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



## 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



) ISCC National School Climate Center

## 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

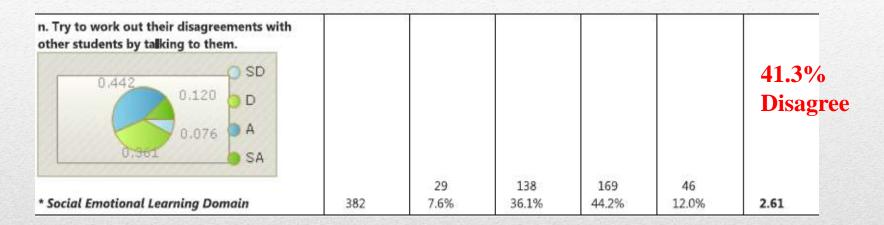
## **Data Review Findings**

#### Student Grades 9 to 12 Climate Survey, Page 2

Question	Total Answers	1 Strongly Disagree (SD)	Disagree (D)	3 Agree (A)	4 Strongly Agree (SA)	Mean Rating
1. How much do you agree with the following s	tatements abo	ut your school	?			
f. Stop and think before doing anything when they get angry.  O.403 O.107 D A O.099 A SA		38	149	154	41	45.9% Disagre
* Social Emotional Learning Domain	382	9.9%	39.0%	40.3%	10.7%	2.52
* Social Emotional Learning Domain ** 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		57	153	139	22	45% Agree
answer and would skew the total value of the domain.	382	57 14.9%	153 40.1%	139 36.4%	33 8.6%	2.61

#### Student Grades 9 to 12 Climate Survey, Page 2

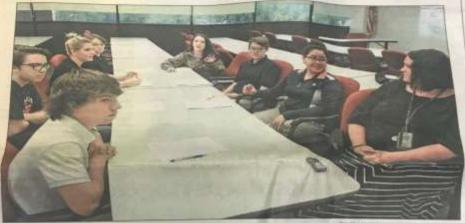
Question	Total Answers	1 Strongly Disagree (SD)	2 Disagree (D)	3 Agree (A)	4 Strongly Agree (SA)	Mean Rating			
1. How much do you agree with the following statements about your school?									



- 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'



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. PYTAN. STAFF WRITER

MAR LIN - Late in the 2015-16 Mar Lin, said Sept. 6. school year administrators of the For example, at the start of this

numerous strides, Stacey Minahan, unforce values to make the school assistant principal at STC-South, community stronger

Schuylkill Technology Center pro- school year, students were able to gram started work on a project to report bullies anonymously via an improve the relationships of its stuonline form. Scott a school store will denta, parents, shaff and community open, and a group of student leaders Since then, the "School Climate from STC North Frackville, and Leadership Initiative" has made STC-South will be assembled to

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

Pleane 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** 



according to the state Department of Education website

Read More



"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 Blave. Chair of the International Observatory

## **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



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## **Contact Information**