



Connecticut State Department of Education School Climate Improvement Efforts

The State Department of Education (CSDE) works collaboratively with all local public school districts to improve school climate and culture. Children cannot learn and socialize in environments that are not safe. Physical, emotional and intellectual safety is the necessary foundation for student academic and social success. The quality of the relationships in school – how well individuals treat one another – is indicative of the kind of school climate that school community members experience. Educators must take the lead role in making schools safe for each and every school community member, no matter his or her circumstances.

Students, family members and educators must all be “connected” to school. A sense of belonging is essential for overall student success and must be sought collaboratively among all stakeholders. Students who are highly connected to school, achieve to their academic potentials, and are at significantly less risk for engaging in substance abuse, unhealthy sexual behaviors, violent or deviant behavior and they experience less stress than their peers who are less connected. The elements of connectedness are:

- Close to people at school
- Happy to be at school
- Feel a part of the school
- Feel as though adults in school treat students fairly
- Feel physically, emotionally and intellectually safe

Students are much more likely to be connected to school when there is a positive school climate.

Through the Connecticut Accountability for Learning Initiative (CALI) the CSDE offers educators statewide two-day School Climate Basic Training and three-day School Climate Certification Training (for those school personnel who seek more in depth knowledge and plan to lead their school/district through the process of improving school climate by assessing, analyzing the results, prioritizing goals, determining strategies, implementing the strategies and re-evaluating for continual improvement). These training sessions are scheduled throughout the school year at various regional locations. For additional information about these professional development sessions or about improving school climate in general, contact:

Jo Ann Freiberg, Ph.D., Education Consultant
Bureau of Accountability and Improvement, State Department of Education
165 Capitol Avenue, Room #222, Hartford, CT 06106
JoAnn.Freiberg@ct.gov
Phone: (860) 713-6598
Fax: (860) 713-7023