

STUDENT CLIMATE AND MINDSET SURVEY ANALYSIS

Prepared for Kenai Peninsula Borough School District

May 2024



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 in this report are only compared longitudinally with the results from the 2022-23 survey administration, with full results in the district data supplement. 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 (2024) includes responses from 2,367 students (937 in Grades 3-5; 1,430 in Grades 6-12; Figure ES.1). Distributions from the previous survey are also displayed.

Figure ES.1: Grade Distribution

GRADE	NUMBER OF RESPONDENTS	
	2023	2024
Grade 3	247	309
Grade 4	233	321
Grade 5	247	307
Grade 6	180	269
Grade 7	250	329
Grade 8	257	222
Grade 9	247	180
Grade 10	222	170
Grade 11	154	145
Grade 12	122	115

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 2022-23 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:

- **Celebrate the successful efforts focusing on students in Grade 6-12, and expand targeted supports for continued growth.** Although index scores are lower for students in Grades 6-12 compared to students in Grades 3-5, all but one index score for student in Grades 6-12 increased in comparison with last year. The most notable increases in index scores were for school climate, instructional depth, and community and connectedness, and are consistent with increases found among the individual items of each scale. Such improvements should be shared and celebrated with school and district staff. KPBSD should also gather additional feedback through interviews, focus groups, or discussion forums from students and staff to identify the specific practices or approaches that facilitated such improvement. Leveraging and expanding upon what has worked this year will be important for growth going forward.
- **Expand opportunities for increasing instructional depth related to problem solving for Grade 3-5 students.** Within the instructional depth scale/topic although items related to identifying or defining problems, developing or comparing different ways to solve problems, and solving problems independently are all items that had a mean score above 4, they were among the items that showed the most significant reduction since last year. Examining best practices for strengthening problem solving skills and identifying actionable approaches that can be implemented in the classroom, with a specific focus on students in Grades 3-5, will be essential for addressing these areas and effectively supporting teachers.

KEY FINDINGS

OVERALL COMMUNITY AND CONNECTEDNESS

Similar to 2023, most students indicate feeling connected to their school community and feel that others care for them within that community. Results from students in Grades 3-5 had a similar averages across items compared to 2023, while students in Grades 6-12 had an increased average compared to 2023.

- The percentage of students who agree with some statements about school community remains similar in Grades 3-5 from 2023 to 2024, with some small increases such as students at this school feeling *the principal frequently asks students about their ideas* (52% to 53%). Other proportions of agreement decreased, however, such as the belief that students can *personally make a difference* in their community (72% to 70%).
- Although students in Grades 6-12 indicate lower percentages of overall agreement with survey items compared to their Grade 3-5 counterparts, notable improvement from 2023 through 2024 is noted among the Grade 6-12 grade band. There were increases from 2023 in all but two of the areas of community and connectedness, with the largest increase in mean score and agreement related to students feeling that *the principal frequently asks students about their ideas* (42% in 2023, 47% in 2024).

OVERALL SCHOOL CLIMATE

Grade 3-5 students have a similarly positive perception of school climate as students from 2023. For students in Grades 6-12, school climate ratings increased substantially from 2023 to 2024.

- For students in Grades 3-5, results are mostly similar to 2023. Eighty-seven percent of respondents report that the school is a *welcoming place for students and families like theirs* and 86% agree that *adults treat students with respect*. The largest since last year is a decrease in agreement for students reporting that *students at their school treat them with respect* (67% to 61% in 2024).
- For students in Grades 6-12, the proportion who agree increased on 5 items, stayed the same on 2 and decreased on 1. The largest increases on items are in the percentages of students saying they *feel safe at school* (68% in 2023 to 73% in 2024) and the percentage who say *school is a welcoming place* (68% to 73%).

OVERALL SOCIAL EMOTIONAL LEARNING

Students from both grade segments report small decreases in the average score for the social-emotional learning index from 2023 to 2024.

- Students in Grades 3-5 in 2024 have decreased levels of agreement to 6 out of 10 questions compared to 2023. The largest decreases in percent confidence are in regard to *making ethical and constructive choices* (81% to 77% in 2024), *standing up for themselves without putting other people down* (80% to 76%), *working in a team with other students* (81% to 77%).
- Agreement with most items remains fairly stable for students in Grades 6-12. Most items saw a one to two percentage point change, with the largest increase in student confidence to *work in a team with other students* (68% to 71% in 2024), and largest decrease in student confidence to *disagree without starting a fight or argument* (68% to 65% in 2024).

OVERALL STUDENT MINDSET

Overall, students in Grades 3-5 have a slight decrease in the average index score and among several items, while students in Grades 6-12 had no change in the average index score yet improvement found among several items.

- For Grades 3-5, percent agreement and mean scores decreased slightly for students in 12 of 14 items from 2023 to 2024, with the largest decreases in students reporting they *believe they can excel in all their classes* (84% to 80%) and they *have goals for their future* (88% to 84%).
- Students in Grades 6-12 continue to provide similar ratings to 2023. Most students indicate that *they will graduate from high school* (88%) and *know what is hard for them to do* (86%). Knowing they *can do well on tests, even if they are tough* (67%) remains the lowest rated item within the construct but is an improvement since 2023.

OVERALL INSTRUCTIONAL DEPTH

For students in Grades 3-5, most item means within this construct decreased slightly from 2023. However, in Grades 6-12 most item means increased from 2023.

- The overall instructional depth construct score decreased from 2023 in Grades 3-5 (4.08 to 3.96) and increased in Grades 6-12 (3.14 to 3.58).
- In Grades 3-5, seven out of eight item means decreased from 2023. The largest decrease was in students reporting how often teachers ask them to *support facts or opinions with credible sources* (4.28 to 3.98), with the sole increase in how often students say teacher ask them to *make connections between things they learned in different subjects or classes* (3.70 to 3.91).
- In Grades 6-12, five of eight item means increased from 2023. Specifically, the greatest increase occurred for *making connections between things you learned in different subjects or classes* (3.13 to 3.44). Two item means remained the same with a decrease in the mean for *supporting facts or opinions with credible resources* (4.01 to 3.93).

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	
	2023	2024
Scale 1: Community and Connectedness	4.09	4.08
Scale 2: School Climate	4.12	4.10
Scale 3: Social-Emotional Learning	4.06	4.03
Scale 4: Student Mindset	4.35	4.30
Scale 5: Instructional Depth	4.08	3.96
Scale 6: Overall Wellness	3.86	3.76

INDIVIDUAL ITEM SCORES

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

ITEM	2023		2024	
	Percent Agree	Mean Score	Percent Agree	Mean Score
At this school, students are encouraged to do their very best.	88%	4.49	89%	4.54
I am actively involved in clubs, athletics, and school activities.	67%	3.76	68%	3.79
I believe that I can personally make a difference in my community.	72%	3.93	70%	3.80
I care about my community.	95%	4.76	94%	4.74
I care about my school.	91%	4.65	88%	4.52
I have at least one teacher who makes me excited about the future	81%	4.27	83%	4.34
I think it is important to participate in community service.	84%	4.36	81%	4.32
It is easy to talk to adults at this school about things that are bothering me.	64%	3.64	61%	3.53
It is easy to talk to adults outside of school about things that are bothering me.	63%	3.64	62%	3.62
My teachers care about my health and well-being.	91%	4.65	88%	4.54
Students in this school help each other, even if they are not friends.	67%	3.72	66%	3.73
The principal frequently asks students about their ideas.	52%	3.20	53%	3.34
	n=602-701		n=790-906	

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

ITEM	2023		2024	
	Percent Agree	Mean Score	Percent Agree	Mean Score
Adults at my school treat students with respect.	85%	4.45	86%	4.44
I feel safe at school.	81%	4.29	80%	4.24
I have fun at school.	80%	4.18	78%	4.12
My teachers are fair.	81%	4.28	83%	4.31
Students at my school treat me with respect.	67%	3.75	61%	3.58
The school is a welcoming place for students and families like mine.	88%	4.54	87%	4.49
When students break rules, they are treated and disciplined fairly.	66%	3.76	69%	3.84
When students see another student being picked on, they try to stop it.	67%	3.73	66%	3.70
	n=632-703		n=818-907	

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

How confident are you in your ability to...

ITEM	2023		2024	
	Percent Confident	Mean Score	Percent Confident	Mean Score
Clearly describe your feelings.	57%	3.41	56%	3.41
Disagree without starting a fight or argument.	68%	3.85	69%	3.84
Get along with students who are different from you.	85%	4.42	82%	4.28
Make ethical and constructive choices.	81%	4.25	77%	4.16
Recognize and compliment others' accomplishments.	83%	4.32	83%	4.32
Remain calm even when under stress.	64%	3.62	63%	3.63
Respect other people's opinions, even if they are different from yours.	86%	4.48	86%	4.41
Stand up for myself without putting other people down. *	80%	4.15	76%	4.11
Think about what may happen before making a decision.	70%	3.83	69%	3.88
Work in a team with other students.	81%	4.28	77%	4.16
	n=618-688		n=805-886	

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

ITEM	2023		2024	
	Percent Agree	Mean Score	Percent Agree	Mean Score
I believe I can excel in all my classes.	84%	4.28	80%	4.21
I believe I will graduate from high school.	89%	4.55	87%	4.47
I can do well on tests, even if they are tough. *	83%	4.22	81%	4.19
I can find many ways around problems.	77%	4.06	76%	4.03
I can finish tasks, even if they are tough.	85%	4.32	85%	4.32
I can learn how to solve tough problems.	85%	4.33	82%	4.30
I come to class prepared.	82%	4.23	80%	4.16
I have a great future ahead of me.	84%	4.37	82%	4.30
I have goals for my future.	88%	4.50	84%	4.40
I have goals for this school year.	79%	4.19	78%	4.12
I know what I am good at.	90%	4.58	92%	4.60
I know what is hard for me to do.	90%	4.59	88%	4.49
I meet the goals my teachers set for me.	82%	4.22	81%	4.17
I work hard to achieve my goals.	89%	4.52	90%	4.53
	n=624-697		n=806-894	

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	
	2023	2024
...compare different ways of solving the same problem?	4.25	4.07
...consider multiple sources of information before making your own opinion?	3.93	3.91
...develop multiple solutions to a problem?	4.22	4.06
...identify or define a problem?	4.32	4.14
...make connections between things you learned in different subjects or classes?	3.70	3.91
...seek out sources that go against your current knowledge or opinion?	3.59	3.57
...solve a new problem without help from your peers or teachers?	4.36	4.21
...support facts or opinions with credible resources?	4.28	3.98
	n=539-628	n=675-810

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	
	2023	2024
I chose to eat healthy foods when given different options.	3.67	3.62
I got to move around during the school day (e.g., recess, brain break).	4.05	3.91
	n=680-690	n=870-871

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 – GRADES 6-12	
	2023	2024
Scale 1: Community and Connectedness	3.43	3.77
Scale 2: School Climate	3.18	3.62
Scale 3: Social-Emotional Learning	3.80	3.81
Scale 4: Student Mindset	4.13	4.13
Scale 5: Instructional Depth	3.14	3.58
Scale 6: Overall Wellness	3.49	3.53

INDIVIDUAL ITEM SCORES

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

ITEM	2023		2024	
	Percent Agree	Mean Score	Percent Agree	Mean Score
At this school, students are encouraged to do their very best.	76%	4.09	79%	4.17
I am actively involved in clubs, athletics, and school activities.	67%	3.74	69%	3.82
I believe that I can personally make a difference in my community.	55%	3.51	58%	3.54
I care about my community. *	82%	4.31	84%	4.40
I care about my school.	73%	4.03	72%	4.02
I have at least one teacher who makes me excited about the future	78%	4.18	79%	4.22
I think it is important to participate in community service.	73%	4.00	75%	4.04
It is easy to talk to adults at this school about things that are bothering me.	47%	3.15	48%	3.23
It is easy to talk to adults outside of school about things that are bothering me.	55%	3.43	56%	3.47
My teachers care about my health and well-being.	74%	4.04	77%	4.13
Students in this school help each other, even if they are not friends. *	44%	3.08	43%	3.02
The principal frequently asks students about their ideas.	42%	3.01	47%	3.15
	n=1,308-1,414		n=1,289-1,400	

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

ITEM	2023		2024	
	Percent Agree	Mean Score	Percent Agree	Mean Score
Adults at my school treat students with respect.	68%	3.85	71%	3.92
I feel safe at school.	68%	3.88	73%	4.00
I have fun at school.	59%	3.52	59%	3.53
My teachers are fair.	63%	3.68	65%	3.73
Students at my school treat me with respect.	56%	3.46	53%	3.40
The school is a welcoming place for students and families like mine.	68%	3.93	73%	4.02
When students break rules, they are treated and disciplined fairly.	53%	3.41	56%	3.46
When students see another student being picked on, they try to stop it. *	35%	2.87	35%	2.84
	n=1,291-1,399		n=1,303=1,400	

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

How confident are you in your ability to...

ITEM	2023		2024	
	Percent Confident	Mean Score	Percent Confident	Mean Score
Clearly describe your feelings.	45%	3.02	45%	3.11
Disagree without starting a fight or argument.	68%	3.84	65%	3.79
Get along with students who are different from you.	74%	4.01	73%	3.99
Make ethical and constructive choices.	75%	4.04	76%	4.05
Recognize and compliment others' accomplishments.	79%	4.15	80%	4.16
Remain calm even when under stress.	58%	3.48	60%	3.55
Respect other people's opinions, even if they are different from yours.	78%	4.16	77%	4.13
Stand up for myself without putting other people down.	65%	3.76	66%	3.79
Think about what may happen before making a decision.	66%	3.78	66%	3.77
Work in a team with other students.	68%	3.81	71%	3.87
	n=1,328-1,387		n=1,334-1,389	

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

ITEM	2023		2024	
	Percent Agree	Mean Score	Percent Agree	Mean Score
I believe I can excel in all my classes.	72%	3.94	74%	3.96
I believe I will graduate from high school.	89%	4.58	88%	4.56
I can do well on tests, even if they are tough.	64%	3.71	67%	3.74
I can find many ways around problems.	76%	4.03	76%	4.02
I can finish tasks, even if they are tough.	77%	4.08	77%	4.06
I can learn how to solve tough problems.	79%	4.16	81%	4.17
I come to class prepared.	78%	4.13	79%	4.14
I have a great future ahead of me.	74%	4.11	76%	4.14
I have goals for my future.	82%	4.31	84%	4.36
I have goals for this school year.	73%	4.01	73%	3.99
I know what I am good at. *	84%	4.33	84%	4.34
I know what is hard for me to do. *	88%	4.45	86%	4.39
I meet the goals my teachers set for me.	67%	3.77	68%	3.80
I work hard to achieve my goals.	81%	4.19	81%	4.20
	n=1,282-1,376		n=1,276-1,393	

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	
	2023	2024
...compare different ways of solving the same problem?	3.41	3.41
...consider multiple sources of information before making your own opinion?	3.47	3.50
...develop multiple solutions to a problem?	3.42	3.52
...identify or define a problem?	4.00	4.00
...make connections between things you learned in different subjects or classes?	3.13	3.44
...seek out sources that go against your current knowledge or opinion?	3.14	3.20
...solve a new problem without help from your peers or teachers?	3.67	3.72
...support facts or opinions with credible resources?	4.01	3.93
	n=1,202-1,269	n=1,202=1,249

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	
	2023	2024
I chose to eat healthy foods when given different options.	3.58	3.59
I got to move around during the school day (e.g., recess, brain break).	3.39	3.49
	n=1,318-1,341	n=1,332-1,358

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