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## **National School Climate Center Releases Two New Reports to Support School Climate Improvement**

*Reports showcase best practices from school districts and insight from thought leaders*

**Charlotte N.C. (Dec. 12, 2018)** — The National School Climate Center (NSCC) today released two powerful reports that provide real-world examples from schools and insight from thought leaders to support and drive school climate improvements.

The **Lessons from the Field** report showcases the school climate work being done in six school districts and shares their best practices to help other districts create safe, engaging school communities.

The **Connecting Communities of Courage** report recaps a 2017 summit co-hosted by NSCC and Facebook for Education which brought together 170 education leaders for a discussion on school climate including safety, engagement and inclusion and it describes what schools can focus on to improve school climate.

Both reports, as well as three related videos, are available at <https://schoolclimate.org/summit>.

“Creating a positive school climate – one in which students and adults are engaged, supported and respected – can improve both academic and positive life outcomes for young people. This is the goal of our work at the National School Climate Center, said Whitney Allgood, CEO of the NSCC. “These two reports represent more than a year of research, discussion and on-the-ground work from people who are dedicated to this important goal. The reports provide powerful, thought-provoking insight from a diverse group of school districts and education leaders to support and inform school climate work throughout the country.”

### **Lessons from the Field**

NSCC worked with six school districts – City Center Public Charter Schools (Washington D.C.), Monroe-Woodbury School District (NY), Parkway School District (MO), Schuylkill Technology Centers (PA), Simpson County Schools (KY), and West Sonoma Union County High Schools (CA) – to develop a

collection of best practices for creating safe, engaging school communities. The Lessons from the Field report was created after NSCC conducted focus groups, conducted site visits, and interviewed district leadership and staff. It outlines seven key lessons learned from the school districts during this work:

- 1) Innovative, collaborative leadership galvanizes school community engagement
- 2) Committed and trusted adults are necessary catalysts for change and central to student success
- 3) Confronting the challenge of conflict deepens trust among students and teachers
- 4) Project-based and service learning stimulate greater inclusion & engagement
- 5) Social-emotional learning integration enhances classroom practice
- 6) Representation of all student voices is key to striving towards equity
- 7) Peer-to-peer support structures instill leadership and strengthen student bonds

The report notes several challenges that still exist such as addressing socio-political issues, leadership turnover, continuing strong SEL instruction in middle and high school, and engaging the school community. The report also provides guidance for research, policy and practice moving forward.

### **Connecting Communities of Courage**

In 2017, NSCC and Facebook for Education convened a first-of-its kind summit called Connecting Communities of Courage: Building Inclusive, Safe, and Engaging Schools. The event brought together education thought leaders, school and district representatives, and students from across the country for a powerful, engaging discussion on school climate. It sought to address the mismatch between the needs of school communities and the policies, research, and resources available to build inclusive, safe, and engaging schools.

The Connecting Communities of Courage report identified four themes that schools should focus on to drive school climate improvement – Mission, Wellness, Innovative Implementation of Best Practices and Integration.

### **About the National School Climate Center**

The National School Climate Center is a nonprofit with more than two decades of experience working with schools, districts, and states nationwide to help the entire school community—administrators, staff, students, and parents – improve the climate for learning. Our mission is to help school communities measure, improve and sustain positive school climates that will ensure all students realize their fullest potential as learners, individuals, and engaged members of society. NSCC achieves this through: advocacy and policy, measurement and research, and educational services that support a model for whole school improvement. Visit our website to learn more about our services: [www.schoolclimate.org](http://www.schoolclimate.org).

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