Georgia's School Climate Journey

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Georgia Department of Education

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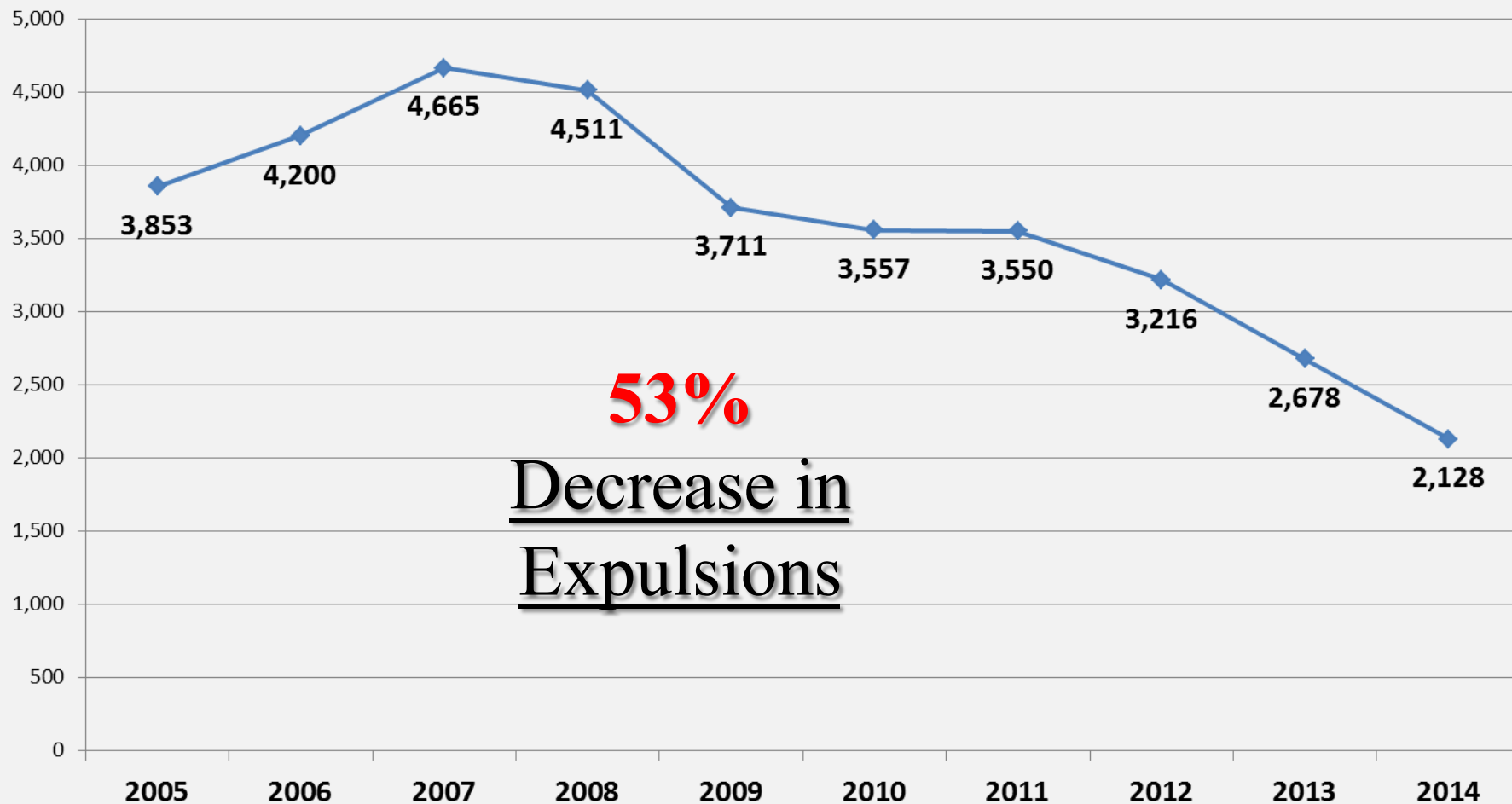
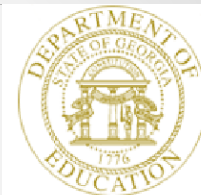*"A journey seldom takes you where you expected to go."*
-J.R.R. Tolkien

"Experts often possess more data than judgment."
-Colin Powell

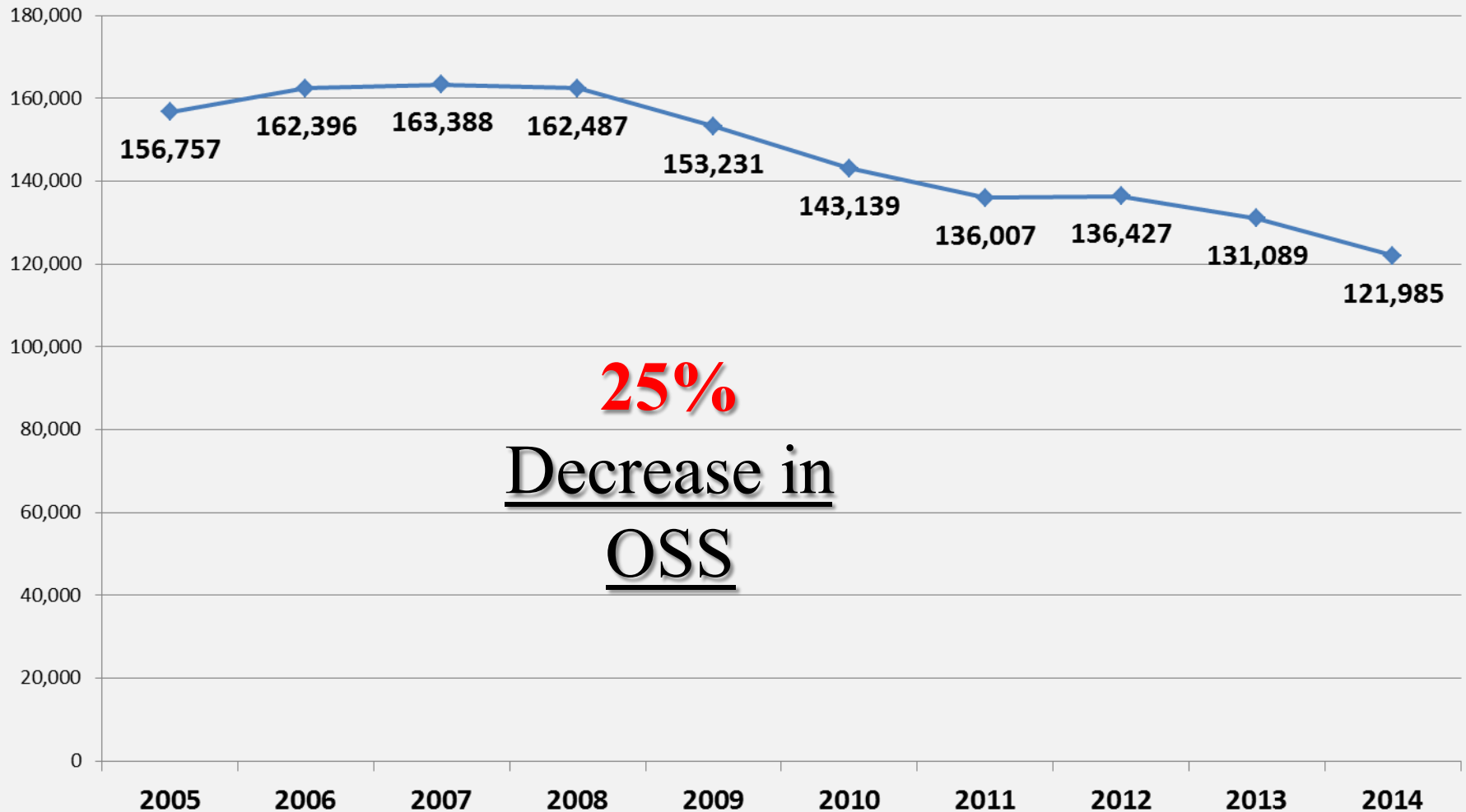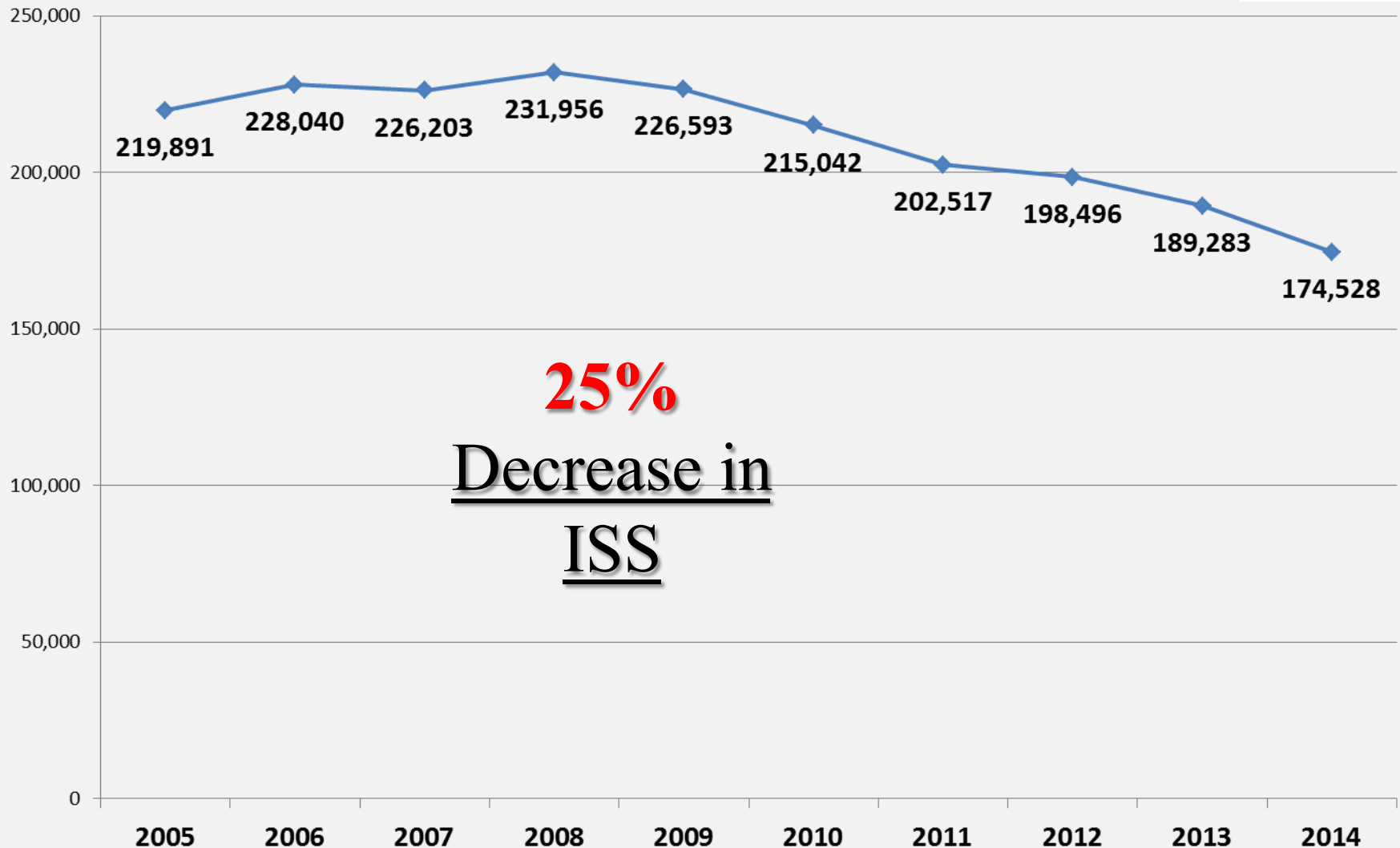State of Georgia
Discipline Action - Expulsion
Total Number of Students

53% Decrease in Expulsions

3,853 | 4,200 | 4,665 | 4,511 | 3,711 | 3,557 | 3,550 | 3,216 | 2,678 | 2,128

2005 | 2006 | 2007 | 2008 | 2009 | 2010 | 2011 | 2012 | 2013 | 2014

State of Georgia
Discipline Action - In-School Suspension
Total Number of Students

219,891 — 228,040 — 226,203 — 231,956 — 226,593 — 215,042 — 202,517 — 198,496 — 189,283 — 174,528

25%
Decrease in ISS

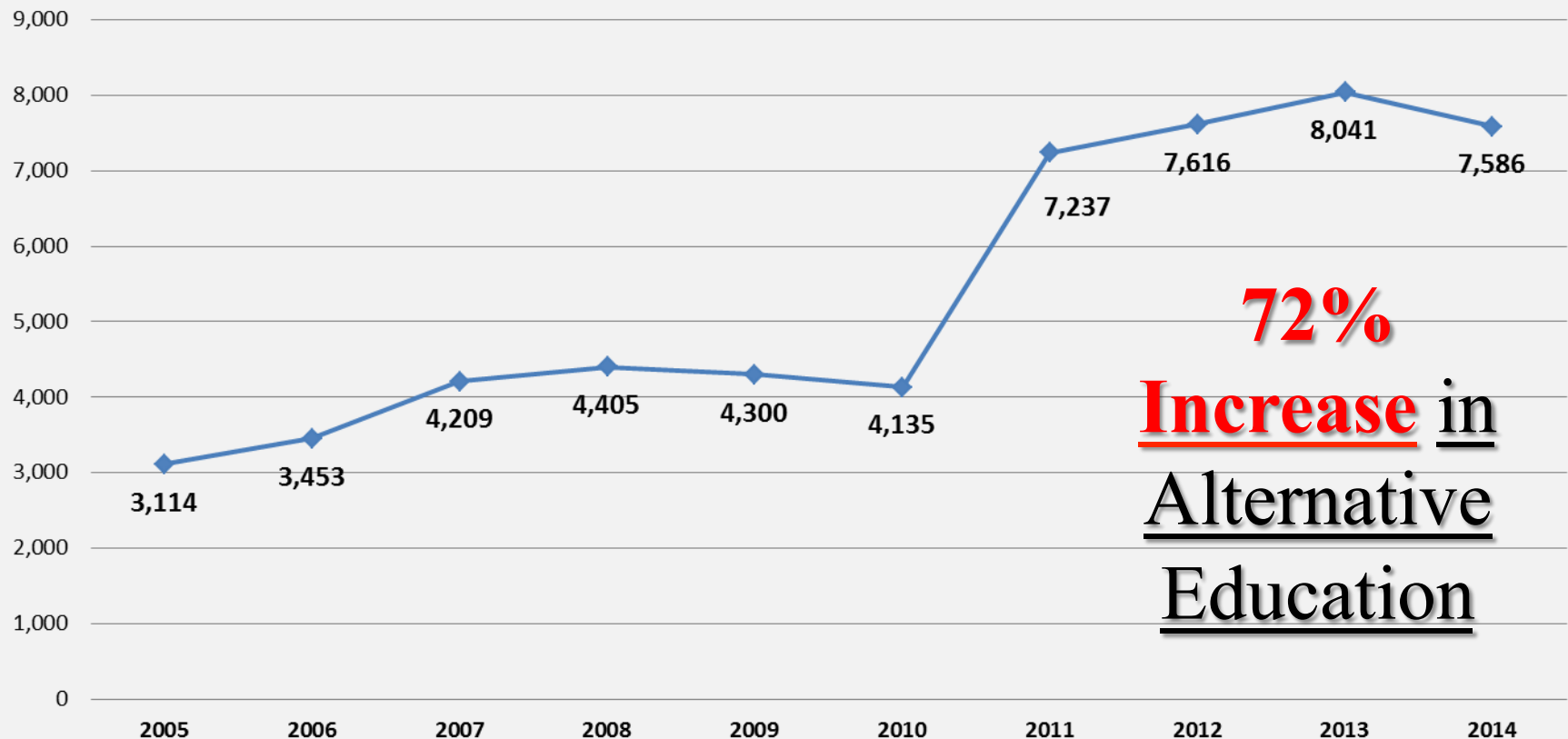2005 2006 2007 2008 2009 2010 2011 2012 2013 2014
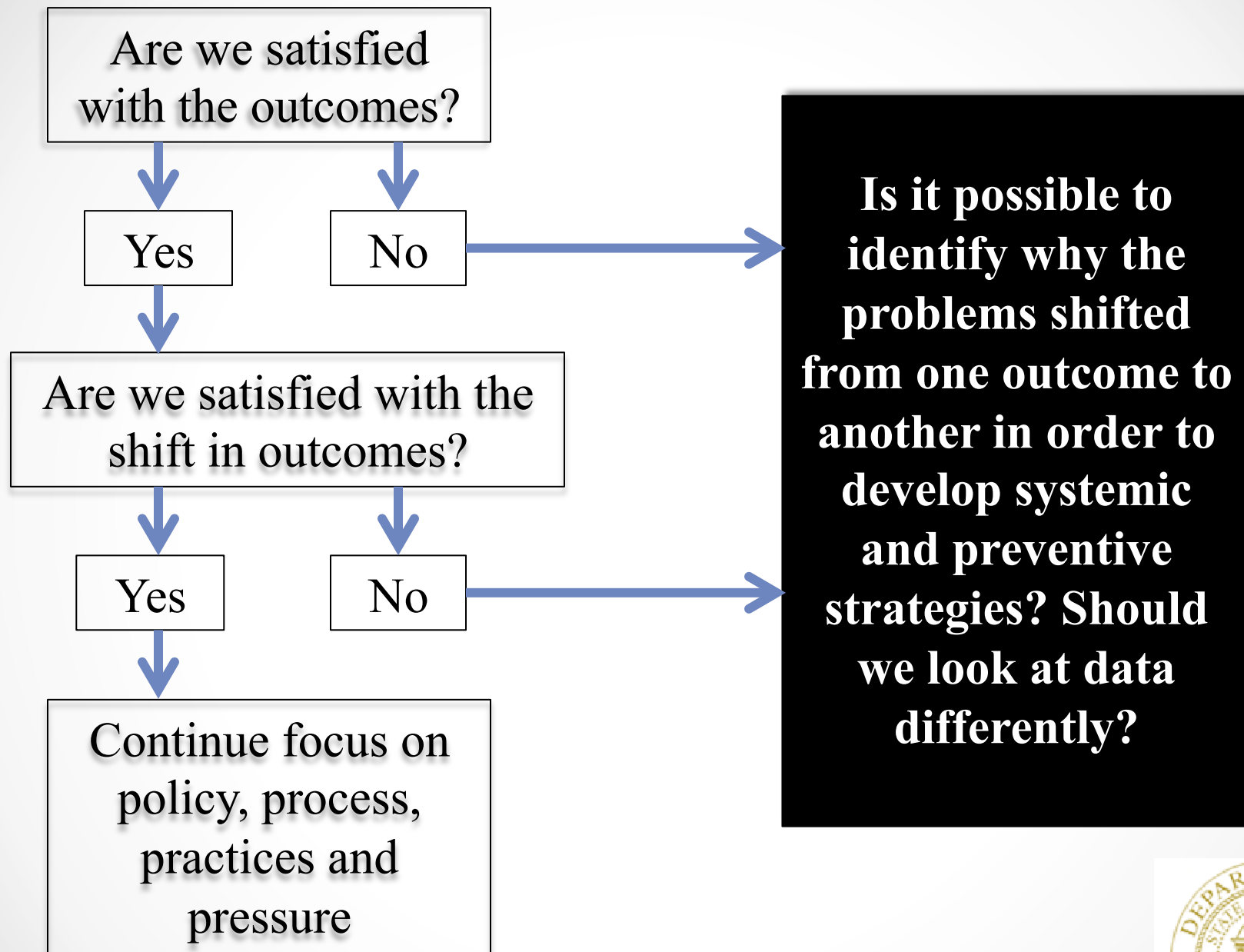
Changes

- **Policy**
  - Minimize Zero Tolerance
- **Process**
  - Discipline hearings
- **Practices**
  - Communicate policy and process; 1-5 incident to 1-5 consequence reporting
- **Pressure**
  - *"Quit suspending so many students."*

Are policies, processes, practices, and pressure sufficient to address the issues?

Expulsions decreased **53%** State of Georgia
OSS decreased **25%** Discipline Action -
ISS decreased **25%** Alternative School - Disruptive

72% Increase in Alternative Education

Policies, Processes, Practices, and Pressure
are sometimes not sufficient to address the issues.

State of Georgia Discipline Action - Alternative School - Disruptive

Year	Value
2005	3,114
2006	3,453
2007	4,209
2008	4,405
2009	4,300
2010	4,135
2011	7,237
2012	7,616
2013	8,041
2014	7,586

Are we satisfied with the outcomes?

Yes

No

Are we satisfied with the shift in outcomes?

Yes

No

Continue focus on policy, process, practices and pressure

Is it possible to identify why the problems shifted from one outcome to another in order to develop systemic and preventive strategies? Should we look at data differently?

*If you change the way you look at things,
the things you look at change.*

Look at the Issues from Epidemiological Basics

Diseases do not occur by chance: there are always determinants for the disease to occur.

Diseases are not distributed at random: distribution is related to risks factors that need to be studied for the population in order to identify solutions.

Disruptive behaviors do not occur by chance: there are always determinants for the disruptive behavior to occur.

Disruptive behaviors are not distributed at random: distribution is related to risks factors that need to be studied for the population in order to identify solutions.

Epidemiology

To provide a basis for developing surveillance measures and prevention procedures for groups <u>and</u> at-risk populations, and to identify causation and then strategies that impact both groups and populations, thereby also allowing individual treatments to be effective.

This represents a shift from targeted reactions to population-based prevention and intervention.
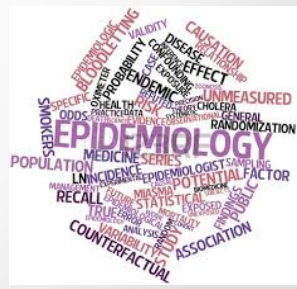
Surveillance of Data

- Student survey (GSHS 2.0)
- Parent survey
- School staff survey
- Discipline data
- Attendance data
- Achievement data (grade level reading)
- Trend and trajectory data

What matters the most for groups, populations, and individuals is school climate: _safety_, _relationships_, _teaching and learning_, _institutional environment_

SCHOOL CLIMATE MATTERS

- Georgia Department of Education commissioned a study with the ***Center for School Safety, School Climate and Classroom Management at Georgia State University***.
- The study found that ***outside factors*** (i.e., location, student demographics) ***did not have a significant bearing*** on the climate inside the school building.
- The study found that ***school climate*** was primarily determined by the ***personal interactions of the teachers and leaders in the school*** – <u>meaning that impacting the climate of a school was within the control of the school</u>.

- The study also showed that *school climate has a significant impact on student behavioral outcomes*.
- A **1 percent improvement in school climate** was found to decrease discipline actions per student by 1.35 percent **and** decrease suspension days per student.
- A **1 percent improvement in school climate** was found to increase student average daily attendance by 1.6 percent and improve performance on the Georgia Criterion Reference Competency Test from 2 to 5 percent.

- The study also found that *school climate is related to student attendance*:
  - ✓ A *1 percent decrease* in the number of school days attended predicts a 1.25 percent *increase* in the total number of juvenile crimes.
  - ✓ Conversely, a *5 percent increase* in student attendance leads to a *5 percent reduction* in juvenile crime.
- A GaDOE study found that a *9th grader who misses 15 days or more* of school is more than *50 percentage points less likely to graduate* than a student who misses five days or less.

School Climate

Culture

Norms

Values

Relationships
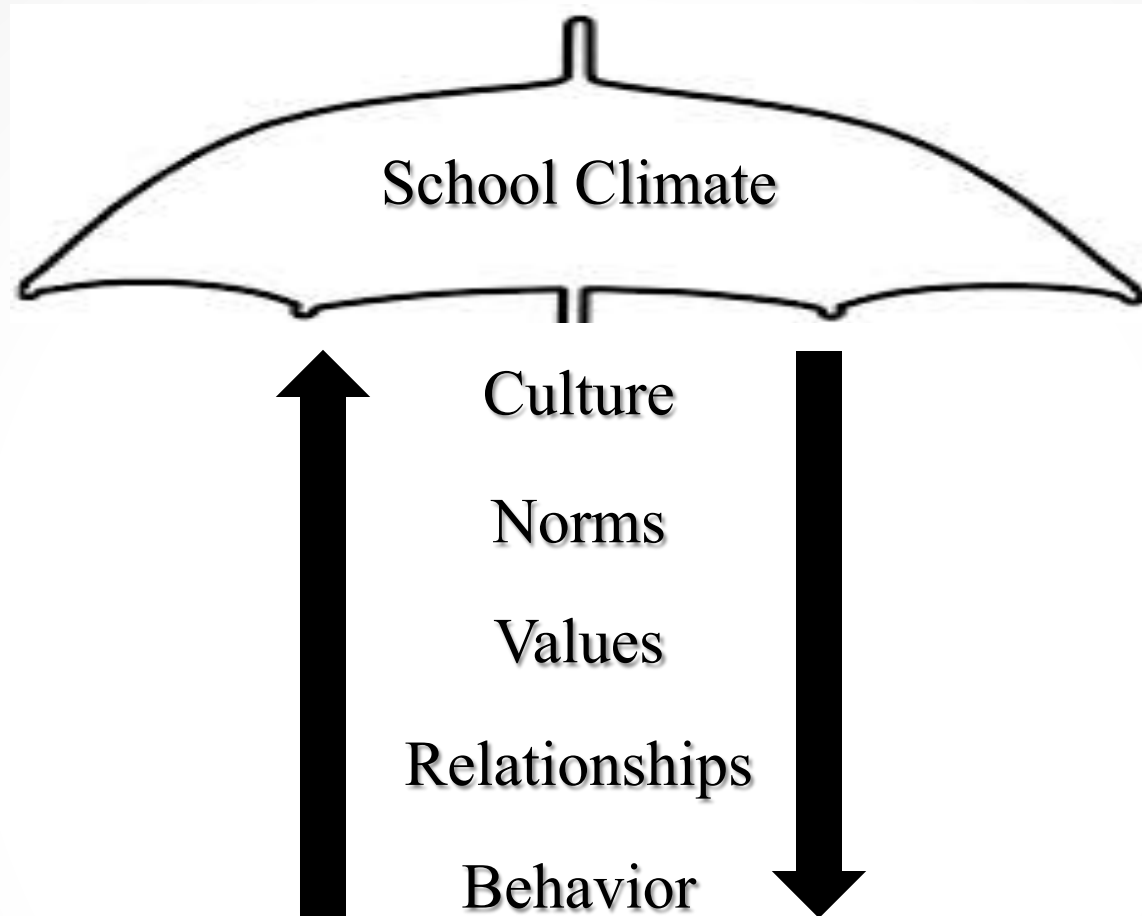
Behavior

Lesson #1: To change behavior, relationships have to change; to change relationships, values have to change; to change values, norms have to change; to change norms, culture has to change; to change culture, school climate has to change.
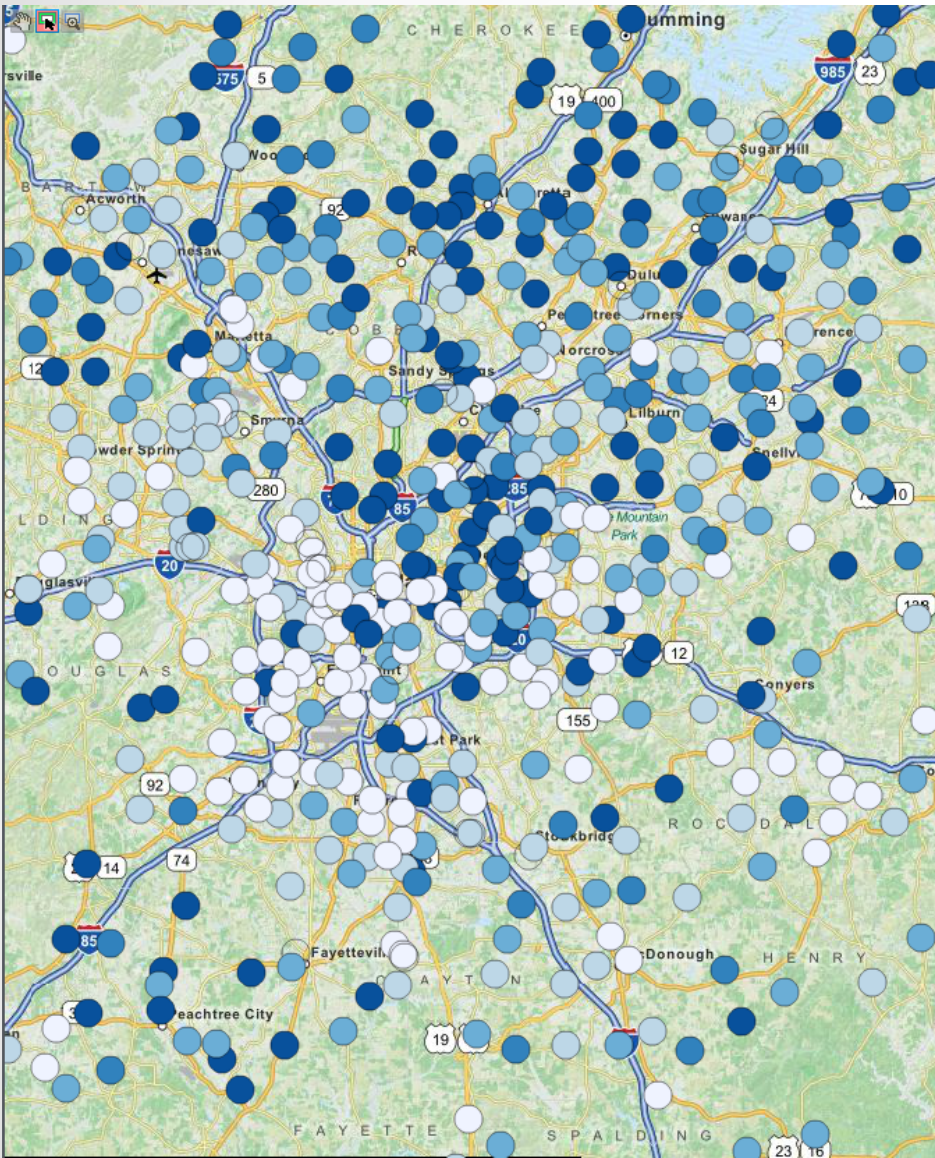
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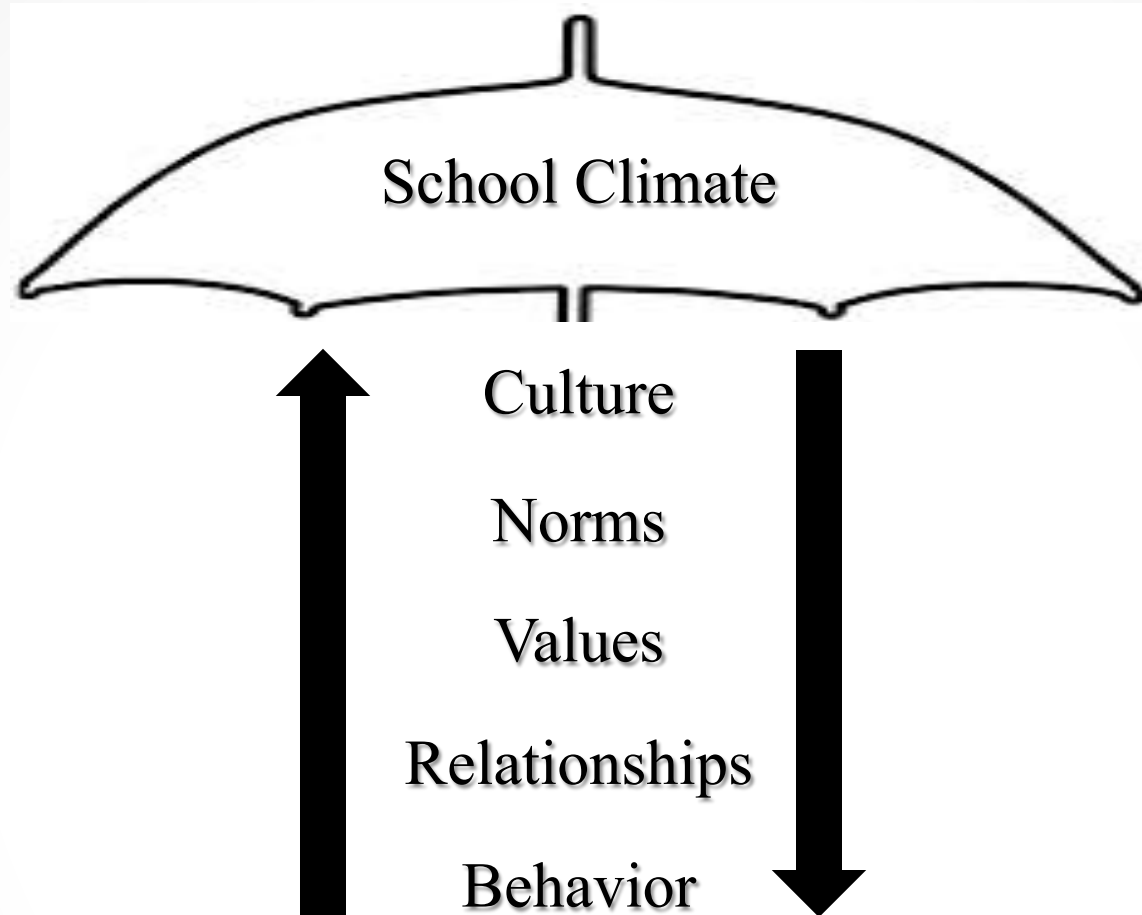
Lesson #2: The possible positive impacts of projects, programs, initiatives, and interventions are compromised, threatened, or weakened if implemented in a <u>school climate that is unstable.</u>
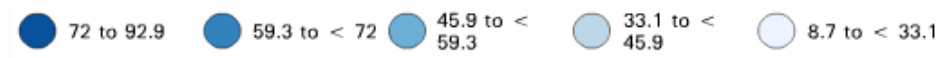
School Climate
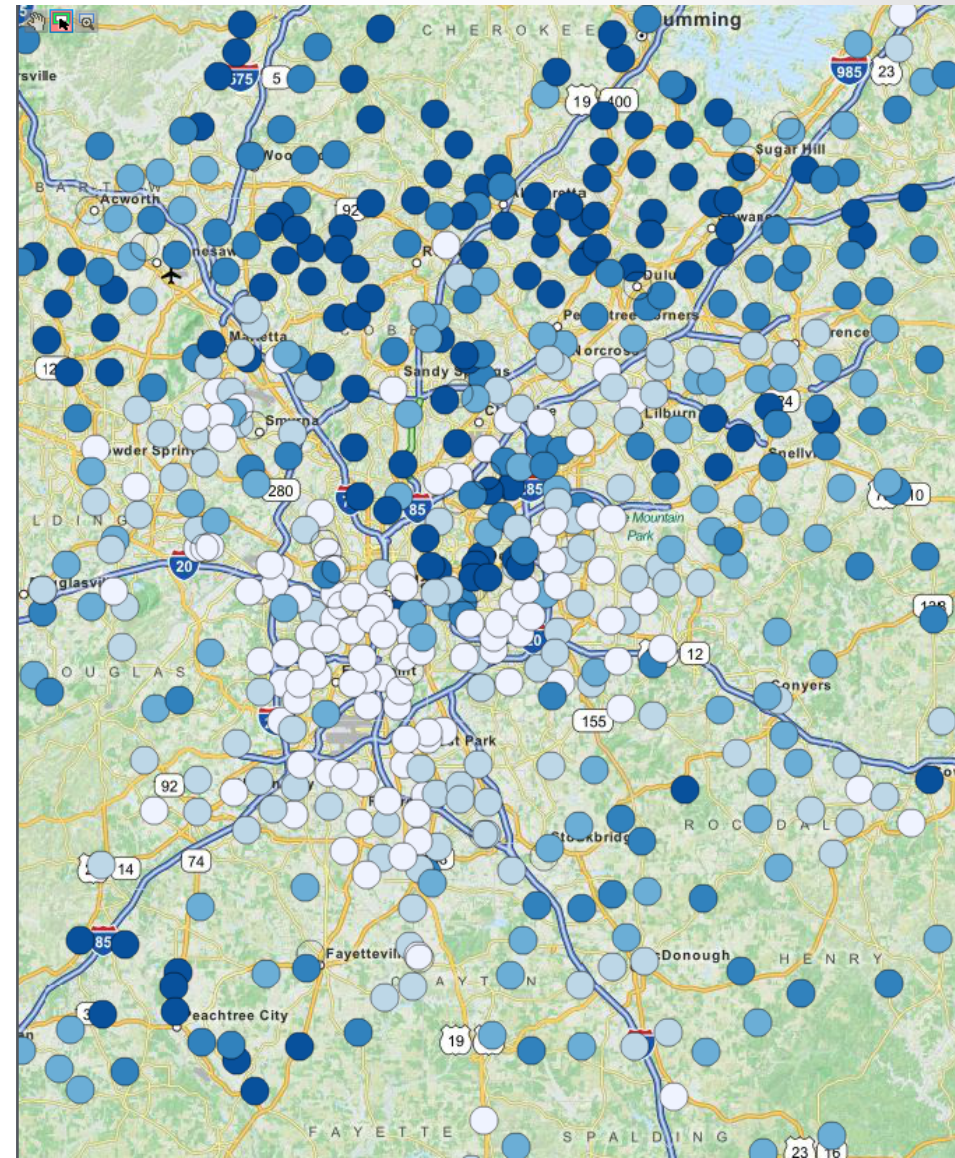
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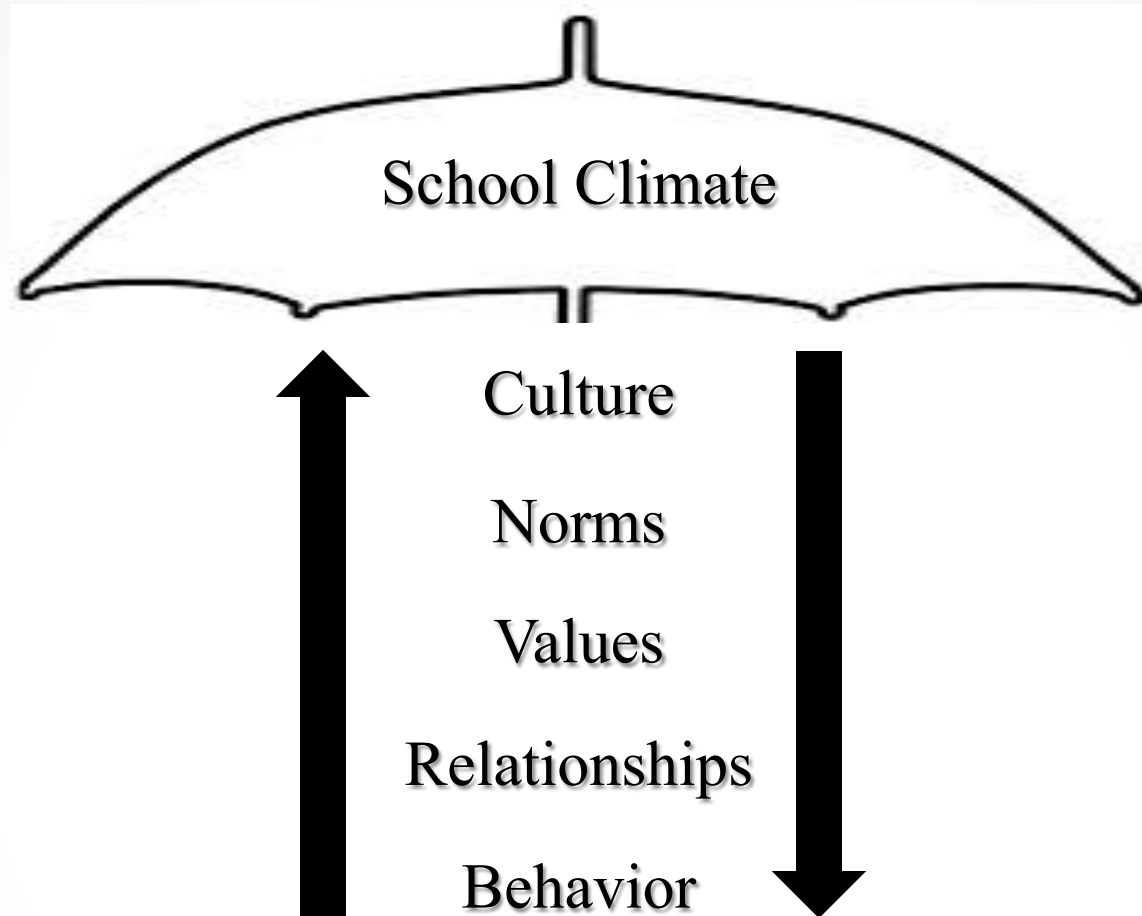
Lesson#3: Early access ("Early Warning") to identification and intervention, plus a positive school climate can minimize the prevalence of discipline problems and increase academic outcomes.

Suspensions, per 1,000, 3rd Grade, 2013
(Dark Blues are **lowest** Suspension Rate)

% Exceed, 3rd Grade Reading, 2013
(Dark Blues are **highest** Exceed Rate)

Legend (left map): 52.6 to 316.8 | 24.4 to < 52.6 | 10.4 to < 24.4 | 0 to < 10.4 | 0

Legend (right map): 72 to 92.9 | 59.3 to < 72 | 45.9 to < 59.3 | 33.1 to < 45.9 | 8.7 to < 33.1

School Climate's Impact

The Relationship Between School Climate and 3rd Grade Reading Proficiency
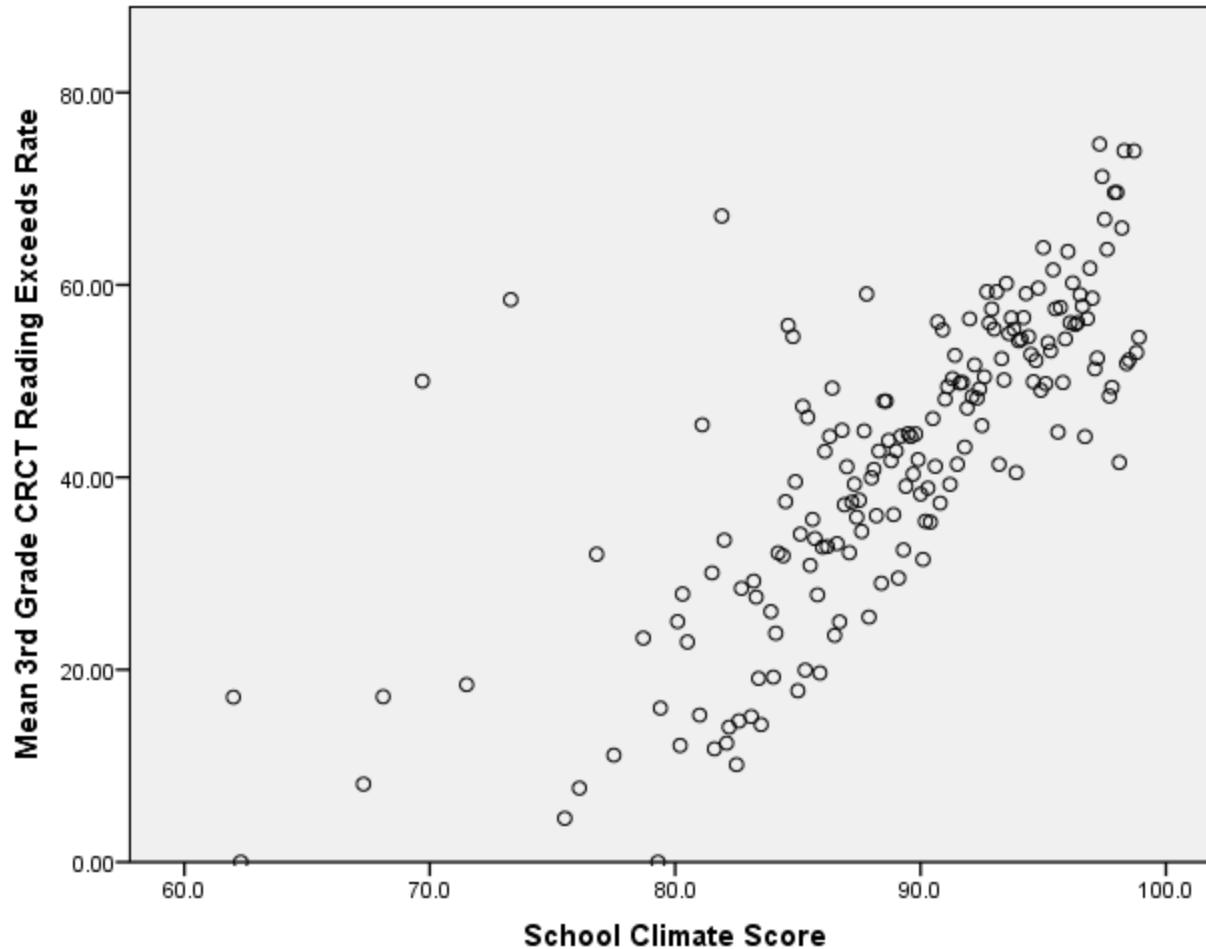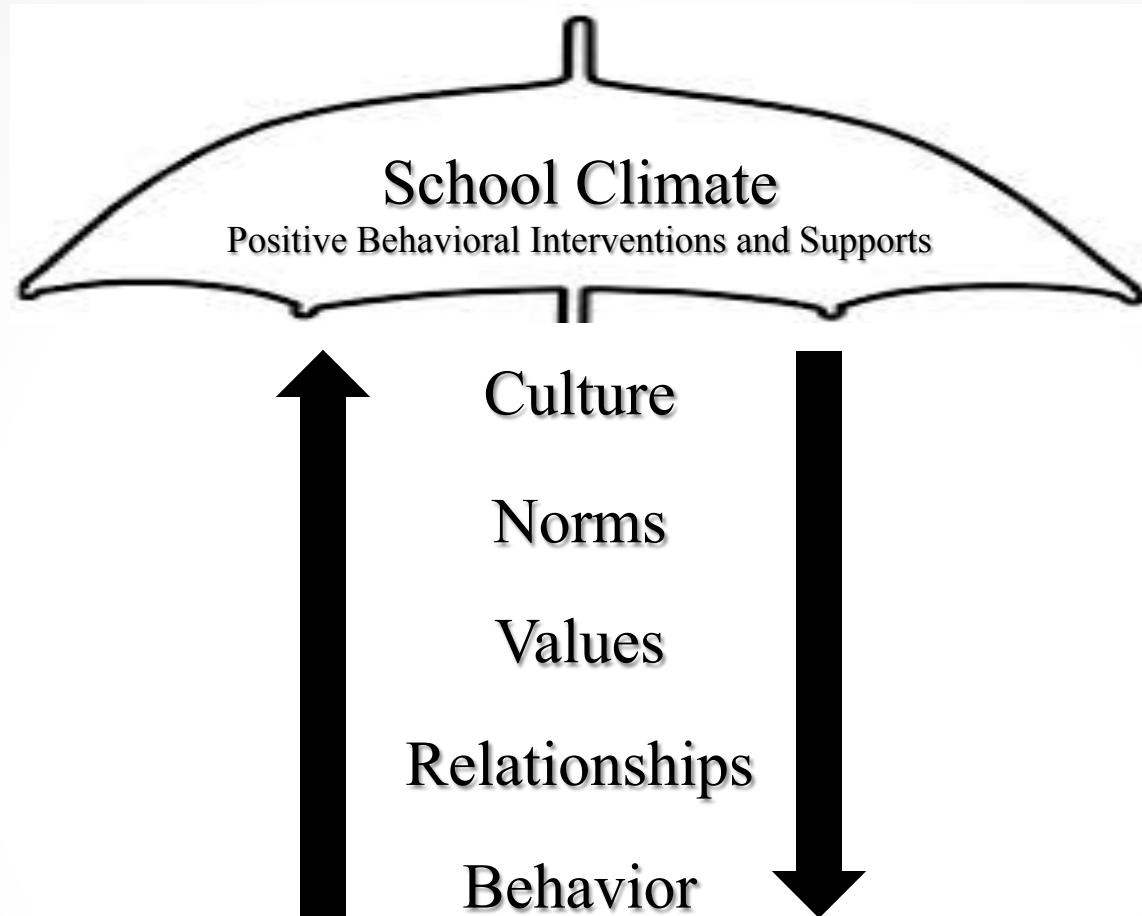
STUDENTS WHO DON'T READ PROFICIENTLY BY THE END OF THIRD GRADE ARE

4 TO 6 TIMES MORE LIKELY TO DROP OUT

OF HIGH SCHOOL COMPARED TO PROFICIENT READERS.

School Climate
Positive Behavioral Interventions and Supports

Culture

Norms

Values

Relationships

Behavior

Lesson#4: Outcomes in Georgia and research in diverse school settings support the use of Positive Behavioral Interventions and Supports (PBIS) as the most effective framework for improving school climate. PBIS focuses on population-based prevention and intervention and supports individual interventions.

School Climate
Positive Behavioral Interventions and Supports

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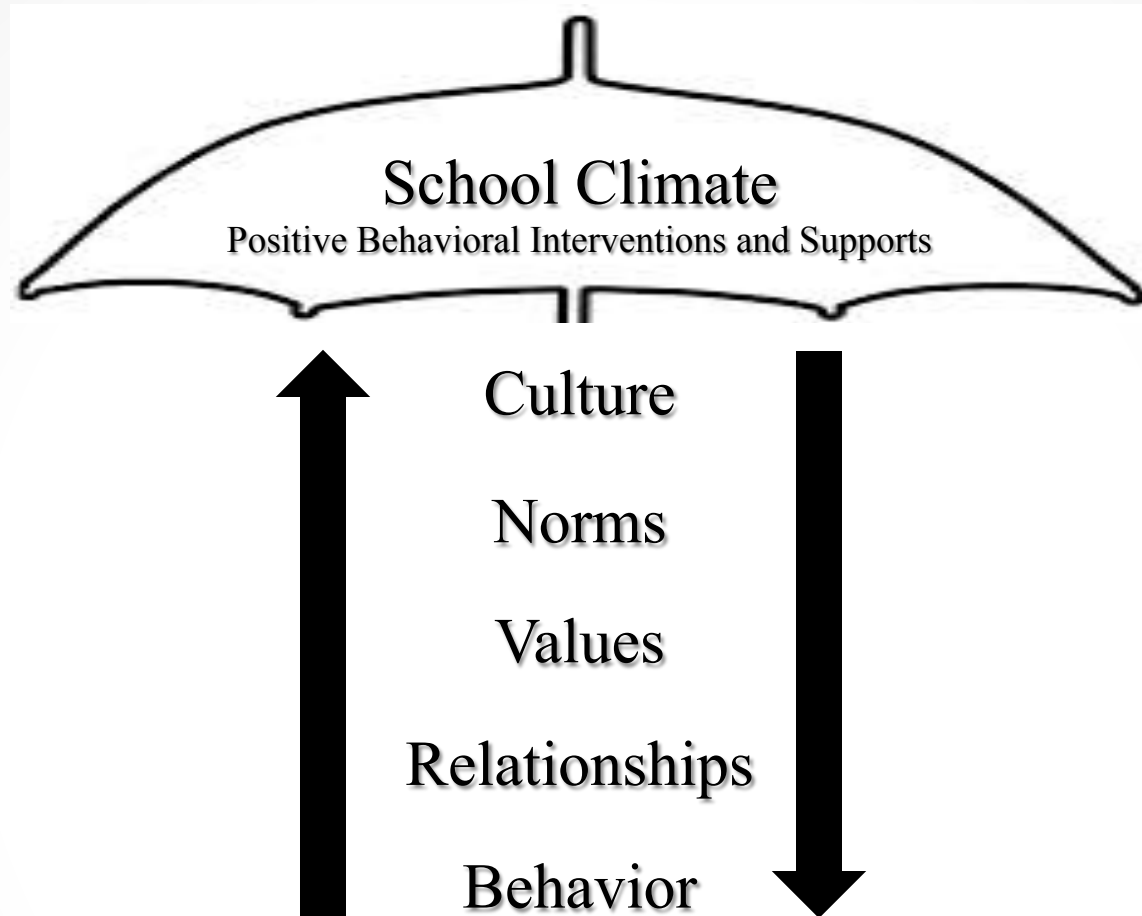
Lesson#5: The efforts to improve school climate through the PBIS frameworks must include a statewide delivery strategy that engages the strength and influence of the Regional Education Service Agencies (RESA) and puts the resources at the region, school district, and school level.

Expanded School Climate State Strategy

- PBIS in *early learning centers* and *K-12 schools*
- Link PBIS to *Response to Intervention*
- *Get Georgia Reading Campaign* includes Productive Learning Climate (*reading, discipline, and school success are linked*)
- Partnership with RESAs, Georgia Appleseed, Woodward Foundation and other public/private partnerships
- Programs/Strategies as Subsets of PBIS and School Climate:
  - o Restorative Justice
  - o De-escalation
  - o Peer Mediation
  - o Anti-Defamation League's *No Place for Hate*
  - o Anger Management
  - o Complex Trauma Training
  - o Mental Health First Aid Training

Georgia's School Climate Star Rating

*Every public school in Georgia receives a School Climate Star Rating

School Climate Star Rating Data Metrics (Determinants)

25%	25%	25%	25%
Student Survey **Parent Survey** **School Staff Survey**	**Student Discipline Data** *(discipline data and enrollment =weighted OSS rate)*	**Schoolwide Attendance Data** *(student, staff, teachers)*	**Survey + Discipline Data** *(Ratio of drugs, alcohol, bullying, & dangerous incidents)*

School Climate Star Rating (Scale 1-5: Negative to Positive)

*Schools have access to each School Climate Star Rating metric, because the Rating is intended to be prescriptive __not__ punitive. Improvement of school climate depends on effective change of each determinant.

Additional School Climate Rating Considerations
Schools will either gain or lose points based on these factors:

- Gains Points: Implements an evidence-based program and shows improvement in one of the four dimensions of school climate (safety, relationships, teaching and learning, institutional environment)

- Loses Points: Has two consecutive years of Unsafe School Choice Option (USCO) violations – "Persistently Dangerous."

- Loses Points: Has two consecutive years of disciplinary disproportionality of any subgroup of students.

"A positive school climate makes everything possible."

-Justin Patchin

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