

STUDENT CLIMATE AND MINDSET SURVEY ANALYSIS

Prepared for Kenai Peninsula Borough School District

May 2023



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 establish an index for tracking progress on these items.

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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 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
- Scale 6: Overall Wellbeing

METHODOLOGY

Within the report and data supplement, Hanover segments data by Grades 3-5 students and Grades 6-12 students.

The data supplement includes additional segmentations by specific grade level, school, and year. Results are only compared longitudinally with the results from the 2021-22 survey administration. Hanover uses statistical tests at the 95 percent confidence level to compare results between years. Statistically significant results are denoted by an asterisk (*).

To analyze results, Hanover uses the mean score for individual items. Additionally, Hanover presents the percentage of positive responses ("Top 2s") 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 (2023) includes responses from 2,159 students (727 in Grades 3-5; 1,432 in Grades 6-12; Figure ES.1). Distributions from the previous survey are also displayed.

Figure ES.1: Grade Distribution

GRADE	NUMBER OF RESPONDENTS	
	2022	2023
Grade 3	241	247
Grade 4	295	233
Grade 5	296	247
Grade 6	308	180
Grade 7	371	250
Grade 8	323	257
Grade 9	300	247
Grade 10	252	222
Grade 11	244	154
Grade 12	144	122

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. Consistent with the 2021-22 survey administration, all students are administered the same questions which utilize either a 5-point or 7-point response scale (Figure ES.2). Each response option has a numeric value used to calculate mean scores.

Figure ES.2: Survey Scales and Response Options

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

RECOMMENDATIONS

Based on survey results, Hanover recommends KPBSD:

- **Examine ways to increase students' sense of community and connectedness at the middle and high school level.** Over the last two years of survey administration, 9 of the 12 items comprising the community and connectedness construct have seen a reduction in agreement among Grade 6-12 students. The items with lowest agreement include believing students can make a difference in their community, helping those that may or may not be friends, and having the principal ask them about their ideas. As a first step, KPBSD can review the following resource to support a sense of student belonging: [Research Brief and Discussion Guide: Building a Sense of Belonging](#).
- **Gather student perspectives to identify ways to increase a positive school climate at the middle and high school level.** All items comprising the school climate construct had less than 70 percent agreement among Grade 6-12 respondents. Items with the lowest agreement included being treated with respect, discipline being fairly implemented, students stepping in when peers are being picked on. Utilizing student focus groups and/or in-depth interviews can further support KPBSD in understanding the specific challenges at the middle and high school levels related to these areas to identify targeted supports or strategies.
- **Identify best practices to strengthen teachers' ability to support students with critical thinking and evaluating information.** Students across all grade levels indicated a reduction in agreement for items related to identifying and solving problems, making connections between information, and considering multiple sources when forming or adjusting opinions. Identifying best practices related to these skill areas across grade levels, can support KPBSD with strengthening vertical alignment and instructional depth.

KEY FINDINGS

OVERALL COMMUNITY AND CONNECTEDNESS

Similar to 2022, most students feel connected to their school community and feel that others care for them within that community. A slight decrease is observed, however, among many items within this construct.

- Similar to 2022 results, most students in Grades 3-5 report that they *care about their community* (95%), that their *teachers care about their health and well-being* (91%), and that they *care about their school* (91%).
- Generally, fewer students in Grades 6-12 agree with survey items than those in Grades 3-5. Still, most report that they *care about their community* (82%). Additionally, 78% *have at least one teacher who makes them excited about the future*. The largest decrease relates to *believing that they can personally make a difference in their community* and *students in their school help each other, even if they are not friends* (-4 percentage points).

OVERALL SCHOOL CLIMATE

Most Grade 3-5 students have a similarly positive perception of school climate as students from 2022. However, for students in Grades 6-12, school climate continues to be the lowest rated area across both years of administration.

- For students in Grades 3-5, results are mostly similar to 2022. Eighty-eight percent of respondents report that the school is a *welcoming place for students and families like theirs* and 85% agree that *adults treat students with respect*. Additionally, when compared with 2022 fewer students in 2023 agree that *students at their school treat them with respect* (67%), *when students see another student being picked on, they try to stop it* (67%), and *when students break rules, they are treated and disciplined fairly* (66%).
- For students in Grades 6-12, agreement with most items is similar to 2022; however agreement regarding *when students see another student being picked on, they try to stop it* decreased by seven percentage points (42% to 35%). Notably, all of the items related to this construct had less than 70% agreement.

OVERALL SOCIAL EMOTIONAL LEARNING

Students from both grade segments report similar levels of agreement across both 2022 and 2023. Students from Grades 3-5 and Grades 6-12 continue to be less confident about their ability to clearly describe their feelings (57% and 45%, respectively) or to remain calm even under stress (64% and 58%, respectively).

- Students in Grades 3-5 in 2023 have similar levels of agreement to questions as they did in 2022. Interestingly, there is a five percentage point increase of agreement that they are confident in their ability to *stand up for myself without putting other people down* (75% to 80%). That said, they are still least likely to be confident in their ability to *clearly describe their feelings* (57%) or *remain calm even under stress* (64%).
- Agreement with surveyed items remains fairly stable for students in Grades 6-12. All items within this construct are within a three percentage point change from 2022 to 2023. The largest percentage point decrease relates to their confidence in their ability to *work in a team with other students* (71% to 68%).

OVERALL STUDENT MINDSET

- Overall, students from both grade segments in 2023 have similar results when compared with the previous year. Both groups mostly agree that they know what is hard for them to do. Most students in Grades 3-5 continue to agree that they *know what they are good at* (90%) and *know what is hard for them to do* (90%). Moreover, compared to 2022, there is an eight percentage point increase in the sentiment that they *can do well on tests, even if they are tough* (75% to 83%). The only decrease across years is for the item I *can find many ways around problems* (78% to 77%).
- Students in Grades 6-12 continue to provide similar ratings to 2022. Most students indicate that they will graduate from high school (89%) and know what is hard for them to do (88%). Knowing they *can do well on tests, even if they are tough* (64%) remains the lowest rated item within the construct.

OVERALL INSTRUCTIONAL DEPTH

Similar to other constructs, most item means within this construct decreased slightly from 2022. In both grade divisions, student report decreased frequency of items related to instructional depth.

- The overall instructional depth construct score decreased slightly from 2022 in both Grades 3-5 (4.16 to 4.08) and Grades 6-12 (3.68 to 3.14).
- In Grades 3-5, five out of eight item means decreased from 2022. Similar to 2022, relatively few students report high frequency regarding *seeking out sources that go against their current knowledge or opinion* (3.59) and *making connections between things you learned in different subjects or classes* (3.70).
- In Grades 6-12, all eight item means decreased from 2022. Specifically, the greatest decrease occurred for *making connections between things you learned in different subjects or classes* (-0.24) and *comparing different ways of solving the same problem* (-0.19).

SECTION I: GRADES 3-5

This section presents analyses related to the district results for Grades 3-5 students, including:

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

OVERALL SCALE SCORES

Figure 1.1: Overall Results by Scale, Grades 3-5

SCALE/TOPIC AREA	AVERAGE INDEX SCORE – GRADES 3-5	
	2022	2023
Scale 1: Community and Connectedness	4.12	4.09
Scale 2: School Climate	4.17	4.12
Scale 3: Social-Emotional Learning	4.03	4.06
Scale 4: Student Mindset	4.29	4.35
Scale 5: Instructional Depth	4.16	4.08
Scale 6: Overall Wellness	3.90	3.86

INDIVIDUAL ITEM SCORES

Figure 1.2: Overall Community and Connectedness Items, Grades 3-5 (1-5 Agreement Scale)

ITEM	2022		2023	
	Percent Agree	Mean Score	Percent Agree	Mean Score
At this school, students are encouraged to do their very best.	88%	4.52	88%	4.49
I am actively involved in clubs, athletics, and school activities.	71%	3.93	67%	3.76
I believe that I can personally make a difference in my community.	71%	3.92	72%	3.93
I care about my community.	94%	4.75	95%	4.76
I care about my school.	91%	4.64	91%	4.65
I have at least one teacher who makes me excited about the future	82%	4.31	81%	4.27
I think it is important to participate in community service.	83%	4.35	84%	4.36
It is easy to talk to adults at this school about things that are bothering me.	62%	3.59	64%	3.64
It is easy to talk to adults outside of school about things that are bothering me.	62%	3.59	63%	3.64
My teachers care about my health and well-being.	91%	4.60	91%	4.65
Students in this school help each other, even if they are not friends.	68%	3.79	67%	3.72
The principal frequently asks students about their ideas.	54%	3.33	52%	3.20
	n=726-812		n=602-701	

Figure 1.3: Overall School Climate, Grades 3-5 (1-5 Agreement Scale)

ITEM	2022		2023	
	Percent Agree	Mean Score	Percent Agree	Mean Score
Adults at my school treat students with respect.	86%	4.47	85%	4.45
I feel safe at school.	82%	4.30	81%	4.29
I have fun at school.	80%	4.25	80%	4.18
My teachers are fair.	83%	4.29	81%	4.28
Students at my school treat me with respect.	67%	3.75	67%	3.75
The school is a welcoming place for students and families like mine.	88%	4.53	88%	4.54
When students break rules, they are treated and disciplined fairly.	70%	3.85	66%	3.76
When students see another student being picked on, they try to stop it.	70%	3.84	67%	3.73
	n=737-808		n=632-703	

Figure 1.4: Overall Social-Emotional Learning Items, Grades 3-5 (1-5 Confidence Scale)

How confident are you in your ability to...

ITEM	2022		2023	
	Percent Confident	Mean Score	Percent Confident	Mean Score
Clearly describe your feelings.	55%	3.35	57%	3.41
Disagree without starting a fight or argument.	67%	3.80	68%	3.85
Get along with students who are different from you.	84%	4.35	85%	4.42
Make ethical and constructive choices.	80%	4.20	81%	4.25
Recognize and compliment others' accomplishments.	84%	4.36	83%	4.32
Remain calm even when under stress.	63%	3.58	64%	3.62
Respect other people's opinions, even if they are different from yours.	85%	4.40	86%	4.48
Stand up for myself without putting other people down. *	75%	4.06	80%	4.15
Think about what may happen before making a decision.	73%	3.94	70%	3.83
Work in a team with other students.	81%	4.28	81%	4.28
	n=723-790		n=618-688	

Figure 1.5: Overall Student Mindset Items, Grades 3-5 (1-5 Agreement Scale)

ITEM	2022		2023	
	Percent Agree	Mean Score	Percent Agree	Mean Score
I believe I can excel in all my classes.	81%	4.21	84%	4.28
I believe I will graduate from high school.	87%	4.47	89%	4.55
I can do well on tests, even if they are tough. *	75%	4.02	83%	4.22
I can find many ways around problems.	78%	4.07	77%	4.06
I can finish tasks, even if they are tough.	81%	4.22	85%	4.32
I can learn how to solve tough problems.	83%	4.31	85%	4.33
I come to class prepared.	81%	4.23	82%	4.23
I have a great future ahead of me.	83%	4.31	84%	4.37
I have goals for my future.	86%	4.44	88%	4.50
I have goals for this school year.	77%	4.13	79%	4.19
I know what I am good at.	89%	4.53	90%	4.58
I know what is hard for me to do.	89%	4.50	90%	4.59
I meet the goals my teachers set for me.	81%	4.13	82%	4.22
I work hard to achieve my goals.	86%	4.43	89%	4.52
	n=705-787		n=624-697	

Figure 1.6 Overall Instructional Depth Items, Grades 3-5 (1-7 Frequency Scale)

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

ITEM	MEAN SCORE	
	2022	2023
...compare different ways of solving the same problem?	4.32	4.25
...consider multiple sources of information before making your own opinion?	4.14	3.93
...develop multiple solutions to a problem?	4.19	4.22
...identify or define a problem?	4.38	4.32
...make connections between things you learned in different subjects or classes?	3.86	3.70
...seek out sources that go against your current knowledge or opinion?	3.76	3.59
...solve a new problem without help from your peers or teachers?	4.30	4.36
...support facts or opinions with credible resources?	4.26	4.28
	n=603-719	n=539-628

Note: Instructional Depth uses a frequency scale 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).

Figure 1.7 Overall Wellness Items, Grades 3-5 (1-5 Frequency Scale)

ITEM	MEAN SCORE	
	2022	2023
I chose to eat healthy foods when given different options.	3.74	3.67
I got to move around during the school day (e.g., recess, brain break).	4.06	4.05
	n=765-778	n=680-690

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, Instructional Depth, and Overall Wellness.
- Individual item scores in each category.

OVERALL SCALE SCORES

Figure 2.1: Overall Results by Scale, Grades 6-12

SCALE/TOPIC AREA	AVERAGE INDEX SCORE -	
	2022	2023
Scale 1: Community and Connectedness	3.75	3.43
Scale 2: School Climate	3.62	3.18
Scale 3: Social-Emotional Learning	3.84	3.80
Scale 4: Student Mindset	4.11	4.13
Scale 5: Instructional Depth	3.68	3.14
Scale 6: Overall Wellness	3.49	3.49

INDIVIDUAL ITEM SCORES

Figure 2.2: Overall Community and Connectedness Items, Grades 6-12 (1-5 Agreement Scale)

ITEM	2022		2023	
	Percent Agree	Mean Score	Percent Agree	Mean Score
At this school, students are encouraged to do their very best.	79%	4.15	76%	4.09
I am actively involved in clubs, athletics, and school activities.	64%	3.72	67%	3.74
I believe that I can personally make a difference in my community.	59%	3.55	55%	3.51
I care about my community. *	85%	4.41	82%	4.31
I care about my school.	75%	4.09	73%	4.03
I have at least one teacher who makes me excited about the future	79%	4.23	78%	4.18
I think it is important to participate in community service.	75%	4.02	73%	4.00
It is easy to talk to adults at this school about things that are bothering me.	46%	3.16	47%	3.15
It is easy to talk to adults outside of school about things that are bothering me.	53%	3.38	55%	3.43
My teachers care about my health and well-being.	76%	4.11	74%	4.04
Students in this school help each other, even if they are not friends. *	48%	3.19	44%	3.08
The principal frequently asks students about their ideas.	38%	2.94	42%	3.01
	n=1,748-1,902		n=1,308-1,414	

Figure 2.3: Overall School Climate Items, Grades 6-12 (1-5 Agreement Scale)

ITEM	2022		2023	
	Percent Agree	Mean Score	Percent Agree	Mean Score
Adults at my school treat students with respect.	68%	3.84	68%	3.85
I feel safe at school.	70%	3.92	68%	3.88
I have fun at school.	60%	3.50	59%	3.52
My teachers are fair.	64%	3.71	63%	3.68
Students at my school treat me with respect.	58%	3.53	56%	3.46
The school is a welcoming place for students and families like mine.	70%	3.94	68%	3.93
When students break rules, they are treated and disciplined fairly.	55%	3.47	53%	3.41
When students see another student being picked on, they try to stop it. *	42%	2.99	35%	2.87
	n=1,766-1,896		n=1,291-1,399	

Figure 2.4: Overall Social-Emotional Learning Items, Grades 6-12 (1-5 Confidence Scale)

How confident are you in your ability to...

ITEM	2022		2023	
	Percent Confident	Mean Score	Percent Confident	Mean Score
Clearly describe your feelings.	43%	3.05	45%	3.02
Disagree without starting a fight or argument.	67%	3.85	68%	3.84
Get along with students who are different from you.	76%	4.08	74%	4.01
Make ethical and constructive choices.	73%	4.03	75%	4.04
Recognize and compliment others' accomplishments.	78%	4.18	79%	4.15
Remain calm even when under stress.	57%	3.51	58%	3.48
Respect other people's opinions, even if they are different from yours.	79%	4.17	78%	4.16
Stand up for myself without putting other people down.	66%	3.82	65%	3.76
Think about what may happen before making a decision.	67%	3.79	66%	3.78
Work in a team with other students.	71%	3.91	68%	3.81
	n=1,798-1,861		n=1,328-1,387	

Figure 2.5: Overall Student Mindset Items, Grades 6-12 (1-5 Agreement Scale)

ITEM	2022		2023	
	Percent Agree	Mean Score	Percent Agree	Mean Score
I believe I can excel in all my classes.	73%	3.96	72%	3.94
I believe I will graduate from high school.	87%	4.52	89%	4.58
I can do well on tests, even if they are tough.	66%	3.73	64%	3.71
I can find many ways around problems.	75%	4.04	76%	4.03
I can finish tasks, even if they are tough.	76%	4.06	77%	4.08
I can learn how to solve tough problems.	78%	4.16	79%	4.16
I come to class prepared.	78%	4.14	78%	4.13
I have a great future ahead of me.	74%	4.08	74%	4.11
I have goals for my future.	80%	4.25	82%	4.31
I have goals for this school year.	72%	3.99	73%	4.01
I know what I am good at. *	82%	4.30	84%	4.33
I know what is hard for me to do. *	85%	4.36	88%	4.45
I meet the goals my teachers set for me.	69%	3.83	67%	3.77
I work hard to achieve my goals.	80%	4.19	81%	4.19
	n=1,716-1,836		n=1,282-1,376	

Figure 2.6: Overall Instructional Depth Items, Grades 6-12 (1-7 Frequency Scale)
Within the past two weeks, how many times have your teachers asked you to...

ITEM	MEAN SCORE	
	2022	2023
...compare different ways of solving the same problem?	3.60	3.41
...consider multiple sources of information before making your own opinion?	3.65	3.47
...develop multiple solutions to a problem?	3.60	3.42
...identify or define a problem?	4.07	4.00
...make connections between things you learned in different subjects or classes?	3.37	3.13
...seek out sources that go against your current knowledge or opinion?	3.29	3.14
...solve a new problem without help from your peers or teachers?	3.78	3.67
...support facts or opinions with credible resources?	4.05	4.01
	n=1,667-1,744	n=1,202-1,269

Note: Instructional Depth uses a frequency scale 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).

Figure 2.7 Overall Wellness Items, Grades 6-12 (1-5 Frequency Scale)

ITEM	MEAN SCORE	
	2022	2023
I chose to eat healthy foods when given different options.	3.57	3.58
I got to move around during the school day (e.g., recess, brain break).	3.42	3.39
	n=1,810-1,840	n=1,318-1,341

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4401 Wilson Boulevard, Suite 400

Arlington, VA 22203

P 202.559.0500 F 866.808.6585

www.hanoverresearch.com