

The School Climate Initiative: Empowering Students to Change the Perception of CTE



National School Climate Center

Educating Minds and Hearts, because the 3 Rs Are Not Enough

Schuylkill Technology Center

Gretchen Witman- Social Worker

Stacey Minahan- Assistant Director



- Located in Schuylkill County, Pennsylvania
- 12 Sending School Districts
- Grades 9-12
- Semester-About Schedule
- 2 Campuses: North and South
- 21 Programs



Schuylkill Technology Center

2015 - 2016

- Nationwide Dilemma: Negative Perception of CTE
- Local Dilemma: Distorted Perception of STC
 - Low Enrollment
 - Student Demographics
 - Grades, Behavior, Attendance
 - Mismatched Career Objectives
 - Last Minute Enrollments
 - Uninformed Stakeholders
 - Community, Business, Parents, Students, Sending Schools



The Perception of CTE

- Pathway to Change CTE Perception
 - Joined Pennsylvania School Climate Improvement Network Community
 - PAIU, PDE Office of Safe Schools, and NSCC
 - 5-Stage Planning Process
 - Preparation and Planning
 - Evaluation
 - Understanding the Findings and Developing an Action Plan
 - Implementing an Action Plan
 - Reevaluation and Development of the Next Phase



<https://www.schoolclimate.org/about/our-approach>



School Climate Leadership Initiative

- Team Effort
 - IU Regional Coordinator
 - SCLI Team Leader
 - Administration
 - Instructors- CTE, Itinerant, Social Studies Teachers
 - Support Staff- Social Worker, School Counselor, Secretaries, Technology Coordinator, Co-Op Coordinator



School Climate Leadership Team

- PA School Climate Surveys
 - Student
 - Faculty and Staff
 - Parent
 - Community/Business & Industry
- 4 Domains
 - Social Emotional Learning
 - Student Support
 - High Expectations
 - Safe School Climate



PA School Climate Surveys

- Student Data Analysis
- Major Areas of Concern
 - High Expectations
 - Domain: Social Emotional Learning *
- Data Analysis Lead to More Questions
 - Mainly, Why Did Students Answer This Way?
 - What Does STC Need to Fix? How Can STC Help?
- Conducted Student Focus Groups

Data Review Findings

Question	Total Answers	1 Strongly Disagree (SD)	2 Disagree (D)	3 Agree (A)	4 Strongly Agree (SA)	Mean Rating
1. How much do you agree with the following statements about your school?						
<p>f. Stop and think before doing anything when they get angry.</p> <p><i>* Social Emotional Learning Domain</i></p>	382	38 9.9%	149 39.0%	154 40.3%	41 10.7%	2.52
<p>i. Get into arguments when they disagree with people.</p> <p><i>* Social Emotional Learning Domain</i> <i>** Note: This question has been altered for this report so that the answer reflects the true value of other questions within the report. A disagreement with this question is a positive answer and would skew the total value of the domain.</i></p>	382	57 14.9%	153 40.1%	139 36.4%	33 8.6%	2.61

**45.9%
Disagree**

**45%
Agree**

Student Grades 9 to 12 Climate Survey, Page 2

Question	Total Answers	1 Strongly Disagree (SD)	2 Disagree (D)	3 Agree (A)	4 Strongly Agree (SA)	Mean Rating
1. How much do you agree with the following statements about your school?						

n. Try to work out their disagreements with other students by talking to them.



**41.3%
Disagree**

* Social Emotional Learning Domain

382	29 7.6%	138 36.1%	169 44.2%	46 12.0%
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2.61

- Ask and They Will Answer!
 - Student Focus Groups
 - Randomly Selected by Technology Coordinator
 - Parent Permission Slips
 - Scripted with Pre-Determined Questions
 - Facilitator and Recorder
- Social Emotional Learning Question Examples
 - What makes you happy when you are at STC and how do you remain happy when you are here?
 - What makes you angry when you are at STC and how do you deal with your anger while you are in school?
 - What causes you stress when you are at STC and how do you deal with stress while you are in school?

Student Focus Groups

STC makes strides on 'school climate'



DAVID MCKEOWN / STAFF PHOTOGRAPHER

Administrators of the Schuylkill Technology Center program are working to improve the relationships of STC's students, parents, staff and community. On Sept. 6, representatives of a student focus group at STC-South, Mar Lin, met to discuss the project. They are, clockwise from left, Arron Marth of Pottsville Area, John Swirsky of North Schuylkill, Jenna Rupp of Pottsville Area, Nikki Dorman of Williams Valley, Noella Neary of Mahanoy Area, Ash Jarvie of Williams Valley, Johana Argueta of Shenandoah Valley and Stacey Minahan, assistant principal at STC-South.

Vo-tech students should feel at home at both technology center, home districts

BY STEPHEN J. FYTAH
STAFF WRITER

MAR LIN — Late in the 2015-16 school year, administrators of the Schuylkill Technology Center program started work on a project to improve the relationships of its students, parents, staff and community.

Since then, the "School Climate Leadership Initiative" has made

numerous strides. Stacey Minahan, assistant principal at STC-South,

Mar Lin, said Sept. 6.

For example, at the start of this school year, students were able to report bullies anonymously via an online form. Soon a school store will open, and a group of student leaders from STC-North, Frackville, and STC-South, will be assembled to

enforce values to make the school community stronger.

This climate improvement process was recommended by the state Department of Education, Diane R. Best, the director of curriculum for Schuylkill Intermediate Unit 29, said.

Please see **STC**, Page 9

Local Press: Focus Groups

- End of Year Action Plan: Due May 1st
 - Objectives
 - Strategies/Initiatives
 - Benchmarks/Evidence
 - Outcomes
- Road Map
 - Constantly Changing
- School Climate is a Cyclical Process



Goals and Action Plan

- Students Become the Voice
 - Focus Group
 - Student Ambassadors
- Student Training
 - SEL Workshops for Students and Staff
- Restorative Practices
 - Circles
 - Peer Mediation



Added Social Emotional Initiatives

- Online Bully Box and SAP Referral Systems
- Spring Fling Dance
- Knoebels Community Appreciation Day
- STC Tech Trot 5K/Fun Run
- Random Acts of Kindness
- Mix It Up At Lunch Day
- End of Semester Celebration
- Pumpkin Chucking
- Holiday Door Decorating



Other Added Initiatives

www.stcenters.org



- **Connecting Communities of Courage**
 - Facebook Headquarters: Menlo, California
 - October 2017
- Summit Focused on Building Inclusive, Safe, and Engaged Schools
- Brought Together Diverse Community of Stakeholders from National, State, and Local Levels
- Summit Conclusion: Stakeholders Need to Include Students and Parents in Decision-Making Regarding the Safety of Schools.



National Spotlight


https://www.schoolclimate.org/ Approve Outstanding Requests Home - National School Climate Center

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NSCC
National School Climate Center

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Latest News and Updates



Shenandoah Valley student speaks of school climate initiative

Nov 21, 2017 by Stephen J. Pytak

"School climate refers to the quality and character of school life. It is based on people's experiences of school and reflects norms, goals, values, interpersonal relationships, teaching and learning practices, and organizational structures," according to the state Department of Education website.


[Read More](#)

Tweets by @school_climate

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Harvard Education @hgee

"Contending with frequent moves, new schools, and the echoes of deployments, these military-connected kids carry a unique weight—often invisible, often unacknowledged." Reflecting on how schools can meet the needs of military families: gse.harvard.edu/news/uk/16/11/... #VeteransDay18



"The National School Climate Center is an essential non-profit body for research and intervention not only at the national level but also the international one since their activities are well known and appreciated worldwide. We appreciate the scientific based and practice based activities, which provide rigorous background and interventions."

Dr. Catherine Blaya, Chair of the International Observatory of Violence in Schools

National Recognition

National School Climate Center: Lessons from the Field



- 1 of 6 Schools in the Nation
 - Only CTE in Study
- Focus: Inclusion, Safety, and Engagement



3 Phases of Research

- Background Research
 - Policies, Procedures, and Practice
- Site Visit
 - Student Focus Group
 - Faculty/Staff Focus Group
 - Classroom Observations
 - Administrative Interviews
- Data Validation
 - Draft Report
 - October 2018

National Spotlight

2018 - 2019

- Improved
 - Morale
 - Student Satisfaction
 - School Climate
 - Positive Perception



New Mindset

Ultimate Key to Success

Student Voice!!!

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Contact Information
