



## Building Rigorous & Respectful Schools Together

*Engaged Students...Inspired Teachers*



*The CSCL aims to help schools achieve greater academic success by promoting positive school climate and engaging teaching and learning.*



### SafeMeasures™ School Climate Improvement Process

The SafeMeasures™ Process is a comprehensive, yet simple process for improving school climate and learning. We use the power of *student-led, collaborative action research* to engage and inspire students and teachers to work together to improve their schools. This five-stage process brings together diverse teams of student and adult leaders to collect and analyze school climate data, create action plans and initiate effective projects and activities that promote measurable school climate improvement. We use a valid and reliable school climate assessment program that is aligned with National School Climate Standards to guide school improvement planning and design. Engaging students and teachers as leaders and experts on school climate is the heart and soul of this five step school improvement process.

#### ***Stage One: Planning, Design, and Organization***

- Gain the commitment and leadership of the principal and a group of caring adults who will help design and lead the process for their school.
- Plan, design, and organize the SafeMeasures™ process so it fits with existing school initiatives.
- Select a **diverse** group of students to serve as leadership partners.

#### ***Stage Two: Data Collection***

- Collect qualitative and quantitative school climate data from students, teachers, and parents to understand school climate issues within each school.

#### ***Stage Three: Data Analysis & Goal Setting***

- Analyze data to understand students' and teachers' (and parents') perceptions of the school.
- Students and teachers each set School Improvement Goals based on evidence from the data of the school's greatest needs.

#### ***Stage Four: Action Planning & Project Development***

- Students and teachers develop action plans and projects, and make commitments to address their goals.
- Students and teachers implement short-term and long-term projects over the course of at least a year.

#### ***Stage Five: Implementation, Evaluation and Sustaining Leadership***

- Student leaders collect a second round of school climate data and compare pre-post results with their teachers to evaluate the school's progress.
- Celebrate and publicize successes and improvements in school climate and learning.
- Repeat the process, develop new action plans for continuous improvement,
- Develop infrastructure and supports to support and sustain school improvement efforts over time.

## Research Shows SafeMeasures™ Works!

Research from hundreds of client schools shows that the SafeMeasures™ Process really works. Qualitative and quantitative pre-post data, as well as academic achievement data collected through state testing, show that client schools have:

- ✓ Significantly improved school climate and safety  
*Unpublished research findings conducted by UMASS researchers for Main Street Academics, April 2010*
- ✓ Reduced bullying and harassment  
*National Dropout Prevention Center, Terry Cash, principal investigator (Dec. 2009) APEX II Final Performance Report for the New Hampshire Department of Education*
- ✓ Significantly reduced drop-out rates  
*National Dropout Prevention Center, Terry Cash, principal investigator (Dec. 2009) APEX II Final Performance Report for the New Hampshire Department of Education*
- ✓ Heightened civic engagement and empowerment of students  
*Preble, W., Langdon, S., Taylor, L., & Ashton, K. (2001). Maine civil rights team evaluation. Augusta, ME: Office of the Maine Attorney General and Maine Justice Assistance Council (co-published report).*
- ✓ Significantly improved academic achievement  
*Preble, W.K. & Newman, A. (2006) School Climate Improvement Means Higher Academic Performance In Sullivan County Tennessee Schools. Unpublished report.*

## Why Student Leadership for School Improvement?

### Students Offer a ‘Reality Check’ for Schools

The CSCL specializes in school climate improvement, made possible through youth leadership development. If you want to understand how safe, respectful and engaging schools really are, just ask the students. Then, ask the adults and compare their perceptions. We teach schools to empower diverse teams of students and adult leaders to work together to better understand their schools and to bring about powerful changes in school climate, safety, respect, and learning.

### Student Leadership Drives School Improvement

A recent evaluation of our work by Clemson University’s National Dropout Prevention Center showed that our student leadership teams were helping to “drive” school improvement forward in 10 NH high schools. In 36 schools in Tennessee, the superintendent said, “Things really started to happen when the students got involved.”

We train student leaders who document and teach adults what their schools are really like for ALL students. Their stories are compelling. The school-wide data they collect about school safety, climate and learning bring to light areas that require immediate attention and improvement. Student leaders work collaboratively with adult leaders to develop data-driven action plans and help adults implement powerful projects that result in safer, more respectful, more engaging, and more successful schools.