



# Making ESSA's Equity Promise Real: State Strategies to Close the Opportunity Gap

## *Building a Positive School Climate*

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### Abstract

This policy brief is part of a larger research report, *Making ESSA's Equity Promise Real: State Strategies to Close the Opportunity Gap*, that describes how states are using opportunities in ESSA to better support historically underserved students through the thoughtful selection of specific equity measures in their accountability and improvement systems. To this end, the full report suggests focusing attention on students furthest from opportunity by taking steps to

- reduce rates of student suspension;
- build a positive school climate;
- reduce rates of chronic absenteeism;
- implement an extended-year graduation rate; and
- expand access to a college- and career-ready curriculum.

This brief focuses on state efforts to **build a positive school climate**.

For the full report, go to <https://learningpolicyinstitute.org/product/essa-equity-promise>.

### Acknowledgments

This report benefited from the insights and expertise of two external reviewers: Robyn Brady Ince, Vice President, Education Policy and Advocacy, Education Youth Development Division, National Urban League; and Molly J. Mauer, Executive Vice President and Director, Partners for Each and Every Child.

This research was supported by a grant from the Ford Foundation. LPI's work in this area is also supported by the S. D. Bechtel, Jr. Foundation; the William & Flora Hewlett Foundation; and the Sandler Foundation.

### Introduction

The Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA), passed in December 2015, gives states the opportunity to create new approaches to school accountability and continuous improvement. These approaches, if informed by well-chosen indicators of school opportunity and performance, have the potential to create more inclusive and equitable learning environments for historically underserved students.

Along with measures of academic achievement (student performance on state assessments in English language arts and mathematics, which may include growth in proficiency), graduation rates, and English language proficiency, ESSA requires states to include at least one indicator of school quality or student success.

All indicators must provide valid, reliable, and comparable information within each state's accountability system. States then use school performance on these indicators to **identify** schools for either comprehensive support and improvement or targeted support and improvement. Districts with such schools can use data from statewide indicators to inform the needs assessments and school improvement plans required under ESSA. States can also select additional indicators to use as part of their **broader continuous school improvement efforts** across all schools, regardless of identification status.

Now that all states have received approval from the U.S. Department of Education for their plans for statewide accountability and improvement systems, a number of states are taking advantage of the opportunities provided by ESSA to measure the extent to which their students are supported and provided with equitable educational opportunities.

This brief specifies which states are making efforts to build positive school climates in their ESSA plans and describes how some states intend to measure and use information from this indicator to create more equitable and inclusive learning environments for all students.<sup>1</sup>

## Building a Positive School Climate

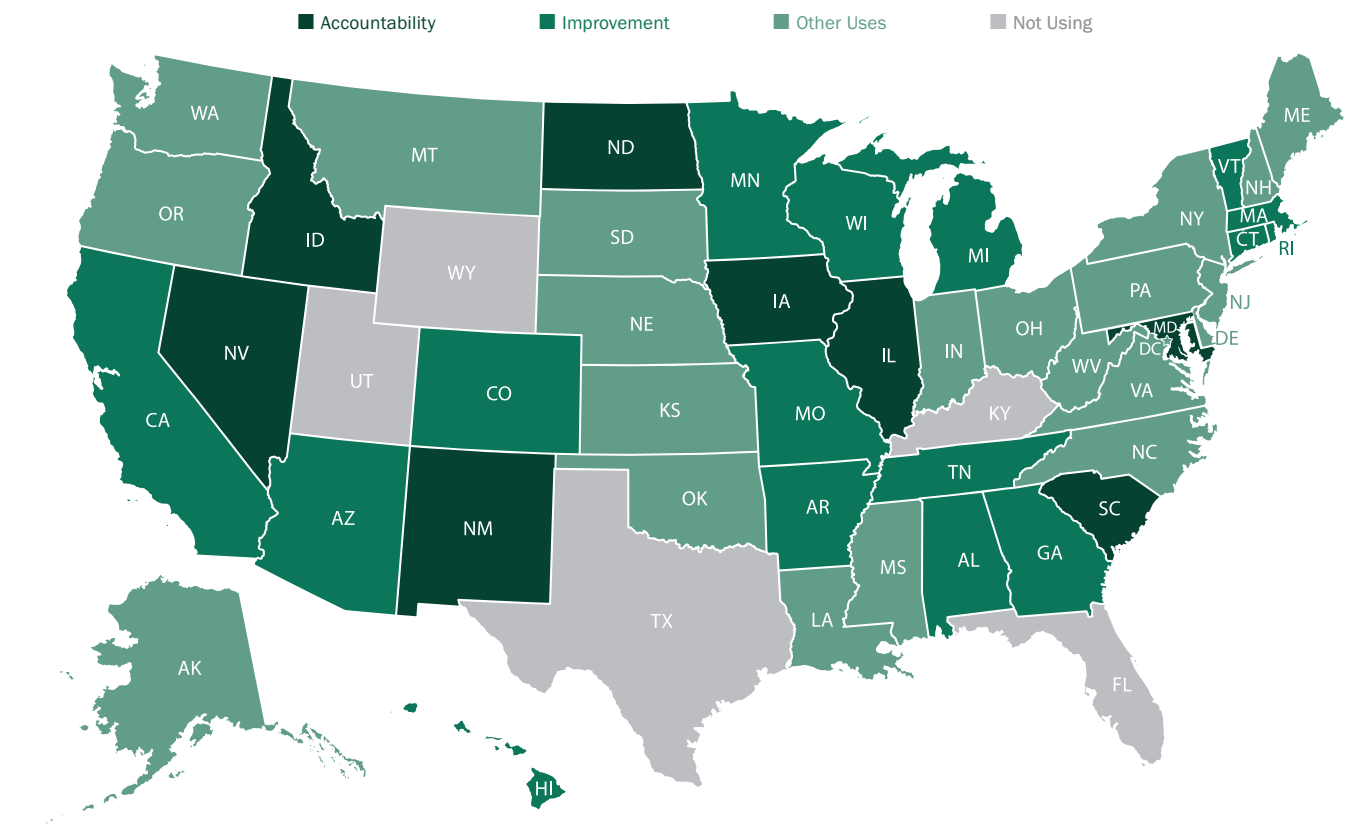
**School climate** is often thought of as “how a school feels”; that is, whether it feels safe and supportive for students, staff, and families. A positive school climate reflects a school’s “norms, goals, values, interpersonal relationships, teaching and learning practices, and organizational structures.”<sup>2</sup> Social-emotional learning (SEL) supports a positive school climate. Explicit teaching of social-emotional competencies allows children and adults to “acquire and effectively apply the knowledge, attitudes, and skills necessary to understand and manage emotions, set and achieve positive goals, feel and show empathy for others, establish and maintain positive relationships, and make responsible decisions.”<sup>3</sup> School climate and SEL are linked because, as students and school personnel refine their social and emotional competence, school climate improves, just as the existence of a positive school climate creates the atmosphere within which SEL can take place.<sup>4</sup>

A positive school climate can be measured in an accountability and improvement system through student surveys and on-site reviews of practice, such as School Quality Reviews, during which teams observe classrooms and the organization of the school as a whole and receive feedback from families and school leaders in order to provide action steps to better serve students. Surveys typically measure a school’s safety; relationships among students, staff, and families; the teaching and learning environment; and institutional factors, such as facility quality or resource availability.<sup>5</sup> Surveys may also measure the degree to which a school is supportive of students’ social and emotional development by, for example, helping them learn to resolve conflicts with peers. Disaggregation of survey results by subgroup is important because student experiences often vary significantly, even within a single school.<sup>6</sup>

Individual students’ social and emotional skills can also be measured for school-level improvement purposes through surveys, teacher observation tools such as rubrics, or performance assessments.<sup>7</sup> Such surveys can measure whether students feel—or their teachers perceive—they have learned to identify their own emotions and strengths (self-awareness); are able to persevere even when they feel frustrated (self-management); can feel empathy and learn from people with other opinions or experiences (social awareness); and are able to interact productively in interpersonal relationships, including resolving conflicts (relationship skills). However, researchers caution that data from these measures should not be used for high-stakes purposes, such as school identification, because student-level assessments could become distorted under high-stakes conditions, putting pressure on students or adults to report their self-perceptions or perceptions of others less honestly, and are better suited for improvement purposes.

Measuring school climate can shine a light on important school practices that are often overlooked and can send a signal from the state to districts and schools that creating a positive school environment in which students feel safe and connected is a priority. This attention may incentivize the development of positive school cultures through improved teaching strategies and schoolwide initiatives in which students are supported socially, emotionally, and academically. Analysis of disaggregated results may lead to intervention and support opportunities for the least engaged youth or subgroups of students disproportionately impacted. A focus on school climate can also encourage educators to create a more welcoming environment for effective family engagement.

**Figure 1**  
**States Incorporating a School Climate Indicator for School Identification or Improvement Purposes in Their Statewide Accountability Systems**



Eight states are measuring school climate in their accountability system by using student surveys (see Figure 1). Six of these states are also using data from these surveys to inform their school improvement efforts. Sixteen additional states describe strategies for improving school climate in schools identified for support and improvement or as part of a broader statewide effort. For example, six of these states<sup>8</sup> are providing technical assistance to schools that includes evidence-based strategies for improving school climate, and nine states<sup>9</sup> are supporting the diagnostic/self-assessment process at the school level to identify areas of improvement as they relate to school climate.

Although not specifically using school climate data for accountability or improvement purposes, 12 additional states describe efforts to make school climate data available. Six of these states will report information from student survey data. While the remaining six states do not provide details as to which measures of school climate will be reported, under ESSA all states are required to collect and report on rates of in-school and out-of-school suspensions; expulsions; school-related arrests; referrals to law enforcement; and incidences of school violence, including bullying and harassment. Therefore all states will have these school climate data available.

Finally, 11 states explicitly mention providing resources and support to schools to improve students' social and emotional learning. Five of these states are including addressing student social and emotional learning as a part of their overall school improvement support efforts.<sup>10</sup>

## Selected State Approaches: Iowa, Maryland, and Ohio

**Iowa** measures school climate through the Iowa Youth Survey: Conditions for Learning. The survey asks students about their engagement, views of school, and feelings of safety on campus. It is given to students biannually as part of a broader Iowa Safe and Supportive Schools measure that includes surveys of students, staff, and parents. Because indicators in the accountability plan must be able to be disaggregated by student subgroups, only the student responses from this set of surveys are included in the state's ESSA accountability plan. The Iowa Department of Education implements the student survey in collaboration with the Iowa Department of Public Health for grades 5 through 12. Iowa has a process and timeline to adapt the survey to apply to students in grades 3 and 4 with potential companion staff and parent/guardian surveys.<sup>11</sup>

**Maryland** is using school climate surveys of students and educators as an accountability indicator in all grades. The state is currently collaborating with [REL Mid-Atlantic](#) and Mathematica to develop the appropriate survey instrument. Both student and educator surveys will include items in the same four domains: relationships, safety, engagement, and environment. These domains include the following subtopics: cultural and linguistic competence, relationships, school participation, emotional safety, physical safety, bullying, substance abuse, emergency readiness, physical environment, instructional environment, physical health, mental health, and discipline.<sup>12</sup> To respond to the data provided by school climate and other indicators, the Maryland Department of Education will develop and implement a multitiered system of support that will include partnerships between schools and community members to further sustain conflict resolution programs, reduce and eliminate disproportionality in discipline, provide a Youth Mental Health First Aid curriculum for staff, and implement wraparound services.

The **Ohio** Department of Education is structuring a portion of the state's Title IV, Part A funds to pilot different school climate surveys including of students and possibly educators and/or parents as well. By helping schools implement the surveys, the state will also test each survey's feasibility for statewide use. Ohio fosters school climate improvement using the [Ohio School Climate Guidelines](#), which list key benchmarks, such as measuring student engagement, parental involvement, and community connection with the school. These guidelines also list suggested strategies schools and districts can use to improve schools' climate, such as encouraging teachers to greet students by name when they enter the classroom, make time for students to reflect on what they have learned, and maintain contact with parents.<sup>13</sup> Ohio uses the guidelines as a framework for supporting professional development and information dissemination at the district level. To address other aspects of school climate, Ohio publishes an anti-bullying guidance document and offers training and technical assistance to help schools monitor the broad impact of harassment, intimidation, and bullying.<sup>14</sup> The state also reports student-level school discipline data on report cards published on the Department of Education's website. Finally, the Ohio Department of Mental Health and Addiction Services works on three grant initiatives that specifically focus on the use of collaborative efforts between school staff and community partners to create safe and secure schools and promote behavioral and mental wellness among students.<sup>15</sup>

Ohio is also one of a significant number of states participating in the [Collaborating States Initiative](#), in which states partner with the Collaborative for Academic, Social, and Emotional Learning to develop a plan to meet the unique needs of their students and families and to identify resources and best practices. These resources can include restorative justice discipline strategies, strategies to improve cultural competence and promote culturally relevant curriculums, and trauma-informed education approaches.

## Policy Considerations for Implementation

States and districts can help schools improve their climate by:

- Leveraging school improvement funding or Title IV grants under ESSA to implement school climate surveys and improve school climate and SEL strategies. Local education agencies can partner with community-based organizations to create or build on existing interventions regarding youth development, parent engagement, and/or mental and behavioral health.<sup>16</sup>
- Identifying ways to acknowledge success and share best practices of schools that have improved school climate, including support for conferences and peer networks among schools to share strategies that work.
- Providing schools with resources and technical assistance as they seek to interpret school climate surveys and develop responses to what they find. Staff need to be trained in the analysis of the data they collect and the implementation of high-quality programs, professional development, and school organizational changes that support students' development based upon that analysis. State-level support may include technical assistance for program development, widely available professional development, and the provision of state and federal funding to support schools' efforts.<sup>17</sup>

### Resources for School Climate

#### School Climate Guide for District Policymakers and Education Leaders

(Center for Social and Emotional Education and the National School Boards Association)

This guide highlights districts that are using the National School Climate Standards and provides a framework state decision makers can follow to utilize school climate measures.<sup>18</sup>

#### School Climate Measurement and Analysis

(National School Climate Center)

This brief by the National School Climate Center provides practical advice for schools that are trying to implement measures of school climate and effectively use student responses to improve student achievement.<sup>19</sup>

#### Safe Space Kit

(Gay, Lesbian, and Straight Education Network)

This guide to support lesbian, gay, bisexual, and transgender (LGBT) students in schools provides steps for schools to build safe spaces as well as resources to help students become allies to LGBT students.

## Endnotes

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8. These states are Arizona, Arkansas, Hawaii, Massachusetts, Michigan, and Missouri.
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10. These states are Arkansas, Hawaii, Massachusetts, Michigan, and Rhode Island.
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15. Ohio Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA) Consolidated State Plan. Columbus, OH: Ohio Department of Education.
16. Gayl, C. (2017). *How state planning for the Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA) can promote student academic, social, and emotional learning: An examination of five key strategies*. Chicago, IL: The Collaborative for Academic, Social, and Emotional Learning.
17. Melnick, H., Cook-Harvey, C., & Darling-Hammond, L. (2017). *Encouraging social and emotional learning in the context of new accountability*. Palo Alto, CA: Learning Policy Institute.
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# School Climate Indicator Usage by State

The use of multiple measures in **school accountability and improvement systems** under the Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA) offers states the chance to gather and respond to information that is meaningfully connected to student opportunity and success. As states implement ESSA, using the information from these systems, policymakers should continue to engage with educators, parents, community-based organizations, and other education stakeholders to improve their efforts to ensure that students furthest from opportunity can graduate from high school fully prepared for college, career, and civic engagement.

## HOW STATES ARE USING THE INDICATOR:

**Accountability:** States using one or more measures of the indicator to identify schools for comprehensive support and improvement (CSI) or targeted support and improvement (TSI) in their accountability systems.

**Improvement:** States using one or more measures of the indicator to inform improvement efforts in identified schools or as part of a broader system of continuous improvement across schools.

**Other Uses:** Additional state efforts to measure or improve school performance on this indicator.

STATE	INDICATOR USE	DESCRIPTION OF USE
Alabama	Improvement	Alabama does not have an identified school climate indicator reported statewide. However, it uses “quality indicators,” one of which is school climate, to review how resources are allocated to schools identified for support and improvement, and whether adjustments in resource allocation need to be made. Although the state plan does not define what data the state will use to measure school climate, ESSA requires all states to collect and report on rates of in-school and out-of-school suspensions, expulsions, school-related arrests, referrals to law enforcement, and incidences of school violence, including bullying and harassment. Therefore, these data will be available to Alabama for this purpose.  ESSA State Plan PDF pg. 37
Alaska	Other Uses: Resources Available	ESSA requires all states to collect and report on rates of in-school and out-of-school suspensions, expulsions, school-related arrests, referrals to law enforcement, and incidences of school violence, including bullying and harassment. Alaska does not have an identified school climate indicator reported statewide. However, Alaska will help interested districts identify evidence-based programs intended to improve school climate as part of their school improvement planning process. This support includes making data from the “Youth Risk Behavior” survey available to schools that are interested.  ESSA State Plan PDF pg. 63
Arizona	Improvement	Arizona does not have an identified school climate indicator reported statewide. However, Arizona will provide technical assistance to districts that have a significant number or percentage of schools identified for support and improvement on how to improve school culture and climate. Although Arizona does not describe how school culture will be measured in its state plan, ESSA requires all states to collect and report on rates of in-school and out-of-school suspensions, expulsions, school-related arrests, referrals to law enforcement, and incidences of school violence, including bullying and harassment. Therefore, these data will be available to Arizona for this purpose.  ESSA State Plan PDF pp. 39–40

STATE	INDICATOR USE	DESCRIPTION OF USE
Arkansas	Improvement	<p>Arkansas does not have an identified school climate indicator reported statewide. However, the state requires districts to work with their schools that are identified for intervention and support to develop improvement plans that incorporate strategies to improve the climate and culture of those schools, including how to meet the academic, social, and emotional needs of students. In addition, Arkansas uses an “Educator Dashboard” as part of an early warning indicator system that includes academic and behavioral data, as well as climate data such as teacher and student attendance. Arkansas also will provide schools with opportunities to pilot measures for improving school climate in their continuous improvement cycles. ESSA requires all states to collect and report on rates of in-school and out-of-school suspensions, expulsions, school-related arrests, referrals to law enforcement, and incidences of school violence, including bullying and harassment. Therefore, these data will be available to Arkansas in these efforts.</p> <p>ESSA State Plan PDF pg. 21 and pg. 86</p>
California	Improvement	<p>California’s accountability system requires all schools and districts to measure school climate through locally selected student surveys at least once every 2 years and to incorporate evidence from these surveys into continuous improvement plans. For schools identified for improvement and support, California will provide more rigorous support and intervention through its continuous improvement system process. This process focuses on the development of positive school climates as one of its priorities, and California will target resources to support those efforts through its Local Control Funding Formula. In addition to local survey data, ESSA requires all states to collect and report on rates of in-school and out-of-school suspensions, expulsions, school-related arrests, referrals to law enforcement, and incidences of school violence, including bullying and harassment. Therefore, those data will be available to California in its efforts.</p> <p>ESSA State Plan PDF pg. 84</p>
Colorado	Improvement	<p>Colorado does not have an identified school climate indicator reported statewide. However, for schools identified for support and improvement, Colorado uses data from a school culture diagnostic that includes a self-assessment and external data to identify school improvement needs. Colorado’s plan does not indicate what data will be used; however, ESSA requires all states to collect and report on rates of in-school and out-of-school suspensions, expulsions, school-related arrests, referrals to law enforcement, and incidences of school violence, including bullying and harassment. Therefore, these data will be available to Colorado for this purpose. Colorado will consider using measures of climate and/or social-emotional learning as future accountability indicators.</p> <p>ESSA State Plan PDF pp. 69–70 and pg. 92</p>
Connecticut	Improvement	<p>For schools identified for support and improvement, Connecticut will measure school culture and climate to inform the school’s improvement framework in addition to providing support through the state-level tiered intervention model. Connecticut’s plan does not indicate what data will be used; however, ESSA requires all states to collect and report on rates of in-school and out-of-school suspensions, expulsions, school-related arrests, referrals to law enforcement, and incidences of school violence, including bullying and harassment. Therefore, these data will be available to Connecticut for this purpose.</p> <p>ESSA State Plan PDF pg. 53</p>
Delaware	Other Uses: Data Reported	<p>ESSA requires all states to collect and report on rates of in-school and out-of-school suspensions, expulsions, school-related arrests, referrals to law enforcement, and incidences of school violence, including bullying and harassment. Delaware does not have an identified school climate indicator reported statewide. However, Delaware publicly reports results from an engagement survey that is administered to students, parents, and teachers.</p> <p>ESSA State Plan PDF pg. 59</p>



STATE	INDICATOR USE	DESCRIPTION OF USE
Florida	Not Using	ESSA requires all states to collect and report on rates of in-school and out-of-school suspensions, expulsions, school-related arrests, referrals to law enforcement, and incidences of school violence, including bullying and harassment. Florida does not have an identified school climate indicator reported statewide.
Georgia	Improvement	<p>For the schools identified for support and improvement, Georgia will use information from the their School Climate Star Rating, which serves as a school climate diagnostic tool, to determine their plans for improvement. All schools in Georgia receive this rating and can use the information, regardless of identification status, to support continuous improvement. Although the state plan does not describe what data the diagnostic tool will assess, ESSA requires all states to collect and report on rates of in-school and out-of-school suspensions, expulsions, school-related arrests, referrals to law enforcement, and incidences of school violence, including bullying and harassment. Therefore, these data will be available to Georgia for this purpose.</p> <p>ESSA State Plan PDF pp. 30–31</p>
Hawaii	Improvement	<p>ESSA requires all states to collect and report on rates of in-school and out-of-school suspensions, expulsions, school-related arrests, referrals to law enforcement, and incidences of school violence, including bullying and harassment. For the schools identified for support and improvement, Hawaii will provide training to staff on how to implement restorative justice and social-emotional learning supports as a component of a six-part strategic approach.</p> <p>ESSA State Plan PDF pg. 63</p>
Idaho	Accountability	<p>ESSA requires all states to collect and report on rates of in-school and out-of-school suspensions, expulsions, school-related arrests, referrals to law enforcement, and incidences of school violence, including bullying and harassment. As part of its system to identify schools for support and improvement, Idaho will use data from a satisfaction and engagement survey administered to students in grades 3–8.</p> <p>ESSA State Plan PDF pg. 23</p>
Illinois	Accountability	<p>ESSA requires all states to collect and report on rates of in-school and out-of-school suspensions, expulsions, school-related arrests, referrals to law enforcement, and incidences of school violence, including bullying and harassment. As part of its system to identify schools for support and improvement, Illinois will use the grades 6–12 student response data from the 5 Essentials survey administered to parents, teachers, and administrators in grades 6–12. All schools in Illinois can use the information, regardless of identification status, to support continuous improvement.</p> <p>ESSA State Plan PDF pp. 56–57</p>
Indiana	Other Uses: Considering for Accountability and Improvement Purposes	<p>ESSA requires all states to collect and report on rates of in-school and out-of-school suspensions, expulsions, school-related arrests, referrals to law enforcement, and incidences of school violence, including bullying and harassment. Indiana plans to pilot a school climate survey for possible future use in the accountability and improvement system.</p> <p>ESSA State Plan PDF pg. 46</p>
Iowa	Accountability	<p>ESSA requires all states to collect and report on rates of in-school and out-of-school suspensions, expulsions, school-related arrests, referrals to law enforcement, and incidences of school violence, including bullying and harassment. As part of its system to identify schools for support and improvement, Iowa will use grades 5–12 student data from its Conditions for Learning survey. The state will include additional survey data from students in grades 3 and 4 in its accountability system starting in the 2019–20 school year.</p> <p>ESSA State Plan PDF pp. 62–63</p>

STATE	INDICATOR USE	DESCRIPTION OF USE
<b>Kansas</b>	Other Uses: Resources Available	ESSA requires all states to collect and report on rates of in-school and out-of-school suspensions, expulsions, school-related arrests, referrals to law enforcement, and incidences of school violence, including bullying and harassment. Kansas, however, does not have an identified school climate indicator reported statewide. In addition, as part of a statewide effort to provide a multitiered system of supports to districts and schools, Kansas will work directly with districts to determine how to implement practices at the school level that are designed to improve social-emotional character development.  ESSA State Plan PDF pg. 61
<b>Kentucky</b>	Not Using	ESSA requires all states to collect and report on rates of in-school and out-of-school suspensions, expulsions, school-related arrests, referrals to law enforcement, and incidences of school violence, including bullying and harassment. Kentucky, however, does not have an identified school climate indicator reported statewide.
<b>Louisiana</b>	Other Uses: Data Reported and Resources Available	ESSA requires all states to collect and report on rates of in-school and out-of-school suspensions, expulsions, school-related arrests, referrals to law enforcement, and incidences of school violence, including bullying and harassment. Louisiana, however, does not have an identified school climate indicator reported statewide. For interested school staff, the state makes available training on how to develop positive school climates by focusing on building students' social and emotional and academic success. School staff can use the required reported data to support these efforts.  ESSA State Plan PDF pg. 92 and pg. 96
<b>Maine</b>	Other Uses: Resources Available and Considering for Accountability and Improvement Purposes	ESSA requires all states to collect and report on rates of in-school and out-of-school suspensions, expulsions, school-related arrests, referrals to law enforcement, and incidences of school violence, including bullying and harassment. Maine, however, does not have an identified school climate indicator reported statewide. In addition, although not used to identify schools for intervention and support, or as part of the school improvement process for identified schools, Maine makes available to schools school climate diagnostic surveys that are administered to students, teachers, and school staff to assess classroom and school climate and professional culture. The state is considering expanding the use of student perception surveys and other tools to measure classroom and school climates and including a social and emotional measure in its accountability and improvement system in the future.  ESSA State Plan PDF pg. 37 and pg. 60
<b>Maryland</b>	Accountability	ESSA requires all states to collect and report on rates of in-school and out-of-school suspensions, expulsions, school-related arrests, referrals to law enforcement, and incidences of school violence, including bullying and harassment. To identify schools for support and improvement, Maryland uses data from a school climate survey that is administered to students and educators in all grades. These data are available to all schools, regardless of identification status, to support a system of continuous improvement.  ESSA State Plan PDF pg. 28–29
<b>Massachusetts</b>	Improvement	ESSA requires all states to collect and report on rates of in-school and out-of-school suspensions, expulsions, school-related arrests, referrals to law enforcement, and incidences of school violence, including bullying and harassment. In schools identified for support and improvement, Massachusetts will support these schools in implementing and expanding the use of evidence-based social, emotional, and behavioral practices and supports. To support continuous improvement across all schools in improving school climate, Massachusetts anticipates reporting school climate survey results in school and district report cards.  ESSA State Plan PDF pg. 25 and pg. 63

STATE	INDICATOR USE	DESCRIPTION OF USE
Michigan	Improvement	<p>ESSA requires all states to collect and report on rates of in-school and out-of-school suspensions, expulsions, school-related arrests, referrals to law enforcement, and incidences of school violence, including bullying and harassment. Although Michigan is not using measures of school climate to identify schools for support and improvement, the state will assess school culture and climate as part of a school's comprehensive needs assessment more broadly. It is redeveloping the comprehensive needs assessment process using a multitiered system of support approach to focus on the whole child, which includes supporting schools in doing a data-based review of the conditions that relate to student learning, including school safety, discipline, bullying and/or harassment, and student health (inclusive of physical, mental, behavioral, and social-emotional health). Based on the needs identified through this analysis, Michigan districts will be supported with a series of current evidence-based practices, including positive behavior intervention supports, implementation of Michigan's anti-bullying policy and practices, school health and safety programs, family and community engagement, and staff wellness.</p> <p>ESSA State Plan PDF pp. 52–53</p>
Minnesota	Improvement	<p>In schools identified for support and improvement, Minnesota will use school climate data as part of the school's comprehensive needs assessments. Although the state plan does not identify which data will be used, ESSA requires all states to collect and report on rates of in-school and out-of-school suspensions, expulsions, school-related arrests, referrals to law enforcement, and incidences of school violence, including bullying and harassment. Therefore, these data will be available to Minnesota for this purpose.</p> <p>ESSA State Plan PDF pg. 60</p>
Mississippi	Other Uses: Data Reported and Resources Available	<p>ESSA requires all states to collect and report on rates of in-school and out-of-school suspensions, expulsions, school-related arrests, referrals to law enforcement, and incidences of school violence, including bullying and harassment. Mississippi, however, does not have an identified school climate indicator reported statewide. In addition, as part of the state's early warning system, schools may receive technical assistance on how to use school climate data to determine additional supports, and these data required under ESSA may be used to support those efforts.</p> <p>ESSA State Plan PDF pg. 93</p>
Missouri	Improvement	<p>For districts serving a significant number of schools identified for support and improvement, Missouri will review school climate and culture data as part of the technical assistance it provides to support improvement. Although the plan does not specify which measures will be used, ESSA requires all states to collect and report on rates of in-school and out-of-school suspensions, expulsions, school-related arrests, referrals to law enforcement, and incidences of school violence, including bullying and harassment. Therefore, these data will be available to Missouri for this purpose.</p> <p>ESSA State Plan PDF pg. 37</p>
Montana	Other Uses: Resources Available and Considering for Accountability and Improvement Purposes	<p>ESSA requires all states to collect and report on rates of in-school and out-of-school suspensions, expulsions, school-related arrests, referrals to law enforcement, and incidences of school violence, including bullying and harassment. While Montana does not have an identified school climate indicator reported statewide, it is developing a school survey of program quality indicators for improving school climate, reducing behavior issues, and increasing engagement to identify schools for support and improvement. Montana will submit this survey to the U.S. Department of Education for approval as meeting ESSA's requirements for accountability indicators.</p> <p>ESSA State Plan PDF pp. 25–26</p>

STATE	INDICATOR USE	DESCRIPTION OF USE
Nebraska	Other Uses: Data Reported	Although not used to identify schools for intervention, or to support improvement efforts in those schools, Nebraska will use “learning climate data” as part of a continuous school improvement process across all schools. The state plan does not define what data it will use to measure school climate or the process for how it will use it; however, ESSA requires all states to collect and report on rates of in-school and out-of-school suspensions, expulsions, school-related arrests, referrals to law enforcement, and incidences of school violence, including bullying and harassment. Therefore, Nebraska will have this school climate data available.  ESSA State Plan PDF pg. 61
Nevada	Accountability	ESSA requires all states to collect and report on rates of in-school and out-of-school suspensions, expulsions, school-related arrests, referrals to law enforcement, and incidences of school violence, including bullying and harassment. In their process to identify schools for support and improvement, Nevada will recognize schools that have a 75% or above participation rate in the state’s school climate survey. Nevada does not describe how it will use data from this survey to inform school improvement; however, these data are available to participating schools for this purpose.  ESSA State Plan PDF pg. 51
New Hampshire	Other Uses: Resources Available	ESSA requires all states to collect and report on rates of in-school and out-of-school suspensions, expulsions, school-related arrests, referrals to law enforcement, and incidences of school violence, including bullying and harassment. Therefore, these data will be available to New Hampshire to support these efforts. While New Hampshire does not have an identified school climate indicator reported statewide, it offers interested districts a tutorial on policies and procedures that promote a positive school climate.  ESSA State Plan PDF pg. 68
New Jersey	Other Uses: Data Reported and Resources Available	New Jersey does not have an identified school climate indicator reported statewide. However, ESSA requires all states to collect and report on rates of in-school and out-of-school suspensions, expulsions, school-related arrests, referrals to law enforcement, and incidences of school violence, including bullying and harassment. Therefore, these data will be available to New Jersey for this purpose. In addition, the state provides support to interested districts on how to use federal funds to promote a positive school climate and social-emotional learning. New Jersey is considering whether to report any results from school climate surveys in the future.  ESSA State Plan PDF pp. 126–27 and pg. 272
New Mexico	Accountability	ESSA requires all states to collect and report on rates of in-school and out-of-school suspensions, expulsions, school-related arrests, referrals to law enforcement, and incidences of school violence, including bullying and harassment. To identify schools for support and improvement, New Mexico uses student response data from an Opportunity to Learn survey that includes measures of a positive school climate and is administered to students in grades k–11 and their parents.  ESSA State Plan PDF pg. 79 and pg. 86
New York	Other Uses: Data Reported and Considering for Accountability and Improvement Purposes	ESSA requires all states to collect and report on rates of in-school and out-of-school suspensions, expulsions, school-related arrests, referrals to law enforcement, and incidences of school violence, including bullying and harassment. New York does not have an identified school climate indicator reported statewide, but it is considering developing a school climate survey to identify schools for support and intervention or to inform the diagnostic process for identified schools. New York also encourages all schools to administer U.S. Department of Education school climate surveys to students, parents, and staff.  ESSA State Plan PDF pp. 117–19

STATE	INDICATOR USE	DESCRIPTION OF USE
North Carolina	Other Uses: Considering for Accountability and Improvement Purposes	ESSA requires all states to collect and report on rates of in-school and out-of-school suspensions, expulsions, school-related arrests, referrals to law enforcement, and incidences of school violence, including bullying and harassment. North Carolina does not have an identified school climate indicator reported statewide, but it is considering developing a school climate indicator for accountability and improvement purposes. Although not used to identify schools for intervention and support or as part of the school improvement process for identified schools, North Carolina includes supporting student social and emotional needs in its multitiered system of support that is available to interested schools.  ESSA State Plan PDF pg. 50 and pg. 117
North Dakota	Accountability	ESSA requires all states to collect and report on rates of in-school and out-of-school suspensions, expulsions, school-related arrests, referrals to law enforcement, and incidences of school violence, including bullying and harassment. To identify schools for support and improvement, North Dakota uses data from a school climate and engagement survey that is administered to students in all grades. These data are available to all schools and can be used to support continuous improvement efforts related to school climate across these schools.  ESSA State Plan PDF pp. 40–41
Ohio	Other Uses: Data Reported, Resources Available, and Considering for Accountability and Improvement Purposes	ESSA requires all states to collect and report on rates of in-school and out-of-school suspensions, expulsions, school-related arrests, referrals to law enforcement, and incidences of school violence, including bullying and harassment. Although not used to identify schools for intervention and support or as part of the school improvement process for identified schools, Ohio makes school climate guidelines available for interested schools and will pilot school climate surveys and encourage their use for school improvement. Ohio also is exploring using school climate surveys statewide as an additional accountability and improvement indicator.  ESSA State Plan PDF pp. 40–41, and pp. 61–62
Oklahoma	Other Uses: Data Reported and Resources Available	ESSA requires all states to collect and report on rates of in-school and out-of-school suspensions, expulsions, school-related arrests, referrals to law enforcement, and incidences of school violence, including bullying and harassment. Oklahoma, however, does not have an identified school climate indicator reported statewide. In addition, although not used to identify schools for intervention and support, or as part of the school improvement process for identified schools, Oklahoma provides schools the option to survey students, staff, and parents using a “prevention needs assessment,” which includes measures of school culture and climate.  ESSA State Plan PDF pg. 117–118
Oregon	Other Uses: Data Reported and Resources Available	ESSA requires all states to collect and report on rates of in-school and out-of-school suspensions, expulsions, school-related arrests, referrals to law enforcement, and incidences of school violence, including bullying and harassment. Oregon, however, does not have an identified school climate indicator reported statewide, but it does report on the rate and disproportionate use of exclusionary discipline and rate of parent and family engagement. Oregon will explore additional measures of social and emotional learning and school climate for interested schools. In addition, the state developed social-emotional standards for early educators and provides social-emotional learning resources, such as presentation materials, student handouts, and facilitator guides for all grade levels in interested schools.  ESSA State Plan PDF pg. 108–09
Pennsylvania	Other Uses: Resources Available	ESSA requires all states to collect and report on rates of in-school and out-of-school suspensions, expulsions, school-related arrests, referrals to law enforcement, and incidences of school violence, including bullying and harassment. Pennsylvania does not have an identified school climate indicator reported statewide, but for interested districts, the state provides a customizable school climate survey.  ESSA State Plan PDF pg. 123

STATE	INDICATOR USE	DESCRIPTION OF USE
Rhode Island	Improvement	ESSA requires all states to collect and report on rates of in-school and out-of-school suspensions, expulsions, school-related arrests, referrals to law enforcement, and incidences of school violence, including bullying and harassment. Although not used to identify schools for intervention and support, Rhode Island supports the use of statewide data to create a community of practice around improving school climate. Rhode Island's social-emotional learning initiative supports a community of practice of nearly 300 professionals committed to improving conditions in schools for the emergence of social-emotional learning, sharing best practices, and sharing resources to improve school climate. Rhode Island developed a number of data opportunities for all schools to track improvements in school climate through statewide data repositories.  ESSA State Plan PDF pg. 63
South Carolina	Accountability	ESSA requires all states to collect and report on rates of in-school and out-of-school suspensions, expulsions, school-related arrests, referrals to law enforcement, and incidences of school violence, including bullying and harassment. To identify schools for support and improvement, South Carolina uses a student engagement survey to measure school climate for students in grades 3–12. In addition, South Carolina has established a task force to develop and identify restorative justice practices that can be used to ensure a safe school climate.  ESSA State Plan PDF pg. 66 and pg. 88
South Dakota	Other Uses: Resources Available	ESSA requires all states to collect and report on rates of in-school and out-of-school suspensions, expulsions, school-related arrests, referrals to law enforcement, and incidences of school violence, including bullying and harassment. South Dakota does not define school climate or have an identified school climate indicator reported statewide, but it will prioritize funding to support identified schools that need training on positive behavioral interventions and supports and school climate interventions. However, these data will be available to South Dakota for this purpose.  ESSA State Plan PDF pg. 43
Tennessee	Improvement	ESSA requires all states to collect and report on rates of in-school and out-of-school suspensions, expulsions, school-related arrests, referrals to law enforcement, and incidences of school violence, including bullying and harassment. Although Tennessee is not using a school climate measure to identify schools for support and improvement, it conducts a needs assessment for all schools that includes school climate data as a part of the state's overall school improvement process. Tennessee also offers school climate surveys to all schools that can be administered to students, parents, and administrators.  ESSA State Plan PDF pp. 162–63
Texas	Not Using	ESSA requires all states to collect and report on rates of in-school and out-of-school suspensions, expulsions, school-related arrests, referrals to law enforcement, and incidences of school violence, including bullying and harassment. Texas, however, does not have an identified school climate indicator reported statewide.
Utah	Not Using	ESSA requires all states to collect and report on rates of in-school and out-of-school suspensions, expulsions, school-related arrests, referrals to law enforcement, and incidences of school violence, including bullying and harassment. Utah, however, does not have an identified school climate indicator reported statewide.
Vermont	Improvement	ESSA requires all states to collect and report on rates of in-school and out-of-school suspensions, expulsions, school-related arrests, referrals to law enforcement, and incidences of school violence, including bullying and harassment. Although Vermont is not using a school climate measure to identify schools for support and improvement, it does use school climate data in its Safe and Healthy Schools measure to support a framework of continuous improvement in performance on this measure. These data will be available to Vermont for this purpose.  ESSA State Plan PDF pp. 85–86

STATE	INDICATOR USE	DESCRIPTION OF USE
Virginia	Other Uses: Data Reported and Resources Available	ESSA requires all states to collect and report on rates of in-school and out-of-school suspensions, expulsions, school-related arrests, referrals to law enforcement, and incidences of school violence, including bullying and harassment. Virginia, however, does not have an identified school climate indicator reported statewide. It has identified evidence-based, systemwide practices to address school climate as part of its tiered system of supports that it provides to all schools.  ESSA State Plan PDF pg. 38
Washington	Other Uses: Data Reported and Considering for Accountability and Improvement Purposes	ESSA requires all states to collect and report on rates of in-school and out-of-school suspensions, expulsions, school-related arrests, referrals to law enforcement, and incidences of school violence, including bullying and harassment. Washington does not have an identified school climate indicator reported statewide, but it will consider using a school climate and engagement survey for possible future use in its accountability and improvement system.  ESSA State Plan PDF pg. 39
Washington, DC	Other Uses: Considering for Accountability or Improvement	ESSA requires all states and the District of Columbia (DC) to collect and report on rates of in-school and out-of-school suspensions, expulsions, school-related arrests, referrals to law enforcement, and incidences of school violence, including bullying and harassment. DC does not have an identified school climate indicator reported districtwide. However, it plans to pilot a school climate survey for possible future use in the accountability and improvement system. The plan does not state whether the survey will be administered to students, teachers, or parents.  ESSA State Plan PDF pp. 24–25
West Virginia	Other Uses: Data Reported and Resources Available	ESSA requires all states to collect and report on rates of in-school and out-of-school suspensions, expulsions, school-related arrests, referrals to law enforcement, and incidences of school violence, including bullying and harassment. West Virginia does not have an identified school climate indicator reported statewide, but it provides training and technical assistance to districts to implement evidence-based models for developing positive school climates. West Virginia also offers all interested schools a set of school climate surveys that can be administered to students, staff, and teachers.  ESSA State Plan PDF pg. 52
Wisconsin	Improvement	ESSA requires all states to collect and report on rates of in-school and out-of-school suspensions, expulsions, school-related arrests, referrals to law enforcement, and incidences of school violence, including bullying and harassment. In schools identified for support and improvement, Wisconsin requires those schools to engage families and the community in focused efforts to improve school climate and culture as a part of its school improvement efforts, but its state plan does not describe what those required efforts are. These data will be available to Wisconsin for this purpose.  ESSA State Plan PDF pg. 50
Wyoming	Not Using	ESSA requires all states to collect and report on rates of in-school and out-of-school suspensions, expulsions, school-related arrests, referrals to law enforcement, and incidences of school violence, including bullying and harassment. Wyoming, however, does not have an identified school climate indicator reported statewide.