dr. Kaylene Case

Overview of Research on Social and Emotional Needs and Conditions for Success

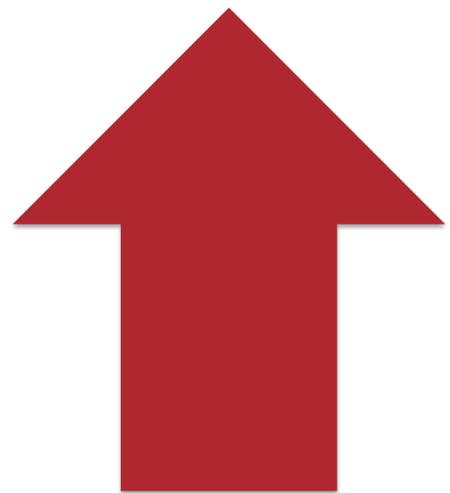


Dr. Christina Pate

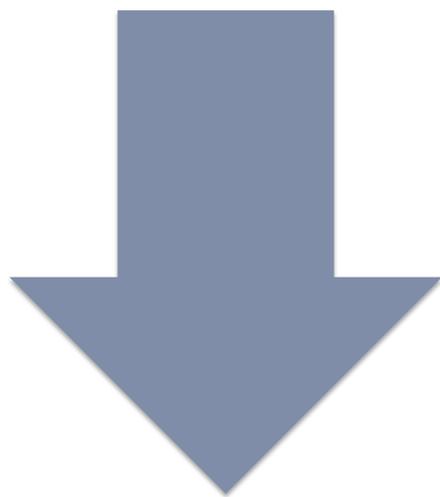
Deputy Director, National Center to Improve Social and Emotional Learning and School Safety at WestEd

Two Crises, Two Narratives

For Some...

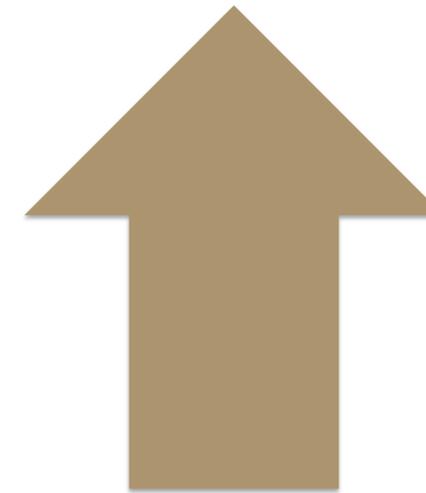


Anxiety, Fear,
Stress

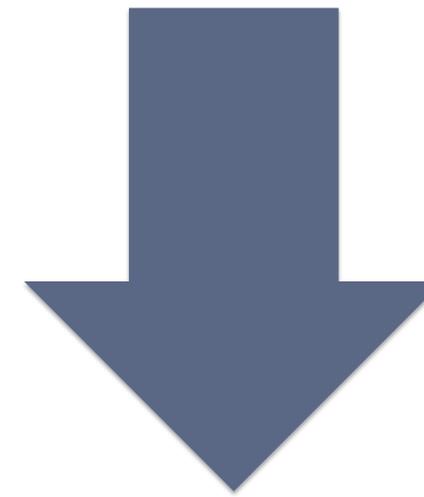


Proximity to
School
Support
Networks

For Others...



Agency,
Purpose,
Leadership



Proximity to
School
Support
Networks

The North Star

- Safe and supportive relationships and environments promote resilience, provide protective factors, and create the conditions in which every person – regardless of age – can learn, grow, and thrive.
 - For some, schools were places where this happened – so there was a real loss when schools closed.
 - For others, however, schools were NOT places where this happened.

What do we need to reconsider, rethink, revise as schools reopen?

Consider One Important Process – 3 steps – In this order!



Regulate: physically and emotionally calm and settled



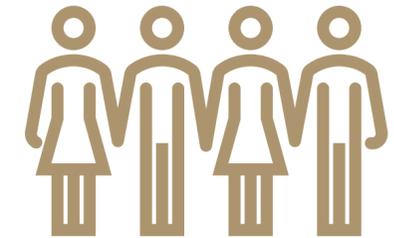
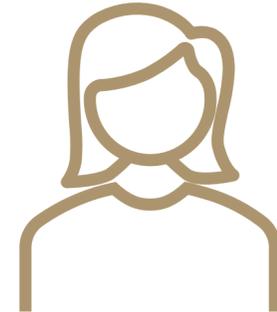
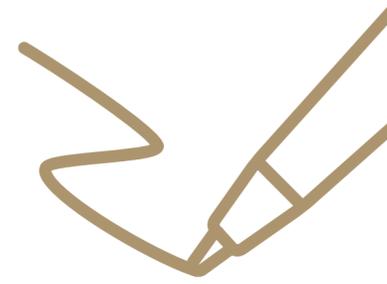
Relate: socially and emotionally connected through safe and supportive relationships attuned to needs



Reason: ready and able to engage in teaching and learning

Regulate

- Regulation looks different for everyone
- Regulating activities for students may differ from those that help adults or make them feel comfortable
- This may also differ across races and cultures
- Consider your biases and work towards developmentally appropriate and culturally responsive practices



Regulate



GROUNDING
EXERCISES



STRUCTURE AND
CONSISTENCY



RITUALS

- Begin meetings, classes, and lessons with grounding and centering exercises
- Create structure and consistency: re-establish or co-create new routines and school or classroom expectations
- Create safe and welcoming rituals through a student-centered lens

Regulate



BREAKS



SELF-AWARENESS



SELF-REGULATION



VOICE AND CHOICE

- Create more opportunities for breaks and physical activity
- Encourage self-awareness by creating opportunities to communicate feelings
- Promote self-regulation by providing relaxing or calming activities or invigorating activities. Consider various sensory needs.
- Offer meaningful opportunities to exercise voices and make choices

Relate

Behavior is Communication!

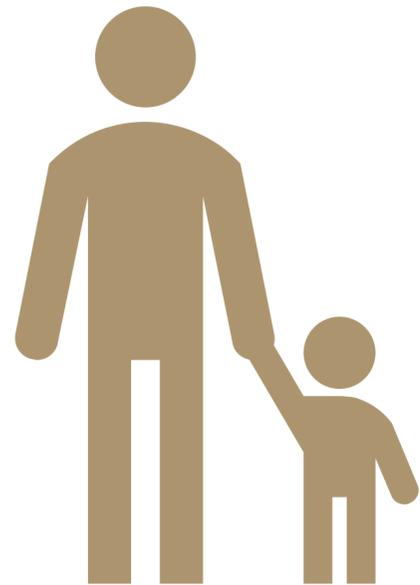
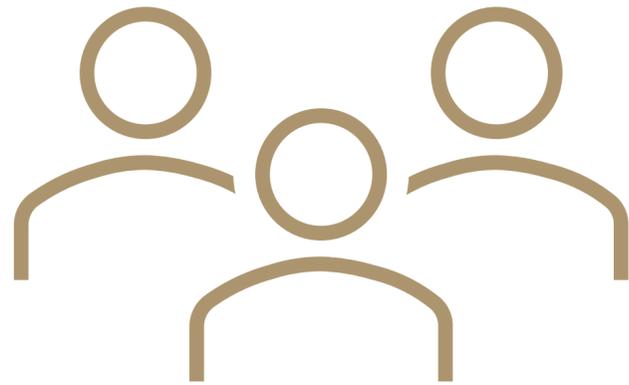
Fight, flight, or freeze responses may look like defiance, noncompliance, or task avoidance



Consider how you perceive and respond to challenging behaviors:

- Reframe
- Respond vs. react
- Consider biases and apply culturally responsive practices

Relate



- Be intentional about creating space and opportunities for healthy interactions
- Explicitly address the importance of safe and supportive social connections
- Ensure consistent connections to a caring, reliable adult
 - Similarly, ensure that new staff are connected to a buddy or a mentor

Relate

Create opportunities for self- and collective care

Emphasize caring connections and well-being – even when discussing academic content or performance



Healthy mindsets and behaviors



Identity, connectedness, and belonging



Healthy boundaries and interactions

Reason



Support executive functioning and self-management skills by breaking work into smaller pieces



Before using lessons, texts, activities, and videos, ensure that they are not activating for students and their families



Create opportunities for voice, choice, agency, and leadership

Guiding Actions for the Return to School



LISTEN, TRUST, AND
CO-PLAN



CO-CREATE
CONDITIONS



REFLECT AND REFINE
IN PARTNERSHIP

- Listen first, then co-develop a plan in partnership *with* students, families, and staff
- Co-create the conditions for healing and success for all school community members
- Continue to reflect on and refine policies and practices *with* students, families, and staff

Student Perspectives on Strategies to Support their Social and Emotional Needs



Zoë Jenkins
Prichard Committee for Academic
Excellence Student Voice Team



Emanuelle Sippy
Prichard Committee for Academic
Excellence Student Voice Team

JULY 29, 2020

STUDENTS AS PARTNERS IN CREATING A NEW NORMAL

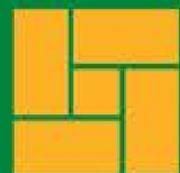


Student Voice Team

The Prichard Committee

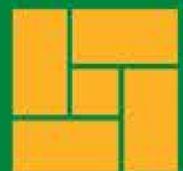
WHO WE ARE

- 100 plus members
- Statewide
- Ages 11-21
- Self-selected



WHAT WE DO

- Amplify and elevate student voice
- Support students as partners to improve Kentucky schools
- Extend the reach of the Prichard Committee



MEANINGFUL STUDENT VOICE

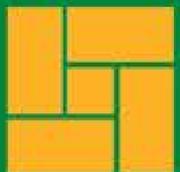
EXPRESSION

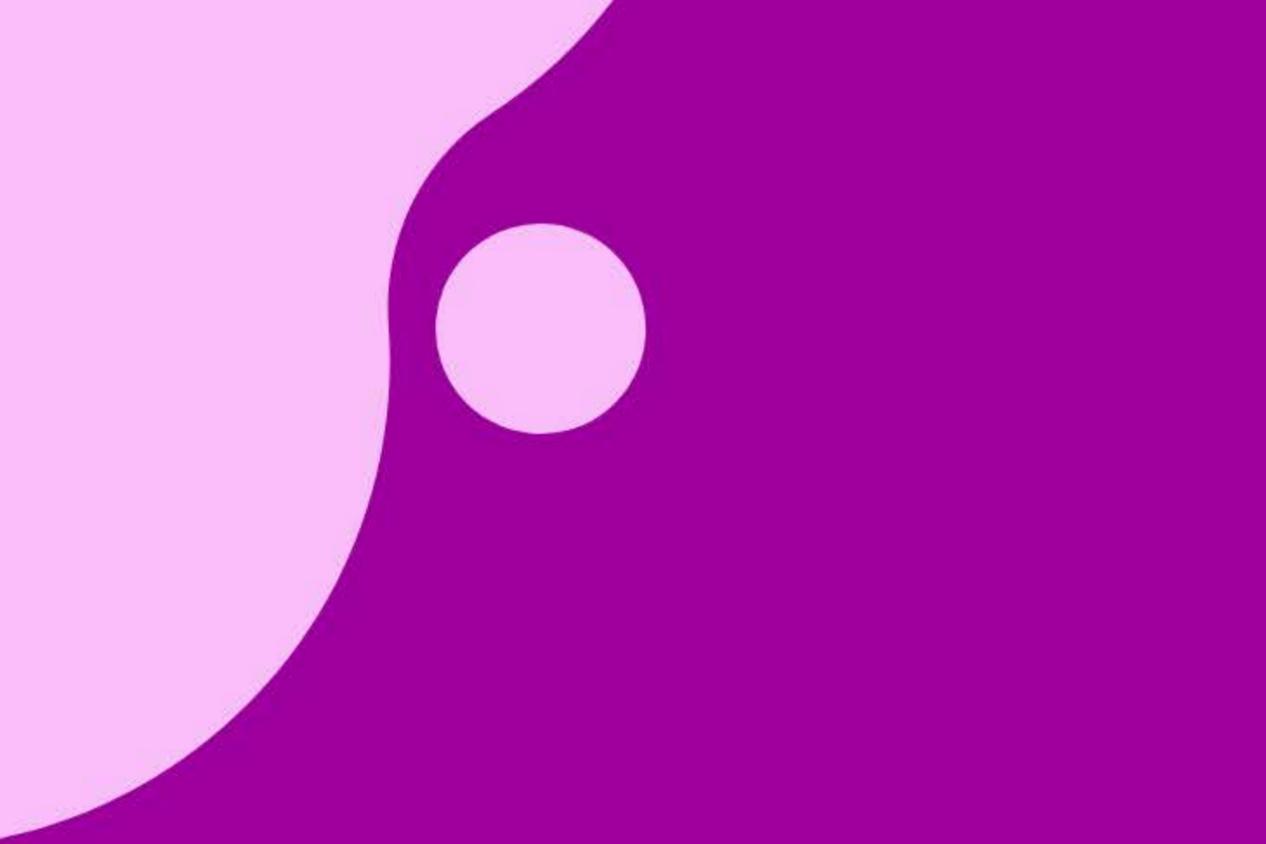
CONSULTATION

PRESENCE + PARTICIPATION

PARTNERSHIP

ACTIVISM + LEADERSHIP





COPING WITH COVID-19 STUDENT-TO- STUDENT STUDY

Part I : Survey

- ~13,000 responses
- All 120 counties represented

Part II : Interviews

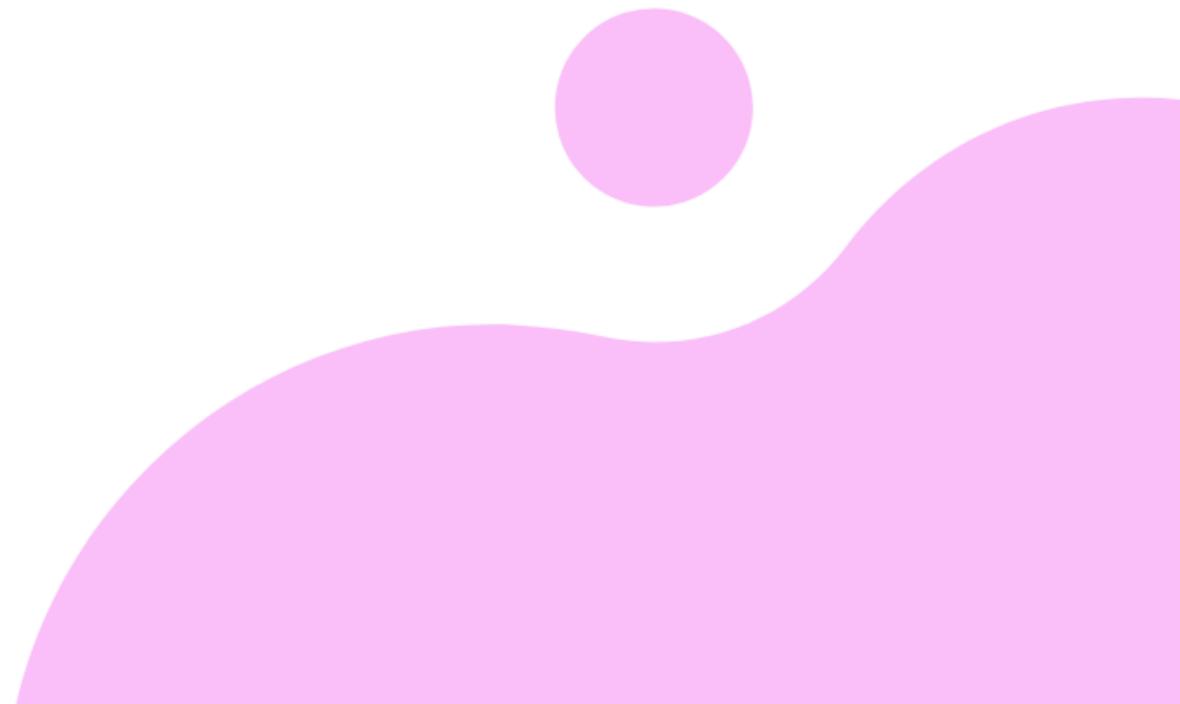
- 50 peer-to-peer

- With funding from Teach for America Reinvention Lab, Woodrow Wilson Foundation, National Geographic, and Pathway 2 Tomorrow
- Created by the Prichard Committee Student Voice Team, with dissemination help from KY YMCA and Kentucky School Council Association
- Help from researchers at the University of Kentucky and REL-Pacific

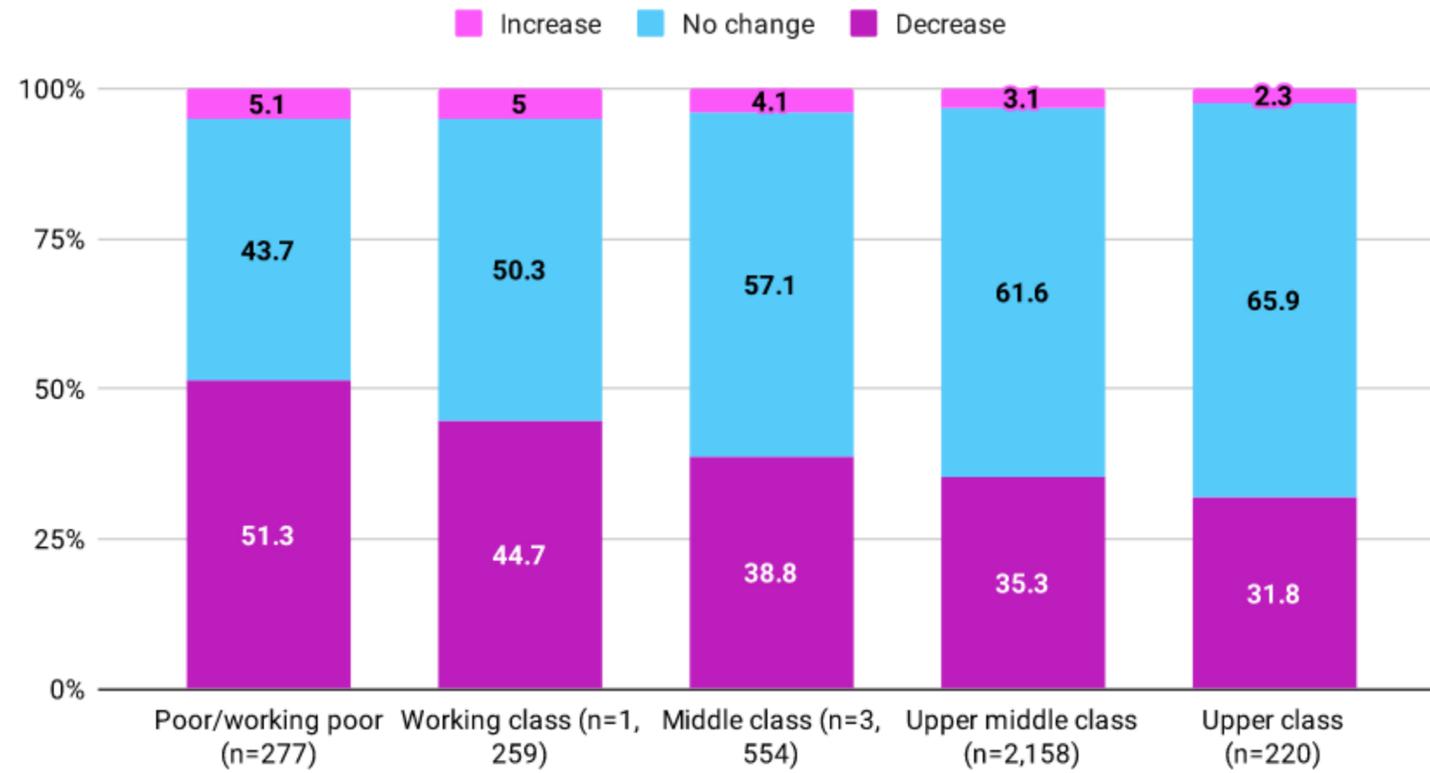


WHAT WE ARE SEEING

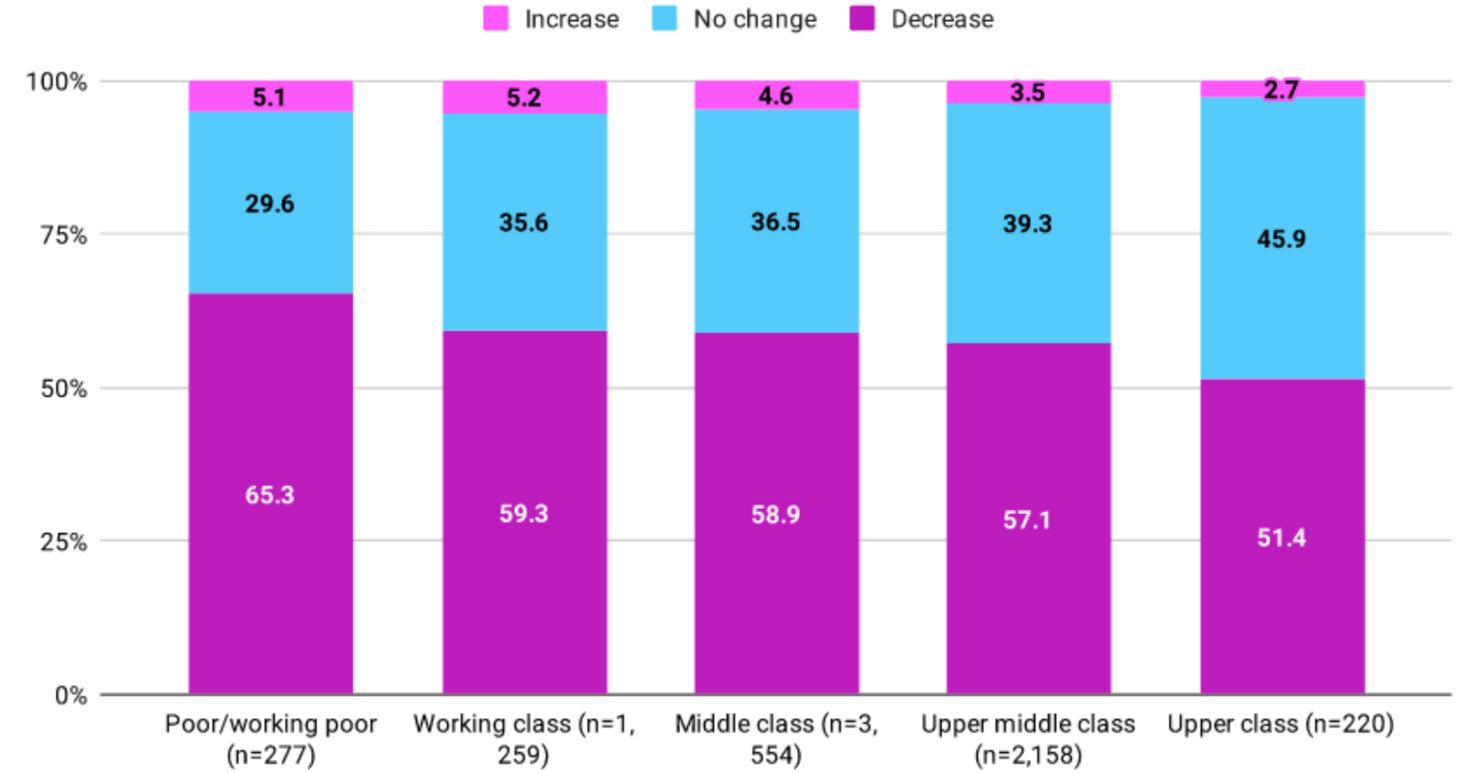
- **Students in metro areas (250K+) averaged meeting with their teachers once or more a week while rural students (<2,500) reported meeting less than once a week**
- **Students who have more frequent contact with their teacher are more engaged and motivated with their schoolwork**



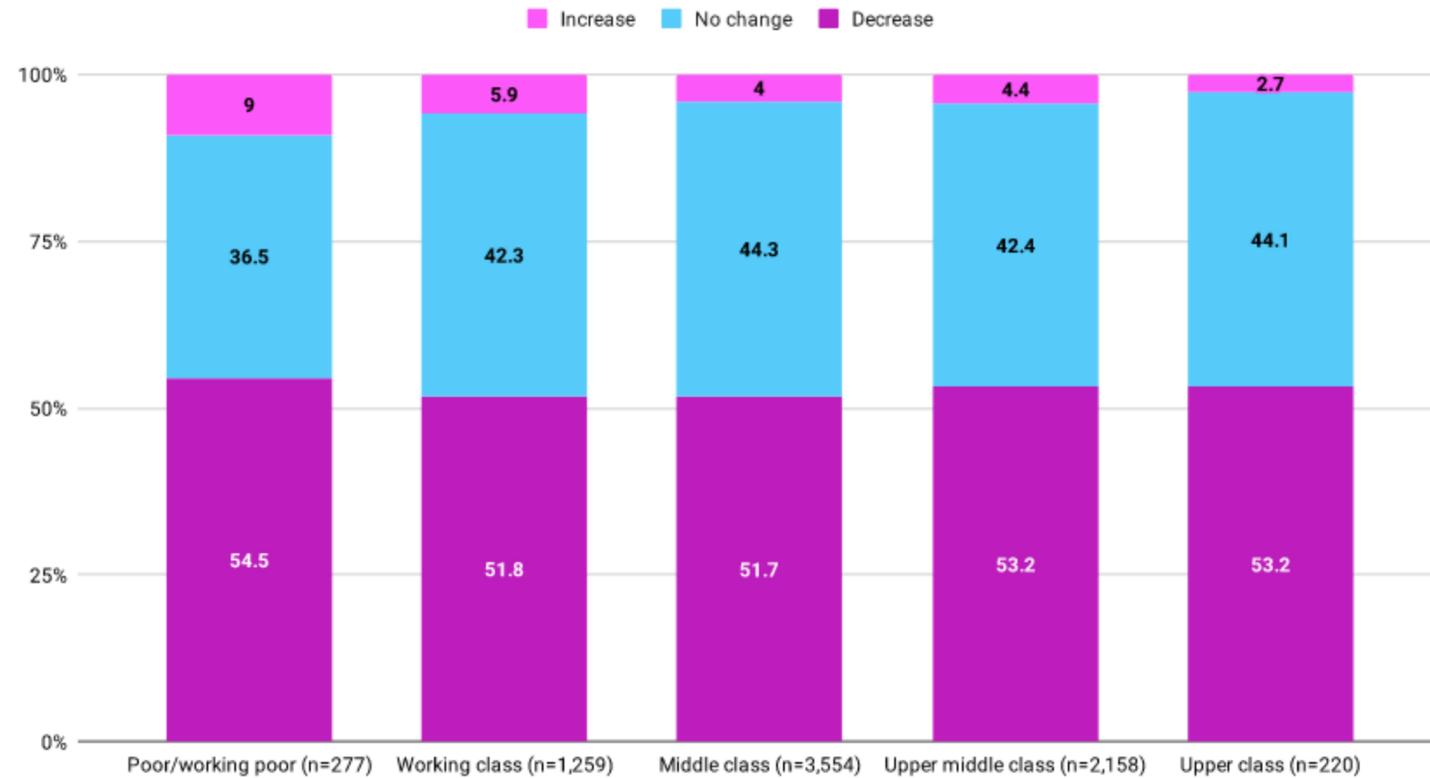
Decrease, No change and Increase in Understanding by SES



Decrease, No change and Increase in Motivation by SES



Decrease, No change and Increase in Meaningfulness by SES



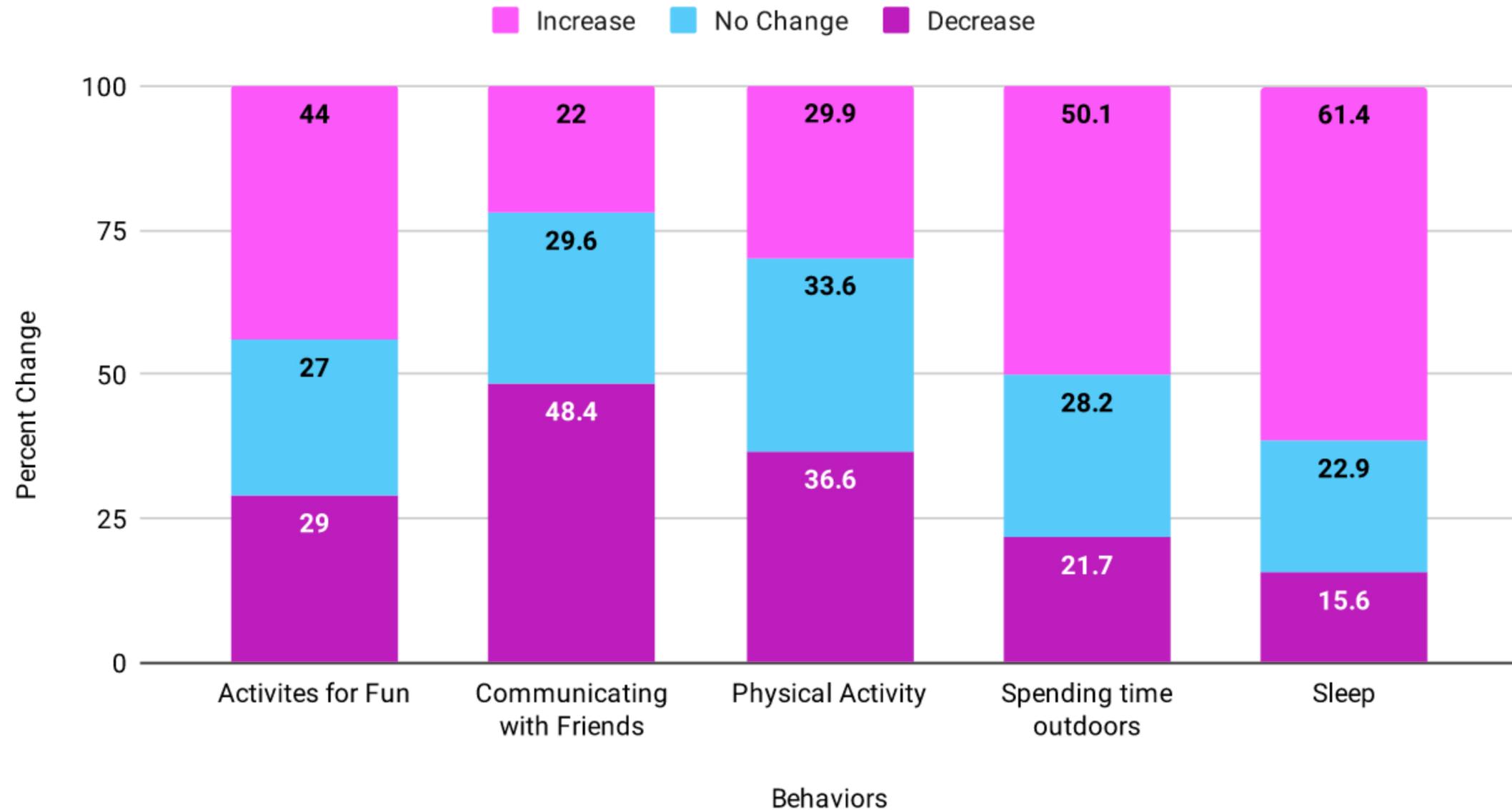
Decrease, No change and Increase in Manageability by SES



STUDENT BEHAVIORS

- **Latinx and Asian students are communicating much less than other racial groups**
- **Students with less consistent WiFi access more likely to report sleeping, communicating with friends, and having fun less**

Percent Change in Time Spent on Different Behaviors

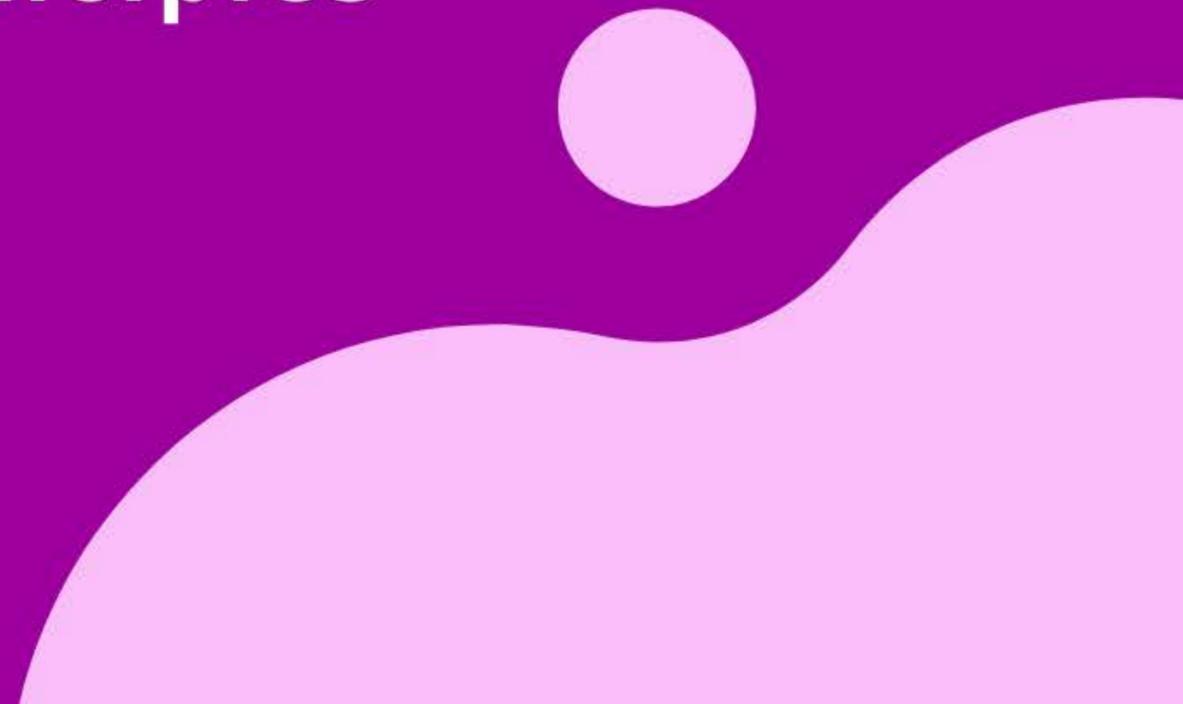
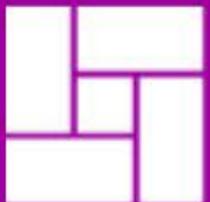


WHAT WE NEED WHEN WE RETURN

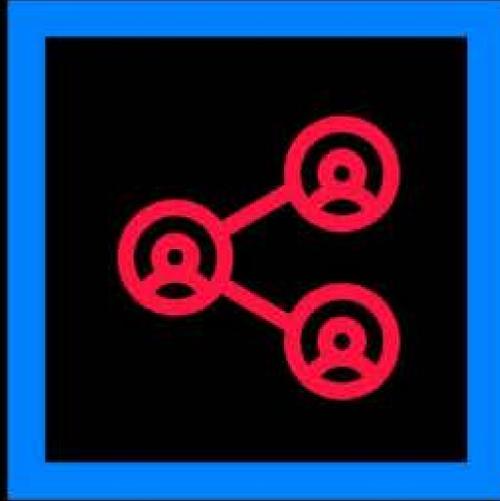
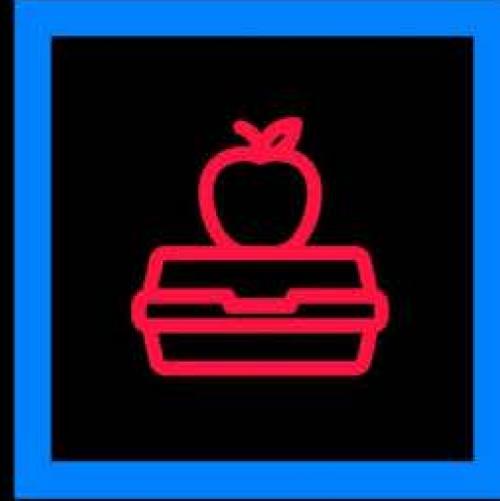
- **Flexible attendance policy**
 - **Students in chairs ≠ engaged learning**
 - **Re-examine the role of SROs**
 - **Re-thinking discipline**
- 
- A decorative graphic in the bottom right corner consisting of a large, light pink, wavy shape that resembles a stylized cloud or a splash, with a smaller, solid pink circle positioned above it.

How can schools and districts work *with* students, not *for* us?

- **Co-creation**
 - Virtual dialogues
 - Surveys with meaningful shareback
 - Include students on committees
- **Move School Forward Guiding Principles**
 - Ecosystem approach
 - Anti-racist education



move school forward



STUDENT DEMANDS FOR JUSTICE IN SCHOOLS

moveschoolforward.org

CONNECT WITH US!



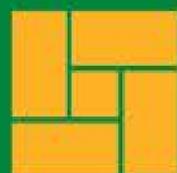
studentvoiceforum.org



[@pcstuvoiceteam](https://www.instagram.com/pcstuvoiceteam)



**Get Schooled: Student Stories
from Across KY**



Family Perspectives on Strategies to Support their Social and Emotional Needs



Veronica Crespín-Palmer
Co-Founder and CEO, RISE
Colorado



The Family-Led Movement for Educational Equity

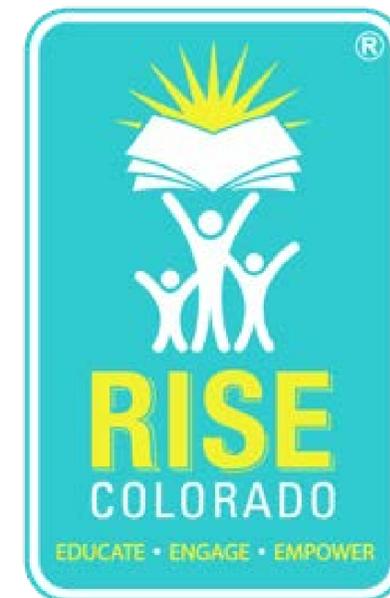
Veronica Crespín-Palmer

Story of Self:

Veronica Crespin-Palmer



Theory of Change



What does the research say?

There is a **significant positive correlation** between school, family, and community involvement and student success.

Grounding Reality

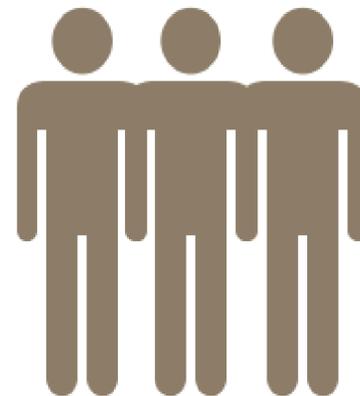
Average span of time in a school community:

Superintendent



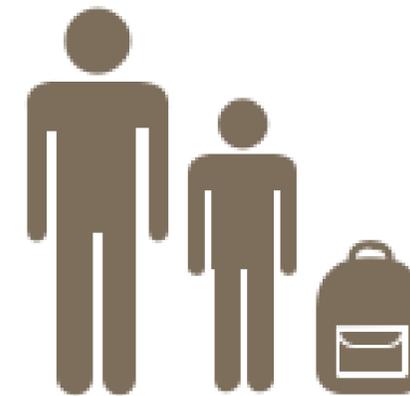
6 years

School board



5 years

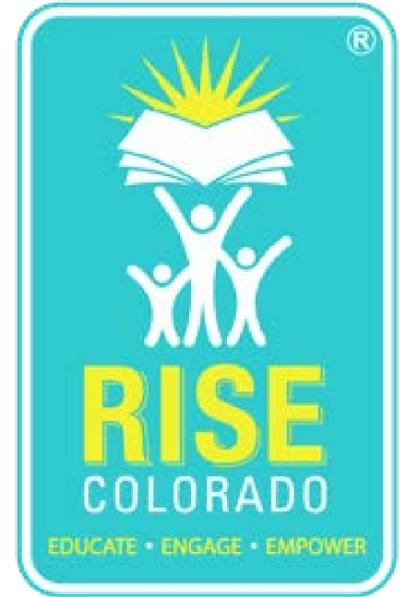
Student/parent



18 years

What do families and communities need as students return to school to feel connected and supported?

- **Cared for, listened to, and validated** – families have been through *a lot* during the pandemic
- **Holistic wraparound services** (think Maslow’s Hierarchy of Needs) – food, mental health, housing assistance, direct cash assistance
- **Opportunities to share input and feedback often** during reopening and recovery so their needs and challenges are being met in real-time



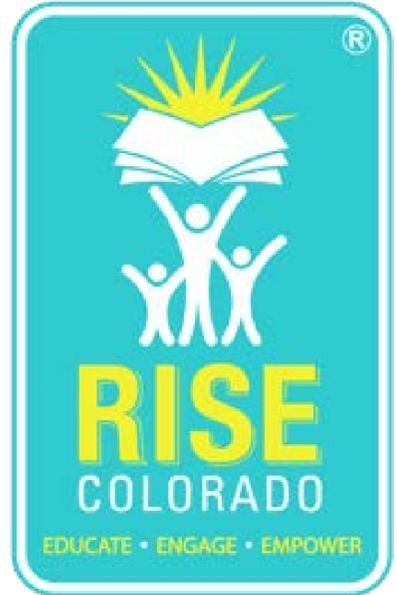
What does the research say?

Family-Like Schools: “In a partnership, teachers and administrators create more *family-like* schools. A family-like school **recognizes each child’s individuality** and makes each child feel special and included. Family-like schools **welcome all families**, not just those that are easy to reach.”

School-Like Families: “In a partnership, parents create more *school-like* families. A school-like family recognizes that **each child is also a student**. Families reinforce the importance of school, homework, and activities that **build student skills and feelings of success.**”

How can schools and districts work *with* families (vs. doing *to* or *for* families)?

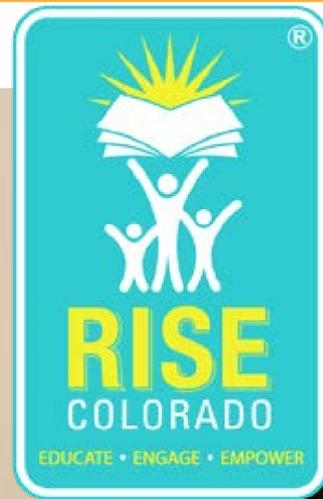
- **Adjust mindsets.** Really and truly believe that low-income families of color care, value, and have time for their children's education.
- **Seeing families as the experts and leaders.** They are key to their children's education.
- **Trust families and students!** Provide them with the space to share their challenges and the conditions to co-create solutions with education systems to address those challenges.



What does the research say?

“When schools build partnerships with families that **respond to their concerns and honor their contributions**, they are successful in sustaining connections that are aimed at improving student achievement. And when **families and communities organize** to hold poorly performing schools accountable, studies suggest that school districts make positive changes in policy, practices, and resources.”

RISE With Your Families and Students!



School District Perspectives and Strategies to Support Staff and Students



Dr. Kaylene Case
Behavior Specialist, School
Psychologist, Douglas County
School District, Colorado

Staff Needs from School and District Leadership



COMMUNITY



RESOURCES



PARTNERSHIPS

Critical: Staff need to feel valued and esteemed

- Empower relationships among all stakeholders
- Build confidence to access available school and district resources
 - Mental health
 - Multi-tiered systems of support
- Create natural platforms for parents, students, and educators to come together, share experiences, and identify their needs
- Create partnerships with community agencies

How Do Staff Rebuild Conditions of Success for the Entire School Community Upon Return?

Create a sense of community, characterized by **cohesion**, **participation**, and **safety** to build resilience

- Focus on building relationships, listening, and acting based on feedback. **Inclusive**, influential, and ongoing community collaboration is essential.
- Consider **culture** in reestablishing supports. There are different values, beliefs, and preferences for accessing support.
- Ask community-building questions. Some examples include:
 - What makes relationships work out well?
 - How do you manage stress?
 - When is a time that you felt stereotyped?



Know Community Contexts to Rebuild Conditions for Success



SOCIAL
DETERMINANTS



SELF-ASSESSMENT



COMMUNITY PULSE

- Social Determinants of Health
 - Food, housing, interpersonal safety
- The Importance of Self-Assessments
 - Leaders model vulnerability
 - Set boundaries
 - Accept feelings
- Community Pulse
 - What is important?
 - What is our “why”?
 - What are we accomplishing?

Additional Strategies for District Leaders to Support Conditions for Success

- Use a trauma-informed lens to foster collective care
- Use clear, concise communication that is relevant and meaningful
- Assign group to serve as peer support systems
- Provide staff with tools and resources to develop social and emotional skills, beginning with self-awareness and self-management. Practice together
- Collegial activities through a variety of platforms
- Create safe spaces in the building for staff to renew and reset

Action Planning



Dr. Christina Pate

Deputy Director, National Center to
Improve Social and Emotional
Learning and School Safety at
WestEd

Action Planning

What are your top 3 *priorities*?



What's one *action* you can do *now* toward addressing each of those priorities?



Action Planning Example

Priorities

1. Listen to students and families to understand their needs and co-plan with them using equity as a design driver
2. Create a space where staff feel valued, heard, and offered a voice in the decision-making as plans are created
3. Reconsider policies including attendance and discipline with a focus on equity and inclusion

Actions

- ✓ Gather existing data and create time and space to better understand challenges, needs, and hopes of students and families. Begin to co-plan and co-create solutions to address needs (schedule listening forums, co-planning sessions).
- ✓ Design and schedule a staff retreat *before* students return to listen, learn, acknowledge, and affirm (stresses, concerns, successes) and create opportunities for community care and connection.
- ✓ In partnership with students and families, conduct a review of discipline and attendance policies to determine if they are inclusive, equitable, trauma-sensitive, culturally appropriate. Revise as needed.

Thank you!

This presentation was prepared for the Institute of Education Sciences (IES) under Contract ED-IES-17-C-0012 by Regional Educational Laboratory (REL) West at WestEd. The content of the presentation does not necessarily reflect the views or policies of IES or the U.S. Department of Education, nor does mention of trade names, commercial products, or organizations imply endorsement by the U.S. Government.

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