

Rhinebeck School District District Report

Comprehensive School Climate Inventory
(CSCI) Measuring the Climate for Learning

December 2017



Developed by the National School Climate Center (NSCC)
schoolclimate.org



I. Introduction

What is school climate?

- School climate refers to the quality of school life as it relates to norms and values, interpersonal relations and social interactions, and organizational processes and structures.
- The school climate sets the tone for all the learning and teaching done in the school environment, and is predictive of students' ability to learn and develop in healthy ways.
- All schools, like all people, have a range of strengths and weaknesses, as well as a distinctive vision for the kind of school they aspire to be.

Measuring school climate: the CSCI

- The CSCI (Comprehensive School Climate Inventory) is a scientifically developed survey based on research and theory defining what contributes to positive climates for learning.
- The CSCI measures the shared perceptions of the school community and reveals how the populations whose perceptions were measured (e.g. students, school personnel, and parents) feel about the school environment.

Who developed the CSCI?

- The CSCI was developed by the National School Climate Center (NSCC), a non-profit organization dedicated to measuring and improving the climate for learning in schools. NSCC's mission is to help schools integrate crucial social, emotional, and ethical learning with academic instruction to enhance student performance, prevent dropouts, reduce violence, and develop healthy and positively engaged adults.



DIMENSIONS	MAJOR INDICATORS
Safety	
1 Rules and Norms	Clearly communicated rules about physical violence, clearly communicated rules about verbal abuse, harassment, and teasing, clear and consistent norms and enforcement for adult intervention.
2 Physical Security	Students and adults feel safe from physical harm in the school.
3 Social-Emotional Security	Students feel safe from verbal abuse, teasing, and exclusion.
Teaching and Learning	
4 Support for Learning	Use of supportive teaching practices, such as: encouragement and constructive feedback, varied opportunities to demonstrate knowledge and skills, support for risk-taking and independent thinking, atmosphere conducive to dialogue and questioning, academic challenge, and individual attention.
5 Social and Civic Learning	Support for the development of social and civic knowledge, skills, and dispositions including: effective listening, conflict resolution, self-reflection, emotional regulation, empathy, personal responsibility, and ethical decision making.
Interpersonal Relationships	
6 Respect for Diversity	Mutual respect for individual differences (e.g. gender, race, culture, etc.) at all levels of the school—student-student, adult-student, adult-adult and overall norms for tolerance.
7 Social Support—Adults	Pattern of supportive and caring adult relationships for students, including high expectations for students' success, willingness to listen to students and to get to know them as individuals, and a personal concern for students' problems.
8 Social Support—Students	Pattern of supportive peer relationships for students, including friendships for socializing, for problems, for academic help, and for new students.
Institutional Environment	
9 School Connectedness-Engagement	Positive identification with the school; norms for broad participation in school life for students, staff, and families.
10 Physical Surroundings	Cleanliness, order, appeal of facilities; adequate resources and materials.
Social Media	
11 Social Media	Students feel safe from physical harm, verbal abuse/teasing, gossip, and exclusion when online or on electronic devices (ie: Facebook, Twitter, other social media platforms, by an email, text messaging, posting photo/video, etc.).
Staff Only	
12 Leadership	Administration creates and communicates a clear vision and is accessible and supportive of school staff development.
13 Professional Relationships	Positive attitudes and relationships among school staff that support effectively working and learning together.
schoolclimate.org The 13 Dimensions of School Climate Measured	

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Introduction

This report is intended to provide overall school climate trends for Rhinebeck School District. Please refer to the individual school reports for more in-depth information on particular school-level trends and areas of strength and need.

This report will analyze district trends among student, staff and parent populations among all schools. It is organized around the following sections: (1) differences among the three populations by school level; (2) differences within each population; (3) breakdown of relative rankings; (4) concluding thoughts and questions.

The purpose of this report is to identify the meaningful trends across the district. Incomplete or inadequate data due to population size have been omitted. This includes district-wide charts on activity participation, since participation rates vary widely among different schools. In order to protect anonymity, we only share out sub-group information when the sub-group contains 10 or more constituents.



District-wide Response Rates

The chart on the next page shows the response rates for each population by school. The survey responses are most valuable when they capture the perceptions of all school community members. Where response rates are particularly low, it is important to note that the voice represented may be skewed or reflect a particular subset of your overall community. In these cases, it is critical to be careful when interpreting findings or making decisions for next steps. For schools where the response rates are low, it will be important to review the demographic profile of the respondents in the individual school report, and compare that to your school's profile. Please keep in mind that even where response rates are low, the overall findings can be used to engage the community in collaborative efforts for school climate improvement. Additionally, future survey efforts can include specific plans to reach out to groups that appear to have been under-represented here.

The ideal thresholds for response rates are:

- Aim for as close to 100% completion as possible from student body and total staff. (Goal should not be lower than 85%.)
- Aim for at least 40% for parents. (Goal should not be lower than 30%.)



District Climate Overview

School	Student Response #/Total (%)	Staff Response #/Total (%)	Parent Response #/Total (%)
Bulkeley Middle School	216*/248 (87.10%)	34*/42 (80.95%)	86*/251 (34.26%)
Chancellor Livingston Elementary School	191*/237 (80.59%)	37*/70 (52.86%)	34*/417 (8.15%)
Rhinebeck High School	296*/369 (80.22%)	39*/69 (56.52%)	66*/372 (17.74%)

*Figures received from school to represent potential number of respondents.



Differences between School Levels

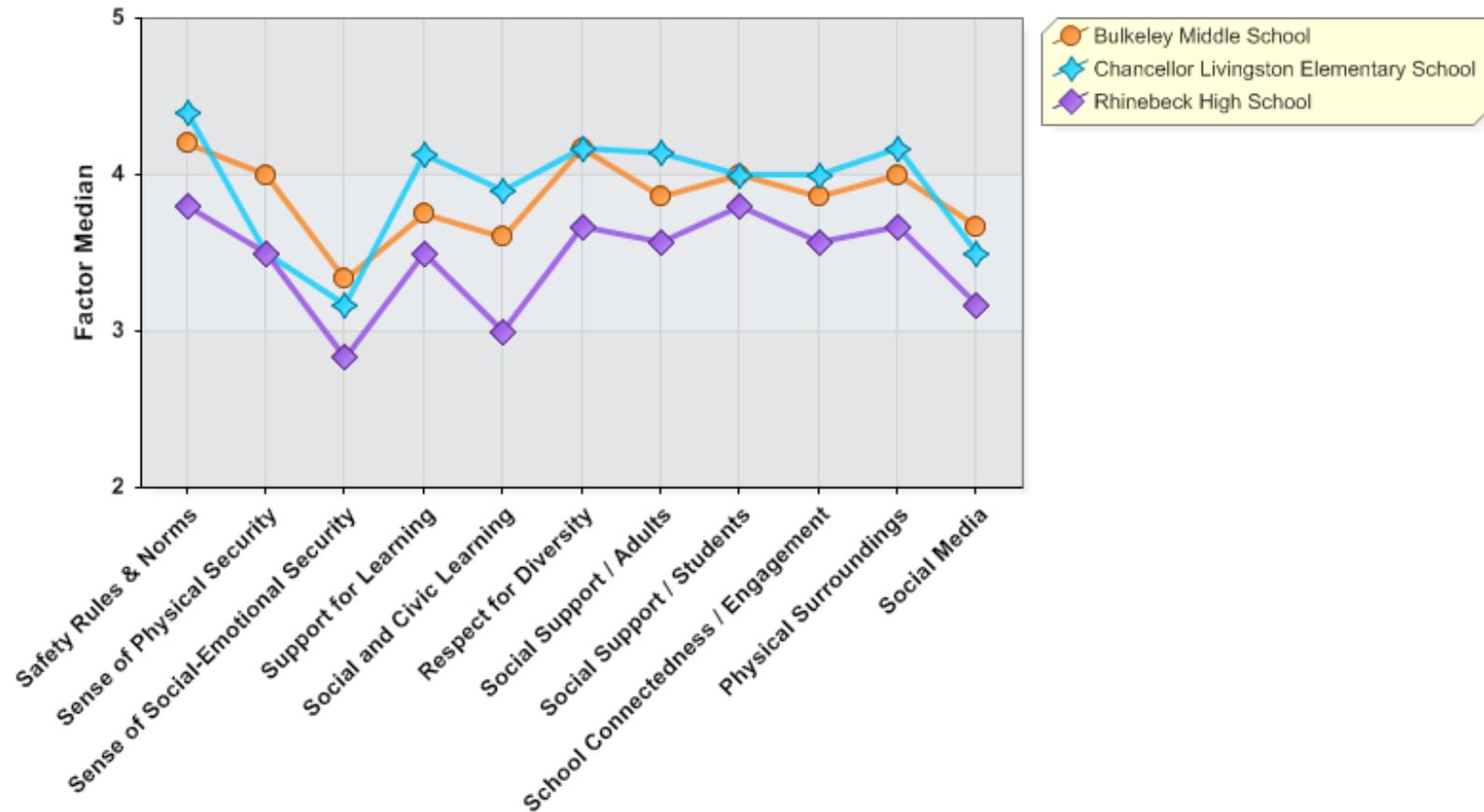
The following three charts show the differences among the elementary, middle, and high school populations, for students, staff and parents/guardians. All schools follow a similar pattern, displaying common areas of high strength and/or need across the district.

As you will see in the chart on the next page, Chancellor Livingston Elementary School students have higher perceptions about Safety Rules and Norms, Support for Learning, Social Support Adults, and Physical Surroundings than students in the middle and high school. It is typical for student ratings to dip as students' progress to high school.

Social Support is a key strength across students in all schools. Chancellor Livingston Elementary School and Rhinebeck High School students have overlapping perceptions for Sense of Physical Security. Chancellor Livingston Elementary School and Bulkeley Middle School students have overlapping perception about Respect for Diversity and Social Support Students. Bulkeley Middle School students are most positive about Sense of Physical Security, Sense of Social Emotional Security, and Social Media. Social and Civic Learning is a downward trend found among many schools, as the explicit emphasis on these skills begins to take a backseat to developmental changes and an emphasis on testing and grades takes place.



Student Climate Scores by School



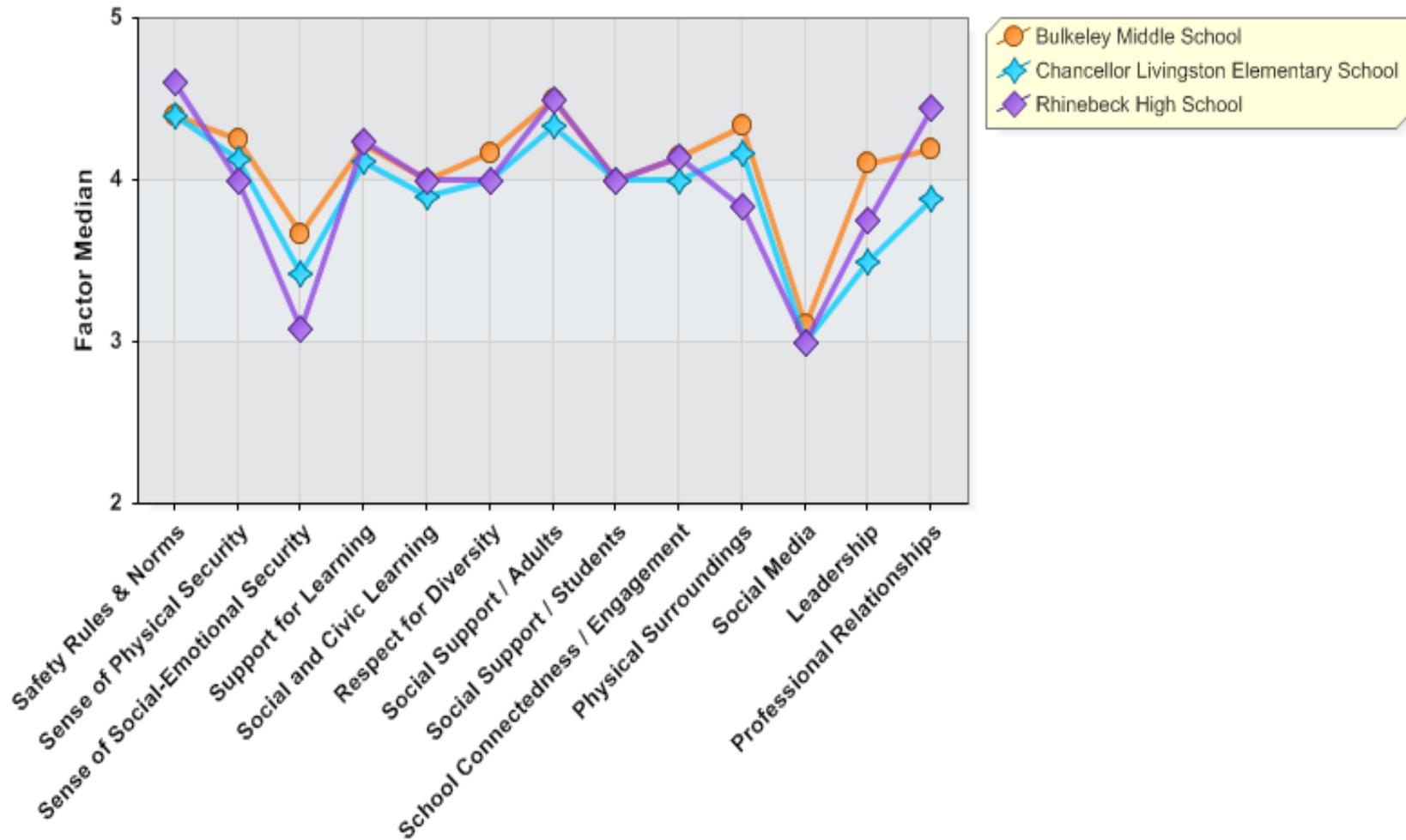


Staff ratings are all much closer together across elementary, middle and high school compared to student ratings. Rhinebeck High School staff members tend to have slightly higher ratings for Safety Rules and Norms and Professional Relationships, but hold the lowest perceptions for Sense of Social Emotional Security and Physical Surroundings. There are overlapping perceptions across all schools among staff for Social Support Students.

The schools do show some variability within Professional Relationships, one of the two staff only dimensions. This can be explored further in the individual reports.



Faculty Climate Scores by School

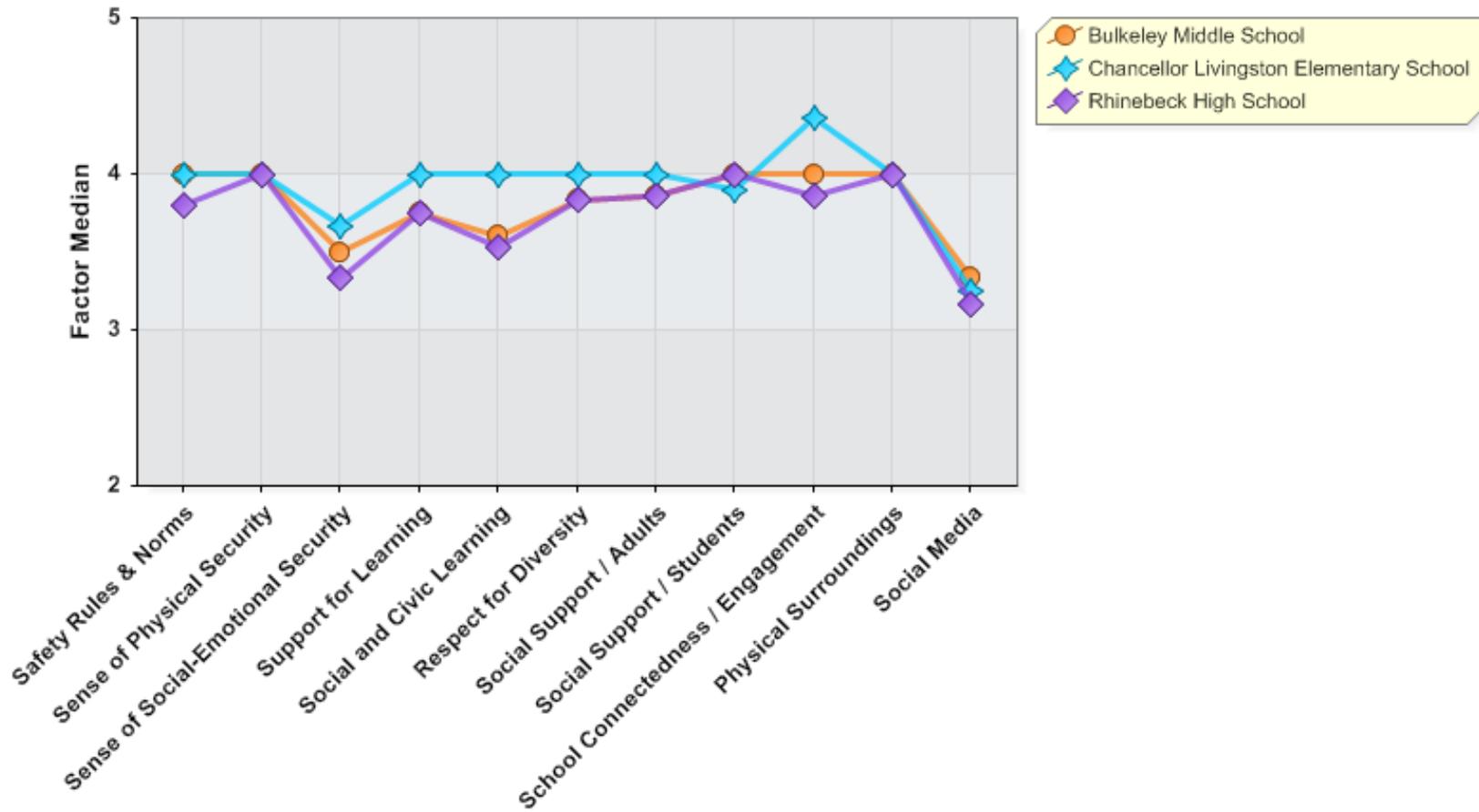




Parents'/Guardians' perceptions track a more even line than students and staff across all dimensions. Parents/Guardians of Chancellor Livingston Elementary School are generally more positive across all dimensions and are most positive about School Connectedness/Engagement. There are high levels of agreement among parents/guardians at all levels about Sense of Physical Security. Social Media is the lowest rated dimensions for all parents/guardians.



Parent Climate Scores by School





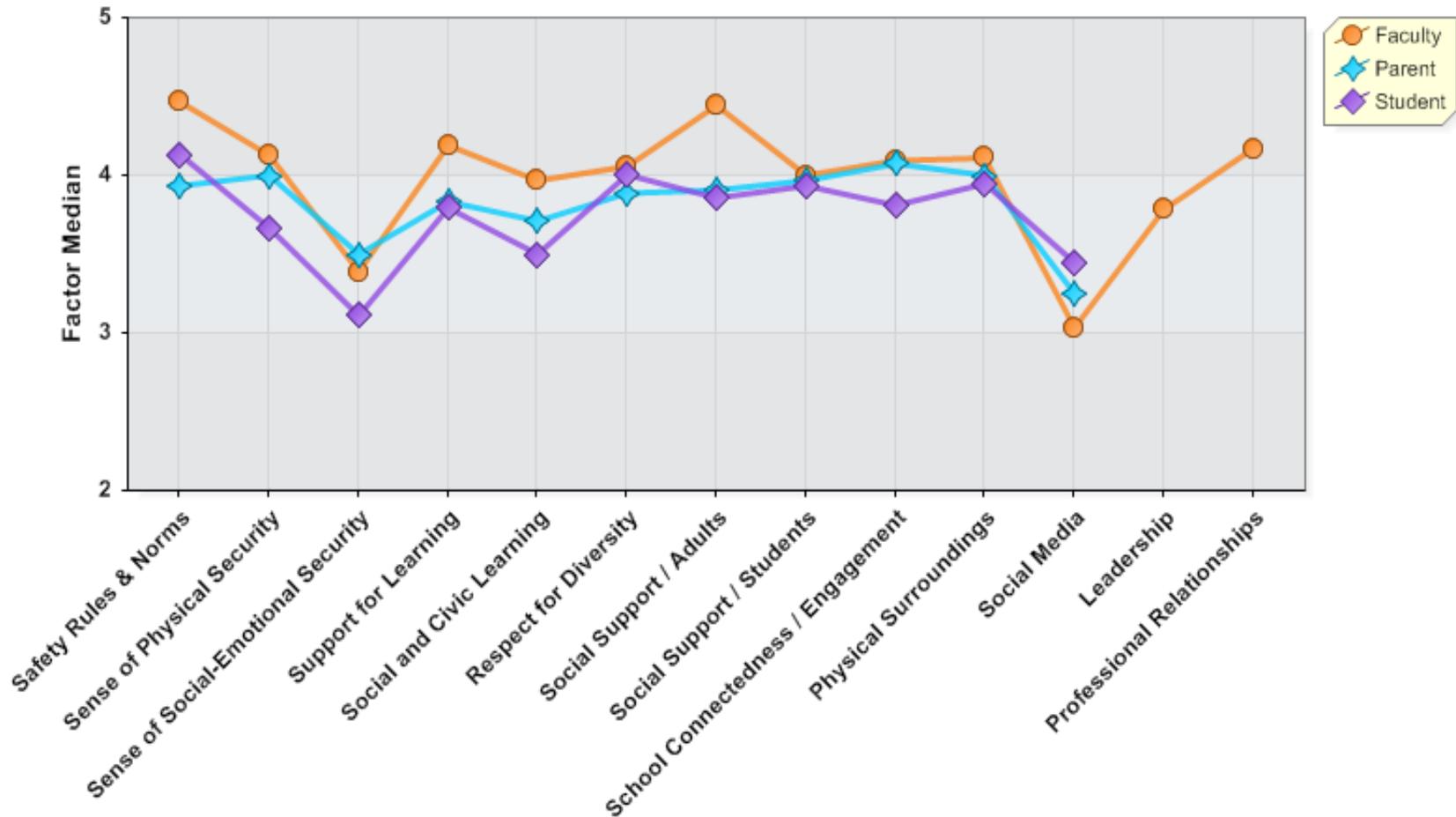
Overall

Students, staff and parents/guardians follow a similar trend, but exhibit systematic differences in ratings. The community agrees most about Respect for Diversity, Social Support Students, and Physical Surroundings. In particular, staff hold more positive views for most dimensions.

Faculty rate Social Support Adults higher than students and parents/guardians, meaning they feel there are good relationships and adults have high expectations for students' success, are willing to listen to students and get to know them as individuals, and show personal concern for students' problems. Parents/guardians are least positive about Safety Rules and Norms. It is important to note that if participation rates from parents are low, the data could reflect only a certain subset of parents rather than the whole parent population. It will be important to further investigate parent ratings across all schools and try to gather the perspectives of parents who did not complete the survey. One way of doing this could be to share positive survey results with the community, and ask for additional feedback, or to build buy-in for the survey through initiatives and information, and ask parents to complete the survey again in the next year or following year.



Climate Scores by Population



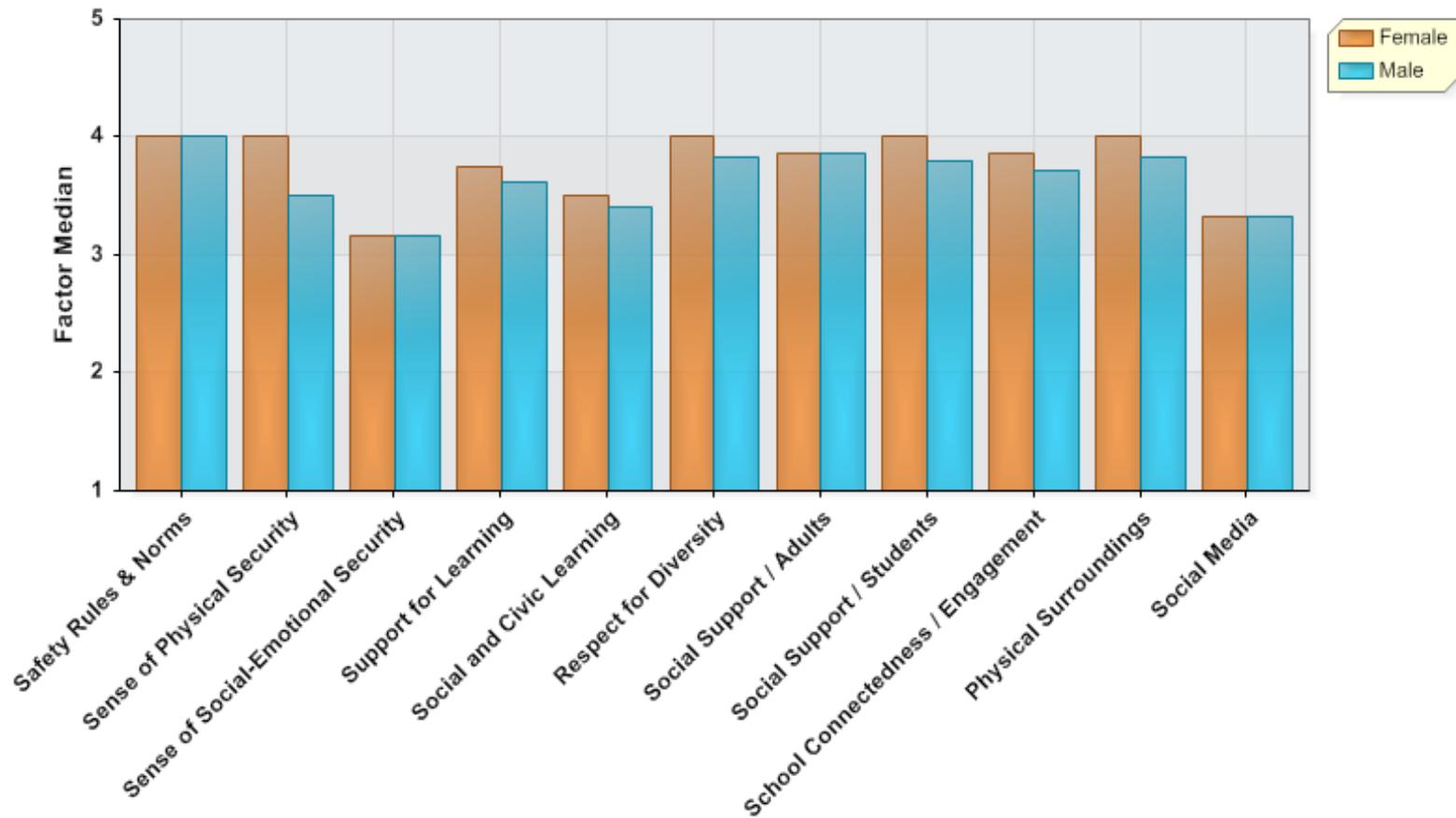


Students

The chart on the next page illustrates the aggregate median scores for students across all schools by gender. Gender differences between male and female students are slight. Male students are less positive about Sense of Physical Security, Support for Learning, Social and Civic Learning, Respect for Diversity, Social Support Students, School Connectedness/Engagement, and Physical Surroundings. There are no gender differences for Safety Rules and Norms, Sense of Social Emotional Security, Social Support Adults, and Social Media.



Student Climate Scores by Gender



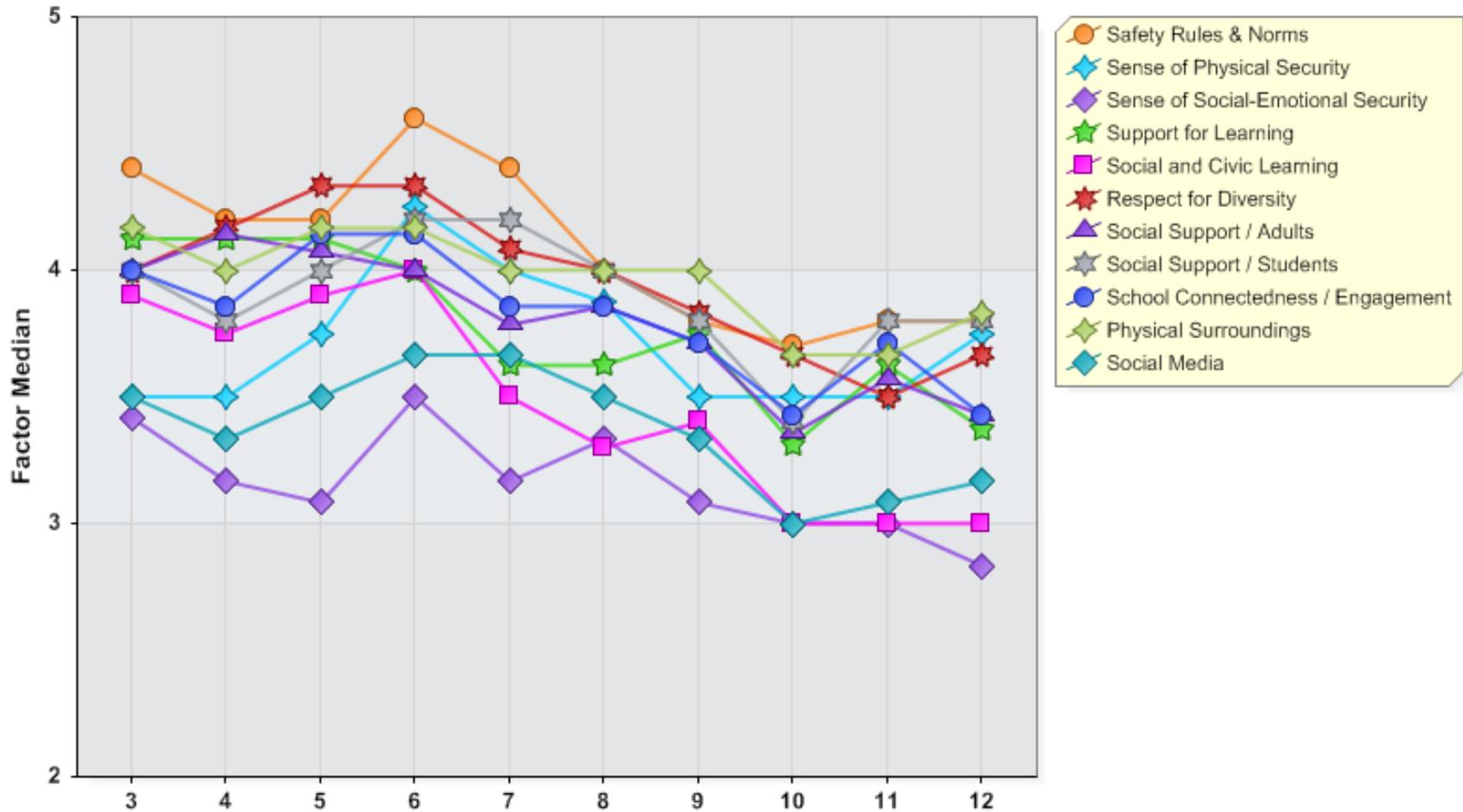


The chart on the next page illustrates the aggregate median scores for students across all schools by grade. For the most part, students' perceptions are most positive in grades 5 and 6. Safety Rules and Norms has is most positive among 6th, grade students.

Sense of Physical Security increases starting in grade 4 and continues to increase to grade 6. After grade 6 this dimension begins to drop where in 9th grade it levels off throughout grades 10 and 11. Social and Civic Learning experiences a precipitous drop between 6th and 7th grade and again between 9th and 10th grade. Similarly, Sense of Social-Emotional Security exhibits a dip starting after the 6th grade, where it reaches its lowest perception among 12th grade students. Social Media is rated highest among 6th and 7th grade students.



Student Climate Scores by Grade

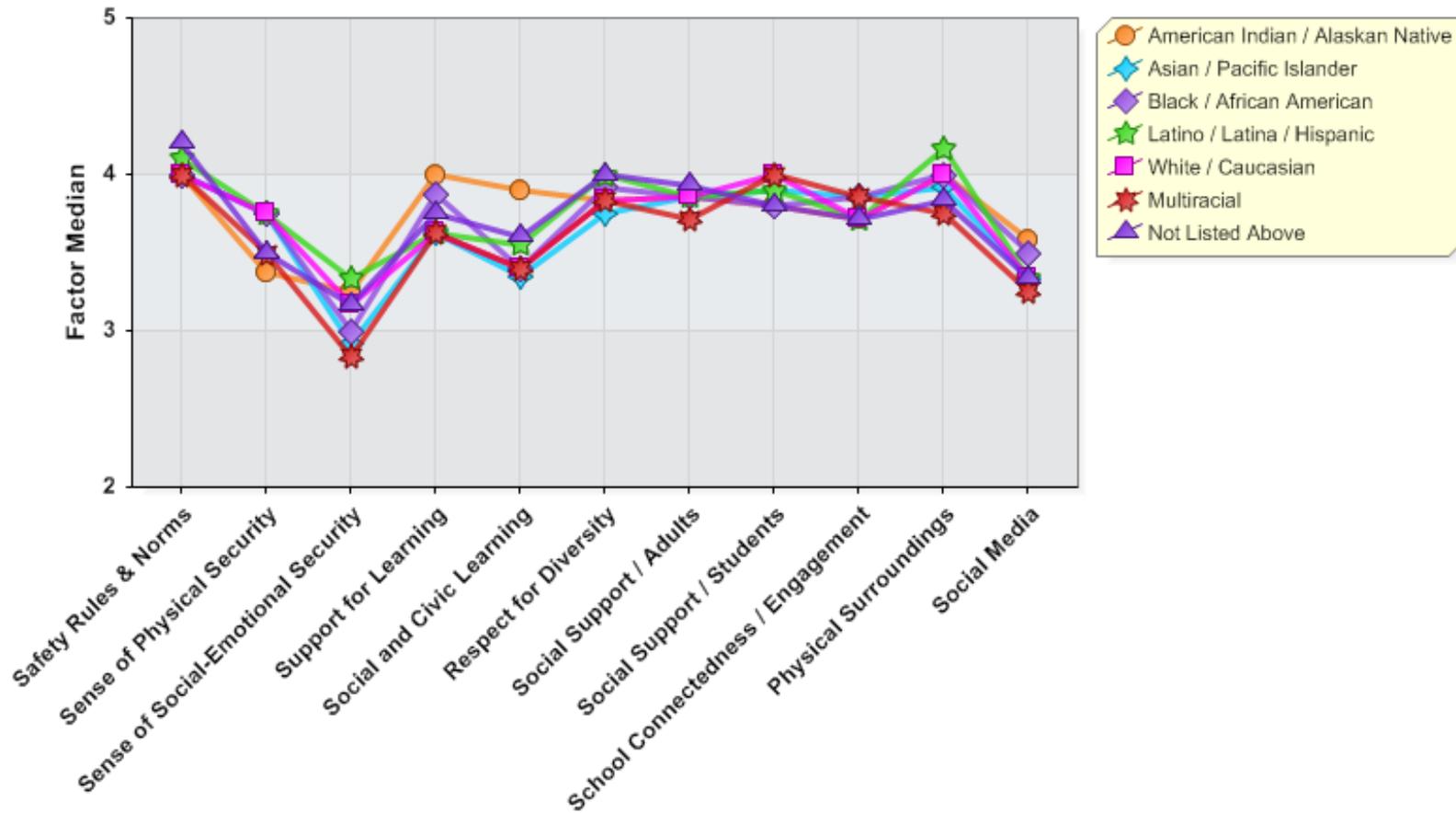




The chart on the next page illustrates the aggregate median scores for students across all schools by ethnicity. All ethnic groups exhibit similar patterns. American Indian/Alaskan Native students' perceptions are lowest for Sense of Physical Security and highest for Support for Learning and Social and Civic Learning. There is close agreement for all race/ethnicities on Safety Rules and Norms and School Connectedness/Engagement. White/Caucasian students are most positive about Physical Surroundings and Sense of Social Emotional Security.



Student Climate Scores by Race/Ethnicity

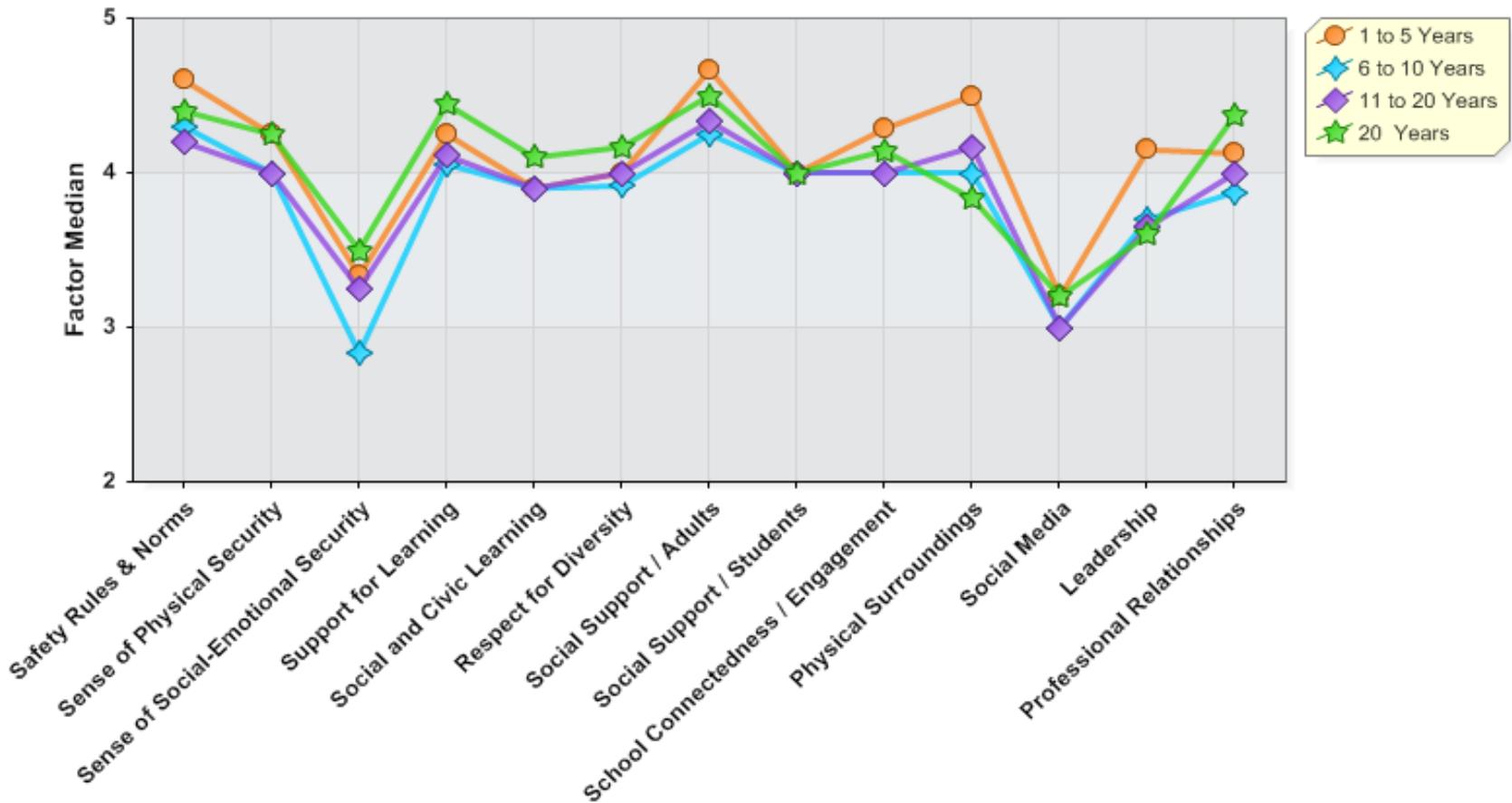




While staff exhibit consistent patterns regardless of the length of their tenure at the school, there are systematic differences. First year staff hold the highest ratings for Safety Rules and Norms, Social Support Adults, School Connectedness Engagement, Physical Surroundings and Leadership. Staff who have been at their school more than 20 years are most positive about Support for Learning, Social and Civic Learning, Respect for Diversity, and Professional Relationships. However, these same staff members are least positive about Physical Surroundings. Regardless of tenure there is agreement among all staff members for Social Support Students.



Staff Climate Scores by Years at the School





The next chart shows the relative dimension rankings for the three populations across the district. The highest rated dimension for students and staff is Safety-Rules and Norms. This signifies that the school community believes that there are clearly communicated rules about violence, verbal abuse, harassment and teasing, as well as consistent enforcement and norms for adult intervention.

Respect for Diversity is also rated positively among students and is ranked at #2 . This means that students feel mutual respect for individual differences at all levels of the school; staff and parents/guardians are less positive about this dimension ranking it #7. Social Support-Students is ranked #4 among students and parents/guardians and #8 for staff. Parents rank School Connectedness/Engagement #1 where students and staff rank this dimension #6.

While Safety-Rules and Norms is the most universal area of strength, another key facet of Safety, Sense of Social-Emotional Security, is at the bottom of the list for students. This means that students are concerned about verbal abuse, teasing and harassment, and staff members and parents are concerned as well. Another potential area of need is Social Media. Parents/guardians and staff members rank this dimension #11 while students rank it #10.



Relative Factor Rankings by Population

Dimensions	Students	Staff	Parents
Safety Rules & Norms	1	1	5
Sense of Physical Security	8	4	2
Sense of Social-Emotional Security	11	10	10
Support for Learning	7	3	8
Social and Civic Learning	9	9	9
Respect for Diversity	2	7	7
Social Support / Adults	5	2	6
Social Support / Students	4	8	4
School Connectedness / Engagement	6	6	1
Physical Surroundings	3	5	2
Social Media	10	11	11

Note: If two or more dimensions have the same median score, they are given the same (higher) rank. For example, if two dimensions score a 4.0 and that is the highest score, they will both be ranked "1" and the next highest score will be ranked "3."



The next chart displays relative rankings of strengths and needs across students in each building. For all students the highest rated dimension is Safety - Rules and Norms. Students tend to hold similar views across all grade levels, especially concerning key areas of strength and need. However, there are some unique differences between the schools.

Bulkeley Middle School students are most positive about Sense of Physical Security (#3) whereas Chancellor Livingston Elementary School students rank this dimension #9 and Rhinebeck High School students #7. Although some dimensions may receive low rankings it is important to refer to the individual school building results to view median scores for each dimension. For example, elementary school students rate dimensions higher than middle or high school students, so many of their "lower" rankings still reflect a high rating or a positively rated dimension.

For all schools, Sense of Social-Emotional Security and Social Media hover at the bottom of the list receiving a #11 ranking. There is also agreement among all students about Social Media (#9). It will be important to view the full report for the schools to note which specific sub-groups are contributing to the low ranking.



Relative Rankings

Relative Factor Rankings by Student			
Schools / Dimensions	Bulkeley Middle School	Chancellor Livingston Elementary School	Rhinebeck High School
Safety Rules & Norms	1	1	1
Sense of Physical Security	3	9	7
Sense of Social-Emotional Security	11	11	11
Support for Learning	8	5	7
Social and Civic Learning	10	8	10
Respect for Diversity	2	2	3
Social Support / Adults	6	4	5
Social Support / Students	3	6	1
School Connectedness / Engagement	6	6	5
Physical Surroundings	3	2	3
Social Media	9	9	9

Note: If two or more dimensions have the same median score, they are given the same (higher) rank. For example, if two dimensions score a 4.0 and that is the highest score, they will both be ranked "1" and the next highest score will be ranked "3."



One of the highest rated dimensions for staff is Social Support - Adults. It is clear that the adults care about their students and have high expectations and strong personal concern for their well-being; this perceived strongly by all staff members. Similar to students, Safety Rules and Norms is highly ranked for all schools.

Bulkeley Middle School and Chancellor Livingston Elementary School is more positive about Physical Surroundings ranking this dimension #3 while Rhinebeck High School staff rank this same dimension #10. Sense of Social Emotional Security is ranked #12 and Social Media is ranked #13 across all buildings. Rhinebeck High School staff are most positive about Social and Civic Learning (#6) whereas Bulkeley Middle school staff rank this dimension #10 and Chancellor Livingston Elementary School rank it #9.

Differences in other areas seem idiosyncratic to the particular schools. Outside of the areas where staff members agree and disagree on key areas of strength and need, it is important to view the individual reports at the building level.



Relative Rankings

Relative Factor Rankings by Faculty			
Schools / Dimensions	Bulkeley Middle School	Chancellor Livingston Elementary School	Rhinebeck High School
Safety Rules & Norms	2	1	1
Sense of Physical Security	4	4	6
Sense of Social-Emotional Security	12	12	12
Support for Learning	5	5	4
Social and Civic Learning	10	9	6
Respect for Diversity	7	6	6
Social Support / Adults	1	2	2
Social Support / Students	10	6	6
School Connectedness / Engagement	8	6	5
Physical Surroundings	3	3	10
Social Media	13	13	13
Leadership	9	11	11
Professional Relationships	6	10	3

Note: If two or more dimensions have the same median score, they are given the same (higher) rank. For example, if two dimensions score a 4.0 and that is the highest score, they will both be ranked "1" and the next highest score will be ranked "3."



For parents, one of the highest ranked dimensions is Sense of Physical Security. Parents/guardians at Rhinebeck High School rank Safety Rules and Norms #7 where parents of Chancellor Livingston Elementary School rank this dimension #2 and Bulkeley Middle School parents/guardians rank it #1. Sense of Social Emotional Security and Social Media both fall to the bottom of the ranked list for parents/guardians. Overall, parents from all the schools exhibit high levels of agreement across dimension rankings.



Relative Rankings

Relative Factor Rankings by Parent			
Schools / Dimensions	Bulkeley Middle School	Chancellor Livingston Elementary School	Rhinebeck High School
Safety Rules & Norms	1	2	7
Sense of Physical Security	1	2	1
Sense of Social-Emotional Security	10	10	10
Support for Learning	8	2	8
Social and Civic Learning	9	2	9
Respect for Diversity	7	2	6
Social Support / Adults	6	2	4
Social Support / Students	1	9	1
School Connectedness / Engagement	1	1	4
Physical Surroundings	1	2	1
Social Media	11	11	11

Note: If two or more dimensions have the same median score, they are given the same (higher) rank. For example, if two dimensions score a 4.0 and that is the highest score, they will both be ranked "1" and the next highest score will be ranked "3."



This district analysis highlights several trends throughout Rhinebeck School District. It should be noted that overall ratings are high and the district has many strengths upon which to draw. Following is a summary by major areas:

Safety:

- Safety Rules and Norms are consistently rated very high across all populations and all school levels. The ability to develop well communicated and well understood rules and norms about physical violence, verbal abuse and harassment is a foundational strength to be leveraged.
- Social-Emotional Safety is the universal area of need across all populations district-wide. Across the board, parents rate this higher than students and lower or equal to staff. Research has shown that cultivating upstanders is a powerful way to drastically reduce bullying and harassment in a visible, high-impact and long-term way. This will be a useful opportunity for improvement that the district can explore.

Questions for further consideration:

- o Are the rules and guidelines in Rhinebeck consistent for both Physical and Social-Emotional safety? Are there practices and policies that have been instituted to ensure physical safety that can be usefully adapted for social-emotional safety? How can the rules be modified to more explicitly target verbal harassment and bullying?
- o Are there specific sub-groups within the schools who feel particularly negative compared to others with regards to Social-Emotional Safety? If so, what initiatives can be implemented or further research done to address their concerns and improve the overall climate?
- o How can the success of "upstander behavior" be harnessed and cultivated?



Teaching & Learning:

- Typically, these dimensions are consistently high among students and staff at the elementary schools when digging deeper into the sub-group grade level information. The difference in findings is typical as staff members are the ones teaching the skills. These dimensions are often more explicit to staff than they are to students, especially in the higher grades as social and civic learning becomes a more implicit aspect of the curricula.
- Throughout the district, parents have the highest scores at the elementary schools. This means they feel like their children are getting varied opportunities to demonstrate their skills, are supported for independent thinking, receive academic challenge and support and individual attention.

Questions for further consideration:

- o Is there consistency in the mission and structure of the school at the classroom level vs. the school level? Is there consistency across both campuses that support a smooth transition for students? When you dig deeper into school reports, do you see how this impacts schools, grades and sub-groups?
- o What are the goals for Social and Civic Learning across the district? In what specific ways are students experiencing Social and Civic Learning and Support for Learning differently from teachers?
- o How is Social and Civic Learning incorporated into the curriculum at the elementary school? How can this be modified to also extend to the middle and high schools?
- o Is there a potential disconnect between implicit vs. explicit teaching? How can Social and Civic Learning concepts be conveyed in a way that resonates with students and parents as much as it does with staff members?



Interpersonal Relationships:

- Social Support - Adults and Social Support - Students is consistently rated very high across all populations and all school levels. This is a foundational attribute and a strength that can be leveraged.
- Respect for Diversity is positive across the district. This is a dimension that could potentially become an area of even greater strength.

Questions for further consideration:

- o How is Respect for Diversity underscored & reflected in adult-to-adult, student-to- student, and adult-to-student relationships within the school?
- o Why are some student groups and grades rating Respect for Diversity higher than others? What can be done to boost respect among groups with lower ratings?
- o How can a strong sense of Social Support among students be extended to create a stronger sense of community and respect? How does the school engage parents and what efforts would enhance this relationship?



Institutional Environment:

- Throughout the district, parents are positive about School Connectedness/ Engagement. Parents are often the most positive, meaning they identify positively with being a member of the district. This is a key strength.
- Student ratings for the School Connectedness/ Engagement are very positive in elementary schools, and then ratings slightly decline, as is the tendency for all ratings to decline as students advance.

Questions for further discussion:

- o How can a strong sense of School Connectedness/Engagement among parents be extended to create an even stronger sense of community among students and staff? How does the school engage parents and what efforts would enhance this relationship?

Staff Only Dimensions:

- Professional Relationships is consistently rated very positively in the district. This is a foundational strength to leverage for improvement in linked areas, such as Social and Civic Learning.
- Staff members reflect varying perceptions of the Leadership dimension, and it may be useful to review the individual reports for more details on how this is reflected at the school-level. Overall, staff feel the administration is accessible, and they feel comfortable going to administrators for help.



Rhinebeck School District District Report has been
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