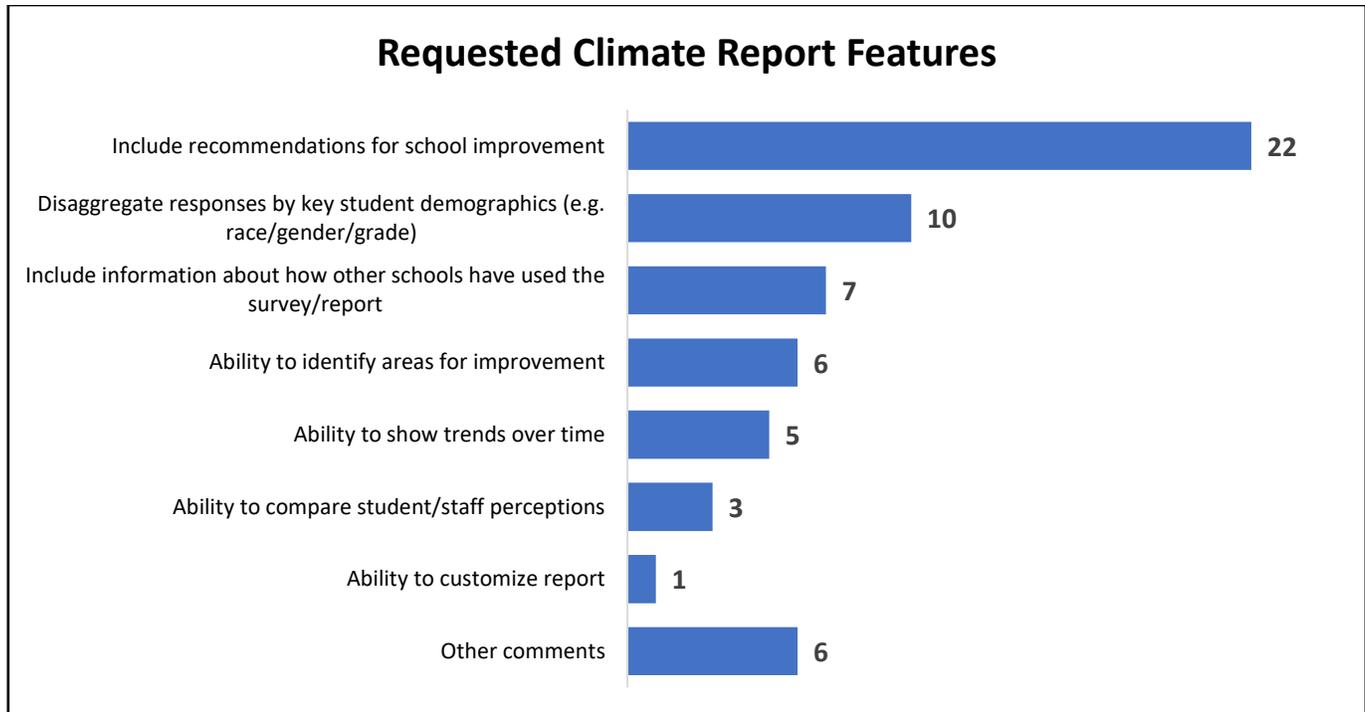


Practical Findings from the Virginia School Climate Survey

What do school administrators want in school climate reports?

In 2018, all 322 high school principals were asked for their feedback on the Virginia Secondary School Survey administered by the Department of Criminal Justice Services. Approximately 88% (283) of the principals completed the survey and answered one or more questions. When asked “What would you like to see in the school climate report that would help improve the school?” there were 161 responses. The chart summarizes the most frequent requests for report features.



Themes from Administrator Interviews

In-depth interviews were conducted with 10 school and division-level administrators. Administrators indicated they like receiving the report early because they use it in their needs assessment for their school improvement plan in May/June. While administrators expressed a desire to “see data over two or three years,” they also appreciated that the survey is not currently administered annually. Administrators would like to be able to disaggregate data by student demographics. One administrator explained they need to “make sure that our good data doesn’t cover a vulnerable group that has a different experience. Maybe our students with disabilities are reporting a tremendous amount of being bullied, but it’s covered by the fact that our non-disabled kids are not reporting that.” Administrators like that the current report compares their school to the region and the state, but noted, “It’s equally important to know how your school compares to your division and knowing what your division results are.” Finally, administrators stated that while they appreciate all of the data, there is so much information that they would like key findings to be highlighted.

Study Overview. The Virginia Secondary School Climate Survey was administered in the spring of 2018 as part of the annual School Safety Audit (§ 22.1-279.8.A) by the Virginia Center for School and Campus Safety (VCSCS) in the Department of Criminal Justice Services (DCJS), in cooperation with the Virginia Department of Education. This project was supported by grant #NIJ 2017-CK-BX-007 awarded to the University of Virginia by the National Institute of Justice, Office of Justice Programs, U.S. Department of Justice. The opinions, findings, and recommendations expressed in this report are those of the researchers at the Youth Violence Project of the University of Virginia and do not necessarily reflect those of the U.S. Department of Justice or the Center for School and Campus Safety at the Virginia Department of Criminal Justice Services. More detailed analyses are available from the Virginia Youth Violence Project: <http://youthviolence.edschool.virginia.edu>.