

STUDENT CLIMATE AND MINDSET SURVEY ANALYSIS

Prepared for Kenai Peninsula Borough School District

April 2019



In the following report, Hanover Research analyzes results from a school climate survey to identify elements that promote a healthy school climate, identify areas of development, and track progress on an index over time.

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

INTRODUCTION

This report presents the results of a survey administered by Hanover Research (Hanover) on behalf of Kenai Peninsula Borough School District (KPBSD). Hanover administered the survey to students in Grades 3-12 throughout the district. The survey seeks to create an index for Grades 6-12 students measuring the district's student climate, culture, and mindset in specific topic areas by grouping batteries of related items together in a scale. These scales/topic areas are:

- Scale 1: Community and Connectedness
- Scale 2: School Climate
- Scale 3: Social-Emotional Learning
- Scale 4: Student Mindset
- Scale 5: Instructional Depth (Grades 6-12 only)

METHODOLOGY

Within the report and data supplement, Hanover segments data by Grade 3-5 students and Grade 6-12 students. Data obtained from the 2018 survey are presented in conjunction with the current 2019 data for grades 6-12. The data supplement includes additional segmentations by specific grade level, school, and year. Hanover uses statistical tests at the 95 percent confidence level to compare results between each segmentation.

For Grades 6-12 students, Hanover uses the mean score for individual items to analyze results. Additionally, Hanover presents the percentage of positive responses ('Top 3s') for individual items alongside mean scores within figures. Sample sizes may vary between mean scores and individual responses as mean scores were only calculated for respondents who answered all items within a scale battery.

SURVEY SAMPLE

The current analysis (2019) includes responses from 4,229 students (Grade 3-5 = 1,506 and Grade 6-12 = 2,723; Figure ES.1). Distributions from last year’s survey are also displayed.

Figure ES.1: Grade Distribution

GRADE	NUMBER OF RESPONDENTS 2018	NUMBER OF RESPONDENTS 2019
Grade 3	454	496
Grade 4	479	514
Grade 5	454	496
Grade 6	439	486
Grade 7	388	483
Grade 8	398	422
Grade 9	346	424
Grade 10	270	345
Grade 11	264	338
Grade 12	188	225
Total	3,680	4,229

SURVEY SCALES

Items in each scale use a set of Likert response options to measure students’ opinions or how often they engage in certain practices. Grade 3-5 questions use 3-point response scales while Grade 6-12 questions use a 7-point response scale (Figure ES.2 and ES.3). For Grade 6-12 students, each response option has a numeric value that Hanover uses to calculate the mean score for items.

Figure ES.2: Grade 3-5 Survey Scales and Response Options

AGREEMENT	CONFIDENCE
Scales 1, 2, and 4	Scale 3
1 = No, not at all	1 = No, I cannot do this easily.
2 = A little bit	2 = I have some confidence with this.
3 = Yes, very much	3 = Yes, I can do this easily.

Figure ES.3: Grade 6-12 Survey Scales and Response Options¹

AGREEMENT	CONFIDENCE	FREQUENCY
Scales 1, 2, and 4	Scale 3	Scale 5
1 = Strongly Disagree	1 = Very Unconfident	1 = Never
2 = Disagree	2 = Unconfident	2 = 1-2 Times
3 = Somewhat Disagree	3 = Somewhat Unconfident	3 = 3-4 Times
4 = Neither Disagree nor Agree	4 = Neither Confident nor Unconfident	4 = 5-6 Times
5 = Somewhat Agree	5 = Somewhat Confident	5 = 7-8 Times
6 = Agree	6 = Confident	6 = 9-10 Times
7 = Strongly Agree	7 = Very Confident	7 = More than 10 Times

¹ Select items in Scale 4 use an inverted scale (1 = Strongly Agree – 7 = Strongly Disagree) because they assume negative outcomes. All other survey items assume positive outcomes.

RECOMMENDATIONS

Based on survey results, Hanover recommends that Kenai Peninsula Borough School District should:

- **Utilize strategies and programs to help students obtain a more positive mindset.** Students report stagnant or higher agreement with statements such as “My intelligence is something that I can’t change very much” (Figure 2.5). It is important for students to understand that intelligence is malleable and that expertise and mastery of a subject takes practice. An example strategy to create a more positive mindset for students is to encourage mistakes and to help students understand that making mistakes is part of becoming an expert in any subject.
- **Focus on strategies to make learning fun for students.** A statistically significant drop (from 81% to 78%) from 2018 to 2019 was found in students reporting that they think school is fun (Figure 2.3). Strategies to make learning fun for students can include hands-on experiments, outings, student-led discussions, or making an assignment a game.
- **Help students to feel more confident in their self-regulatory abilities.** Students indicate that they are more confident in their ability to respect and be civil with others. However, they feel least confident when it comes to their own abilities to remain calm under stress or clearly communicate their feelings (Figure 2.4). Informing students about strategies to remain calm, such as one-minute breathing exercises for example, can help students’ confidence in the face of future stressful events.

KEY FINDINGS

- **Results from the 2019 student survey are largely similar to the 2018 results.** Though the overall scale scores decreased slightly in 2019, only a handful of items display statistically significant differences.
- **Students indicate that they care about their community and are encouraged to do their best.** Mirroring results obtained from 2018, Grade 6-12 students report that they care about their community (85%; down one point from 2018) and that they are encouraged to do their best (81%; down one point from 2018). Compared to 2018, a significant decrease in grade 6-12 students reporting that they have at least one teacher who makes them excited about the future (78% vs. 81%). However, a significant increase for students reporting that their principal frequently asks students about their ideas was found between 2018 and 2019 (44% vs. 47%, respectively), yet this is still the lowest scoring item in the Community and Connectedness Scale (Figure 2.3).
- **Students feel similarly safe and welcome in 2019 as they did in 2018 but fewer report having fun at school and attempting to stop bullying.** Nearly three quarters of all Grade 6-12 students report three things: their school is welcoming to students

and their families, adults at their school treat students with respect, and that they feel safe at their school (Figure 2.4). Students report, however, that there is a decrease from 2018 to 2019 in having fun at school (64% vs. 61%, respectively) and that other students try to stop students from being picked on (55% vs. 50%, respectively).

- **Students note more confidence in their ability to get along with others but have less confidence in their self-regulatory abilities.** Students in Grade 6-12 have scores on the Social-Emotional Learning Scale that mirror results obtained from the 2018 survey. If a scale item changed, it changed by only one point (either increasing or decreasing). Regardless, students note that they have the most confidence in their abilities to respect the opinions of others (82%), compliment other's accomplishments (82%), and get along with students different than themselves (81%). The social-emotional abilities that students report the least confidence in is their ability to clearly describe their feelings (51%) and remain calm under stress (62%; Figure 2.5).
- **Overall student mindset scores decreased slightly from 2018 to 2019 (5.52 to 5.42).** For all but two items on the Student Mindset Scale, students report lower scores, some by non-significant margins and others by significant margins. For example, in 2018 81% of students report that they came to class prepared while 77% report coming to class prepared in 2019. Additionally, students' beliefs in malleable intelligence (e.g., "If I am not naturally smart in a subject, I will never do well in it") significantly increased from 2018 to 2019 (63% disagreement vs. 61% disagreement). In regard to increases, 93% of high school seniors are confident that they will graduate in 2019, while only 90% were confident in 2018 (Figure 2.6).

SECTION I: GRADES 3-5

This section presents analyses related to the district results for Grades 3-5 students. It includes individual item scores in each category.

INDIVIDUAL ITEM SCORES

Figure 1.1: Overall Community and Connectedness Items (1-3 Agreement Scale)

ITEM	NO, NOT AT ALL	A LITTLE BIT	YES, VERY MUCH
I care about my community.	1%	11%	88%
My teachers care about my health and well-being.	2%	12%	86%
I care about my school.	2%	16%	82%
At this school, students are encouraged to do their very best.	2%	20%	79%
I have at least one teacher who makes me excited about the future.	8%	19%	73%
I think it is important to participate in community service.	4%	28%	68%
I am actively involved in clubs, athletics, and school activities.	15%	40%	45%
I believe that I can personally make a difference in my community.	11%	44%	45%
It is easy to talk to adults outside of school about things that are bothering me.	18%	42%	40%
Students in this school help each other, even if they are not friends.	7%	54%	39%
It is easy to talk to adults at this school about things that are bothering me.	17%	46%	37%
The principal frequently asks students about their ideas.	18%	54%	28%

n=1,470-1,480

Figure 1.2: Overall School Climate (1-3 Agreement Scale)

ITEM	NO, NOT AT ALL	A LITTLE BIT	YES, VERY MUCH
The school is a welcoming place for students and families like mine.	2%	14%	83%
Adults at my school treat students with respect.	2%	18%	80%
My teachers are fair.	3%	24%	73%
I feel safe at school.	4%	25%	71%
I have fun at school.	5%	28%	67%
When students break rules, they are treated and disciplined fairly.	10%	36%	54%
When students see another student being picked on, they try to stop it.	8%	47%	45%
Students at my school treat me with respect.	6%	51%	43%

n=1,468-1,477

Figure 1.3: Overall Social-Emotional Learning Items (1-3 Confidence Scale)

How confident are you in your ability to...

ITEM	No, I CANNOT DO THIS EASILY.	I HAVE SOME CONFIDENCE WITH THIS.	YES, I CAN DO THIS EASILY
Respect other people's opinions, even if they are different from yours.	3%	25%	72%
Get along with students that are different than you.	4%	29%	67%
Recognize and compliment others' accomplishments.	4%	29%	67%
Work in a team with other students.	7%	28%	65%
Stand up for myself without putting other people down.	8%	30%	61%
Make ethical and constructive choices.	4%	39%	57%
Disagree without starting a fight or argument.	10%	36%	54%
Think about what may happen before making a decision.	8%	44%	48%
Remain calm even when under stress	15%	41%	44%
Clearly describe your feelings.	22%	45%	32%

n=1,467-1,483

Figure 1.4: Overall Student Mindset Items (1-3 Agreement Scale)

ITEM	No, NOT AT ALL	A LITTLE BIT	YES, VERY MUCH
I know what I am good at.	3%	17%	80%
I have a great future ahead of me.	4%	24%	73%
I know what is hard for me to do.	4%	25%	71%
I can learn how to solve tough problems.	3%	31%	66%
I come to class prepared.	5%	30%	65%
I can finish tasks, even if they are tough.	3%	37%	60%
I believe I can excel in all my classes.	4%	36%	60%
If I am not naturally smart in a subject, I will never do well in it. ‡	55%	31%	14%
Challenging myself won't make me any smarter. ‡	54%	23%	23%
I meet the goals my teachers set for me.	3%	42%	54%
I can find many ways around problems.	5%	40%	54%
I can do well on tests, even if they are tough.	5%	40%	54%
There are some things I am not capable of learning. ‡	32%	46%	22%
My intelligence is something that I can't change very much. ‡	32%	37%	31%

n=1,450-1,462

‡Denotes items with inverted scales. These items use percent *disagreement* instead. Answers are coded from 1 (Strongly Agree) to 7 (Strongly Disagree).

SECTION II: GRADES 6-12

This section presents analyses related to the district results for Grades 6-12 students, including:

- Overall scale scores in Community and Connectedness, School Climate, Social-Emotional Learning, Student Mindset, and Instructional Depth.
- Individual item scores in each category.

OVERALL SCALE SCORES

Figure 2.1: Overall Results by Scale

SCALE/TOPIC AREA	AVERAGE INDEX SCORE - 2018	AVERAGE INDEX SCORE - 2019
Community and Connectedness	5.04	5.03
School Climate	4.98	4.93
Social-Emotional Learning	5.23	5.19
Student Mindset	5.30	5.23
Instructional Depth	3.52	3.62

n=2,136-2,227 (2018); n=2,181-2,287 (2019)

Figure 2.2: Results by Year and Grade Level

SCALE/TOPIC AREA	GRADE 6		GRADE 7		GRADE 8		GRADE 9		GRADE 10		GRADE 11		GRADE 12	
	18	19	18	19	18	19	18	19	18	19	18	19	18	19
Community and Connectedness	5.33	5.32	5.24	5.08	4.82	4.95	4.89	4.82	4.95	4.98	4.97	4.95	4.98	5.04
School Climate	5.34	5.32	5.18	4.88	4.79	4.82	4.81	4.66	4.83	4.88	4.80	4.91	4.94	5.08
Social-Emotional Learning	5.34	5.28	5.25	5.05	4.95	5.05	5.26	5.08	5.15	5.26	5.38	5.29	5.33	5.46
Student Mindset	5.47	5.40	5.41	5.18	5.16	5.15	5.25	5.07	5.14	5.23	5.35	5.23	5.36	5.37
Instructional Depth	3.88	3.91	3.70	3.95	3.41	3.55	3.44	3.29	3.39	3.76	3.33	3.28	3.09	3.30

INDIVIDUAL ITEM SCORES

Figure 2.3: Overall Community and Connectedness Items (1-7 Agreement Scale)

ITEM	PERCENT AGREE 2018	MEAN SCORE 2018	PERCENT AGREE 2019	MEAN SCORE 2019
I care about my community.	86%	5.78	85%	5.76
At this school, students are encouraged to do their very best.	82%	5.58	81%	5.57
I have at least one teacher who makes me excited about the future.*	81%	5.59	78%	5.55
My teachers care about my health and well-being.	79%	5.47	78%	5.44
I care about my school.	78%	5.45	77%	5.40
I think it is important to participate in community service.	74%	5.27	74%	5.26
I am actively involved in clubs, athletics, and school activities.	70%	5.14	70%	5.13
I believe that I can personally make a difference in my community.	65%	4.87	63%	4.85
It is easy to talk to adults outside of school about things that are bothering me.	56%	4.56	56%	4.56
Students in this school help each other, even if they are not friends.	55%	4.38	55%	4.40
It is easy to talk to adults at this school about things that are bothering me.	50%	4.29	51%	4.30
The principal frequently asks students about their ideas.*	44%	4.12	47%	4.20

n=2,275-2,287 (2018); n=2,691-,2,702 (2019)

*indicates a significant difference between either the percent agreement, mean scores, or both for 2018 and 2019 at the 95% confidence level (p < .05). Please see the accompanying data supplement for specific differences.

Figure 2.4: Overall School Climate Items (1-7 Agreement Scale)

ITEM	PERCENT AGREE 2018	MEAN SCORE 2018	PERCENT AGREE 2019	MEAN SCORE 2019
The school is a welcoming place for students and families like mine.	75%	5.33	74%	5.31
Adults at my school treat students with respect.	75%	5.25	74%	5.24
I feel safe at school.	75%	5.35	74%	5.32
My teachers are fair.	70%	5.06	71%	5.08
Students at my school treat me with respect.	64%	4.80	64%	4.81
I have fun at school.*	64%	4.83	61%	4.69
When students break rules, they are treated and disciplined fairly.	60%	4.71	61%	4.70
When students see another student being picked on, they try to stop it.‡	55%	4.50	50%	4.34

n=2,277-2,282 (2018); n=2,688-2,702 (2019)

*indicates a significant difference between either the percent agreement, mean scores, or both for 2018 and 2019 at the 95% confidence level (p < .05). Please see the accompanying data supplement for specific differences.

Figure 2.5: Overall Social-Emotional Learning Items (1-7 Confidence Scale)

How confident are you in your ability to...

ITEM	PERCENT AGREE 2018	MEAN SCORE 2018	PERCENT AGREE 2019	MEAN SCORE 2019
Respect other people's opinions, even if they are different from yours.	83%	5.61	82%	5.59
Recognize and compliment others' accomplishments.	82%	5.55	82%	5.54
Get along with students that are different than you.	81%	5.57	81%	5.53
Make ethical and constructive choices.	78%	5.39	77%	5.37
Work in a team with other students.	76%	5.32	75%	5.25
Think about what may happen before making a decision.	75%	5.24	74%	5.18
Stand up for myself without putting other people down.*	74%	5.31	73%	5.21
Disagree without starting a fight or argument.	71%	5.16	72%	5.19
Remain calm even when under stress.	63%	4.72	62%	4.73
Clearly describe your feelings.	52%	4.35	51%	4.30

n=2,275-2,281 (2018); n=2,683-2,693 (2019)

*indicates a significant difference between either the percent agreement, mean scores, or both for 2018 and 2019 at the 95% confidence level (p < .05). Please see the accompanying data supplement for specific differences.

Figure 2.6: Overall Student Mindset Items (1-7 Agreement Scale)

ITEM	PERCENT AGREE 2018	MEAN SCORE 2018	PERCENT AGREE 2019	MEAN SCORE 2019
I believe I will graduate from high school. †	90%	6.37	93%	6.41
I know what is hard for me to do.	86%	5.72	84%	5.70
I have goals for my future.*	85%	5.93	84%	5.82
I know what I am good at.	83%	5.68	82%	5.62
I work hard to achieve my goals.*	83%	5.63	81%	5.53
I can learn how to solve tough problems.	82%	5.53	80%	5.47
I can finish tasks, even if they are tough.	79%	5.43	78%	5.39
I can find many ways around problems.	79%	5.40	78%	5.33
I come to class prepared.*	81%	5.50	77%	5.38
I have goals for this school year.*	79%	5.57	76%	5.45
I have a great future ahead of me.*	75%	5.52	73%	5.42
I believe I can excel in all my classes.	75%	5.33	73%	5.30
I meet the goals my teachers set for me.	69%	5.03	67%	4.96
I can do well on tests, even if they are tough.	67%	4.94	65%	4.91
Challenging myself won't make me any smarter* ‡	66%	5.13	62%	4.97
If I am not naturally smart in a subject, I will never do well in it.* ‡	63%	5.03	61%	4.92
My intelligence is something that I can't change very much. ‡	51%	4.53	50%	4.52
There are some things I am not capable of learning. ‡	42%	4.12	42%	4.13

n=187-2,274 (2018); n=220-2,680 (2019)

‡Denotes items with inverted scales. These items use percent *disagreement* instead. Answers are coded from 1 (Strongly Agree) to 7 (Strongly Disagree).

† Only Grade 12 students saw this survey item.

*indicates a significant difference between either the percent agreement, mean scores, or both for 2018 and 2019 at the 95% confidence level (p < .05). Please see the accompanying data supplement for specific differences.

Figure 2.6: Overall Instructional Depth Items (1-7 Frequency Scale)

Within the past two weeks, how many times have your teachers asked you to...

ITEM	MEAN SCORE 2018	MEAN SCORE 2019
...identify or define a problem?	3.93	3.99
...support facts or opinions with credible resources?	3.89	3.94
...solve a new problem without help from your peers or teachers?*	3.57	3.75
...consider multiple sources of information before making your own opinion?*	3.45	3.55
...develop multiple solutions to a problem?	3.48	3.54
...compare different ways of solving the same problem?	3.36	3.43
...seek out sources that go against your current knowledge or opinion?*	3.06	3.18

n=2,259-2,265 (2018); n=2,659-2,669 (2019)

*Note: Instructional Depth uses a frequency scale going from 1 (Never) to 7 (More than 10 times) rather than a negative to positive scale. Hanover excludes percentages since the scale is continuous rather than balanced (i.e., any cutoff point would be arbitrary).

*Indicates a significant difference between mean scores for 2018 and 2019 at the 95% confidence level ($p < .05$).

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