

Guidance for Selecting a District Climate Coordinator(s)

Research suggests that meaningful and sustainable school change is dependent on the systems and supports in which schools are embedded (Elias, Zins, Graczyk, & Weissberg, 2003). District leadership can support schools in facilitating positive change initiatives by coordinating and centralizing access to data-based systems and training; opening communication channels for effectively and efficiently sharing knowledge, information, and outreach with school stakeholders; and promoting a collective vision and mission (Freeman, Miller, & Newcomer, 2015). Designating a District Climate Coordinator(s) (DCC) is an essential step in effectively scaling up school climate change efforts and supporting sustainable change over time.

Staff working at the district level such as Superintendent, Assistant Superintendents, Supervisors, Directors, and/or Coordinators are well-positioned for the role of District Climate Coordinator (DCC). School-level staff, such as School Principals, *cannot* be designated as DCC given their time and expertise will be focused on school-level climate change efforts. The New Jersey School Climate Improvement (NJ SCI) Platform will enable the appointed DCC(s) to help coach School Climate Leadership Teams (SCLTs) in participating schools through the stages of a data-driven change process. Knowledge, skills, interest, and/or expertise related to data collection and analysis, diversity, equity and inclusion, school culture and climate, or social and emotional learning (SEL) are essential for this role.

It is recommended that the District Climate Coordinator(s) **plan meetings with leaders of School Climate Leadership Teams at strategic times (at least 4 times a year) throughout the school year**, including during the launch of NJ SCI Administration, analysis of results, goal setting, and strategic planning around actions to address needs. *Depending on the size or configuration of your district and staff capacity, you may select more than one person to serve the role of DCC in order to provide effective supports for schools in coordinating climate improvement efforts.*

Initial tasks associated with this role to be completed in coordination with the Superintendent/CSA:

- Communicating with school principals/school leaders about the NJ SCI Survey and Platform and assessing interest in this opportunity; and
- Registering interested schools and inviting school principals from those schools to create an account via the NJ SCI Platform.

Ongoing responsibilities include:

- Advocating for district-level commitment to vision and values for school climate improvement and supporting alignment of goals and initiatives across schools within the district;
- Reviewing and understanding NJ SCI Survey data to better assess needs and priorities across the district to support school climate improvement planning;
- Coaching school-level leaders in their efforts to implement actions and activities related to a data-driven change process and supporting the development of related leadership competencies (e.g., School Climate Leadership Team development, data collection and analysis, and strategic planning);
- Communicating with community stakeholders regarding district-wide school climate efforts, including the facilitation of opportunities for voice and input at various stages;
- Coordinating allocation of resources across schools in the district for school climate efforts; and
- Communicating (as needed) with Rutgers SCTP staff regarding any district- and school-level needs.

When selecting an individual(s) for this role, consider the following competences:

- **Collaboration:** Ability to build rapport, value input and feedback from others, resolve conflicts, take others' perspectives, collaborate effectively with school-level stakeholders, and act as an advocate for the importance of this work with school community stakeholders (e.g., district leaders, BOE, families, etc.)
- **Assessment and Inquiry:** Ability to understand and synthesize data for facilitating effective data-driven action across the district and within schools
- **Leadership Coaching:** Ability to support the development of skills and capacity of school principals and School Climate Leadership Team members in order to support completion of actions associated with a data-driven change process
- **Group-Process Facilitation:** Ability to manage group development process among district-level stakeholders as well as school-level teams in order to promote collaborative communication, consensus-building, problem solving, and task completion
- **Equity-Focused:** Ability to understand organizational context and needs of diverse stakeholders throughout the process, as well as ensure diverse voices and perspectives are represented through meaningful participation and decision making related to school climate efforts