

*Resisting Violence & Raising Grades*  
*Creating Safe & Supportive Schools*  
**Comments on the Morrison  
Institute Report**

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**S3** ~ *Safe and Supportive Schools*

*Sticks and stones  
may break my  
bones, but names  
can never hurt me!*

# Morrison Institute Report

## Examining the Effectiveness of Anti- Bullying and Violence Prevention

# Presentation Topics

- Current issues and research on bullying
- Violence in schools
- Zero tolerance
- Other solutions - School climate
- Safe and Supportive Schools initiative
- Next steps

# Effects of Bullying

Students who reported being bullied or harassed were 2 to 3 times more likely to report:

- Missing school
- Feeling sad or hopeless
- Contemplating suicide

# Bullying

- Harassment, intimidation, ridicule, threats
- On going, over time
- Power differential

Not only do these words and threats make an impact on psychological and academic effectiveness but they also could have fatal effects with students.

# How dangerous are schools?

- CDC reports that fewer than 2% of youth homicides occur on school grounds
- In 2009-10 – 17 homicides in over 100,000 schools



# Yet, we can not forget:

- Springfield, Oregon
- West Paducah, Kentucky
- Jonesboro, Arkansas
- Bethel, Alaska
- Pearl, Mississippi
- Littleton, Colorado

# Secret Service Study

## School Shooters:

- Often harassed or teased
- Part of a fringe group in the school
- In schools where cliques etc were tolerated

# Another finding

In these cases, a student at the  
school knew about

the shooter's plan and

**DID NOT TELL AN ADULT!**

**WHAT DOES THIS SAY  
ABOUT THE CLIMATE AT  
THESE SCHOOLS?**

# Zero Tolerance

Consistently enforced suspension and expulsion policies for drugs or violent acts in a school.

# Studies consistently have shown...

- Over time, predetermined, mandated, harsh punishment for a wide degree of rule violations.
- Racial disproportionality
- Increasing rates of expulsion and suspension related to increasing drop out rates.
- Detrimental to school climate

# National Association of School Psychologists Recommendations

- Systematic school-wide prevention programs, social skills curricula and positive behavioral supports lead to improved learning for all students and safe school communities.
- Serious dangerous behaviors do require consistent firm consequences.
- Context must be considered.

**“There is sufficient knowledge to pursue an evidence-based approach to school safety and to reject a number of ineffective and sometimes misguided practices that continue to be widely used in schools.”**

When we view these as problems that  
come from the struggles of an  
individual student –  
**it is an IMPOSSIBLE problem to solve.**

**When viewed as a problem of the design  
of schools as systems -**

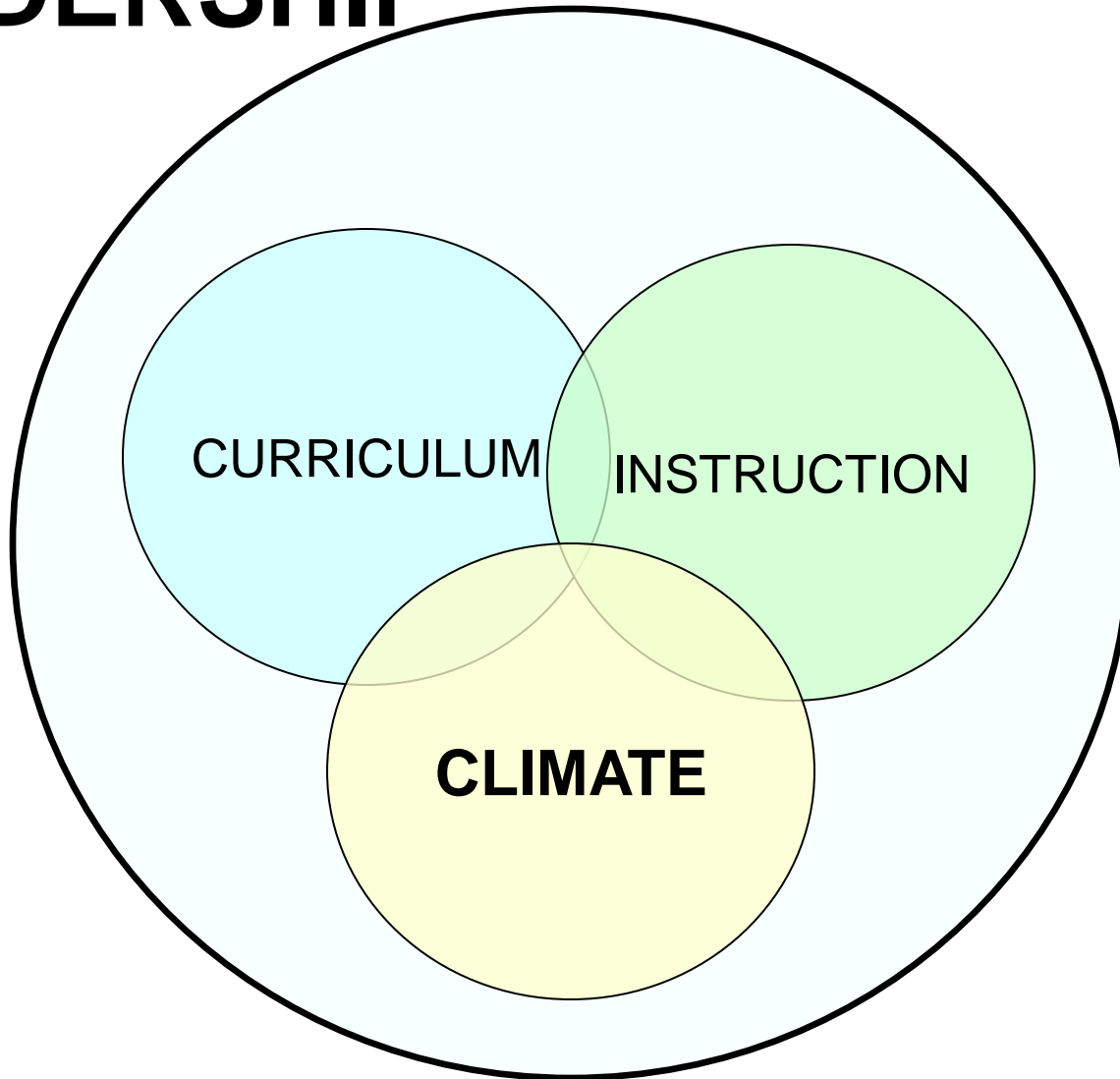
**It becomes SOLVABLE**



“Good instruction is one of our best behavior tools and good behavior is one of our best instruction tools.”

Sugai , 2011

# LEADERSHIP



# Climate

- Total environmental quality
- What it feels like to work in the organization
- Shared perceptions
- Determined by many factors - leadership, structure, rewards and recognition.
- More prone to short term fluctuations

# Culture/Climate & Achievement

Evaluation of a whole school reform – KIPP

Achievement results were related to:

- ✓ Positive school climate
- ✓ Whole school, rather than isolated implementation

Ross et al. 2007

# Culture/Climate & Achievement

“Student’s improvement in mathematics over time was higher in schools characterized by a stronger climate, above and beyond students’ and schools’ demographic characteristics.”

Bodovski, et al., 2013

# Culture/Climate & Achievement

“Improving student achievement is a matter of school improvement focused on student engagement...” Jones, et al. , 2008

Student engagement is the “most robust predictor of achievement and behavior in schools.” Klem & Connell, 2004

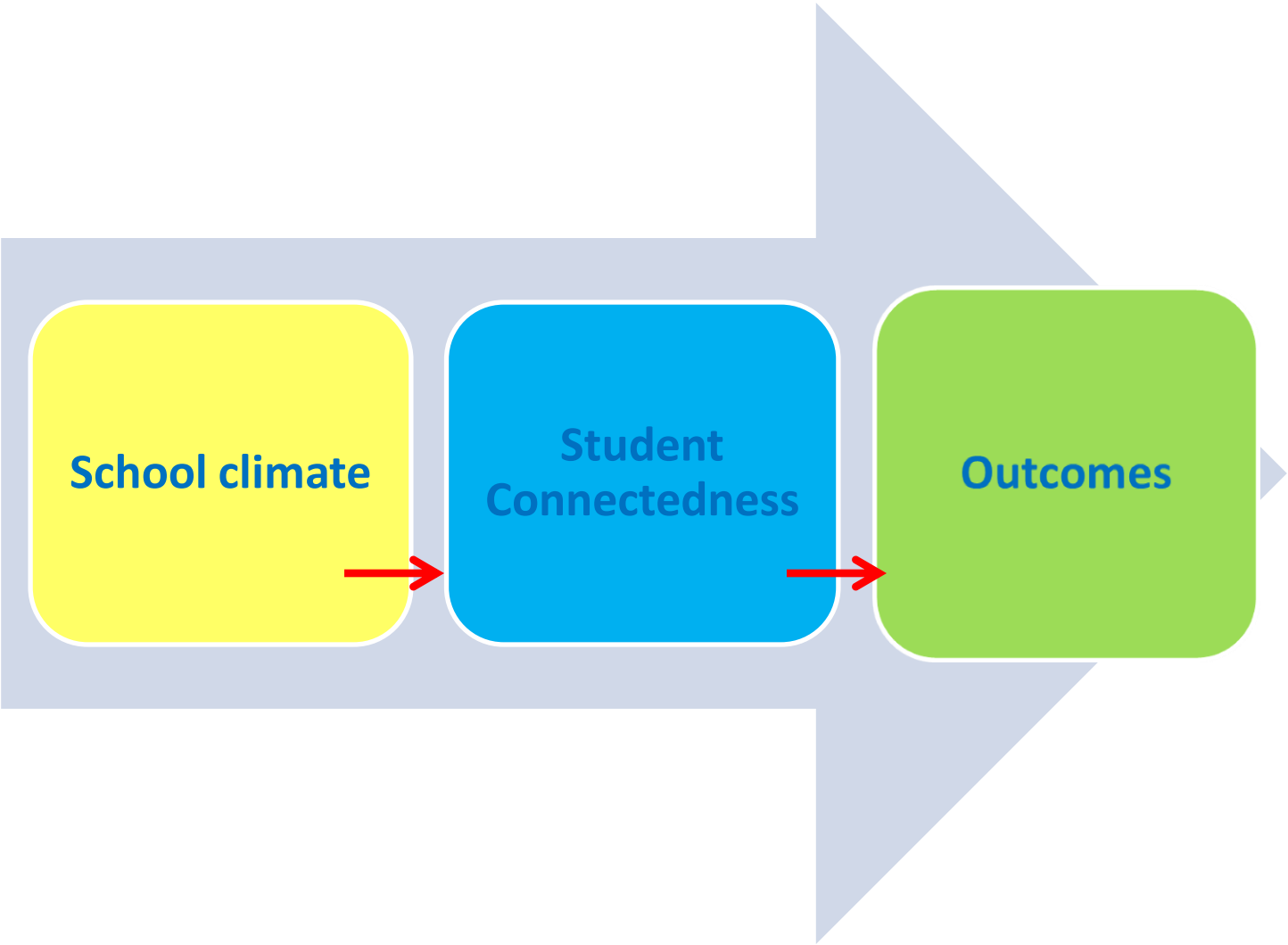
# Culture/Climate & Behavior

- School's climate could increase or decrease the risk of antisocial behavior. Rutter et al. 1994
- Environmentally focused interventions were effective in reducing delinquent behavior and drug abuse. Najaka, Gottfredson & Wilson, 2001
- Amount of connectedness predicts the likelihood of aggression and victimization. Wilson, 2004

# Adolescent Health Study

*“When students feel they are part of school, say they’re treated fairly by teachers, and feel close to the people at school, they are healthier and more likely to succeed.”*





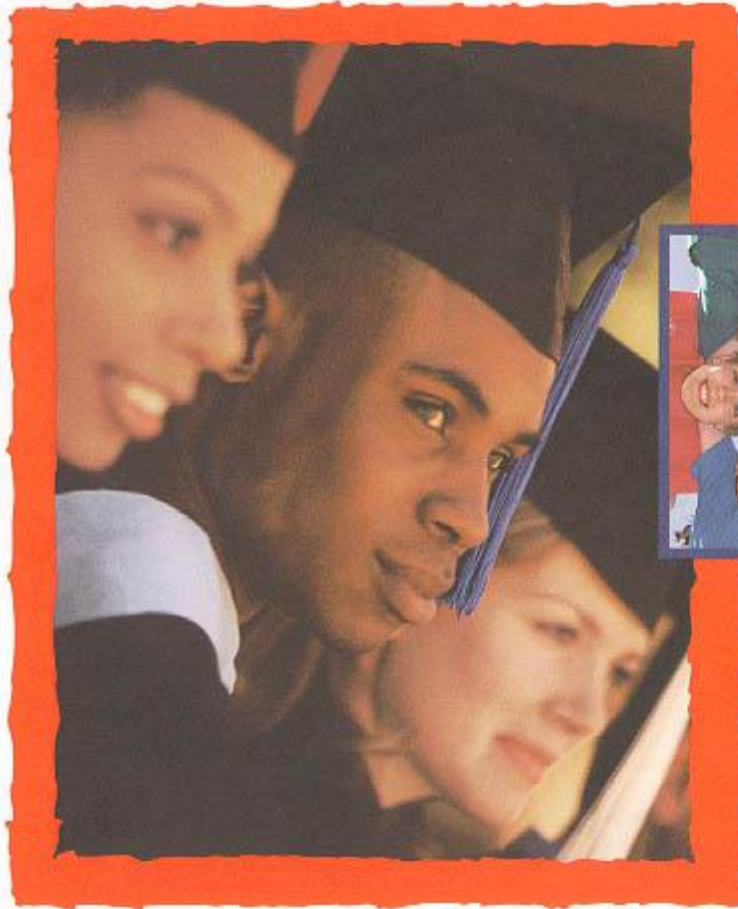
# The Promise of a Positive Culture

Dealing with two issues raised in  
the Morrison Institute Report:

Academics

Behavior

# Protective Schools



Linking  
Drug Abuse  
Prevention  
with Student  
Success

*A guide for educators,  
policy makers, and families*



THE UNIVERSITY OF ARIZONA,  
COLLEGE OF EDUCATION

# 10 Protective Schools Factors

- Vision
- Positive culture
- Leadership commitment
- Strong academic programs
- Research-based prevention
- Continuum of services
- Professional development
- Home-School-Community relationships
- Funding and resources
- Data-based decision making

“Every day interactions and activities in the school may have at least as much effect as the best design prevention program or discipline policy on children’s future.”

Protective Schools, 2000

# Safe and Supportive Schools Approach

- **Effective Thinking** – using data and research to lead to solutions. Taking positive not a deficit approach.
- **Effective Action** – implementing evidence-based or research-based programs or processes to solve the problems or issues identified by Effective Thinking.
- **Effective Relationships** – supporting the relationships that will enhance climate and be the “glue” that keep the Actions moving forward.
- **Effective Accomplishment** – evaluating success in multiple ways and at many times in the process and feeding these data into the Effective Thinking process

# S3 Processes

- Data-based decisions
- Staff and leadership commitment
- A leadership core team
- Evidence based strategies and programs.
- Capacity building in prevention
- Evaluation

# Leadership Core Team

Teacher leaders, counselors and administrators who use data to set goals and guide implementation of evidence-based programs, practices and processes.



# NEXT STEPS

- Carefully read the Morrison Institute Report
- Share the report with folks at your site
- Talk to teachers, students, parents about their perceptions.
- Investigate strategies for creating and maintaining positive climates in schools.

# CONTACT INFORMATION

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