

STUDENT CLIMATE AND MINDSET SURVEY ANALYSIS

Prepared for Kenai Peninsula Borough School District

May 2025



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: Wellness

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 beginning with the results from the 2023-24 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 (2025) includes responses from 2,547 students (893 in Grades 3-5; 1,654 in Grades 6-12; Figure ES.1). Distributions from the previous survey are also displayed.

Figure ES.1: Grade Distribution

GRADE	NUMBER OF RESPONDENTS	
	2024	2025
Grade 3	309	303
Grade 4	321	287
Grade 5	307	303
Grade 6	269	283
Grade 7	329	273
Grade 8	222	253
Grade 9	180	258
Grade 10	170	257
Grade 11	145	204
Grade 12	115	126

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. Beginning 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:

Expand positive wellness habits across all schools. The 2025 survey revealed positive trends in both physical activity and healthy eating habits for all grades. The most notable increase for students in Grades 3–5 were related to opportunities to be active during the school day, while students in Grades 6–12 reported more frequent healthy food choices. KPBSD could incorporate an analysis of the open-ended comments to learn more about students’ choice of activities and behaviors. Additionally, the district could explore what schools with higher scores have implemented to help inform school leaders whose schools’ wellness scores show room for improvement.

Strengthen instructional depth related to cross-disciplinary learning. Overall instructional depth scores increased in 2025. For example, more students indicated they support facts or opinions with credible sources. Additionally, in Grades 6-12, all but one area saw an item-level increase. Both grade bands, however, experienced a decline in the item related to making connections between different subjects or classes. KPBSD could examine its strategies to support cross-disciplinary teaching and learning using insights from evidence-based research on such strategies as project-based learning, interdisciplinary teaching teams, and STEM or STEAM initiatives.

Gather qualitative insights to enhance the survey findings on student mindset indicators. Across all grades, the average index score and several individual items related to student mindset increased modestly in 2025 and overall results were generally mixed. For example, for Grade 6-12 students, agreement with the statements “I have a great future ahead of me” and “I meet the goals my teachers set for me” both increased by five or more percentage points. Yet, significantly fewer Grade 6-12 students agreed with the statement “I know what I am good at”. To better understand the students’ lived experiences in the area of student mindset, KPBSD could conduct qualitative interviews or focus groups to further illuminate these survey results and pinpoint ways to provide additional support.

KEY FINDINGS

COMMUNITY AND CONNECTEDNESS

Compared to last year (2024), students this year express more positive perceptions of community and connectedness across both grade bands. The overall mean score for this survey area increased among students in grades 3-5 from 4.08 to 4.19 and among students in grades 6-12 from 3.77 to 3.83.

- While last year only 58% of students in grades 3-5 indicated *the principal frequently asked about [their] ideas*, this year 71% of students agree with this statement. While there are a few other areas in which more students this year than last year express positive perceptions (e.g., students are *actively involved in clubs, athletics, and school activities*; 70% in 2024, 75% in 2025), perceptions have mostly remained consistent among students in this grade band from last year to this year.
- As in 2024, this year students in Grades 6-12 indicate lower percentages of overall agreement with survey items compared to their Grade 3-5 counterparts. However, there are notable improvements from 2024 through 2025 in certain specific areas; for instance, agreement that students *care about [their] school* increased six percentage points (72% in 2024, 78% in 2025). Similarly, more students this year than last year say that *students in [their] school help each other, even if they are not friends* (47% in 2024, 52% in 2025).

SCHOOL CLIMATE

In a reversal from last year, this year Grade 6-12 students have a similarly positive perception of school climate as students from 2024, while ratings of school climate increased for students in Grades 3-5 from 2024 to 2025. Specifically, the overall mean score for this survey area increased more substantially from 4.10 in 2024 to 4.16 in 2025 for students in grades 3-5, while the overall mean score for students in grades 6-12 increased only slightly from 3.62 in 2024 to 3.65 in 2025.

- All but two areas within the school climate construct saw increases of at least one percentage point from 2024 to 2025 among students in grades 3-5, and no areas saw any decreases. Students' perception that they *have fun at school* and that their *teachers are fair* remained consistent across the last two survey administrations (78% and 83% agreement, respectively, for each year).
- Though perceptions among students in grades 6-12 are more consistent than students in grades 3-5, there are a few areas that saw notable increases since last year. For instance, while 59% said in 2024 that they *have fun at school*, this year the percentage who agree with this statement is up to 63%.

SOCIAL-EMOTIONAL LEARNING

Unlike last year, when students from both grade segments reported small decreases in average social-emotional learning, this year overall scores increased for students in grades 6-12 and decreased slightly for students in grades 3-5. This year the average score for students in grades 3-5 is down from 4.03 to 4.02; for students in grades 6-12, the average score increased from 3.81 to 3.87.

- Students in Grades 3-5 have decreased levels of confidence for half of the questions compared to 2024. The largest decreases in percent confidence are in regard to *remaining calm even when under stress* (63% in 2024 to 59% in 2025) and *disagreeing without starting a fight or argument* (69% to 66%). Other areas have shown increases, however, such as for *making ethical and constructive choices* (77% to 84%) and *working in a team with other students* (77% to 82%).
- There are several areas within the social-emotional learning construct that showed significant increases from 2024 to 2025 among students in grades 6-12. For instance, more than half of students this year say they can confidently *describe [their] feelings*, while less than half said the same in 2024 (56% vs. 45%). Further, 66% in 2024 and 71% in 2025 express confidence regarding *standing up for [themselves] without putting others down*.

STUDENT MINDSET

Overall, both grade bands saw a slight increase in the average index score and among several items in 2025. There is a mix of consistency, slight increase, and slight decrease in item-level scores for students in grades 3-5 and a mix of consistency or increase in item-level scores for students in grades 6-12.

- The percentage-point increases among students in grades 3-5 are relatively modest; for instance, 84% of students this year say they *can do well on tests, even if they are tough*, while last year 81% of students said the same. On the other hand, slightly fewer this year than last year say they *can finish tasks, even if they are tough* (83% vs. 85%). 91% of students in this grade band agree that they *know what [they] are good at*, and 90% say they *know what is hard for [them] to do*.
- There are two areas that have seen a five-percentage-point increase (or more) since last year among students in grades 6-12: *I have a great future ahead of me* (76% in 2024, 81% in 2025) and *I meet the goals my teachers set for me* (68% and 75%). Additionally, 90% of students in grades 6-12 this year say they *believe [they] will graduate high school*.

INSTRUCTIONAL DEPTH

As was the case in 2024, most item-level instructional depth mean scores decreased slightly this year in comparison with the prior year. Item-level means in grades 6-12 increased from 2024 to 2025, for the most part.

- The overall instructional depth construct score, however, increased from 2024 in both grade bands (3.96 to 4.03 in grades 3-5 and 3.58 to 3.69 in grades 6-12).
- There are fewer item-level mean decreases from 2024 to 2025 than there were from 2023 to 2024. The largest decrease is for students reporting how often they *make connections between things [they] learned in different subjects or classes* (3.91 to 3.65). The item-level mean score for this item was 3.70 in 2023. Several areas saw an increase from 2024 to 2025, however, such as *support[ing] facts or opinions with credible resources* (3.98 to 4.37).
- In Grades 6-12, all but one area (*making connections between things [they] learned in different subjects or classes*) saw an item-level mean score increase from 2024. The greatest increase occurred for *support[ing] facts or opinions with credible resources* (3.93 to 4.13); last year, this area saw a significant decrease in mean score from 4.01 in 2023.

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	
	2024	2025
Scale 1: Community and Connectedness	4.08	4.19
Scale 2: School Climate	4.10	4.16
Scale 3: Social-Emotional Learning	4.03	4.02
Scale 4: Student Mindset	4.30	4.31
Scale 5: Instructional Depth	3.96	4.03
Scale 6: Overall Wellness	3.76	3.89

INDIVIDUAL ITEM SCORES

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

ITEM	2024		2025	
	Percent Agree	Mean Score	Percent Agree	Mean Score
At this school, students are encouraged to do their very best.	89%	4.54	91%	4.63
I am actively involved in clubs, athletics, and school activities.	68%	3.79	75%	3.95
I believe that I can personally make a difference in my community.	70%	3.80	69%	3.85
I care about my community.	94%	4.74	94%	4.75
I care about my school.	88%	4.52	89%	4.53
I have at least one teacher who makes me excited about the future	83%	4.34	83%	4.35
I think it is important to participate in community service.	81%	4.32	84%	4.37
It is easy to talk to adults at this school about things that are bothering me.	61%	3.53	67%	3.73
It is easy to talk to adults outside of school about things that are bothering me.	62%	3.62	65%	3.71
My teachers care about my health and well-being.	88%	4.54	91%	4.64
Students in this school help each other, even if they are not friends.	66%	3.73	71%	3.91
The principal [frequently] asks students about their ideas.	53%	3.34	71%	3.82
	n=790-906		n=762-864	

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

ITEM	2024		2025	
	Percent Agree	Mean Score	Percent Agree	Mean Score
Adults at my school treat students with respect.	86%	4.44	87%	4.46
I feel safe at school.	80%	4.24	84%	4.36
I have fun at school.	78%	4.12	78%	4.17
My teachers are fair.	83%	4.31	83%	4.32
Students at my school treat me with respect.	61%	3.58	64%	3.70
The school is a welcoming place for students and families like mine.	87%	4.49	88%	4.55
When students break rules, they are treated and disciplined fairly.	69%	3.84	72%	3.90
When students see another student being picked on, they try to stop it.	66%	3.70	68%	3.78
	n=818-907		n=776-865	

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

How confident are you in your ability to...

ITEM	2024		2025	
	Percent Confident	Mean Score	Percent Confident	Mean Score
Clearly describe your feelings.	56%	3.41	60%	3.49
Disagree without starting a fight or argument.	69%	3.84	66%	3.79
Get along with students who are different from you.	82%	4.28	83%	4.25
Make ethical and constructive choices.	77%	4.16	84%	4.29
Recognize and compliment others' accomplishments.	83%	4.32	83%	4.35
Remain calm even when under stress.	63%	3.63	59%	3.47
Respect other people's opinions, even if they are different from yours.	86%	4.41	85%	4.42
Stand up for myself without putting other people down. *	76%	4.11	77%	4.10
Think about what may happen before making a decision.	69%	3.88	71%	3.87
Work in a team with other students.	77%	4.16	82%	4.27
	n=805-886		n=789-845	

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

ITEM	2024		2025	
	Percent Agree	Mean Score	Percent Agree	Mean Score
I believe I can excel in all my classes.	80%	4.21	82%	4.26
I believe I will graduate from high school.	87%	4.47	87%	4.53
I can do well on tests, even if they are tough. *	81%	4.19	84%	4.32
I can find many ways around problems.	76%	4.03	76%	4.03
I can finish tasks, even if they are tough.	85%	4.32	83%	4.24
I can learn how to solve tough problems.	82%	4.30	84%	4.30
I come to class prepared.	80%	4.16	79%	4.12
I have a great future ahead of me.	82%	4.30	84%	4.35
I have goals for my future.	84%	4.40	87%	4.50
I have goals for this school year.	78%	4.12	77%	4.11
I know what I am good at.	92%	4.60	91%	4.59
I know what is hard for me to do.	88%	4.49	90%	4.51
I meet the goals my teachers set for me.	81%	4.17	83%	4.20
I work hard to achieve my goals.	90%	4.53	89%	4.48
	n=806-894		n=761-855	

Figure 1.6 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	
	2024	2025
...compare different ways of solving the same problem?	4.07	4.22
...consider multiple sources of information before making your own opinion?	3.91	3.87
...develop multiple solutions to a problem?	4.06	4.19
...identify or define a problem?	4.14	4.30
...make connections between things you learned in different subjects or classes?	3.91	3.65
...seek out sources that go against your current knowledge or opinion?	3.57	3.51
...solve a new problem without help from your peers or teachers?	4.21	4.35
...support facts or opinions with credible resources?	3.98	4.37
	n=675-810	n=667-786

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

ITEM	MEAN SCORE	
	2024	2025
I chose to eat healthy foods when given different options.	3.62	3.67
I [got to move/had opportunities to be active] during the school day (e.g., recess, brain break).	3.91	4.11
	n=870-871	n=835-838

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: Results by Scale, Grades 6-12

SCALE/TOPIC AREA	AVERAGE INDEX SCORE – GRADES 6-12	
	2024	2025
Scale 1: Community and Connectedness	3.77	3.83
Scale 2: School Climate	3.62	3.65
Scale 3: Social-Emotional Learning	3.81	3.87
Scale 4: Student Mindset	4.13	4.19
Scale 5: Instructional Depth	3.58	3.69
Scale 6: Overall Wellness	3.53	3.64

INDIVIDUAL ITEM SCORES

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

ITEM	2024		2025	
	Percent Agree	Mean Score	Percent Agree	Mean Score
At this school, students are encouraged to do their very best.	79%	4.17	79%	4.20
I am actively involved in clubs, athletics, and school activities.	69%	3.82	70%	3.88
I believe that I can personally make a difference in my community.	58%	3.54	59%	3.55
I care about my community. *	84%	4.40	87%	4.43
I care about my school.	72%	4.02	78%	4.18
I have at least one teacher who makes me excited about the future	79%	4.22	81%	4.26
I think it is important to participate in community service.	75%	4.04	73%	4.02
It is easy to talk to adults at this school about things that are bothering me.	48%	3.23	49%	3.26
It is easy to talk to adults outside of school about things that are bothering me.	56%	3.47	58%	3.53
My teachers care about my health and well-being.	77%	4.13	76%	4.11
Students in this school help each other, even if they are not friends. *	43%	3.02	48%	3.18
The principal [frequently] asks students about their ideas.	47%	3.15	52%	3.35
	n=1,289-1,400		n=1484-1630	

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

ITEM	2024		2025	
	Percent Agree	Mean Score	Percent Agree	Mean Score
Adults at my school treat students with respect.	71%	3.92	72%	3.95
I feel safe at school.	73%	4.00	74%	4.07
I have fun at school.	59%	3.53	63%	3.64
My teachers are fair.	65%	3.73	66%	3.77
Students at my school treat me with respect.	53%	3.40	57%	3.51
The school is a welcoming place for students and families like mine.	73%	4.02	71%	3.99
When students break rules, they are treated and disciplined fairly.	56%	3.46	54%	3.40
When students see another student being picked on, they try to stop it. *	35%	2.84	36%	2.84
	n=1,303-1,400		n=1532-1623	

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

How confident are you in your ability to...

ITEM	2024		2025	
	Percent Confident	Mean Score	Percent Confident	Mean Score
Clearly describe your feelings.	45%	3.11	56%	3.41
Disagree without starting a fight or argument.	65%	3.79	67%	3.85
Get along with students who are different from you.	73%	3.99	73%	3.97
Make ethical and constructive choices.	76%	4.05	75%	4.04
Recognize and compliment others' accomplishments.	80%	4.16	79%	4.18
Remain calm even when under stress.	60%	3.55	60%	3.56
Respect other people's opinions, even if they are different from yours.	77%	4.13	77%	4.16
Stand up for myself without putting other people down.	66%	3.79	71%	3.89
Think about what may happen before making a decision.	66%	3.77	68%	3.83
Work in a team with other students.	71%	3.87	71%	3.91
	n=1,334-1,389		n=1545-1602	

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

ITEM	2024		2025	
	Percent Agree	Mean Score	Percent Agree	Mean Score
I believe I can excel in all my classes.	74%	3.96	75%	4.03
I believe I will graduate from high school.	88%	4.56	90%	4.63
I can do well on tests, even if they are tough.	67%	3.74	71%	3.90
I can find many ways around problems.	76%	4.02	78%	4.11
I can finish tasks, even if they are tough.	77%	4.06	80%	4.15
I can learn how to solve tough problems.	81%	4.17	82%	4.24
I come to class prepared.	79%	4.14	79%	4.15
I have a great future ahead of me.	76%	4.14	81%	4.22
I have goals for my future.	84%	4.36	83%	4.34
I have goals for this school year.	73%	3.99	75%	4.05
I know what I am good at. *	84%	4.34	85%	4.30
I know what is hard for me to do. *	86%	4.39	89%	4.48
I meet the goals my teachers set for me.	68%	3.80	75%	3.98
I work hard to achieve my goals.	81%	4.20	83%	4.26
	n=1,276-1,393		n=1479-1599	

Figure 2.6: 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	
	2024	2025
...compare different ways of solving the same problem?	3.41	3.59
...consider multiple sources of information before making your own opinion?	3.50	3.67
...develop multiple solutions to a problem?	3.52	3.60
...identify or define a problem?	4.00	4.17
...make connections between things you learned in different subjects or classes?	3.44	3.34
...seek out sources that go against your current knowledge or opinion?	3.20	3.30
...solve a new problem without help from your peers or teachers?	3.72	3.89
...support facts or opinions with credible resources?	3.93	4.13
	n=1,202-1,249	n=1360-1460

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

ITEM	MEAN SCORE	
	2024	2025
I chose to eat healthy foods when given different options.	3.59	3.72
I [got to move/had opportunities to be active] during the school day (e.g., recess, brain break).	3.49	3.57
	n=1,332-1,358	n=1548-1550

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