



National Leadership Summit on School Discipline and Climate

School Climate Data Collection Reporting and Use

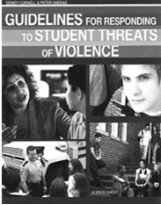
Dewey Cornell, Ph.D.
Curry School of Education
University of Virginia

434-924-8929
Email: youthvio@virginia.edu



Dewey G. Cornell, Ph. D., is a forensic clinical psychologist and Professor of Education in the Curry School of Education at the University of Virginia. Dr. Cornell is Director of the UVA Youth Violence Project, and a faculty associate of the Institute of Law, Psychiatry, and Public Policy.

Dr. Cornell has conducted research on school climate surveys for nearly 20 years and currently directs a federally funded project that administers the Authoritative School Climate Survey in more than 700 secondary schools in Virginia. He developed the Virginia Student Threat Assessment Guidelines, which is an evidence-based protocol for schools to resolve student threats of violence.



What is the purpose of a school climate survey?


- Gather more comprehensive and valid data on school conditions
- Focus attention on quality of teacher-student relationships as well as peer relationships
- Identify strengths as well as areas that need improvement
- Measure progress toward school improvement goals

Why does a positive school climate matter?

- Greater engagement in school
- Fewer discipline problems
- Less bullying and teasing
- Less aggression toward teachers
- Better school attendance
- Better academic performance
- Higher graduation rates


Virginia Secondary School Climate Project

- Authoritative School Climate Survey
- All middle & high schools (alternating years)
- All students or randomly selected 25/grade
- Report with school, region, & state norms




Middle School 2013 Survey

Schools – 423 (98.4%)
Teachers – 9,134 (79%)
Students – 43,805 (84.8%)



High School 2014 Survey

Schools – 323 (99.7%)
Teachers – 13,455 (56.5%)
Students – 48,027 (88.7%)




Commonwealth of Virginia
Department of Education
Superintendent's Regions

Anonymous High School Spring 2014

Student and Teacher Perceptions of School Climate Anonymous High School Grades 9-12, Spring 2014

The Virginia Secondary School Climate Survey provides schools with a benchmark assessment of school climate and safety conditions from the perspective of students and teachers. The purpose of this report is to help schools identify strengths and weaknesses that can guide efforts to improve school safety and student learning.

This report is based on responses from 323 students and 13,455 teachers in 173 schools, with additional comparisons with schools in your region. A breakdown of student surveys by grade and gender is found in a supplementary file available with this report. For more information, see <http://www.doe.virginia.gov/schoolclimate/>.

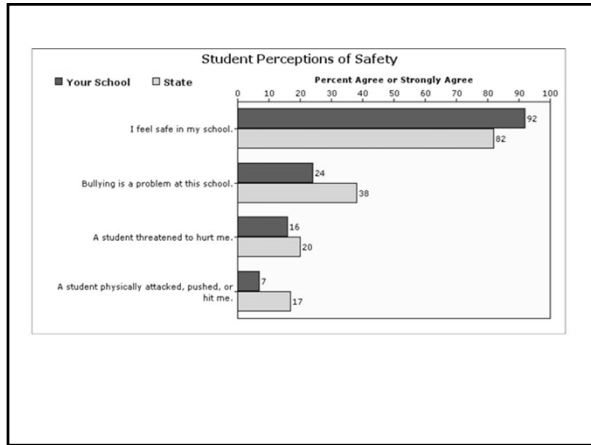


Contents

Page	
2	Key student perceptions
3	Student perceptions of disciplinary structure and student support
4	Student engagement and educational experiences
5	Student academic expectations and values
6	Student safety
7	Student perceptions of the pervasiveness of teasing and bullying
7	Student personal experiences of bullying
9	Student risk behaviors
10	Disciplinary experiences reported by students
11	Demographic information for student participants
11	Key teacher perceptions
11	Teacher perceptions of school discipline
15	Teacher perceptions of student support
18	Teacher perceptions of student support program effectiveness
20	Teacher perceptions of safety
21	Aggression toward students
26	Demographic information for teacher participants
27	Technical notes

Ways To Use This Report!

1. Post the report on your website and notify faculty, students, and parents.
2. Summarize key findings as averages with faculty, students, and parents.
3. Identify school improvement goals.
4. How can you improve student safety at school?
 - a. How can teachers improve their relationships with students?
 - b. How can the disciplinary system be improved?
 - c. How can you engage students and meet their educational aspirations?
4. Document findings related to safety and support programs.
5. Evaluate discipline, education, and bullying prevention efforts.



Anonymous High School Spring 2014

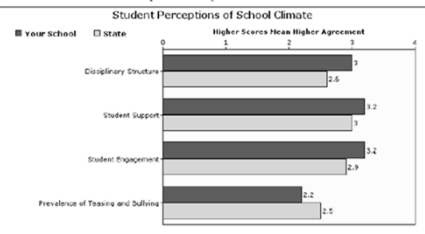
Key Student Perceptions

Four scales are used to summarize key aspects of school climate:

1. **Disciplinary Structure** - average of 7 items to assess whether school rules and discipline seem fair.
2. **Student Support** - average of 8 items to assess whether students feel respected and are willing to seek help from adults at school.
3. **Student Engagement** - average of 6 items to assess whether students like this school and want to learn.
4. **Prevalence of Teasing and Bullying (PTB)** - average of 5 items to assess how much various forms of bullying and teasing are observed.

A series of items have been developed to measure each scale. Each item was answered on a 4-point range: 1-Strongly Disagree, 2-Disagree, 3-Agree, 4-Strongly Agree. The chart below presents averages for all students who took the survey in your school along with the averages for all students in the state who took the survey. For example, an average score of 3.2 for Student Engagement means that students generally agreed with the 6 items for that scale. The items for each scale are found later in the report. Individual school results are not presented if fewer than 20 students completed the survey.

Student Perceptions of School Climate



Scale	Your School (Mean)	State (Mean)
Disciplinary Structure	2.6	2.4
Student Support	3.2	3.1
Student Engagement	3.2	2.9
Prevalence of Teasing and Bullying	2.2	2.0

Anonymous High School Spring 2014

Student Perceptions of Disciplinary Structure and Student Support

These questions assess the degree to which students perceive the school climate as both structured and supportive. The items were answered on a 4-point scale: 1 = Strongly Disagree, 2 = Disagree, 3 = Agree, 4 = Strongly Agree. Percentages for Agree + Strongly Agree are presented here. Averages are based on the mean of all items in the same scale.

Statement	Percent Agree or Strongly Agree	
	Your School	Year Region
Disciplinary Structure Scale		
Thinking about your school, would you agree or disagree with the statements below? Pick the answer that is closest to how you feel.		
The school rules are fair.	90%	64%
The punishment for breaking school rules is the same for all students.	77%	53%
Students at this school are only punished when they deserve it.	70%	60%
Students are rewarded without good reason.	23%	31%
When students are accused of doing something wrong, they get a chance to explain.	76%	68%
Students are treated fairly regardless of their race or ethnicity.	82%	80%
The adults at this school are too strict.	24%	34%
Average for 7 items above	3	2.7
Student Support Scale		
Most teachers and other adults at this school...		
Care about all students.	83%	73%
Want all students to do well.	91%	87%
Listen to what students have to say.	79%	62%
Treat students with respect.	83%	75%
How much do you agree or disagree with these statements?		
There are adults at this school I could talk with if I had a personal problem.	89%	79%
If I tell a teacher that someone is bullying me, the teacher will do something to help.	92%	84%
I am comfortable asking my teachers for help with my school work.	90%	86%
There is at least one teacher or other adult at this school who really wants me to do well.	98%	95%
Average for 8 items above	3.2	3
Additional items not included in overall scale, but relevant to safety:		
If another student talked about killing someone, I would tell one of the teachers or staff at school.	81%	82%
If another student brought a gun to school, I would tell one of the teachers or staff at school.	88%	89%
I feel safe in my school.	92%	93%

What is Authoritative School Climate Theory?


Developmental research has found that authoritative parents, who are both demanding and warm with their children, are more effective than authoritarian parents who are demanding but cold and permissive parents who are warm but not demanding.

Our research suggests that schools where discipline is strict but fair, and teachers are perceived as supportive, are more positive learning environments.

Classic study of parents

Two contrasting groups

- "Authoritarian" strict discipline-oriented
- "Permissive" lacking in discipline




Source: Baumrind, 1966

Classic study of parents

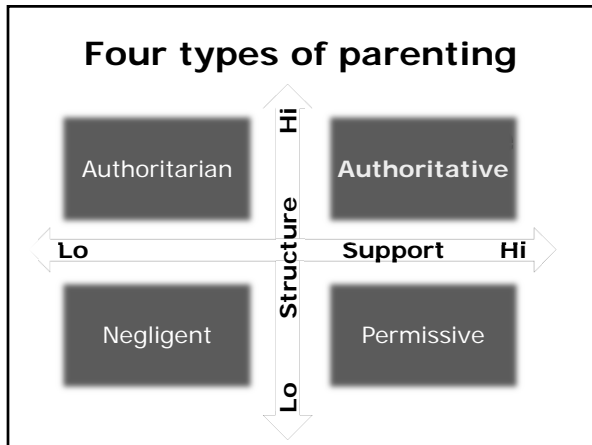
Two contrasting groups

- "Authoritarian" strict discipline-oriented
- "Permissive" lacking in discipline

Meet the Fockers




Authoritarian Permissive



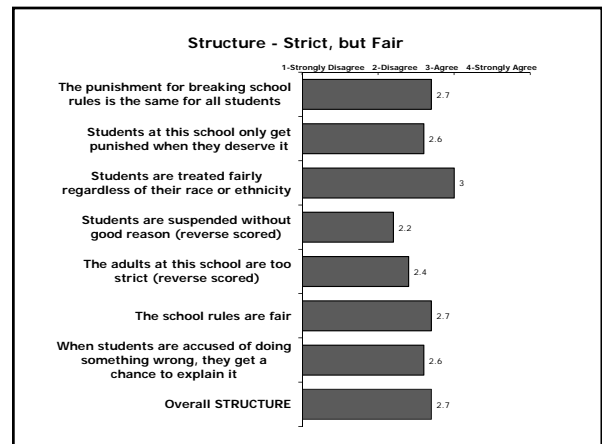
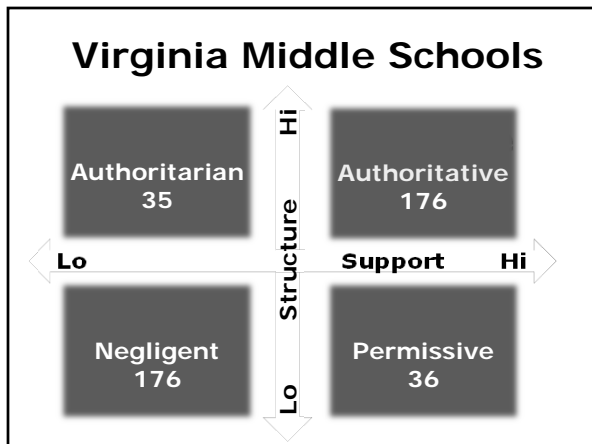
Survey of principals

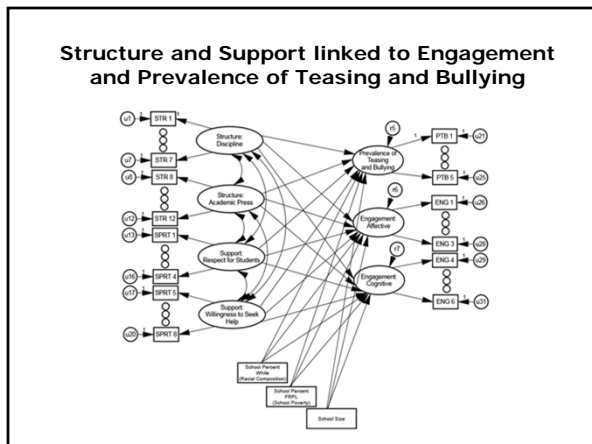
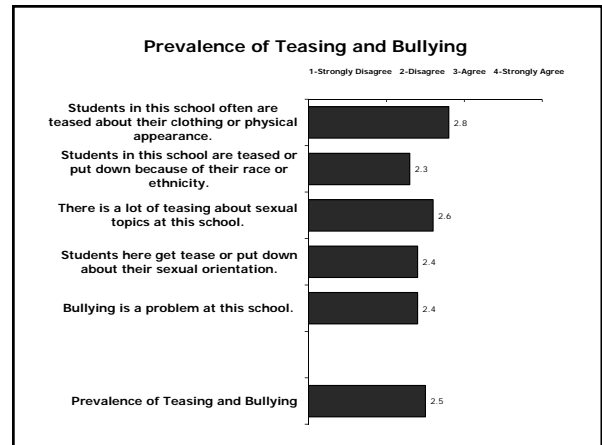
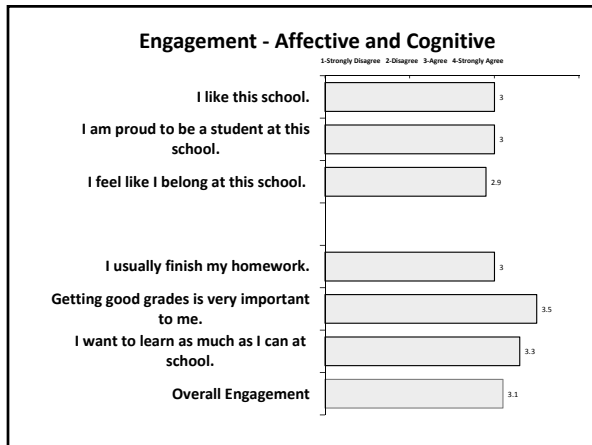
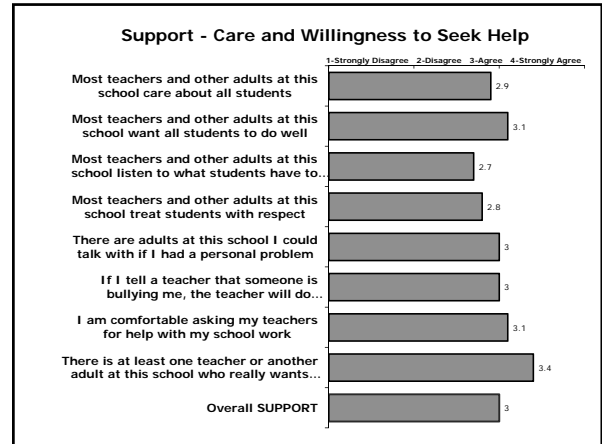
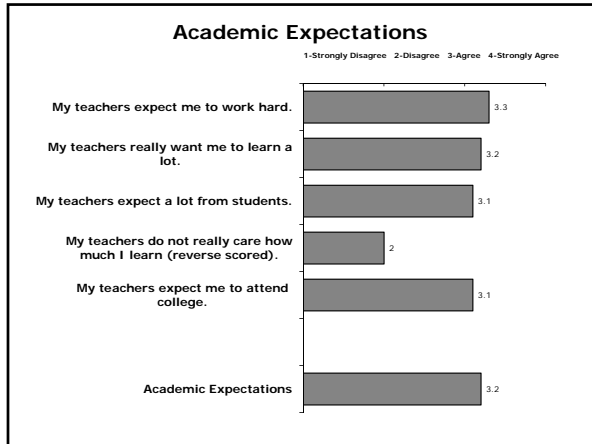
Two contrasting groups

- "Get-tough" strict discipline-oriented
- "Be supportive" prevention-oriented



Source: Skiba & Edl, 2004





- ## Authoritative School Climate Survey
1. **Structure** –
 - Strict but fair school discipline
 - High academic expectations
 2. **Support** – teachers supportive and helpful
 3. **Engagement** –students cognitively and affectively invested in school
 4. **Prevalence of teasing and bullying (PTB)**
 5. **Personal victimization**
 6. **Aggressive attitudes**
 7. **Character Values**

Authoritative School Climate Survey

Student Demographics

1. Gender, grade, race/ethnicity, English
2. Years in school and # schools attended
3. Grades last report card
4. School suspensions
5. Educational aspirations
6. Parent education

Authoritative School Climate Survey

Validity Screening

51. I am telling the truth on this survey.	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Agree	Strongly Agree
112. How many of the questions on this survey did you answer truthfully?				
All of them				
All but 1 or 2 of them				
Most of them				
Some of them				
Only a few or none of them				

Authoritative School Climate Survey

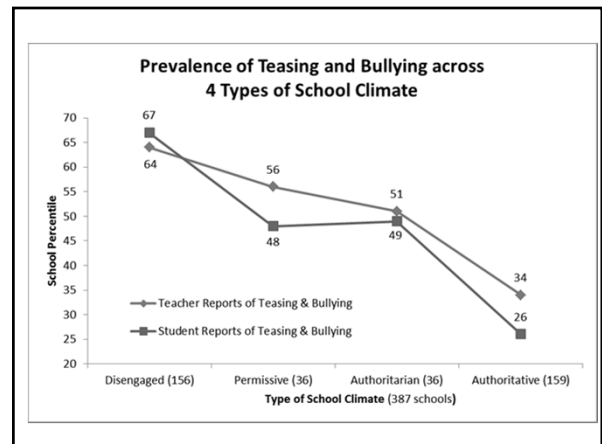
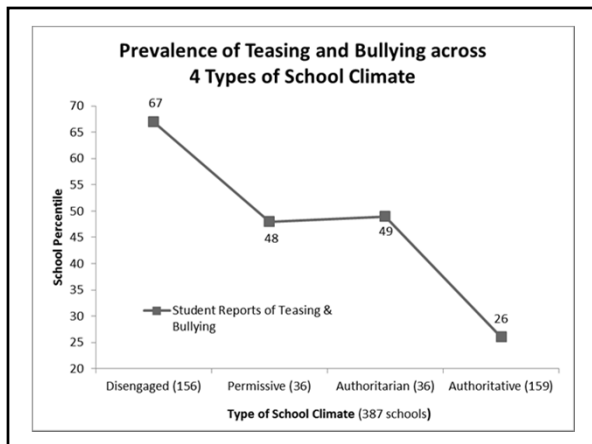
Validity Screening

- Removed 9% in middle and 6% in high school samples
- Reduces exaggerated answers that inflate estimates of risk behaviors
- Improves correspondence with independent criteria and teachers

How much teasing and bullying do we observe in schools with different levels of structure and support?

IV - 4 groups of schools

DV - School percentile in Prevalence of Teasing and Bullying



Journal of Educational Psychology
 2010, Vol. 102, No. 2, 403–409

© 2010 American Psychological Association
 0022-0665/10/\$12.00 DOI: 10.1037/a0019562

Authoritative School Discipline: High School Practices Associated With Lower Bullying and Victimization

Anne Gregory, Dewey Cornell, Xitao Fan, Peter Sheras, Tse-Hua Shih, and Francis Huang
 University of Virginia

In this study we examined authoritative discipline theory, which posits that 2 complementary aspects of school climate—structure and support—are important for adolescents' safety in school. Using a statewide sample of over 7,500 ninth-grade students and 2,000 teachers randomly selected from 290 high schools, we showed, using hierarchical linear modeling, that consistent enforcement of school discipline (structure) and availability of caring adults (support) were associated with school safety. Structure and support were associated with less bullying and victimization after we controlled for size of school enrollment and the proportion of ethnic minority and low-income students. These findings suggest that discipline practices should not be polarized into a "get tough" versus "give support" debate because both structure and support contribute to school safety for adolescents.

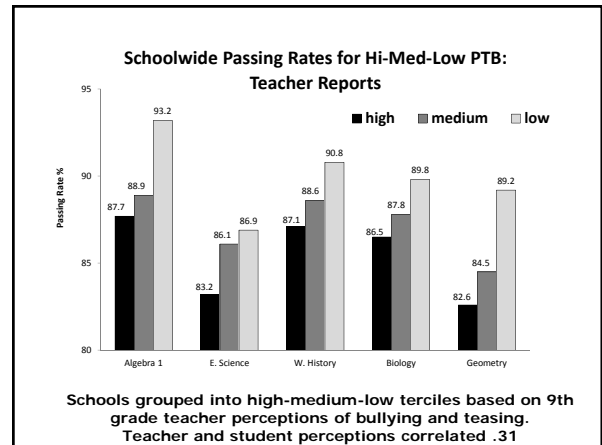
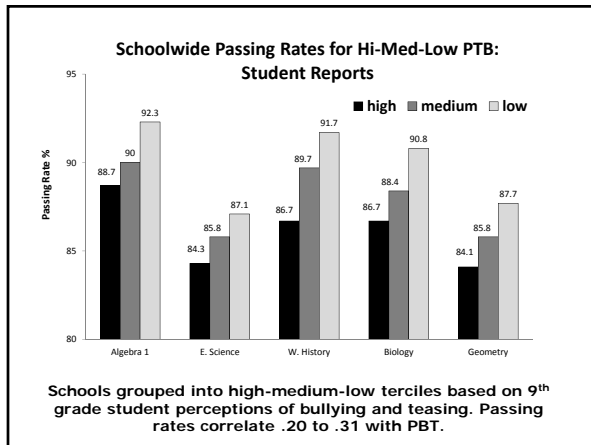
Prior study of 9th grade

Virginia High School Safety Study Links Bullying to Test Performance

Bullying and teasing reported by 9th grade students and teachers predicted schoolwide SOL passing rates.

- Algebra I
- Earth Science
- World history
- Biology
- Geometry

Findings controlled for the proportion of minority students in the school, student poverty, or school size.



Virginia High School Safety Study Links Bullying to Dropout Rates

Journal of Educational Psychology
 © 2012 American Psychological Association
 0022-0665/12/\$12.00 DOI: 10.1037/a0028005

Perceived Prevalence of Teasing and Bullying Predicts High School Dropout Rates

Dewey Cornell
 University of Virginia

Anne Gregory
 Rutgers University

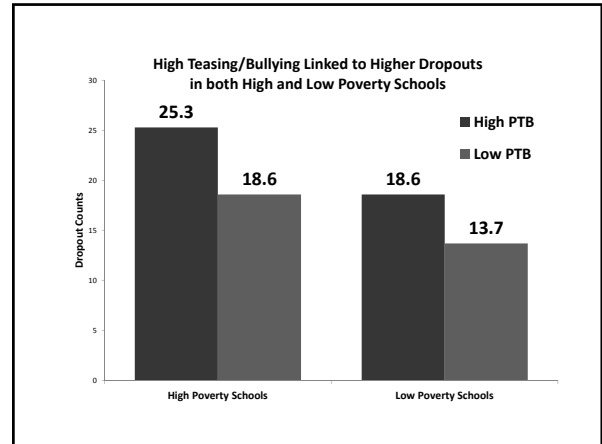
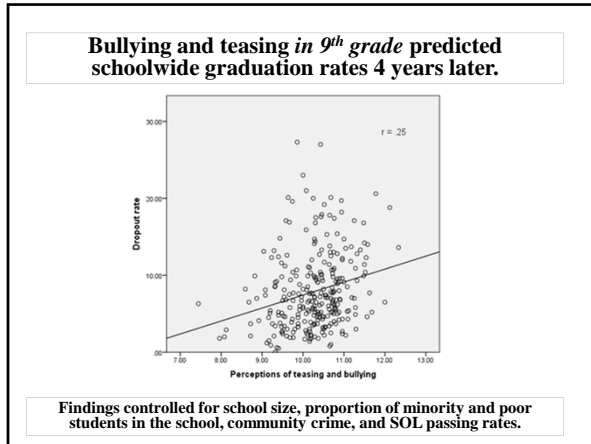
Francis Huang
 University of Virginia

Xitao Fan
 University of Macau

This prospective study of 276 Virginia public high schools found that the prevalence of teasing and bullying (PTB) as perceived by both 9th-grade students and teachers was predictive of dropout rates for this cohort 4 years later. Negative binomial regression indicated that one standard deviation increases in student- and teacher-reported PTB were associated with 16.5% and 10.8% increases in the number of dropouts, respectively, after controlling for the effects of other predictors, including school size, student body poverty and minority composition, community crime rates, and performance on standardized achievement testing. The predictive values of student and teacher perceptions of PTB were comparable in magnitude to the predictive values for other commonly recognized correlates of dropout rates. These results provide new evidence that the prevalence of peer victimization in high school is an important factor in high school academic performance.

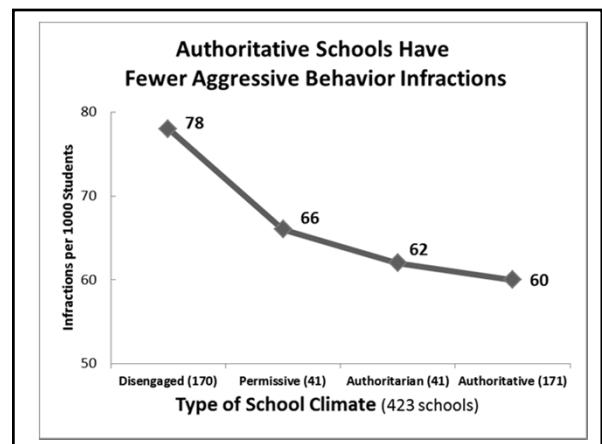
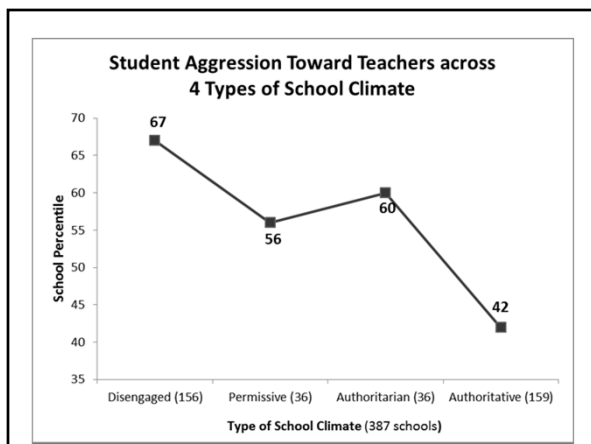
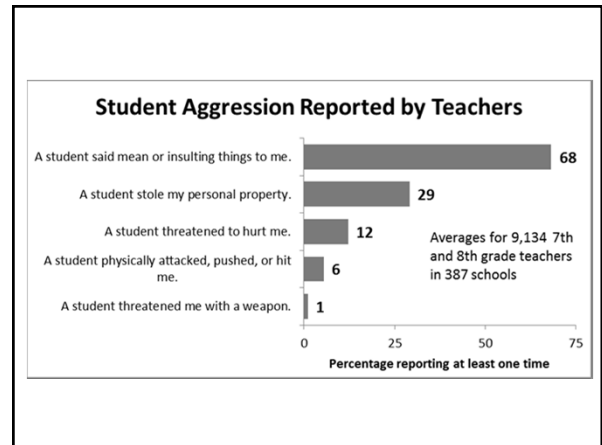
Perceived Prevalence of Teasing and Bullying Predicts High School Dropout Rates

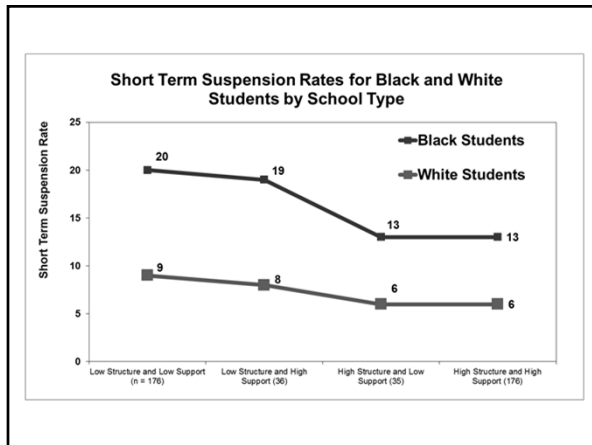
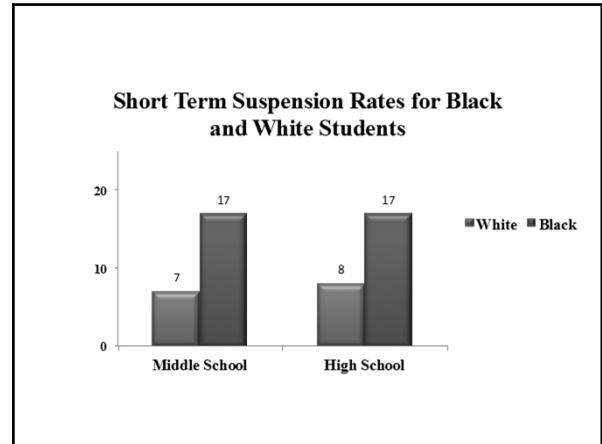
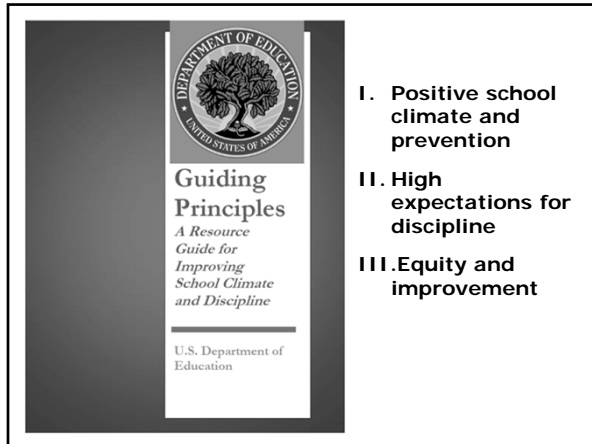
- 9th grade student and teacher perceptions of the prevalence of bullying and teasing
- Cumulative dropout rate over 4 years
- Controlled for school demographics and SOL test performance



Bullying and Teasing are the Broken Windows of School Climate

BROKEN WINDOW THEORY
 Without order and care, the community deteriorates





Schools with high structure and high support:

- Lower bullying and teasing
- Teachers report less mistreatment by students
- Lower schoolwide suspension rates

Schools with high structure and high support:

Findings are consistent across schools varying in

- School size
- Student poverty %
- Minority students %
- Urbanicity

Virginia Secondary School Climate Study

In collaboration:

- Virginia Department of Education
- Virginia Department of Criminal Justice Services and Center for School Safety

This project was supported by Grant #2012-JF-FX-0062 awarded by the Office of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention, Office of Justice Programs, U.S. Department of Justice. The opinions, findings, and conclusions or recommendations expressed in this publication are those of the author and do not necessarily reflect those of the Department of Justice.

Virginia Youth Violence Project

YVP Team Conducting Statewide School Climate and Safety Study
Our team of faculty and graduate students conducts research on effective methods and policies for youth violence prevention and school safety.

LATEST NEWS
New Report Shows Racial Disparities in Virginia School Suspensions, Other Discipline
Study: VA Schools Suspended Black Male Students at Twice the Rate of White Males
The YVP Contributes to APA Report on Gun Violence
Report: Social Assessment Must Be Effective Way to Prevent Gun Violence
Council Lapped for View on School Lockdown Drills
Article Praises for Teaching and Practice School Climate in VA Middle Schools

CONTACT
Virginia Youth Violence Project
Curry School of Education
P.O. Box 881276

dcornell@virginia.edu