



School Climate Improvement Teams Pilot Implementation 2014-2015

The Saint Paul Federation of Teachers piloted School Climate Improvement Teams (SCITs) in four Saint Paul Public Schools during the 2014-2015 school year: American Indian Magnet (K-8), Como High School (9-12), Murray Middle School (6-8), and Ramsey Middle School (6-8). This report summarizes observations and data collected throughout the SCIT pilot year, including the elements that were found to support and hinder positive SCIT development and implementation. Evaluators and program leaders identified the following positive outcomes associated with the teams' work: reduced referrals and suspensions at the two middle schools; an increased ability to identify issues affecting school climate and share with district and union leadership for administrative action; and the strong desire on behalf of parents, families, and community members to have a forum and a process for engaging in building safe, productive, and equitable school environments.

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Introduction to this Report and Toolkit

The Saint Paul Federation of Teachers piloted School Climate Improvement Teams (SCITs) in four Saint Paul Public Schools during the 2014-2015 school year. American Indian Magnet (k-8), Como High School (9-12), Murray Middle School (6-8), and Ramsey Middle School (6-8) all participated in the pilot. School Climate Improvement Teams were composed of educators and school community members brought together to collaborate to make students of all ethnic and racial backgrounds feel welcome and reduce the number of suspensions and other measures used to discipline children¹.

In order to prepare to bring the SCIT model to more schools in future years, external evaluators and facilitators worked closely with the four pilot teams throughout the year to better understand what resources and systems teams need to make a positive impact in the schools. This report and toolkit are intended to describe the experiences and impact of the pilot and provide tools for future teams to make it easier for them to work effectively toward a positive climate in their schools.

In addition to pulling together the stories and tools for this document, the evaluators piloted the feedback instruments featured in the toolkit section. Evaluators and program leaders identified the following positive outcomes associated with the teams' work: reduced referrals and suspensions at the two middle schools; an increased ability to identify and communicate issues affecting school climate for action; and the strong desire on behalf of parents, families, and community members to have a forum and a process for engaging in building safe, productive, and equitable school environments.

"We were able to hear from teachers, administration, and district level employees. We also heard from parents who spent time in the school. Having all these stakeholders present and being able to talk about issues together was important for transparency but also productive in terms of brainstorming solutions." (Parent)

Successful School Climate Improvement Teams

The four schools that participated in the pilot implementation of SCITs shared feedback on their experiences throughout the year to an external evaluation team. At both the midpoint of the academic year (in December) and at the end of the year (in June), they responded to specific questions about the factors that made their work successful. The next section of this report shares the feedback from SCITs about the areas that they thought future teams should consider to ensure the best possible outcomes.

¹ <http://www.dissentmagazine.org/article/teacher-community-unionism-lesson-st-paul>

Specific and Clear Goals

“Completing the SWOT analysis and regular review of data, and assessing the alignment of our work to the 5E's helped see strengths, areas for growth and if our work was aligned to community perceptions of needs.” (Administrator)

School climate is a broad topic and there are many interventions and activities that could possibly fall under this topic. Many of the pilot SCITs struggled early in the year to identify the specific activities or areas of intervention that would be appropriate for these new school groups. Feedback from the pilot SCITs recommended that in future years, SCITs focus their energy in early meetings on identifying specific and clear goals and that the groups commit to focus on these goals as the work progresses while remaining flexible

enough to address new issues as they emerge. SWOT analyses or other tools were successfully used to help with this goal setting process for pilot SCITs and are included in this toolkit. Setting clear and specific goals will also help SCITs to know how often and for how long they should meet to achieve these goals.

Meeting Agendas Prepared and Shared In Advance

In order to make the best use of participants' time and to enable them to prepare for productive meetings, agendas for all meeting should be shared with participants in advance of SCIT meetings. The first meetings of the year should allow time for participants to agree on the format of the agenda and assign responsibility for preparing and sharing ahead of each meeting. Taking time to check in with the team about the best platform for sharing and to ensure that there was accurate contact information for all team members was also seen as important. One successful format for agendas was to use the agendas for note taking and sharing after the meetings. Sharing the notes with participants allowed the SCIT to move forward in their work, remember decisions made during previous meetings, and maintain momentum. Recommendations for sequencing of topics in early meetings are included in this toolkit.

Representation from all Stakeholders

Successful SCITs were able to recruit and retain members from a wide variety of stakeholder groups. At the midpoint of the pilot implementation, schools that participated in the pilot indicated that it was important to have teachers, administrators, and parents as regular participants. When one of these groups is missing, groups found it difficult to move forward on decisions or initiatives.

Additionally, SCIT groups found it helpful to hear from students at important points in the process. Although students were not regular participants in any of the pilot

“Bringing parents and staff together to hear from parents why education is valued and dreaded by our community. Aspects of historical trauma were shared and actually heard.” (Parent)

SCITs, most teams brought students in to hear their perspectives on school climate problems and solutions. The toolkit contains examples of scripts for facilitating student events along with recommended formats and reporting tools.

There were some specific tips that pilot SCITs shared to encourage participation from all stakeholders. First, groups that were able to schedule meetings when both school staff and parents could attend were more successful in retaining participants. In most cases, this meant scheduling meetings later in the day but not in the late evening. Scheduling meetings immediately after the school day was generally too early for parents and families to attend. Meetings scheduled in the evening, long after the school day ended, were difficult for school staff to attend. Decisions about meeting time and place should be made with input from all stakeholders.

Consistent SCIT Membership

In order for the work of the SCIT to gain and maintain momentum throughout the academic year, pilot SCITs felt that consistent membership on the team was helpful. Future groups would benefit from establishing a set group of participants—with an eye toward representing all stakeholders and reflecting the demographics of the school. Limiting the size of the group to roughly 12 members ensures that all team members can have a voice in the process. Although teams recommended limited and consistent membership in the SCIT, they also found it helpful to find ways to engage more people in the process through special events or having guests attend a subsection of meetings as needed. One example of this that the pilot teams found helpful was to invite members from other schools to attend in order to share experiences and hear how other SCITs were moving forward on their work. Forums for families, students, and community members were also a way that SCITs were able to hear from a group that was larger and more diverse than the SCIT without requiring their regular attendance.

Intervention Stories: What worked for SCITs

“Validating that behavior issues had improved so we could start to focus on the school community ... we need to create a legacy of a climate and culture of learning at Murray. I personally would love to see this district wide but that is outside of our circle of control. I would like to think it is something we can influence.” (Parent)

Throughout the pilot SCIT programs, schools shared stories of the impact that the SCIT had on their schools. Each of these vignettes is intended to demonstrate concrete examples of the impact of pilot SCITs. These stories are intended to help future teams to see some of the possibilities for improving school climate and inspire potential SCITs.

Building Trust and Community at Murray Middle School.

During the 2013-2014 school year Murray Middle School was impacted by the district-wide changes to transportation and special

education in addition to changes in school leadership. The entire school community was concerned about a lack of order in the hallway and the classroom. Fights among students were becoming more commonplace and the overall school climate was not perceived to be positive or focused on learning. Parents were withdrawing their students from the school in response to these situations and others were threatening to do so. A group of parents and community members approached the school's administration about these concerns and in spring 2014 the Principal of Murray Middle School convened a meeting to "stop the cycle of shaming and blaming" and come together to propose solutions for making positive changes to the school.

The administrative team at Murray Middle School hosted an event held at the school on May 13, 2014. In advance of the event, all families received a personal phone call inviting them to attend. Over 100 people did attend and were placed into small groups to address the following questions: What are the top successes and opportunities available for learners at Murray Middle School? What are necessary areas of growth in order to support learning at Murray Middle School? Each group discussed for 20 minutes and shared out with the larger group. At the end of the event, participants voted on the most important areas to be addressed to improve school climate. Communication and discipline were the topics that received the most votes.

Parents and teachers from Murray met regularly throughout the summer in advance of the 2014-2015 school year to put together a plan of action to address these issues.

Members of the Murray community point to this event as a turning point in the recent history of the school where parents and teachers stopped blaming each other and came together to work toward finding solutions. Members of the Murray SCIT were recruited from the participants in this process and started the year focused on moving forward on initiative that began during the roundtable. Disciplinary referrals and suspensions were reduced from one year to the next and the disparity between students of color white students receiving disciplinary referrals was reduced.

"I think our community involvement night was a great accomplishment because we were able to learn how to work together as a group to organize an event that reached out to parents and community members." (Parent)

Another roundtable was held in the spring of 2015. This time, the issues identified were opportunities for academic acceleration, and the need to develop more elective classes. The transition in focus to academic topics was seen as an indication that the school had been effective in addressing the discipline and climate issues from the previous year. Engaging families in an authentic conversation about their perceptions of the school was seen as a key in improving the Murray school climate and reducing the number and severity of referrals and suspensions.

Reducing Passing Time Chaos at Ramsey Middle School.

When the SCIT at Ramsey Middle School began meeting in the fall of 2014, there was a major issue that parents, teachers, and community members felt needed to be addressed before additional school climate needs could be tackled. Passing time was becoming increasingly chaotic with dozens of students in the hallway making other students feel unsafe and interfering with teachers' ability to focus their energy on classroom instruction. One reality that exacerbated this situation was a lack of school paraprofessional staff and substitute teachers at Ramsey. Teachers were covering for their absent colleagues when substitutes could not be found, which meant that they could not use the start of their prep time to step into the hallway and help get students into the classroom.

"Parents voiced their own and their student's troubling experiences. SCIT members' children/students were invited to one meeting to voice their concerns. It was great to hear responses to those issues directly from teachers and administrators." (Parent)

The parents, teachers, and administrators of the SCIT decided that swift action was needed and came up with a plan to ensure that the hallways of Ramsey Middle School would be safe and that students would be in the classroom—not the hallway—during instructional time. The school administration committed to hiring additional behavior specialists who would be available to support the intervention. Parents from the SCIT at Ramsey were vocal and effective advocates for bringing district resources to bear on this problem²

The doors to classes were closed after 4 minute passing period and students in the halls had to report to the library to get a pass back to the class. Later the plan changed to have students get passes on each floor to stop the gathering at the Library. There were dramatically fewer kids in the halls as time went forward. Teachers reported that it was a resounding success. Not only were the halls cleared but also kids seemed calmer in class. The process identified those kids who received repeated passes who were then the focus of a positive intervention. Teachers polled students to find out what positive incentives would have the biggest impact.

Parents, teachers and administrators coming together to address the problem of passing time chaos at Ramsey was an important part of an overall school-wide strategy to improve school climate and decrease suspensions that had a real impact in the 2014-2015 school year. The number of student referrals for discipline was cut in half from October

² http://www.twincities.com/education/ci_26971807/st-paul-school-district-aims-reduce-bad-behavior

(951 referrals) to March (486 referrals). Suspensions were more than halved across that same period with 48 suspensions in October and 15 in March³.

Engaging Families from all Backgrounds in Conversations and Activities Around School Culture

A concern that all SCITs identified as a challenge during some point in their process was engaging families that represent all aspects of their school in conversations and activities to address and improve school climate. Each SCIT attempted some form of intervention to engage a broad representation of the school community. Using existing school events such as conferences to reach families and the Parent Teacher Home Visit Project were two examples that Pilot SCITs used.

When talking about how to hear from more families and community members, SCITs agreed that asking families to come to yet another school event did not seem effective. A solution identified during brainstorming sessions about engagement was to meet families where they are. This means finding ways to hear from families when they are already engaged in school events. Conferences, school concerts or performances, and orientation or graduation events were all identified as events that many families attend. The toolkit includes ideas for gathering feedback from families and community members at these events. The important thing is to provide opportunities to share feedback without asking for additional time that many families simply do not have.

All of the schools that formed SCITs during this pilot year also had teachers that received training for participating in the Parent Teacher Home Visit Project. This project has been identified as a way to break the “cycle of blame” for student underachievement or failure and, instead, acknowledge up front that it takes coordinated effort, resources and time on the part of both parents and teachers to change results for kids⁴. Parents who receive home visits report feeling more comfortable attending school events⁵ and the hope from SCITs was that schools could bring more parents into the conversations regarding school climate if they participate in the home visiting program. Representatives from the program presented to all of the schools that participated in the SCIT pilot to ensure that they were aware of the program and the possibilities as a tool for family and community engagement.

SCIT as a Springboard for Change

Although the original vision of the SCITs was focused on the power of bringing together parents and teachers to impact individual schools, one unexpected consequence of the work of the SCITs was the mobilization of these parents and teachers for wider action and calls for change. Advocating for resources for interventions at the district level, providing

³ <http://www.startribune.com/st-paul-middle-school-builds-relationships-calms-disruptions/302050831/>

⁴ <https://www.neafoundation.org/content/assets/2012/03/pthv-full-issue-brief-5.pdf>

⁵ <http://www.spft.org/wp-content/uploads/2013/08/spft-report-071014.pdf>

important feedback to the Saint Paul Federation of Teachers about perceived needs in schools, and working across SCITs to share best practices are all ways that the SCITs in the pilot year expanded the scope of their work in unexpected ways.

Ramsey Middle School's SCIT identified the need for additional staff to support the school's plans to improve and calm the school's climate. Parents attended a School Board meeting in November to voice their concerns and advocate for the resources that they felt were needed to support the work discussed by the SCIT. After the initial SCIT meetings, Ramsey hired a school counselor in November and hired a second therapist in December. The school also hired an additional security staff person. Three behavior intervention specialists were also added to be the first point of contact after a disciplinary referral. Instead of just serving a time-out, which members of the SCIT cited as an ineffective intervention, Ramsey would now have the resources to provide coaching on problem solving and conflict resolution⁶.

The Saint Paul Federation of Teachers was an active partner in the process of forming, training, and evaluating the SCITs during the pilot implementation year. Their active participation in the SCIT processes allowed them to hear from parents, teachers, and administrators about the structural barriers and supports needed to move forward on making a positive impact on school climates. Hearing about the negative impact that the lack of behavior support staff and the difficulties created when schools could not find substitute teachers to cover for missing colleagues gave the SPFT information about the needs inside of schools to help them to advocate for those resources during the next round of contract negotiations.

"It highlighted the commitment of most of the staff to our students and also showed me that there is a need to remind community and ALL staff across SPPS, the history of AIMS and why it was established." (Parent)

American Indian Magnet School (AIMS) emphasizes an American Indian Cultural perspective to provide high quality education for all. The AIMS team started out the year with a large group of active parents, community members, and staff with a passion for making change at their school. They were

focused on larger of culture felt disrespect for their Native American focus from the District. One example is that, as a magnet school, any child could be bussed to the school. They were facing a lot of mid-year transfers and new students, many who didn't understand or care about the focus of the school. It felt to SCIT members like the district was using their magnet status as a dumping ground for families they had trouble placing elsewhere. The once robust Native American programming at the school was also being diminished year by year amid increasing district academic and testing requirements. Staff

⁶ http://www.twincities.com/education/ci_26971807/st-paul-school-district-aims-reduce-bad-behavior

felt like students and families were disconnected from the Native American culture at the heart of the school, and reported not having enough time to reach out and bridge that gap.

The team had identified a significant problem relating to school climate, but lacked clarity on how to use the SCIT process to address this issue. Given this focus and the nature of the team's concerns, their SPFT liaison suggested developing and submitting a School Redesign Proposal. The School Redesign process is a procedure adopted in the 2013-2015 SPPS teachers' contract that allows teachers to initiate school redesign plans, with flexibility at individual schools to adjust staffing and funding to accomplish proposed change. The team embraced this approach, working closely with SPFT to write a plan with the following purpose: "...to infuse more American Indian culture into the school curriculum and to re-engage the school community in the school culture fairs—the Plains Culture Fair, the Woodlands Culture Fair, and the All Nations Culture Fair." To accomplish this work, it will be essential for staff to work across grade levels and with the community to create a scope and sequence for grade level focus for each culture fair and to ensure that the cultural focus aligns with grade level standards and curriculum. The plan required teachers and school staff to approve additional work hours (beyond those stated in the contract), and a commitment from SPPS to fund redesign efforts. 87.6% of the staff voted in favor of the redesign plan, which went on to gain necessary approvals with the district and union board. At the mid-year and final check-ins with SCIT members, AIMS participants noted this success as their greatest team accomplishment.

School Climate Improvement Team Toolkit

During the pilot implementation in Saint Paul Public Schools, teams used a number of facilitation and evaluation tools. This toolkit includes explanations and samples of methods and instruments that teams used to gather feedback about school climate and about the effectiveness of their teams. There are also tips and tools that teams used to organize the work around school climate in the schools.

Surveys

When most people think of evaluation data, they think of surveys. However, it is important to remember that surveys are not the only way to gather feedback and information. In fact, they are often more time consuming to use and analyze than other methods. Additionally, during the pilot implementation, Saint Paul Public Schools had licensed a district-wide school climate survey tool that was used in all of the pilot schools. For schools that do not have access to district-wide climate surveys, however, there are many published tools available to use or modify (see <https://safesupportivelearning.ed.gov> and click on the link for the school climate survey compendium).

Given all of these factors, the use of surveys in the pilots was limited to those who actually participated in SCITs to learn more about their expectations and experiences. The Google Form (<https://www.google.com/forms/about/>) was used to create an anonymous survey tool that could be accessed by everyone who was asked to be a member of a SCIT during the pilot. Participants were asked to respond to a survey before their first SCIT meeting. The results were then brought to the first meeting as a starting off point for conversations about school climate. At the end of the year, an additional survey was sent to everyone who had attended a SCIT meeting to learn from the experiences of the pilot teams.

Tips for using surveys

- Provide a **clear title and introduction** to the survey explaining the survey's purpose, and what you will do with the information you collect.
- Make sure **every question is necessary** and will be used. If you aren't going to use the results, do not ask the question.
- Write your questions in the **clearest, simplest language** possible.

Tools included: Sample Pre-SCIT Member Survey, Sample Post-SCIT Member Survey

SCIT Team Climate Questions (Pre-Survey)

We would like SCIT group members to fill out this form in advance of the first team meeting. Results will be summarized and shared during the first team meeting in order to understand the concerns of group members.

* Required

What are the positive aspects of the climate at your school? *

What are the issues/problems with the climate at your school? *

What is your role in this school community? *

- Parent
- Teacher
- Administrator
- Staff
- Student
- Other:

Why do these issues/problems exist? *

What are the root causes or origins of those issues/problems? Why do the issues/problems continue?

Who shares your concerns? *

How could these issues/problems be addressed or solved? *

Who has the power to solve them? *

Your gender

Optional

Your ethnicity

Optional

SCIT End-of-School-Year Participant Survey

SPFT would like to hear more about your experience as a SCIT participant this school year. Your honest feedback will help us to improve the training and support for future teams.

* Required

Top of Form About You

What is your school? *

What is your role in this school community? *

- Parent
- Teacher
- Administrator
- Staff
- Student
- Other:

Approximately how many SCIT meetings did you attend? *

Pick the option that best fits your involvement.

- All or most of the meetings
- Quite a few
- One or two
- None

If you did not attend a meeting OR if you only attended once or twice, please comment here.

Why did you choose not to come? What would have made you more likely to participate?

Your gender

Optional

Your ethnicity

Optional

About Your SCIT Experience

How did the SCIT help you to understand strengths and opportunities at your school?

How did the SCIT help you to understand problems/issues at your school?

What was your SCIT's greatest accomplishment?

Did the training provided by SPFT prepare you adequately for participating in the SCIT?

- Yes
- No
- I did not attend training.

What would you change about the SCIT training?

Please share any recommendations about how SCIT can be improved for future teams.

Optional

Community Roundtables & Group Interviews

Ramsey Middle School and Murray Middle School both hosted community events that gave all members of the community the opportunity to come together and share their thoughts about school climate. These events also served as opportunities to gather information and feedback using group interviewing techniques and were found to meet multiple needs for SCITs that participated in the pilot. They were an important source of data for the SCITs to understand a broad range of issues related to climate.

Tips for using roundtables as group interviews

- Prepare a clear statement that explains the **purpose of the event and what will happen** to the information that is shared.
- Make sure **every question you ask is necessary** and will be used. If you aren't going to use the results, do not ask the question.
- Don't be afraid of silence during the conversation. Stop and wait. **Give people time and space** to respond.
- Have **a facilitator with each small group** to ensure that all voices are heard and that the information is captured

Suggested Analysis

In order to ensure that the thoughts share at these events were not lost; a note taker was placed at each table with copies of each question and space to write. These notes can be consolidated after the event in a summary document. Alternately, a large sheet of paper can be used for these notes with markers to share the information with the whole group. The sheets can be typed up after the meeting to capture the notes in a usable form. In either case, the SCITs found it helpful to share a summary of what was said at the meeting with participants.

Taking these notes and turning into an action plan is the next important step. There are two ways that SCITs approached this phase of the work. First, if there is an opportunity to share out what is discussed at each table, these themes can be collected and participants could vote using a show of hands or by sticking a colored dot or other sticker next to the theme that they think is most important regarding school climate work. A plan for taking action on the top vote getters could then be worked on by the SCIT. The SCIT could instead discuss the themes and establish those with the highest priority for action after event and develop an action plan at their next meeting.

Tools Included: Community Roundtable Agendas, Sample Community Roundtable Invitation

Community Input Session

{Date}

{Location}

{Time}

Objectives

Participants will

Identify successes and opportunities for students available at {school name}.

Brainstorm and identify areas for growth in meeting the learning needs of all students at {school name}.

Create action items for stakeholder groups in addressing areas of growth.

Agenda

- I. Welcome and presentation (15 min)
- II. Round Table Format
 - a. Brainstorm and list successes and opportunities
-Guiding question: What are the top successes and opportunities available for learners at {school name}? (20 min)
 - b. Brainstorm and list areas for growth
-What are necessary areas of growth in order to support learning at {school name}? (20 min)
 - c. Presentation by groups (20 min)
 - d. Voting process
-Each participant will have 3 sticker dots for voting (15 min)
 - e. Identification of top areas for growth to be addressed
-Top vote getting areas will be determined (10 min)
 - f. Brainstorm and suggest action items for stakeholders to support areas of growth (15 min)
- III. Closing (5 min)

Sample Community Feedback Night Agenda

- 6 pm Set Up (many hands make light work)
- 6:30 Parents and children enter, get food, seating
- 6:45 Greetings
- Administrator introduces administration and district representatives, SCIT leader introduces SCIT Team
 - Brief description of the process and how this information will be shared
- 6:55 Table discussions
- 7:55 Wrap up table discussions and recap
- 8:00 Ending and goodbyes

Facilitator questions:

Intro/ Purpose statement

“The purpose of this meeting is to ask for your input/ thoughts/ opinions to help guide [school] moving forward. We are here to listen to you tonight.”

Student Engagement

- What do you think your student looks forward to at school (What keeps them wanting to come to school)?
- What does your student like about school?
- What motivates your student regarding school?
- What could [school] do to make school more engaging for your student?

Behavior

- What do you believe is school appropriate behavior? (language/ safety)
- What are some things [school] can do to encourage school appropriate behavior?
- What do you believe are appropriate school responses to various student behaviors?

Academics

- What works academically for your student? (homework amounts, tests, projects, student choice)
- How do you know that your student is learning?
- What can [school] do to improve learning experiences for your student?

Community Involvement

- Share your thoughts on how the community can be involved at [school]?
- What type of involvement would you be interested in and willing to do?
- What do you feel is the community’s role in supporting: Student Engagement/ Behavior/ Academics?

School Climate (Wrap Up)

- Ideas/ Suggestions for improvement
- How do you feel overall about [school]?



YOUR INPUT MATTERS!

Murray Middle School Presents

A Round Table Discussion

**May 13, 2014
5:30pm — 7:30pm
Murray Middle School
Cafeteria**

Murray Middle School wants to hear from you! Parents and community members are invited to speak directly with Administration and other Murray staff members. Murray is excited for this opportunity to have an informal conversation with the community.

For Childcare and Transportation requests please contact Stefanie Folkema at 651-744-3922.



Quick Interviews for Parents

One lesson learned by the pilot SCITs is that it is easier to reach a wide variety of parents at events that they are attending for other important reasons than it is to ask them to attend a separate event related to school climate. In order to hear about their experiences with school climate, members of the SCIT could have questions ready to ask families at a variety of school events. Orientation, conferences, and sports events are all examples of opportunities to hear from families that should not be missed.

Sample Questions

- How could school events be more welcoming for you and your family?
- What are the school or community events that you most enjoy?
- How do you hear about school events or happenings?
- Which staff members at school are you most comfortable talking with?
- How could the school do a better job of communicating with you or your family?

Student Feedback (Roundtables, Panels, and Interviews)

Students have valuable first hand feedback about school climate and providing them with a safe space to share their experiences can empower students to engage in conversations and actions surrounding issues in their schools as well as provide helpful and actionable information for SCITs. Ramsey Middle School invited students to participate in one of their SCIT meetings to respond to specific questions about school climate. Students were also active participants in the community roundtable that Ramsey hosted. Murray Middle School hosted an event during the school day for 50 students from across all of their grades to share their experiences with school climate and to help the SCIT to better understand the issues that students felt were most important.

Tips for facilitating feedback from students about school climate

- Prepare a clear explanation to explain the **purpose of the event** and how you will use the information shared
- Make sure that you have invited a **representative sample** of students.
- Don't be afraid of silence during the conversation. Stop and wait. **Give students time and space** to respond.
- Keep the conversation **focused on the questions** that you want to address.
- **Capture the main points** shared and let students know what will happen next. Will the main themes be share with the SCIT? Will it be shared with the school's administration? When can they expect to hear if any action has taken place based on their feedback?

Sample Questions

- What are the top successes and opportunities available for learners at Murray Middle School?
 - *(prompt: what are cool opportunities here at Murray?)*
- What could Murray do better for students?
 - *(prompt: where could you be more supported?)*
- When do students feel most connected to adults at Murray?
- What kind of events or activities would your family attend at Murray?
 - *(prompt: what events would YOU attend at Murray?)*

Team Facilitation Tools

Suggested meeting schedule

The pilot implementation of SCITs in four schools provided the teams with the opportunity to experiment with the format and content of their meetings. Some of the groups met monthly and other met more or less frequently depending on the needs and schedules of the group members. However, all of the groups at the midpoint debrief agreed that it would be helpful in future years to have a better sense of the recommended content of SCIT meetings, especially early in the process so that group can focus on creating and maintaining momentum around climate work in the schools. Based on the work of the pilot schools the following schedule is recommended with clear suggestions for meetings one through three and followed by recommendations for mid and end of year meetings. Other meeting topics, format, and frequency would depend on the needs of individual SCITs

Meeting	Topics	Resources Needed
1st Meeting	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Introductions to the people on the team and the goals for the SCIT • An overview of school data and the other groups in the school including PBIS teams, PTO groups, etc. • Overview of roles: Who will take notes? Who will facilitate? Who will send out agendas? How will the group share information between meetings? How often will the group meet? 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • School discipline or climate data • Description of other active groups in the school and what their roles are
2nd Meeting	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • SWOT Analysis or other activity to identify potential areas of work for the group 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • SWOT Template • SWOT Facilitation Guide
3rd Meeting	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • SCIT vision, goals, and work plan • Review results from SWAT Analysis or other tool • Use to priorities areas for action • Assign next steps and responsibility for action 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • SWOT results • Academic year calendar for planning • Tools for getting any feedback needed from families, community members, school staff or students
Midyear	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Midyear Check in 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Representatives from

Meeting	<p>opportunity</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What is happening on other SCITs across the district? • What have been the greatest successes of the team? • What is needed to move forward 	<p>other SCITs</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Any feedback collected at your school • Summary of SCIT activities and priorities
End of Year Meeting	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What did the group accomplish? • What tools or activities were most helpful? • Is there work that needs to happen over the summer? • How will the group maintain the momentum for the next year? • How will new people be recruited for participation? 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Summary of the work to pass to next year's team • Summer calendars for planning • Thank you to participants

SWOT Template, Sample, and Analysis Guide

One tool that was used by pilot SCITs and could be useful in focusing future teams was a Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities, Threats (SWOT) Analysis. This activity can help teams to identify concrete areas for action and intervention on issues of school climate.

Tools Included: Template, Sample, and Analysis Guide

SWOT Template

<p>[Translate into tasks for the Project Plan]</p>	Strengths <ul style="list-style-type: none">•	Weaknesses <ul style="list-style-type: none">•
Opportunities <ul style="list-style-type: none">•	<p>[How do I use these strengths to take advantage of these opportunities?]</p>	<p>[How do I overcome the weaknesses that prevent me taking advantage of these opportunities?]</p>
Threats <ul style="list-style-type: none">•	<p>[How do I use these strengths to reduce the likelihood and impact of these threats?]</p>	<p>[How do I address the weaknesses that will make these threats a reality?]</p>

Sample SWOT Report

Strengths

Group 1.

- Reflective practice
- Using data
- Proactive Approach
- Availability of supports
- Cohesion with stakeholders collaborating for students
- Trust in the community
- New master schedule
- Focused-prioritized
- Reflective-historical perspective
- Communication process

Group 2.

- Parent/Teacher climate
- Tutoring
- BIP: Behavior Intervention Person
- Discipline referral forms
- EDLs

Group 3.

- Community involvement
- Strong and cohesive administration
- Unified staff
- Useful data tools being used by staff and administration
- Good historical reputation
- Strong/clear expectations and systems for staff
- Physical layout of the school
- Middle school model
- feeder elementary
- Sports and EDL programming

Weaknesses

Group 1.

- Communication with parents
- Bullying versus conflict
- Lack of training in restorative justice
- Contrivance to exclude students through suspension

Group 2.

- Student/Parent activities
- Getting all families to the table
- Understanding the motivations behind student behaviors
- Student Council
- Feeling part of a community project/kids

Group 3.

- Not seeing all students equally
- Communication
- Technology in and out of the classroom
- Wrap around services for mental health and social services
- Meaningful consequences for students

- Understanding the social development of 6th graders

Opportunities

Group 1.

- SPFT Parent Home Visit Project
- Restorative Justice Training
- Karen Interpreter
- Area streamlining

Group 2.

- Activities/kid sponsored
- How-to classes
- Parent-to-parent
- Ipad Technology
- Survey of what students want to learn and hearing more student voice
- More community involvement and participation
- Partnerships with local businesses and colleges
- Meet and Greet for parents to get to know each other

Group 3.

- Building the capacity to maintain the good work happening
- Communication

Threats

Group 1.

- Movement/mobility
- Fewer staff
- Money in the form of economic allocations
- New initiatives

Group 2.

- Perceptions for others in the community

Group 3.

- Instability in the community
- Homelessness
- Consistency/fidelity of implementation across all staff
- Staff turnover
- Difficulty filling substitute positions causing teachers to love prep time

Analysis Guide

Listing down all the strengths and weakness, while identifying all the opportunities and threats is only useful if they come together to inform an action strategy. The SCIT needs to take the information in the SWOT Analysis and react to the set of information given. Teams should look at the strengths and see how they align with the other areas of the matrix. How can the school take advantage of areas identified as strengths and use them to a) take advantage of opportunities, b) improve of weaknesses, and c) avoid or combat identified threats. The true value of this analysis is to bring a wide variety of information and viewpoints together into one document. The analysis can help teams to identify the most promising situations and the most pressing issues to address as a SCIT. Once this area or these areas have been identified, the group can plan for next steps to improve school climate.

SCIT Team Meeting/Gathering Summary

Meeting date: _____ **School:** _____

Facilitator/Leader Name: _____

Participants (attach sign in sheet, if applicable, and note the following):

Number: _____

Demographics of interest (Proportion of teachers/administrators/community, race/ethnicity, gender, SES, etc.)

Highlights from meeting:

(What went well? Didn't go well? Interesting conversations? "Breakthroughs"? Decisions made?)

Next steps

Who is responsible?

Next steps	Who is responsible?

Appendices

Midterm Report

*Saint Paul Federation of
Teachers School Climate Improvement Team
Interim Report
January 2015 Prepared by Goff
Pejsa & Associates, Evaluators*

Summary of Interim Report

This report summarizes the activities and findings from the first semester of the pilot implementation of School Climate Improvement Teams (SCIT) in four Saint Paul Public Schools. A description of the pilot SCIT training, the tools developed to document the work of the SCITs, and the work of each team is followed by an overview of themes common across SCIT sites. This interim report concludes with the goals for the second half of the pilot year from each SCIT.

Overview of Project

The School Climate Improvement Teams (SCIT) in Saint Paul were charged with the following tasks:

- **Develop site-specific policies and plans** to promote high standards of student conduct;
- **Review data on student conduct**, identify potential solutions and interventions, and recommend improvement to the building-wide plan; and
- **Monitor the application and enforcement of the responses** detailed in the Student Behavior Handbook: Rights and Responsibilities (boe.spps.org/POLICYMANUAL) and site specific discipline protocols, Student Conduct Guide and site-specific policies to ensure that all staff – administrators, teachers, paraprofessionals and others – consistently maintain high standards and expectations for all students. Teachers who believe appropriate action was not taken may take their concerns to the team for further discussion. As a last resort, if the team and the principal cannot resolve the issue, the matter may be appealed through the grievance procedure up to the Superintendent for final resolution.

Pilot Training Sessions

To prepare the Pilot SCITs for the work that they were being asked to do in their schools, three-hour trainings were held during fall 2014 for the four pilot schools. Facilitators from Side by Side Consulting (<http://www.sidebysideassociates.com>) walked the groups through a training that gave teams an opportunity to begin to use data to analyze equity disparities in their schools' disciplinary referrals and to:

- Understand the vision, goals, timeline and support for SCIT Pilot Project
- Begin building strong relationships among team members
- Have a shared understanding of positive school climate and racial equity

- Have the tools they need to begin their work together
- Be empowered and excited to begin their work together

The evaluation team developed three tools to help SCITs to document the work happening in their school teams. The data gathered from all of these tools were used to capture and report the work of the SCITs as summarized in this interim report. The first was a "Critical Incident Journal" (*attached*) used by teams to capture important events such as policy changes, public meetings, administrative staffing changes, or other turning points in their work. The second was a "Meeting Notes Tool" to ensure that groups could easily and accurately capture the notes from each meeting in a way that would encourage accountability to decisions made and actions promised (*attached*). The third tool was a pre-SCIT survey on school climate (*attached*) that was shared with schools before their first meetings. The results of the open-ended questions on this survey were used by some teams to facilitate initial discussions about climate priority areas in their schools and by the evaluators to capture baseline data.

Overview of SCIT Teams

Each SCIT was tasked with scheduling their meetings autonomously. The first meetings of each team were attended by a facilitator from Side by Side and a member of the evaluation team. Subsequent meetings were usually attended by a member of the evaluation team and a representative from SPFT. SCITs were responsible for setting their meeting times, agendas, frequency of meetings, membership, and for communicating with members of their teams. Each team has had a distinct experience, tackling issues specific to their schools and cultures. The specifics of each school are followed by themes that the evaluation team observed across schools along with goals for the second half of the year.

American Indian Magnet School

Although some members of the American Indian Magnet (AIM) attended the initial pilot training, the SCIT from AIM was interested in pulling in others who were unable to attend. Their first SCIT meeting at their school was an opportunity to provide the training to a broader school audience. Following this initial training/meeting, the first AIM SCIT meeting happened in December. The Principal, who will be leaving the school after this academic year, attended neither the training, nor any of the SCIT meetings. AIM has successfully engaged parents and community members, and is currently working with existing student groups to incorporate their voice. This group changed their two-hour meeting time from 5:15 to a 1.5 hour meeting starting at 6:00pm to accommodate more families and avoid interference with other school activities.

The SCIT at AIM is focused on the cultural focus of the entire school and feels that this macro focus has a meaningful impact on micro school climate issues. The group is grappling with the most effective way to maximize the cultural focus of the school to impact issues of equity disparities. To that end, the SCIT is weighing the opportunity to pursue a school redesign in lieu of continuing as a SCIT that focuses on school climate and behavior within the existing school model. The opportunity that the school is facing with a new principal is also a focus of the group. Having an active voice in the search process has been a focus of concern for parents and teachers in this school community. The group noted at their mid year review that their greatest accomplishment has been the formation of the SCIT and

some coordination around a redesign has also been brought up by the school as a way to get back to the initial intent of the magnet school

Como High School

Como's first meeting in November did not have any parents or community members in attendance. However, the SCIT at Como mobilized to recruit 4 additional parent and community members for the second meeting held in early December. The team has continued to engage a few of these members, but it is possible that the early meeting time (3:15 to 4:45pm) is difficult for working parents to attend. Como is in a different position than other schools in the pilot as it does not have any intervention specialists on staff; lack of behavior-specific staffing and resources is a major concern for this group. The school does, however, collect behavior data which has been shared and discussed with the SCIT. The SCIT at Como has been focused on using the data on students with multiple disciplinary referrals to develop targeted, comprehensive, and culturally appropriate interventions for these students.

There was some specific staff development work done during fall semester around racial equity work and expectations in the school. A follow up to this work, particularly in renewing school staff commitment to positive culture, has been discussed at length. One perceived barrier to progressing to action for the Como SCIT has been irregular administrative attendance at meetings which has led to the the team being hesitant to move forward on initiatives in the absence of explicit administrative support and buy in. Having said that, the Como SCIT is committed to making the work of their group more visible to the school community. When asked at the midpoint of their pilot year about their greatest success, Como identified their success as having found an openness within the group to ideas that have not been voiced before.

Murray Middle School

The group at Murray had its roots in work that begun in spring 2014 when a group of concerned parents requested a school-wide meeting with administrators and teachers. This listening session is regarded by members of the Murray community as a turning point in the transformation of school culture at Murray Middle School. This group has met monthly at 4:00pm for 1.5 hours. The Principal sends out minutes from previous meetings and detailed agendas in advance of meetings. Every agenda includes the mission of the SCIT along with reminders about expectations for working together as a group that were shared in the original training session.

Initial meetings focused on sharing points of view on school culture both past and current along with an overview of what work related to school climate was already happening in other groups such as the PBIS or academic teams. Academic administrators have shared SWISS Data reflecting school-wide discipline events. This data is showing a reduction in incidents and, more importantly, a decrease in racial disparities for these events. Teachers and administrators have shared their use of PBIS in the school and their efforts to implement the program with fidelity with PBIS at every grade level. Parents, community members, teachers and administrators feel that this has had a strong positive impact on their school.

The evaluator working with the team then walked the group through a SWAT analysis that identified priorities for the climate team to address. The broad areas identified were communication and student voice. The Murray SCIT feels that it has built a level of trust between stakeholders that is new in that school community. The second half of the year will focus on developing impactful interventions that address the areas of concern surfaced during the first half of the year as well as deciding on how to measure and report on the success of these initiatives.

Ramsey Middle School

Ramsey Middle school started the year with a new principal and concerns about disciplinary problems dominating school culture. The group had equal representation from parents and teachers and the school principal joined the training and all meetings. After the initial training, the group recruited a diverse group of parents that included parents of students who were involved in disciplinary referrals. This team has met every two weeks at 5:00pm for 1.5 hours. Meeting minutes and agendas are shared by a teacher who coordinates the meetings.

One area of intense discussion was the fact that there were insufficient behavior intervention staff at Ramsey during the beginning of the year to staff, which meant that school administrators and teachers were taking on this role in addition to their other work. Added to this challenge was a lack of substitute teachers meaning that teachers were using their prep time to cover for missing teachers. Parents expressed frustration over these staffing problems and the barriers that this situation posed to focusing on climate and academics. The focus of early meetings was on identifying school-wide strategies for securing safe hallways and public spaces. The group agreed at an early meeting to focus on some short term interventions, which provided some hopeful successes when those areas improved during the first half of the pilot. Behavior intervention staff were added in December allowing the teachers and administrators to focus on getting referral systems in place to improve classroom and hallway climate. Parents are pushing the SCIT to incorporate more discussions about what is happening academically at Ramsey now that there have been positive changes to school safety. The SCIT is learning more about the Middle School Model and how this will be adopted more rigorously at Ramsey during the next school year. Administrators are also now collecting and sharing SWISS data with the team. Ramsey identified getting parents involved and engaged as their greatest accomplishment for the first half of the pilot.

Additional Common Themes Across Schools

The four schools participating in the SCIT pilot are dealing with four unique school cultures. Each of the SCITs have tackled their schools' climate issues in very different ways and have identified different priorities. However, there have been some themes that emerged across sites. These themes are:

Parents are struggling to find ways to engage with schools and become involved in their school communities

- o This is an issue that seems particularly challenging in middle school and high school
- o The elimination of site councils was mentioned a number of times across different schools
- o Concrete and consistent opportunities to volunteer to support students academically are requested from parents across schools
- o Difficulty in pushing communication out to all families is an issue that schools are trying to tackle

Staffing choices and opportunities impact teachers' and administrations' ability to focus on school culture

- o SCITs have questions about how resources for intervention specialists are allocated within the district and in their buildings
- o Lack of support staff to help with culture and behavior in halls and outside of classrooms is taking teachers away from teaching
- o Schools this fall were unable to staff their schools with substitute teachers, which took teachers away from their other work, including that of school climate

The complex and interrelated nature of school culture can make the work hard to narrow and focus for SCITs

- o Implementation and understanding of PBIS varies across schools
- o SCITs need to have information about work on discipline and academics happening across the school to understand where to best focus their energy and eliminate redundancy
- o A more defined process for action planning and decision making at the SCIT level would be helpful for some teams
- o Frustration at the pace of change in school culture is evident

Structure of the individual SC/T has an impact on stakeholder engagement and effectiveness of the group

- o Meeting times that allow for representation from all parties is essential to engage families and community members in SCIT work
- o Sharing agendas before the meeting and notes from the meeting reinforce accountability and good use of time during meetings

Next Steps

The schools that participated in the pilot implementation of SCITs were brought together for a mid-year check in January 2015. This meeting was again facilitated by Side by Side consulting and focused on reviewing the expectations for the work that these teams are doing around climate and equity. It was also a chance to celebrate the work to date, share experiences with other SCIT sites, and plan for the second half of the year. All four schools were able to attend and have representation from parents, teachers, and administrators—with

the exception of the American Indian Magnet, which did not have administrative representation. At this meeting, schools shared their perceptions of experiences of success in the first half of the year:

- **Ramsey:** Getting parents involved and engaged
- **Murray:** Working well together and amongst the team there is good mutual respect since they have been working together for almost a year. Murray has built a level of trust between stakeholders that is new in that community
- **Como:** Openness to ideas that have not been voiced before
- **AIM:** Formation of the SCIT and some coordination around a redesign has also been brought up by the school as a way to get back to the initial intent of the school

Each SCIT team has shared their unique goals for the 2nd semester: AIM

- Have 33% of the staff at school accept and embrace the SCIT team
- Ensure that 75% of staff commit to school redesign
- Be actively involved in principal search and recruitment (setting guidelines for experience and providing questions for the candidates)

Como

- Adding to the team
- Becoming more visible in the building, reaching out to PBIS team
- Setting visible goals shared with parents and students

Murray

- Increasing student voice on the team to represent diversity of school
- Empowering students from all demographics in the classroom through
- Meaningful and relevant data that can become an ongoing activity for

Ramsey

- Clarify the SCIT role and create mission statement
- Create a formalized decision making process
- Incorporate student voice into the SCIT team

End of Year Survey Summary

Respondents (15 total)

- 6 AIMS, 4 Ramsey, 5 Murray, 0 Como
- 8 parents, 4 teachers, 2 administrators, 1 coach
- 7 White/Caucasian, 4 American Indian/Native American, 1 African American, 4 chose not to answer
- 10 female, 2 male, 3 chose not to answer

Attendance

- 10 "Attended all or most of the meetings", 4 "Quite a few", and 1 "One or two"

Attendance notes/comments:

I joined SCIT in January and attended all or most of the meetings once I joined. I did not see an initial invitation to join the group in the fall, nor was I invited in the winter. I saw a PTO agenda item that a SCIT member would be reporting at a PTO meeting and I inquired about the group

On a couple of occasions, I had previous commitments. I also had a different role related to SCIT so I was participating in the process via that role.

Training

11 attended training, and all 11 indicated it prepared them adequately for participating in the SCIT

Training notes/comments:

Continue to or add more examples/stories from other schools.

Somehow get more teachers and parents involved. Better marketing.

I believe the training was held after I started attending meetings, but an invitation was not extended to me. I heard about it after it had taken place. Perhaps the SCIT members that attended the training could highlight some of the topics at the regular SCIT meeting. Also, the training materials could be made available online for self study/reading.

Timing is always hard and I don't know how to change that

I wish the entire staff could be "trained" in a staff meeting, not just the few who showed up on a Saturday morning.

It was well organized and professional delivered but in hind sight would have been better if it got us rolling even quicker than it did. Not sure if that was possible so don't take this a criticism just observation.

SCIT Impact and Assessment (open-ended, by school)

How SCIT helped team members understand problems/issues at school

<p>AIMS</p>	<p><i>Having other adults' perspectives was good (instead of always hearing from the same people within the staff at our building (Coach)</i></p> <p><i>Again, it highlighted the commitment of most of the staff to our students and also showed me that there is a need to remind community and ALL staff across SPPS, the history of AIMS and why it was established. (Parent)</i></p> <p><i>Looking at data and hearing 1st hand stories. (Parent)</i></p> <p><i>By bringing attention to areas I don't always see. (Teacher)</i></p> <p><i>Our issues have been the same for 20 yrs. Everyone complains about it but when it gets down to the nitty gritty of making documented change, little ever gets done. (Teacher)</i></p>
<p>Murray</p>	<p><i>Hearing multiple perspectives. (Teacher)</i></p> <p><i>It assisted in understanding from a wider perspective and multiple perspectives. (Administrator)</i></p> <p><i>It was explained to us as far as what are the problems and what is being done to fix these problems. (Parent)</i></p> <p><i>Hear from other parents, staff and some students. Saw and discuss the data. No filter or spin. Established trust. Saw that we were heard and plans were acted on and results tracked and shared. (Parent)</i></p>
<p>Ramsey</p>	<p><i>By what the parents and students at a few meetings, shared their experiences - it helped me see a variety of perspectives (Administrator)</i></p> <p><i>We were able to hear from teachers, administration, and district level employees. We also heard from parents who spent time in the school. Having all these stakeholders present and being able to talk about issues together was important for transparency but also productive in terms of brainstorming solutions. (Parent)</i></p> <p><i>Parents voiced their own and their student's troubling experiences. SCIT members' children/students were invited to one meeting to voice their concerns. It was great to hear responses to those issues directly from teachers and administrators. (Parent)</i></p> <p><i>As a teacher, the SCIT helped me understand a parent's' perspective of the problems or issues that arise at Ramsey. For one example, we briefly discussed parent expectations of homework. During this discussion, I was able to notice that parents have different opinions about homework (as do teachers!) so the discussion was helpful to learn background and reasons behind these opinions. This was true for most of the issues we discussed. (Teacher)</i></p>

How SCIT helped team members understand strengths and opportunities at school

<p>AIMS</p>	<p><i>I appreciated learning of SPFT's work and involvement in the racial equity issues. (Coach)</i></p> <p><i>It showed me the commitment that most of the staff have for our students who attend AIMS. It also showed me one of the major weaknesses of our community and that is the apathy that is held by majority of native community in regards to AIMS. (Parent)</i></p> <p><i>Helped to know what is going on in school and get to know the teachers better. (Parent)</i></p> <p><i>To see how others might see our school. (Teacher)</i></p> <p><i>It started off with a lot of staff support but by May the meeting's attendance was low. By creating our school Redesign Plan, we have an opportunity to finally put our focus in writing. But, unless everyone is willing to commit to the plan (not just the same few), it will not work. (Teacher)</i></p>
<p>Murray</p>	<p><i>Hearing multiple perspectives. (Teacher)</i></p> <p><i>Completing the SWOT analysis and regular review of data, and assessing the alignment of our work to the 5E's helped see strengths, areas for growth and if our worked was aligned to community perceptions of needs. (Administrator)</i></p> <p><i>We were given resources and data to show us all the great things that are happening at Murray. (Parent)</i></p> <p><i>Hear from other parents, staff and some students. Saw and discuss the data. No filter or spin. Established trust. Saw that we were heard and plans were acted on and results tracked and shared. (Parent)</i></p>
<p>Ramsey</p>	<p><i>It allowed me to hear the parent perspective. (Administrator)</i></p> <p><i>Through staff perspective and by getting a better sense of what types of changes a school can make on its own and what needs to happen at a higher level. (Parent)</i></p> <p><i>The teachers and administrators reported on PBIS events; how well they went, how many students attended, etc. They also reported on the successes of the new initiatives, such as reduced tardiness from the Jeopardy theme song and less commotion in the hallways from the elimination of backpacks. I also learned from Principal Vibar what her focus for the year was and what priorities she needed to hold for next year so as to not overwhelm the teachers. (Parent)</i></p> <p><i>As a teacher, SCIT helped me understand the strengths of our school from a parent perspective. It also allowed me to explore more opportunities our school can provide to parents and the community. (Teacher)</i></p>

SCIT's greatest accomplishments, from members' perspective

<p>AIMS</p>	<p><i>Getting us to the point of a school redesign! (Coach)</i></p> <p><i>Bringing parents and staff together to hear from parents why education is valued and dreaded by our community. Aspects of historical trauma were shared and actually heard. (Parent)</i></p> <p><i>Getting the district to allow the school to incorporate native teachings in all curriculum. (Parent)</i></p> <p><i>Identifying that we have a strong school that needs improvement. (Teacher)</i></p> <p><i>Creating our school's Redesign Plan to include more native culture in the curriculum. (Teacher)</i></p>
<p>Murray</p>	<p><i>Building consensus on some items. (Teacher)</i></p> <p><i>Increasing student voice through end of the year 8th grade interviews and roundtable input. (Administrator)</i></p> <p><i>I felt I was heard as a parent and knowing that we could share and the administrators listened to our ideas to help continue to make Murray the school it is today. This is a great team! (Parent)</i></p> <p><i>Validating that behavior issues had improved so we could start to focus on the school community building that needs to happen to create a lasting solution. We fleshed out the goal that we need to create a legacy of a climate and culture of learning at Murray. I personally would love to see this district wide but that is outside of our circle of control. I would like to think it is something we can influence. (Parent)</i></p>
<p>Ramsey</p>	<p><i>Parent involvement, Round table event, SUPPORT for both school staff and for parents themselves (Administrator)</i></p> <p><i>Being a part of positive change during an extremely challenging year (Parent)</i></p> <p><i>The Ramsey We are Stronger Together event. It was a proactive initiative in engaging parents and students in Ramsey's success. (Parent)</i></p> <p><i>I think our community involvement night was a great accomplishment because we were able to learn how to work together as a group to organize an event that reached out to parents and community members. (Parent)</i></p>
<p>Recommendations about how SCIT can be improved for future teams.</p>	
<p>AIMS</p>	<p><i>Make sure that parents are asked/invited/and participating. (Parent)</i></p>

	<p><i>Flyers to be handed out by teachers during fall conferences personally inviting parents to be members. (Parent)</i></p> <p><i>Our biggest challenge is getting parental and community members to actively participate for more than 1 meeting. SCIT will not succeed without parental involvement. (Teacher)</i></p>
Murray	<p><i>As we move forward, I would like to see the group be more focused on giving input toward meeting goals that came out of discussions about obstacles and opportunities. (Teacher)</i></p> <p><i>Continue to work toward greater perspective that represents the community. (Administrator)</i></p> <p><i>Continue to share our best practices so every school is not left with reinventing the wheel. Some of this could be as a group like this year. Some exchange could be more small, focused and action oriented. Assumption is that principals are doing this now. Could there be more? Is there more? (Parent)</i></p>
Ramsey	<p><i>I would like the group's focus shifted from information gathering and sharing to a working group. In my five months on the team, the only action that we took as a group was to host the Stronger Together event, which was more info gathering. I am anxious for the group to DO something. I believe in order for that to happen, the culture of the group needs to shift from "I will attend the SCIT meetings and provide my opinion/perspective" to "I will work on tasks/initiatives outside the meetings and report my progress back to the group during meetings". The decision has been made to meet half as often to find better family balance, which I have 100% respect for and fully support. I think that further supports the need to "work" outside of the meetings and use the meetings to "check in". If I am off base on the purpose of the group, I hope someone will help me reset my expectations. (Parent)</i></p>