



## School Climate and Connected Survey (SCCS) Frequently Asked Questions

**Q: *What is the School Climate and Connectedness Survey?***

**A:** The School Climate and Connectedness Survey is a tool to gauge and improve overall school climate and ultimately raise student achievement. The survey was created for the Association of Alaska School Boards by the American Institutes for Research®.

**Q: *Are school climate and student achievement connected? If so, how?***

**A:** Yes. There is a growing body of research, including Alaskan data that shows an association between positive school climate and connectedness and academic achievement and reduced risk behaviors. **When students feel safe, connected and engaged in their schools, they are more successful and effective learners, and exhibit fewer risk behaviors.**

**Q: *Has this survey been around long? Who is using it?***

**A:** The survey was piloted in 2005 and has been used by a growing number of districts ever since. In 2014, more than 32,000 Alaskan students and 7,000 staff took the survey.

**Q: *Who takes the survey?***

**A:** There are two separate surveys: a student survey and a staff survey. For the student survey, the district determines the participating grades, 5<sup>th</sup> or 6<sup>th</sup> grade through 12<sup>th</sup> grade. All staff who have contact with students at those schools take the staff survey. In 2015, there will be a grade 3-4 survey option for districts.

**Q: *Does the survey require parental consent?***

**A:** No, this survey does not need active parental consent. However, we recommend that your district inform parents about the survey, and allow them to review a sample of the student survey. Parents can elect to opt their child(ren) out.

**Q: *When will we get the results?***

**A:** Reports with fully analyzed results are available to AASB over the summer and sent to the district in August. Superintendents are then responsible for sending the results on to the individual schools in their districts. Districts using the online survey may opt to also receive preliminary results within two weeks of the survey closing.

**Q: *Can I see individual student and/or staff results?***

**A:** No. The survey is anonymous, and individual responses are confidential. Responses are combined and reported by school, district and statewide. If there are too few responses, they are not reported at the school level to protect confidentiality.

1111 West 9<sup>th</sup> Street, Juneau, AK 99801



**Q: *What will the results show?***

**A:** The survey measures how students and staff perceive school climate, and also how connected students feel to adults and peers. It provides information on student social-emotional learning, family and community involvement in schools and the level of delinquent behavior and drug and alcohol use observed at school. The survey also includes data on gender, ethnicity and grades. Knowing how students and staff feel about climate can help schools take action and make and monitor improvements.

**Q: *Does AASB provide assistance in interpreting the data?***

**A:** Yes! The district contract for the SCCS survey includes analysis of your district's data and up to one full day/evening of presentations/workshops to your school board and staff, depending on district preferences. Supplemental services are available for additional fees, including services such as facilitated school presentations, workshops, in-services and action planning.

**Q: *What is AASB's purpose?***

**A:** The mission of the Association of Alaska School Boards is to advocate for children and youth by assisting school boards in providing quality public education, focused on student achievement, through effective local governance. The School Climate and Connectedness Survey is a service of AASB.

**Q: *How do you define school climate?***

**A:** School climate refers to factors that contribute to the tone and attitudes of staff and students in school. Positive school climate is associated with well-managed classrooms and common areas, high and clearly stated expectations concerning individual responsibility, feeling safe at school, and teachers and staff who consistently acknowledge all students and fairly address their behavior.

**Q: *How do you define connectedness?***

**A:** School connectedness refers to students' school experiences and their perceptions and feelings about school. This includes feeling that they are a part of the school, that adults at the school care about them personally, that their learning matters and is a high priority, that they are close to people at school and have supportive relationships with adults, and that teachers and staff consistently treat them with respect.

**Q: *How can I learn more about AASB and the school climate and connectedness?***

**A:** Visit our website at [www.aasb.org](http://www.aasb.org) to learn about all of AASB's services. Click on the Alaska ICE symbol to link to more information about school climate and connectedness and community engagement.