

# Findings from the 2017 School Climate Survey

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## EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Since 2007, PGCPs has conducted a school climate survey on a biannual basis, which included participation of students, parents, and teachers. To assess the extent to which students, parents, and teachers perceive the district schools are conducive to learning, Research and Evaluation Unit (R&E) within the Department of Testing, Research, and Evaluation (DTRE) conducted a survey during the spring of 2017. Some of the factors about which stakeholders were asked to opine include school leadership, the level of safety in the schools, and parental involvement, which, when analyzed, reveal what the respondents think about their school's overall climate. With this information, district and school leaders are able to identify strengths that can be built upon to support future improvements.

In this report, the R&E Unit presents findings from the analyses that indicate the extent to which stakeholders perceive their schools exhibit characteristics that are conducive to effective instruction and learning. The specific research question answered in this report is:

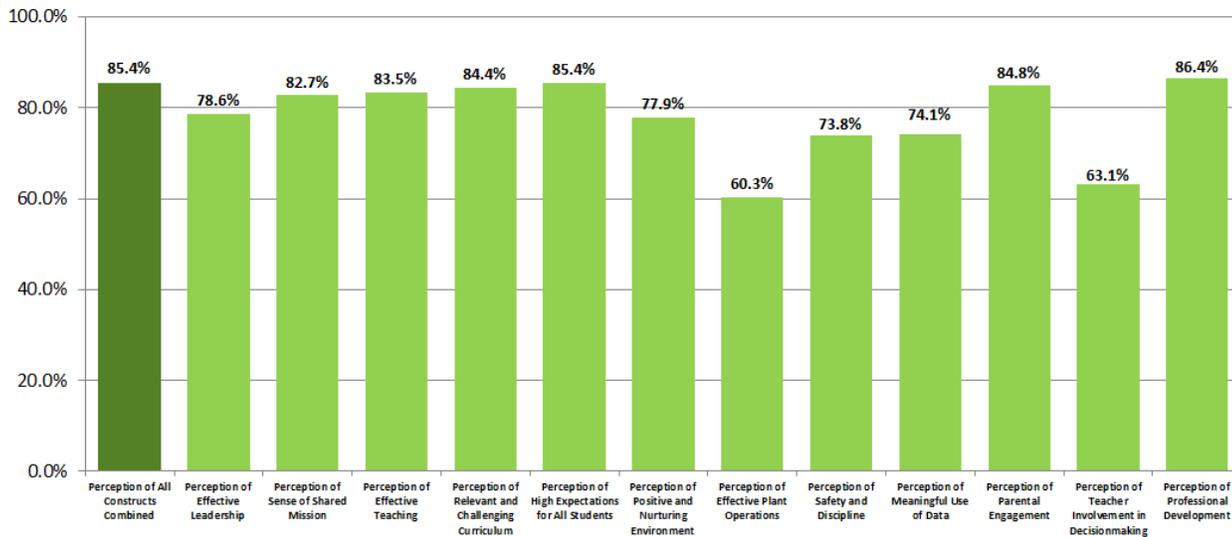
- *To what extent do the students, parents, and teachers of Prince George's County Public Schools perceive their schools exhibit characteristics that are conducive to effective teaching and learning?*

Nearly 49,000 students in grades four, five, seven, nine, and eleven were invited to participate in the survey, and 33,621 submitted responses, making the response rate 69%. All parents with children in PGCPs were invited to participate in the survey. Of the 89,562 parents who received invitations, we received 9,119 responses for a response rate among parents of 10.2%. Among teachers, 9,827 received personalized invitations to participate in the survey and 5,732 submitted responses for a response rate of 58.3%. Overall, more than 48,000 responses were received and the response rate was 32.7%.

Analyses of survey data indicate that approximately 85% of the survey respondents perceive their schools as having a climate that is conducive to effective instruction and learning. When the data are disaggregated by subscale we find differences in the extent to which stakeholders view each positively. Of the subscales that all stakeholder groups were asked to express opinions, 'High Expectations for all Students' is viewed positively by 85% of stakeholders making it the subscale most often positively perceived. At the other extreme, 'Effective Plant Operations' was perceived positively least often. Only about 60% of

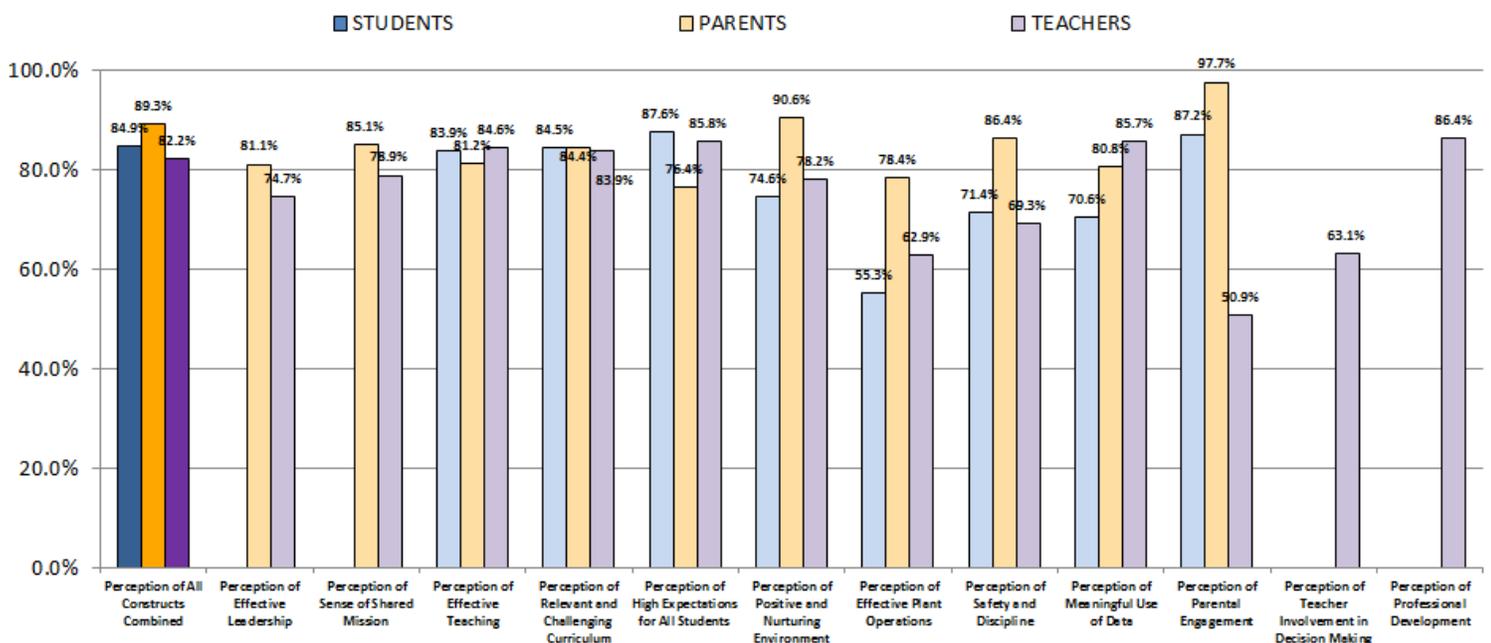
stakeholders had positive opinions about that subscale, which is related to the condition, and upkeep of buildings, facilities, and technology on school campuses. See ES Figure 1.

**ES Figure 1– Perceptions of Characteristics of School Climate, Overall and by Subscale**



There is also a difference in how each stakeholder group perceives each subscale of school climate. Parents expressed positive perceptions about their schools more often than students or teachers. Specifically, more than 89% of parents expressed positive perceptions of the schools their children attend, while about 85% of students hold positive opinions about the schools they attend, and 82% of teachers perceive the climate in their schools positively. The differences among stakeholders persist at the subscale level. See ES Figure 2.

**ES Figure 2–Perceptions of Characteristics of School Climate by Stakeholder Group**



As a group, parents are more positive about the climate in their children’s schools than the students themselves. Irrespective of the stakeholder group, the level of positive perception of overall climate and most subscales of climate tends to be higher at the elementary school level and decrease progressively at school types with higher grade levels. The decreasing percentage of respondents with a positive perception with increasing grade level is understandable considering that challenging situations tend to increase as students grow older.

Furthermore, the range of opinion about the climate within individual schools varies widely across the district. Overall, perceptions of school climate vary the most at the high school level. As shown in ES Figure 3, 100% of stakeholders at Croom Vocational HS expressed positive opinions about the school’s climate, but only 63.4% of stakeholders in Gwynn Park HS feel similarly about their school. The smallest amount of variation in perceptions of school climate is among stakeholders in early childhood centers.

**ES Figure 3–Range of Perceptions of School Climate, Overall by School Type**

