

A Guide to School Climate Data Use at OSSE

OVERVIEW

The Office of the State Superintendent of Education (OSSE) began collecting school climate survey data from all LEAs in the 2024-25 school year. Data from this collection will be used only for the purposes for which they were collected, in accordance with documented commitments made to respondents and other internal and external stakeholders. The DC Survey About Your School (DC SAYS) is administered in the spring for 5-weeks (e.g., in SY2024-25, it was administered from Feb. 24-April 4, 2025). This guide details how OSSE will use these data internally, share with LEAs and publicly report on the DC School Report Card.

DC SAYS DATA

Public Data Reporting

OSSE is required by a [DC State Board of Education \(SBOE\) resolution](#) to report DC SAYS data on the [DC School Report Card](#). It is important to note that OSSE will not use these data to calculate school accountability scores. These survey data are independent from the statewide accountability framework, which must be approved by the SBOE and the US Department of Education (USED) (for more information, please read our [overview of accountability calculations](#)).

Aggregate public reporting by OSSE will follow the requirements of OSSE’s Student Privacy and Data Suppression Policy and Educational Workforce Privacy and Data Suppression Policy.

DC SAYS has several topics, such as School Safety and Sense of Belonging, which are composed of between five and seven questions. For public data reporting of school climate survey responses on the DC School Report

Card, OSSE will only publish topic-level responses when OSSE receives at least 10 responses and the below survey thresholds are met:

- For the student survey, at least 50 percent of the students who received the survey have completed the survey for topic-level responses to be included.
- For the staff survey, at least 50 percent of the staff who received the survey have completed the survey for topic-level responses to be included.
- For the anonymous family/caregiver survey, at least 20 percent of parents must complete the survey, using the enrolled student population as the denominator.

OSSE set these higher thresholds in response to feedback from LEAs during the SY2023-24 Advisory Cohort, that these data are representative of each school. For example, 10 students at a school of 1,000 students may not be a representative sample.

STUDENTS	SCHOOL-BASED STAFF	PARENT/CAREGIVER
Perseverance	Belonging	Family Engagement
Rigorous Expectations	Future Plans	School Fit
School Safety	Professional Learning	School Safety
Self-Efficacy	School Climate	Background Questions (since the survey is anonymous)
Sense of Belonging	School & Staff Leadership	
Supportive Relationships	School Safety	
Valuing of School*		
Emotional Regulation*		

*LEAs had the option to opt out of topic

CONTINUES ON THE BACK

LEA-Facing Reporting

LEAs have access to their DC SAYS data, as well as local and national benchmarks, in a data dashboard within six to eight weeks of the window closing, specifically:

- Identified, individual-level data for students.
- Deidentified data for staff, with a minimum n size of 10 and including demographic data only where at least two subgroups have $n \geq 10$ (or are combined to reach a threshold of $n \geq 10$). In other words, school leadership does not have access to individual responses by staff members.
- Anonymous data for parents / guardians / caregivers, with a minimum n of 10 and demographic data only where at least two subgroups have $n \geq 10$ (or are combined to reach the threshold of $n \geq 10$). The family surveys are fully anonymous; they do not collect any personal information such as the person's name or address.



FOR MORE INFORMATION

If you want to learn more about the DC SAYS surveys, please visit our [School Climate Survey page](#).