



## The 2011 Summer Institute, Certifications and Academic Credit

**Overview:** All members of the institute receive a certification of attendance (see below for details). Participants who work in and/or with K-12 schools have the option of working and learning to receive a *School Climate Improvement Leader* Certificate (see below for details).

Registrants may earn three graduate credits by enrolling in the course *Social, Emotional and Academic Education: Theory, Research, and Practice* as part of the Summer Institute. This course is offered as part of the Institute in collaboration with the CUNY School of Professional Studies (SPS). Professor Cohen teaches this course. Registrants who wish to earn graduate credit will enroll for the course through SPS. If you are interested in registering for this class, please contact Jennifer Lee by phone at (212) 652-2070 or by email at [Jennifer.lee@mail.cuny.edu](mailto:Jennifer.lee@mail.cuny.edu). Graduate credit earned from SPS through the Summer Institute can be applied to the Social, Emotional and Academic Education Certificate program, offered by SPS. For more information, visit the SPS website [www.cuny.sps.edu](http://www.cuny.sps.edu).

### **Certificate of attendance at NSCC's Institute:**

This certificate confirms that the participant attended a three-day institute that focused on school climate reform. Participants are exposed to recent research and best practices in school climate reform as well as an array of national, state, district and school experts in social, emotional, ethical and civic learning and school improvement. Participants learn about a range of school climate improvement tasks and challenges that inform and shape the process of (i) planning and preparing for the next phase of school climate improvement; (ii) evaluation; (iii) understanding evaluation findings, engagement and action planning; (iv) implementing the action plan; and, (v) beginning the cycle anew.

### **School Climate Improvement Leader Certification Program:**

The *primary goal* of the school climate improvement individual practitioner' certification is three-fold:

- (1) To develop a critical mass of socially, emotionally and civically able school leaders who understand the theory, research and practice of school climate reform and evidence-based social-emotional-civic education, risk prevention and health promotion efforts;
- (2) To recognize individuals who are both personally committed to and have demonstrated expertise in promoting comprehensive K-12 school climate improvement and social, emotional, ethical and civic educational practice; and,
- (3) To recognize and support a growing network of local school climate reform leaders.

### **Pre-requisites for certification**

- Being a practicing educator, school-based mental health professional, youth development professional, parent, school board and/community leader. (Parent, school board and/or community leaders need to have an opportunity to work directly with educators involved with school climate reform.)
- A profound commitment to being a 'change agent' in K-12 school communities invested in furthering school climate reform and social, emotional, ethical and civic learning.

The National School Climate Center (NSCC)  
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Requirements:

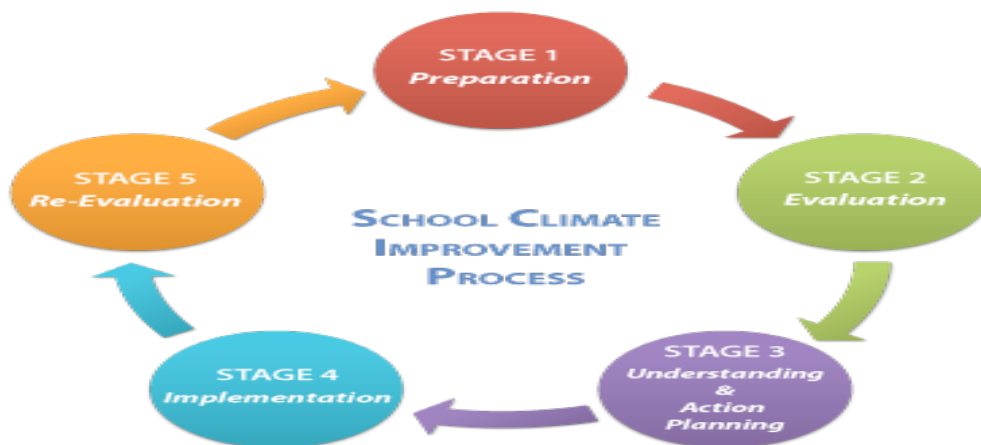
- (1) Attending the summer institute.
- (2) A commitment to becoming a member of a growing network of teachers/learners dedicated to advancing K-12 school climate reform and social, emotional, ethical and civic learning;
- (3) After attending the Institute and over the course of the ensuing year, to demonstrate understanding, performance and reflective learning participants will:
  - 1) Write a three to four page reflections on each of the first four stages in the school climate improvement process (see below for details) that address (i) key understandings and (ii) what they did to address the tasks and challenges that characterize and shape this stage. Applicants will be invited to include information about what readings, web-based resources and/or people have significantly furthered their learning.
  - 2) Provide some form of “evidence” (artifacts) of what you actually DID to address the tasks and challenges in each stage (e.g. how you worked to move away from a culture of blame to a more collaborative and trusting working relations; to create an action plan; data you collected; a description or socio-gram showing the percentage of administrators teachers that they have who are now more aware of school climate and/or school climate standards etc.; an accounting of who may be genuinely interested in this work now as a result of their leadership, who may have actually done something small to improve school climate, who may be engaged in something big such as part of the action plan or projects that have been put in place.)
  - 3) Finally for each of the four stages, applicants will write a final reflection showing what has happened, what has changed, how they have changed, what they have learned. Each of these final write-ups will be two to four pages in length.
- (4) Participants will complete a short evaluation at the end of the process.
- (5) Two letters of recommendation from colleagues that address the following questions:
  - ✓ Your commitment to school climate reform and social, emotional ethical and civic education;
  - ✓ Your commitment to being an ongoing adult learner;
  - ✓ Your beliefs and examples of your experience and practices as a teacher or other child-centered professional that show the importance you place on one of more of the following: building relationships with students, engaging students as learners, differentiating instruction to meet individual needs and interests, or empowering students.
- (6) Having a telephone interview at the end of the process to talk about the experience and verify that the applicant has an understanding of basic school climate theory, research and practice.

Costs: There is a \$500 fee for the School Climate Leader Certification program to cover administrative costs (\$250 will be due at the beginning of this process and \$250 at the end of the process).

**Benefits of being a certified school climate practitioner:**

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- Confirmation and recognition that you have a basic understanding about school climate reform and social, emotional, ethical and civic education; a meaningful credential that identifies your professional commitment to evidence-based school climate improvement.
- Increasing your capability to act as an effective school climate coordinator and leader. Expert feedback and consultation on your school climate improvement process used for the certification requirements.
- Join a growing network of school climate leaders invested in understanding and sharing best practices with other educators, school based mental health professionals and parent leaders.
- You will have opportunities to work, learn and teach with the National School Climate Center and the National School Climate Council in the following ways:
  - ✓ Become an active member of a network of practitioners with opportunities to share experiences, resources and cutting edge research.
  - ✓ Be identified as a coach to assist other schools with their school climate improvement efforts.
  - ✓ Assist in developing new school climate improvement resources and guidelines;
  - ✓ Write case studies and papers about school climate reform;
  - ✓ Serve as a spokesperson for climate change as a critical aspect of school reform.



This school climate improvement model integrates the problem solving cycle that provides the foundation for all school reform efforts as well as research and best practices from school reform, character education, social emotional learning, community schools, risk prevention, health and mental health promotion efforts. The *School Climate Implementation Road Map* (which all Summer Institute participants will receive) includes a series of tools (protocols, rubrics) and guidelines designed to support K-12 leadership teams and school

communities addressing and mastering the tasks noted below. The questions raised in “Basic Understandings” are ones that applicants may want to address in their writings.

## Stage One: Preparation and Planning

- **Forming a representative SC improvement leadership team and establishing ground rules collaboratively.**

Basic understanding: How your school has (or has not) considered how representative its leadership team is and (ii) what steps – if any – it has taken to create a more representative leadership team; and (iii) how do educators in your school work (or not) to establish a shared vision about ground rules? What is helpful and/or not so helpful about this?

- **Building support and fostering “Buy In” for the school climate improvement process.**

Basic understanding: Why this is an important, common barrier and best practices. and in particular why administrative, teacher, and student buy in are important. What are some common barriers to achieving buy in and what are some best practices for achieving it?

- **Establishing a “no fault” framework and promoting a culture of trust.**

Basic understanding: Why is this important? What are important factors that complicate school communities moving away from a culture of blame to a culture of collaborative problem solving and greater trust?

- **Ensuring your team has adequate resources to support the process.**

Basic understanding: What you believe are essential resources needed to support an effective school climate improvement process and social, emotional, ethical and civic education and why?

- **Celebrating successes and building on past efforts**

Basic understanding: Why this is important? What can make this a robust and meaningful or superficial process?

## Stage Two: Evaluation

- **Systematically evaluating the school’s strengths, needs and weaknesses with any number of school climate as well as other potential measurement tools**

Basic understanding: What are the pros and cons of various assessment strategies that seek to engage students and/or parents and/or school personnel in the school climate assessment process?

- **Considering the strengths and limitations of various assessment tools:**

Basic understanding: What are the pros and cons of various assessment tools?

- **Developing plans to share evaluation findings with the school community**

Basic understanding: What is the range of possible strategies that you think could be used within your school community to creatively and meaningfully share evaluation findings?

## **Stage Three: Understanding the findings, Engagement & developing an action plan**

- **Understanding the evaluation findings**

Basic understanding: What you believe are useful ways to support community members really understanding school climate findings?

- **Digging into the findings to understand areas of consensus and discrepancy in order to promote learning and engagement.**

Basic understanding: Why this is important? How can you/we use these findings to engage students and/or parents/guardians and/or school personnel?

- **Prioritizing Goals**

Basic understanding: What are practical strategies that you think could be used within in your school community to do this?

- **Researching best practices and evidence-based instructional and systemic programs and efforts**

Basic understanding: What is helpful and not so helpful about current sources of information about evidence based programs and efforts (e.g. United States Department of Education's Exemplary and Promising Safe, Disciplined, and Drug-Free Schools Programs; US Department of Education, Institute of Education Sciences resources; SAMHSA's National Registry of Evidence-based Programs and Practices; Blueprints; CASEL' Safe and Sound Guide; Character Education Partnership resources)? Or, what are the strengths and limitations of these resources?

- **Developing an action plan**

Basic understanding: Write about and attach a sample of an action pan that you think is most useful and detail why.

## **Stage Four: Implementing the Action Plan**

- **Coordinating evidence-based pedagogic and systemic efforts designed to (a) promote students' social, emotional and civic as well as intellectual competencies; and (b) improve the school climate by working toward a safe, caring, participatory and responsive school community.**

Basic understanding: Why is this important? What are obstacles and practical solutions?

- **There are a range of ways that schools can work to improve safety, healthy relationships, connection to school and engaged and meaningful learning and teaching.**

Basic understanding: What did you focus on, why and how did you go about this?

- **The adults who teach and learn with students work to further their own social, emotional and civic learning.**

Basic understanding: Write a one to two page essay about why this is important.