Implement systematic culture and climate strategies

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A COMMUNITY OF BELIEVERS GETTING BACK TO BASICS

Our Strength is Our Team
Atlanta's students will have effective and engaged teachers, leaders, and staff.
➤ Increase concentration of highly-effective teachers and leaders
➤ Prioritize engagement and retention for staff
➤ Grow and promote strong teachers, leaders, and staff

Our Responsibility Is Shared
Atlanta's students will have supportive families, communities, and partners.
➤ Build meaningful partnerships
➤ Expand Atlanta Partners for Education (APFE) impact
➤ Increase access and engagement for families and communities

Our System Is Efficient & Effective
Atlanta's students will have the schools and resources they need to succeed.
➤ Maximize facility usage for the student and community good
➤ Leverage data to drive strategic financial investments
➤ Implement sustainability initiatives

We Are Strengthening Our Instructional Core
Atlanta's students will have high-quality instruction, materials, and targeted support.
➤ Implement high-quality, relevant, and engaging instructional materials and professional learning in all core content areas
➤ Target resources towards subgroups (eg. exceptional education, English learners, economically-disadvantaged)
➤ Accelerate early learning

We Are Caring For Every Child
Atlanta's students will have trusted, supportive adults meeting their unique needs.
➤ Expand strategies that reduce chronic absenteeism and disproportionate discipline
➤ Implement systematic culture and climate strategies
➤ Increase student access to trusted and reliable adults (eg. mentors, coaches, counselors)

We Are Sparking Student Curiosity
Atlanta's students will have access to explore and expand their passions and interests.
➤ Promote robust arts, athletics, world language, and enrichment offerings
➤ Expand access to high-interest and workforce-ready offerings (e.g. career programs and pathways, advanced coursework)
➤ Explore specialized and innovative school models (eg. School of the Arts)

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Focus Area: **We Are Caring For Every Child**

Objective: **Implement systematic culture and climate strategies**

Key Performance Indicators

Actual (2025)		Target (2026)	Target (2030)
20.2%	**School Climate** % of schools with 4 or 5 star climate rating*	**29.3%**	**50%**
43.6%	**Student-Staff Relationships** % of students feeling comfortable going to most or all of the adults in the school for help*	**47.9%**	**65%**
60%	**Sense of Belonging** % students who feel a sense of belonging**	**63%**	**75%**

* Includes most Charter and Partner Schools
** Includes some Charter and Partner Schools (participation optional)

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SY2023-2024 Climate Star Rating

Components

Attendance

For students: the percentage of students absent less than 10% of enrolled days. For teachers, staff, and admin: total leave days divided by total attendance days.

Discipline

Disciplinary actions are weighted and given a point value. The final score is an inverse of weighted suspension rate and total enrollment: higher scores = fewer disciplinary actions.

Safe & Substance Free

Recorded incidents are divided into groups, and calculated with responses to student surveys (only Middle and High schools use survey responses)

Climate Perception

Survey responses are coded and averaged by group (students, parents, and personnel). A 75% participation rate is required for students and personnel responses to be included.

Climate Star Rating is a multi-component measure of attendance, discipline, and climate survey responses. In SY2024-2025, the Georgia Student Health Survey was replaced by the Georgia School Climate Survey, and the Climate Star Rating calculation will be updated as well. The SY2024-2025 ratings and calculation guide have not yet been released.

System	% 4 or 5 Stars
State	59.3%
Atlanta Public Schools	20.2%
DeKalb County	37.5%
Douglas County	17.7%
Gwinnett County	88.4%
Cobb County	67.6%
Fulton County	72.8%
Clayton County	65.7%
Marietta City	45.5%

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Strategies

1 Build leader capacity to shape positive school culture and climate

2 Create a safe and welcoming environment for all

3 Increase opportunities for students to feel heard and valued

Strategy 1: Build leader capacity to shape positive school culture and climate

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Current Actions

1 **Coaching & Mentoring**
Provide leadership coaching and mentorship, grounded in data

2 **Systems & Routines**
Work with principals to develop and monitor systems and routines for adults and students

3 **Bright Spots**
Share best practices during cluster-level principal meetings

4 **Cluster Support**
Provide a systematic approach to leverage cluster support teams in implementing cluster support plans

5 **Data-Driven Decision Making**
Promote data-driven decision making through surveys, feedback, and analysis

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1 **Build leader capacity to shape positive school culture and climate**

Next Steps

	Expected Completion
Align and leverage the specific roles and responsibilities of the student support team directly with cluster-wide and school specific needs and priorities.	**Ongoing**
Continue professional development (Restorative Practices and De Escalation Techniques) and leadership coaching.	**Ongoing**

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Strategy 2:
Create a safe and welcoming environment for all

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Create a safe and welcoming environment for all

Actions

Current State

Decline in calls for service across 4 of the 9 clusters.

Calls (August/September 2024 to 2025)
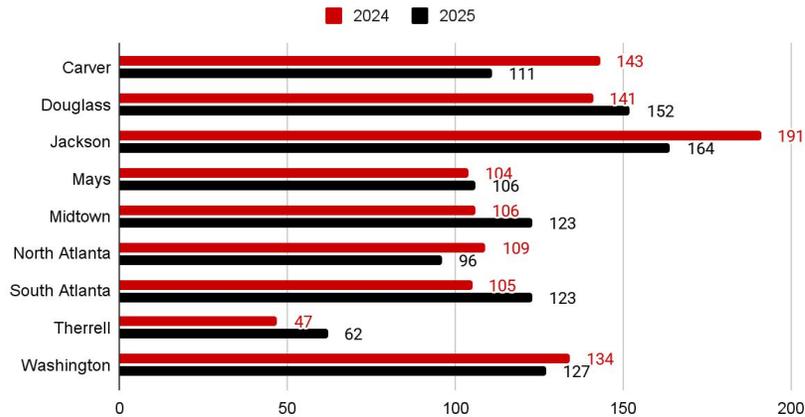
Down 52% Overall

Reduction in arrests in Carver, Douglass, Jackson, Mays, North Atlanta, and South Atlanta. Consistent data for Midtown, Therrell and Washington.

Safe

- SRO Training on Special Education
- Elementary SRO's*
- Security Vestibules/Raptor
- Talk it Out
- Cell Phone Use/Access
- Suicide Prevention Support*
- Safety Team & Safety Plan
- Centegix
- Securly

- Say Something Anonymous Reporting
- MOUs with APD/AFRD
- AED Implementation & Training
- Deployment of K9s
- Drone Pilots for Large Outdoor Activities
- Coordination with APD on Gang ID and Deterrence
- District-wide Safety Assessment
- Tourniquets and Narcan

* Recommendations from Safety & Security Task Force

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Current State

SY2024-2025 Family Engagement Survey
Warm and Welcoming Environments
% of respondents choosing 'Somewhat Agree' or 'Strongly Agree'

87.5% I feel welcome at my child's school.

87.5% My child's school is a safe place to learn.

86.4% My child feels a sense of belonging in the school community.

84.9% I would recommend this school to family and friends with children.

87.9% My child's school respects students of different backgrounds, including race, language, ethnicity, and religion.

Students

How many adults do you feel comfortable going to for help?	46.5%
How many adults show respect toward students?	64.4%
How many adults show they care about students?	65.5%

Teachers/Staff

How safe do you feel?	73.8%
How available are school leaders during work hours when you have an immediate need?	72.0%
How supportive are school leaders of staff members?	73.1%
How well do school leaders follow through on addressing staff concerns?	67.4%

Families

If you had a school concern, How comfortable would you feel going to your child's teacher?	81.6%
If you had a school concern, How comfortable would you feel going to school leaders?	77.2%
How fast does your child's school respond to your phone calls or emails?	78.2%
How confident are you that your child's school is a safe place?	74.1%
How respected do you feel when involved with your child's school?	82.8%
How welcome does school staff make you feel when you enter the school building?	84.4%
How positive have your interactions with staff been?	84.7%

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2 Create a safe and welcoming environment for all

Current Actions

Welcoming

- Culture of Customer Service Excellence On-Demand Course (Including additional leadership module)
- In-person, Customizable Training Experience to Address Specific Opportunities
- Implement Customer Service training as part of onboarding

Next Steps

	Expected Completion
Build community with our newly implemented Elementary School Resource Officers	Ongoing
Build capacity of school leaders and staff to deepen welcoming practices	Ongoing
Build on recommendations from Safety & Security Task Force and Safe Havens International	Ongoing
Implement signal boosters for police radios for signal improvement	Ongoing

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Strategy 3:
Increase opportunities for students to feel heard and valued

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Current Actions

- Maintaining and prioritizing the work of and engagement with the **Student Advisory Council** (SAC). For SY25-26 a delegate from Phoenix Academy was added.

- **Review and respond to student responses on the Georgia Student Health Survey**

- Leveraging the **Student Government Associations (SGA) and Student Advisory groups** as thought partners to support school culture.

- Creation of the **Middle School Leadership Alliance** (MSLA).

- **Clubs, teams, and activities** created based on student interest.

- Increase students serving on **GO Teams**.

- **Community Building** opportunities for educators to create inclusive discussion structures.

- **Opportunities** for students to activate their voices (check-in, actively listen, feel affirmed, and contribute to decisions-making)

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Next Steps

	Expected Completion
Leverage ongoing feedback through surveys and focus groups to increase belonging	**TBD**
Track and report the status of the SY25-26 SAC Recommendations	**May 2026**
Upon approval, student representative(s) from SAC will participate in the ABOE Work Sessions and Policy Committee Meetings	**January 2026**
Continue with the Student Bill of Rights (SBR) pilot with intended SY26-27 district-wide adoption	**April 2026**
Increase student interactions with trusted and reliable adults	**Ongoing**

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