

# REIMAGINING EDUCATIONAL LEADERSHIP

# FOCUS ON

## Student Perceptions of School Climate and Culture

### Insights from the Neubauer Fellowship







PHILADELPHIA  
ACADEMY  
OF SCHOOL  
LEADERS

The Neubauer Fellowship, an initiative of the Philadelphia Academy of School Leaders (PASL), has transformed school climates by fostering inclusive, supportive environments that enhance student engagement, well-being, and academic success. This brief highlights the Fellowship's impact on improving student perceptions and experiences across Philadelphia through positive school leadership.

## PRIORITIZING SCHOOL CLIMATE AND CULTURE

Recognizing the vital importance of school climate in student success, the Neubauer Fellowship provides school leaders with effective strategies to create positive and inclusive environments. This focus on climate and culture is crucial for fostering educational spaces that support students' social, emotional, and academic development.

### In interviews, Fellows reported improvements in:

-   
Student Voice
-   
Student Belonging
-   
Overall School Culture
-   
Students' Abilities to Thrive Academically and Social-Emotionally

## DATA INSIGHTS

- Enhanced Student Perceptions:** A summative evaluation of the Neubauer Fellowship shows that schools led by Fellows have seen notable improvements in student perceptions of school climate, with students reporting better relationships with staff, higher teacher expectations, improved instructional practices, and a more welcoming environment. Adjusted for school characteristics, there was a 1.9 percentage point increase in favorable student responses regarding culturally competent practices. Fellows also reported enhanced student voice, belonging, and school culture, linking these improvements to academic and socio-emotional growth.
- Impact Across School Levels:** Enhancements in student perceptions span across elementary, middle, and high schools, showcasing the Fellowship's extensive influence on school climate and culture.

## SCHOOL CLIMATE AND CULTURE

### by the Numbers

Students giving the most favorable response to items about culturally competent practices in schools led by Neubauer Fellows

**+1.9%\***  
points

Cohorts 3-6  
combined

\* Indicates the difference was statistically significant at the .05 level.

// When people showed up as their authentic selves, and they're able to share themselves with their students, the students respected them more. I think the students saw them as humans, and not just as, you know, people who teach me. I think it allowed us to, as adults, get along better and when kids see that I think it trickles in. //

—Neubauer Fellow, Cohort 7

This document is part of the "Focus Series" by the Philadelphia Academy of School Leaders (PASL) Neubauer Fellowship, which illuminates various aspects of educational excellence and leadership impact. Discover more insights and strategies in our series by visiting [phillyschoolleaders.org](http://phillyschoolleaders.org).