

# Safe and Supportive Schools (S3)

GRANT DESCRIPTIVE STUDY

**S3 Grantee Profile | Arizona Department of Education**

National Center on Safe Supportive Learning Environments



Safe Supportive Learning

Engagement | Safety | Environment



## Highlights

The primary school climate improvement goal of Arizona’s four-year<sup>1</sup> Safe and Supportive Schools (AZ S3) grant was to reduce high rates of drug- and violence-related behavior in 26 high schools across 14 school districts. From baseline to final year, 92 percent of schools with fully implemented interventions and sufficient data reported a decrease in student alcohol use; 58 percent reported a decrease in harassment or bullying on school property; 85 percent reported improved school safety scores; and 73 percent reported a reduction in the number of suspensions due to violence without serious injury.

### *How Did They Do It?*

AZ S3 focused on building school capacity to provide continuous, systemic support for all students. AZ S3 worked with the participating districts and schools to use annual school climate survey data, as well as discipline, incident, and other administrative data, to choose and implement interventions tailored to those districts’ and schools’ specific populations and needs. Grant activities paid special attention to student engagement, emphasizing that student engagement is the strongest predictor of success and good behavior in schools. AZ S3 also focused on teaming processes (with coaching support), including using data systematically to work toward common goals.

AZ S3 schools used two interventions as the cornerstones of the grant: Positive Behavior Interventions and Supports (PBIS) and Student Assistance Programs (SAP), building a strong foundation for safe and supportive learning environments. This foundation was reinforced with additional programs based on each school’s specific needs (see the Interventions section). Notably, the success of many interventions chosen by AZ S3 schools contributed to improvements in order and discipline in schools, as reflected in survey data. Successes also demonstrated the importance of strong relationships between students, staff, community members, and grant staff. Improving the school environment and building strong relationships empowered student voice, which in turn created more positive school climates.

AZ S3 also focused on filling gaps in data collection and analysis, specifically in regard to incident data. AZ S3 maintained and enhanced incident data infrastructure and encouraged schools to utilize the

### What’s in this profile?

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*North Canyon High School PBIS Warriors*

<sup>1</sup> While the S3 grant funded all of the grantees for four years, grant activities extended into a fifth year. This profile summarizes activities reported by grantees across all years in which they were actively working with participating districts and schools to improve school climate. However, the Results section presents data only on schools that achieved “full implementation.”



ADE AzSAFE online data collection and analysis platform to their fullest capacity (see the Administrative Data section for more details on this system).

## School Participation

AZ S3 selected school districts (also referred to as local education agencies [LEAs]<sup>2</sup>) based on diversity in geographic location (northern, southern, and central AZ), urbanicity, district size, high school size, and interest in improving school climate and enhancing the collection of survey and incident data.

### AZ S3 Grant Year 4 Demographics (School Year 2013–14)

This section provides descriptive information about participating districts and schools and the demographics of the students they served. See also Appendix A for a list of AZ S3’s participating districts and schools.

**Number of districts served:** 14 districts

**Number of schools served:** 26 high schools<sup>3</sup>

**School size:** Range: 131–3,330 students; average: 1,635 students

**Total number of students served by AZ S3 schools:** 42,512

#### Participating schools’ student demographics

##### *Race and ethnicity:*<sup>4</sup>

- 32 percent White
- 5 percent Black
- 53 percent Hispanic
- 2 percent Asian/Pacific Islander
- 6 percent American Indian
- 1 percent two or more races

##### *Other student demographics:*

- 56 percent free- and reduced-price-lunch eligible
- 13 percent with individualized education programs (IEPs)<sup>5</sup>

**Source:** NCES Common Core of Data (CCD)  
(<http://nces.ed.gov/ccd/schoolsearch/index.asp>)<sup>6</sup>

<sup>2</sup> Grants were awarded to State education agencies (SEAs), and S3 States partnered with a selection of local education agencies (LEAs) or school districts and participating schools. In these profiles, consistent with grantees’ use of terminology, we use the term *districts* (in lieu of *LEAs*).

<sup>3</sup> AZ S3 started with 28 high schools; during the grant period, one closed and one was eliminated from the grant. Also, 2 of the final 26 schools were converted from alternative schools to programs within schools at the end of school year 2013–14.

<sup>4</sup> Percentages were calculated by dividing the reported number of students in a given demographic by the total reported enrollment. Due to data reporting inconsistencies, totals may not equal 100 percent.

<sup>5</sup> The percentage of students with IEPs is based on S3 district-level statistics as this detail was not available in CCD at the school level.

<sup>6</sup> Data for two schools (Riverside Alternative Program and the Superstition Alternative Program) were obtained from the Mesa Public Schools Demographics database (<http://www.mpsaz.org/research/parents/demographics>).



## Key Partners

AZ S3 forged partnerships that were essential to the implementation of the S3 grant. These partnerships complemented the work of grant staff by promoting collaborations across interrelated student service divisions and with community partners. AZ S3 had many partners that played an integral role. These included:

- [University of Arizona, College of Education](#), which provided resources, training, and on-site coaching on topics including leadership team development, PBIS, bullying and cyberbullying, Community Development Model, BreakAway, Student Assistance Programs (SAP), Applied Suicide Intervention Skills Training, Functional Behavioral Assessment, Teacher Leadership Academy, and designing and monitoring Tier 2 and Tier 3 supports.
- [Arizona Department of Education \(ADE\) Office of School Safety and Prevention \(SS&P\) select staff](#), which ensured grant coordination, budget oversight, and grant reporting. SS&P also provided training and support in survey development and evidence-based program selection and assisted with survey administration and incident data utilization.
- [Arizona Department of Health Services, Division of Behavioral Health](#), which provided district- and school-level staff training on supporting students at risk for suicide.
- [Dr. Keith Zullig, West Virginia University](#), who provided school climate expertise as well as support and guidance regarding data-based decision making, helped establish reliability and validity for the AZ S3 student survey, and developed research on various aspects of school climate based on the AZ S3 student survey data.
- [ICF Macro, Inc.](#) (an international research and evaluation firm), which administered the Arizona Youth Risk Behavior Survey (YRBS) and the S3 Safety and Climate Survey as well as provided school-level reports about the S3 Safety and Climate Survey to all participating high schools.

Additional providers and contractors included:

- [Northern Arizona University, Institute of Human Development](#), which offered Positive Behavior Support certificate program courses for appropriate S3 staff.
- [Arizona State University](#), which offered Behavioral Support Specialist certificate program courses for appropriate S3 staff and provided training and support for behavior screeners.
- [KOI Education](#), which provided PBIS tiered training and PBIS Trainer-Leader-Coach train-the-trainer workshops.
- [Eleutheria, LLC](#), which provided PBIS tiered training and PBIS train-the-trainer workshops.

## Project Components

### Infrastructure Development

To the extent possible, S3 grants built upon existing State student support efforts while also funding significant operational and infrastructure development. Over the course of the grant period, AZ S3 enhanced its infrastructure by:

- Continuing to utilize the Arizona Department of Education (ADE) online incident data collection system AzSAFE (see the Administrative Data section for more details on this system) throughout the grant period. In addition, based on review of the data entered in this system, one-on-one consultations were held with S3 schools on how to improve their reporting/data entry to ensure more accurate data collection.



Additional reports were also created in AzSAFE to assist schools with tracking incident data. AZ S3 encouraged schools to pull and review AzSAFE reports consistently throughout the school year.

- AZ S3 also worked with schools to enhance survey/data collection infrastructure. Schools were trained on survey protocols and were permitted to purchase survey scanning machines and SurveyMonkey accounts to administer their own parent and staff surveys.

## School Climate Measurement

The S3 grant was a data-driven effort that utilized administrative and survey data to focus school climate improvement efforts, decide where to concentrate resources, and help select appropriate interventions. These data also were used to develop school safety scores to monitor change over time. AZ S3 began by developing a [logic model](#), which helped tie the goals, objectives, activities, outputs, and outcomes together. This model served as a training tool for S3 staff and also provided a road map for data collection and analysis. The following describes AZ S3's measurement tools.

### Administrative Data

Administrative data on incidents, violence, and drug-related offenses were reported by schools to ADE<sup>7</sup> through a statewide system for collecting, tracking, and reporting school safety and discipline incident data that was built in 2009. The system, Arizona Safety and Accountability for Education ([AzSAFE](#)), offers a comprehensive, state-of-the-art design for collection, with the capacity to produce 40 different reports with user-friendly charts and graphs, which were integral to making data-based decisions.

### Surveys

AZ S3 utilized two surveys during the course of its grant:

- [Arizona Youth Risk Behavior Survey](#) (YRBS), which was administered in odd-numbered years (2011 and 2013 during the grant period) to students. The YRBS assesses and monitors behaviors that place students at increased risk for premature morbidity and mortality. Survey topics include violence, suicide, alcohol, tobacco, sexual risks, HIV/AIDS, body image, sexually transmitted diseases, diet, and physical activity.
- [AZ School Climate and Safety Survey](#) (SCSS), which was administered annually each spring from 2011–2014 to students, staff, and parents. The AZ SCSS assessed health behaviors of 9th- through 12th-grade students including physical activity; tobacco, alcohol and other drug use; and sexual behaviors that increase risk of HIV/AIDS, other sexually transmitted diseases, and pregnancy. The survey also asked questions about experiences at school including student-teacher relationships, academic support, order and discipline, and physical environment.

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<sup>7</sup> At the beginning of the grant, schools varied in their accuracy of reporting incident data; thus, ADE made improving this accuracy a priority of the AZ S3 grant in order to ensure the accuracy of the school safety score (called the Climate Index [CI] by AZ S3).



*Survey Validation Research:* Constructs from a report by Zullig and colleagues (2010)<sup>8</sup> were combined with items from the YRBS and the Add Health Surveys<sup>9</sup> to develop the AZ SCSS. Following collaboration with the ADE Office of School Safety and Prevention (SS&P) as well as collection of baseline data, the resulting instrument was tested and results were published by Zullig and colleagues in 2014.<sup>10</sup>

For the AZ SCSS parent and student surveys, schools with fewer than 300 students administered surveys to all students; schools with more than 300 students selected a representative sample. All staff were asked to participate in the SCSS survey. The student surveys were made available in paper/pencil format until the no-cost extension year (2014–15) when AZ S3 developed a protocol for schools to conduct the student survey online (e.g., via SurveyMonkey). The format for the staff and parent surveys varied, as determined by the schools and/or districts. Student and parent surveys were made available in both English and Spanish. Response rates for student surveys averaged about 80 percent. Parent response rates varied; motivated schools were about 70 to 80 percent, others were much lower.

Unfortunately, the AZ SCSS was not sustained after the S3 grant period, but the YRBS continues to be administered by the ADE biennially.

### School Safety Scores

The **school safety score** is a figure calculated based on a formula that uses survey data, incident data, and other data representing factors known to influence student and school success. The scores are used to facilitate comparisons between schools in the same State and for individual schools over time. The following summarizes AZ S3's school safety score.

- *Name of score:* Climate Index (CI)
- *Formula:* The CI comprises student prevalence and perceptions of school safety, school climate and connectedness measures, and incident data. The formula for the CI is:  
$$CI = [1 - (\text{Average of prevalence/perception of school safety and school climate/connectedness}) + (\text{student violation score}^{11})] * 100$$
- *Hyperlink:* <http://www.azed.gov/prevention-programs/grantee-overview/>
- *Change over time:* Change in school safety scores are reported in the Results section with other Government Performance and Results Act (GPRA) data.

Continued on next page.

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<sup>8</sup> Zullig, K. J., Koopman, T., Patton, M. J., & Ubbes, V. (2010). School climate: A historical review, instrument development, and school assessment. *Journal of Psychoeducational Assessment*, 28, 139–152.

<sup>9</sup> <http://www.cpc.unc.edu/projects/addhealth>

<sup>10</sup> Zullig, K. J., Collins, R., Ghani, N., Patton, M. J., Hubener, S., & Ajamie, J. (2014). Psychometric support of the school climate measure in a large, diverse sample of adolescents: A replication and extension. *Journal of School Health*, 84(2), 82–90.

<sup>11</sup> Arizona DOE provides the following list of student violations: <http://www.azed.gov/prevention-programs/files/2013/09/2blistofviolations.pdf>. Additional information from AZ S3 on student violations not provided.



## Interventions: Frameworks, Programs, Practices, and Strategies

Key interventions used by schools were decided based on data-driven discussions with school staff, teachers, administrators, and families. AZ S3 used survey data collected each spring and their most recent administrative data to inform the selection and implementation of a variety of interventions and approaches (see Table 1). The specific frameworks, programs, practices, and strategies were tailored to the needs of each school and district.

**Table 1. Intervention frameworks, programs, and practices**

<b>Frameworks</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Positive Behavioral Interventions and Support (PBIS) (26)</li> </ul>
<b>Programs</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Alternatives to Suspension (12)</li> <li>• BreakAway (7)</li> <li>• Building Assets, Reducing Risks (BARR)* (2)</li> <li>• Check-In/Check-Out (Ci/Co) (8)</li> <li>• Class Action* (2)</li> <li>• Community Development Model (9)</li> <li>• Functional Behavioral Assessment (FBA) (14)</li> <li>• Link Crew (8)</li> <li>• NIDA Curriculum—The Brain: Understanding Neurobiology Through the Study of Addiction (4)</li> <li>• Project Towards No Drug Abuse (Project TND)* (4)</li> <li>• Rehabilitation, Empowerment, Natural Supports, Education &amp; Work (RENEW) (2)</li> <li>• Ripple Effects* (2)</li> <li>• Student Assistance Programs (SAPs) (24)</li> <li>• Too Good for Drugs and Violence* (1)</li> <li>• Youth Empowerment Services (YES) (2)</li> </ul>
<b>Practices</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Drug Impairment Training for Education Professionals (DITEP) (6)</li> <li>• Peer Mediation (1)</li> <li>• Public Services Announcements (1)</li> <li>• Student Study Team (SST) Process (5)</li> <li>• Teacher Tips (1)</li> </ul>

Note: \* indicates a program that is classified as an evidence-based program (EBP), meaning it is found on the [National Registry of Evidence-based Programs and Practices](#) (NREPP) or the [What Works Clearinghouse](#); the number of schools using each intervention is noted in parentheses.

### Engagement Strategies

In addition to frameworks, programs, and practices, AZ S3 implemented a number of strategies to engage different groups affected by school climate.

- **District and school leadership** was engaged through their participation in AZ S3’s continuous improvement process as internal monitors. A book group was organized for principals to discuss transitional change; the group read *Managing Transitions: Making the Most of Change* by William Bridges. Each district had an S3 coordinator who managed the grant budget and ensured schools met deadlines. District S3 coordinators participated in annual meetings and retreats for Leadership Core Teams (LCTs) at the school level. Additionally, AZ S3 coaches provided one-on-one trainings to school leadership in order to increase their understanding and buy-in.



- **Staff** were involved through training of “Teacher Leaders”<sup>12</sup> who supported school climate work, participation on school-level LCTs, and attendance at various schoolwide trainings. A four-day Teacher Leadership Training was held to help build LCT capacity.
- **Student voice** was empowered through PBIS student engagement workshops. Videos posted on the AZ S3 Web site illustrated student involvement with and ownership of the programmatic interventions being implemented at their schools. Specific approaches adopted by schools included Link Crew and BreakAway.
- **Family and community partnerships** were specific to each school’s LCT. Some family and community members were a part of the LCTs, PBIS, or CDM teams, while others donated incentive items for students and staff.

### Special Feature North Canyon High School PBIS Warriors



There are no better ambassadors than fellow students. That’s part of what the PBIS Warriors at North Canyon High School (Paradise Valley) did—when they weren’t busy creating YouTube PSA video skits, maintaining a PBIS Web site, designing logos and banners, helping new freshmen adjust to high school, giving feedback on how well PBIS is working on campus, and planning assemblies and events.

If it sounds like the Warriors were inspired and committed, they were that and more. S3 coordinator and school social worker Michelle Stewart enthused, “I didn’t really expect the kids to be so into it. Students are amazing resources if we allow them to be. They bring a wealth of knowledge.” Stewart recruited the Warriors beginning spring 2012 by emailing the entire faculty and staff, asking each to nominate two or three students as PBIS leaders. She asked for names of not just existing leaders—the “student council crowd”—but especially “tarnished stars,” the kids who are well liked and charismatic but don’t always make the best choices.

Stewart says one of the Warriors’ biggest contributions was to “bridge the generation gap.” They gave valuable feedback on the PBIS incentives, surprising Stewart by being less interested in material goods the adults had selected than in items such as free tickets to school sporting events. The Warriors also helped to adjust the behavioral expectations for various locations (e.g., hallways, cafeteria, and bathrooms) to better target the issue of general student conduct. As Stewart sums up, “We don’t have to guess what students will connect with.” Finally, the Warriors gave PBIS credibility among their various peer groups, increasing its visibility and importance in the student body as something the students “owned,” not something adults imposed on them.

The Warrior-generated excitement was contagious, with more and more students wanting to join all the time. Stewart planned to recruit only replacements for graduating seniors so that existing Warriors could mentor the incoming recruits. Her goal is to ensure the program is sustainable after funding for outside facilitators ends.

<sup>12</sup> For more information on AZ’s Teacher Leaders, see <http://www.azed.gov/teacherprincipal-evaluation/files/2014/03/gran-new-leaders-presentation-how-great-principals-build-and-lead-great-teams-of-teachers.pdf> and <http://www.azk12.org/podcast/arizonas-teacher-leaders-setting-example-excellence>.



For more information, see: <https://www.facebook.com/NCHSPBIS/> and <https://twitter.com/NCHSPBIS>

## Training, Coaching, and Technical Assistance

Professional development supports such as training, coaching, and technical assistance (TA) let staff know that school climate is a priority. Training helps staff develop the skills needed to understand the issues, use data to guide their work, and effectively implement intervention(s) with fidelity. Coaches can provide a range of supports such as keeping school climate and student support materials up to date, mentoring staff about policies and practices, or conducting observations and performance-feedback sessions. Technical assistance—provided by members of the school climate team or contractors—can support communities of practice among coaches or school staff, help outline training plans, conduct research to support the work, or help school climate teams address issues such as the need for adaptations to interventions.

### Training

Intensive technical assistance and training was provided at the school and district levels by the ADE Office of School Safety and Prevention (SS&P) and the College of Education at the University of Arizona (see the Key Partners section for information on their specific roles). Numerous trainings were made available to AZ S3 school staff, teachers, community members, and ADE representatives (see Table 2).

**Table 2. Trainings conducted by school year<sup>13</sup> and trainer<sup>14</sup>, with selected detail**

Training Topic	SY 2010–11	SY 2011–12	SY 2012–13	SY 2013–14	SY 2014–15	Trainer	Notes
Kognito At-Risk for High School Educators	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	DBH	Building supports for students at risk for suicide
LCT Retreats and Trainings	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	UA	Initial training 2011; spring and fall retreats as of 2012
Creating Positive School Climates		✓				UA	
Community Development Model (CDM)		✓				UA	January and June 2012
PBIS Implementation		✓				UA	Three regional four-day events
BreakAway	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	UA	Youth Involvement (June 2012); Getting Started Workshops (Dec. 2011, Sept. 2012, Aug. 2013); Youth Opportunity Planning Process (two-day training three times a year); retreats (Sept. 2013 and 2014)

<sup>13</sup> School year was considered September–August in order to align with the grant.

<sup>14</sup> UA: College of Education at the University of Arizona; DBH: Arizona Department of Health Services, Division of Behavioral Health; AZ S3: grant staff and invited national and local presenters.



**S3 Grantee Profile**  
**Arizona Department of Education**

Training Topic	SY 2010–11	SY 2011–12	SY 2012–13	SY 2013–14	SY 2014–15	Trainer	Notes
PBIS Check-In/Check-Out (Ci/Co)		✓				UA	June 2012
PBIS Team Retreat		✓	✓			UA	June and November 2012
Bullying		✓	✓			UA	Bullying prevention, cyberbullying, and method of shared concern
Functional Behavior Assessment (FBA)		✓		✓		UA	Two-day training for staff who conduct FBAs
Student Assistance Program (SAP)		✓	✓	✓		UA	Four facilitator trainings; five coordinator trainings; four coordinator calls
Current Drug Issues and Trends		✓	✓	✓		UA	June 2012 and 2013; four sessions in spring 2014
Alternatives to Suspension		✓			✓	AZ S3	Initial training January 2012, Next Steps training June 2012, conference June 2015
LGBTQ Conference					✓	AZ S3	June 2015, presentations from experts and best practices
PBIS Conference			✓			UA	June 2013
SafeTALK Suicide Prevention Training			✓			UA	October 2012
ASIST Suicide Training				✓		UA	December 2013 and January 2014
Schoolwide Evaluation Tool (SET)				✓	✓	UA	February and November 2014
Tier 2/3 System Development					✓	UA	Leader training and 10 webinars
Trauma Training Series					✓	UA	Four staff workshops; part of certificate program for responding to incidents of trauma <sup>15</sup>

Note: ✓ = event occurred during or throughout the school year; specific timing listed in Notes column if reported.

<sup>15</sup> Workshop topics included (1) Children of Trauma, (2) Structured Sensory Interventions, (3) Understanding and Surviving Vicarious Trauma, and (4) Interventions Following Suicide or Trauma in Schools.



All schools also received training on survey administration, data collection and analysis, and incident data terms and definitions. Throughout the grant period, AZ S3, in conjunction with partners at the University of Arizona, held 809 trainings with more than 7,000 participants. Resources related to these trainings can be found at [www.s3az.org](http://www.s3az.org).

### Coaching and Technical Assistance Model

To lead and sustain change related to school safety and support, the Training and Technical Assistance (TTA) Team at the University of Arizona was created to support school building capacity for prevention and school climate change. The TTA Team included the project director, TTA coordinator, and four coaches assigned to S3 schools. The TTA model consisted of three parts: Leadership Core Team (LCT) development, training for programs or interventions, and coaching.

First, each participating school established a Leadership Core Team (LCT) that comprised an administrator, certified staff (e.g., teachers, counselors, social workers), and classified staff (e.g., security, office staff). LCTs met monthly and were responsible for collecting and reviewing multiple sources of data (including survey and incident data) to determine grant priorities, select interventions, monitor implementation, and evaluate overall progress on objectives. As the LCTs were critical to the school-level success of the AZ S3 grant, each semester and summer the TTA Team facilitated retreats for LCTs focused on developing team members' knowledge and skills related to team functioning, action planning, implementation, evaluation, and data analysis.

Second, the TTA Team provided training to individuals and teams on specific programs or content such as Positive Behavior Interventions and Supports (PBIS), bullying prevention and intervention, Student Assistance Program (SAP), student-adult partnerships, the Community Development Model (CDM), alternatives to suspension, and Check-In-Check-Out (Ci/Co).

Last, the four coaches on the team provided support to the LCT's for action planning, program implementation, and reporting. The coaches developed relationships with LCT leaders, LCT members, principals, and district coordinators. For the LCTs, coaches attended meetings, modeled effective team meeting processes, conducted research for schools on evidence-based programs and strategies, and provided training. Administratively, coaches assisted with LCT retreats and conferences, data collection, and communication between ADE and schools and districts.

### Product Development and Dissemination

To support training, technical assistance, and program implementation, S3 grantees developed many unique products. These included theoretical and logic models, administrative guides, reference manuals, toolkits, videos, reports, Web pages, briefs, workbooks, fact sheets, rating forms, readiness and implementation checklists, and peer-reviewed journal articles. In addition, grantees developed and offered many training presentations and webinars. These resources were shared broadly among participating districts and other districts that took an interest in the work being done. Key products generated by the AZ S3 grant include:

- [AZ S3 Web site](#), which houses a variety of resources including webinars, tip sheets, templates and worksheets, programmatic intervention guides, videos, and links to supporting documentation and outside resources. Notable resources include:
  - A [video spotlight](#) section with videos that document individual AZ S3 school success stories. Many videos were created by student leaders to be shared at



- their schools to explain different aspects of the S3 effort. Topics include overviews of student conduct expectations, shared school values, PBIS, SAPs, and student leadership activities;
- The [Resources section](#), which includes S3-specific information and toolkits capturing lessons learned during program implementation, including leadership, team development, Tier 2/3 system development, and the Community Development Model (CDM); it also provides links to other preventive tools;
  - [Webinars](#), covering PBIS Tiers 2 and 3 system development, classroom support strategies, and information on the BreakAway program; and
  - AZ Leadership Core Team (LCT) Resources (from Leadership and Teaming section of [this page](#)) including the [LCT Commitment pledge form](#) and the [LCT checklist](#).
- AZ S3 [overview report](#) from University of Arizona College of Education, which provides a four-page summary of the AZ Safe and Supportive Schools Model, participating schools, Leadership Core Team information, and programs and interventions
  - [SAP checklist](#)
  - [S3 sustainability checklist](#)
  - [Team charter](#)
  - Fidelity of implementation [Innovation Spotlight](#)
  - Peer-reviewed articles:
    - Zullig, K. J., Collins, R., Ghani, N., Patton, M. J., Hubener, S., & Ajamie, J. (2014). Psychometric support of the school climate measure in a large, diverse sample of adolescents: A replication and extension. *Journal of School Health, 84*(2), 82–90.
    - Bosworth, K., Garcia, R., Judkins, M., & Saliba, M. (2015). Enhancing high school climate and reducing bullying: The impact of leadership readiness. *Under Review*
  - Twenty-six S3 school-level knowledge exchange reports

## Results

Monitoring and evaluation activities examined all the data that had been collected in order to determine how AZ S3's efforts affected school climate in participating districts and schools. Outcome data included survey data, behavioral incident reports and other disciplinary action data, attendance data, and student academic performance. S3 grantees performed a variety of analyses to demonstrate the results of their work. The following sections provide details on reporting requirements as well as additional analyses or evaluations that were performed.

### Government Performance and Results Act Results

The Government Performance and Results Act of 1993 (GPRA) requires all federal grantees to demonstrate their effectiveness on a grant-specific set of indicators. S3 grantees reported annually on four GPRA measures. S3 GPRA measures included the percentage of S3 participating schools implementing interventions that, over the four years of the grant, experienced:

An increase or decrease in the percentage of students who reported:

- Student-reported alcohol use in the past 30 days (GPRA measures a and b); and
- Student-reported harassment or bullying on school property (GPRA measures c and d).

Improvement or worsening of:

- School safety scores (GPRA measures e and f).



An increase or decrease in the number of:

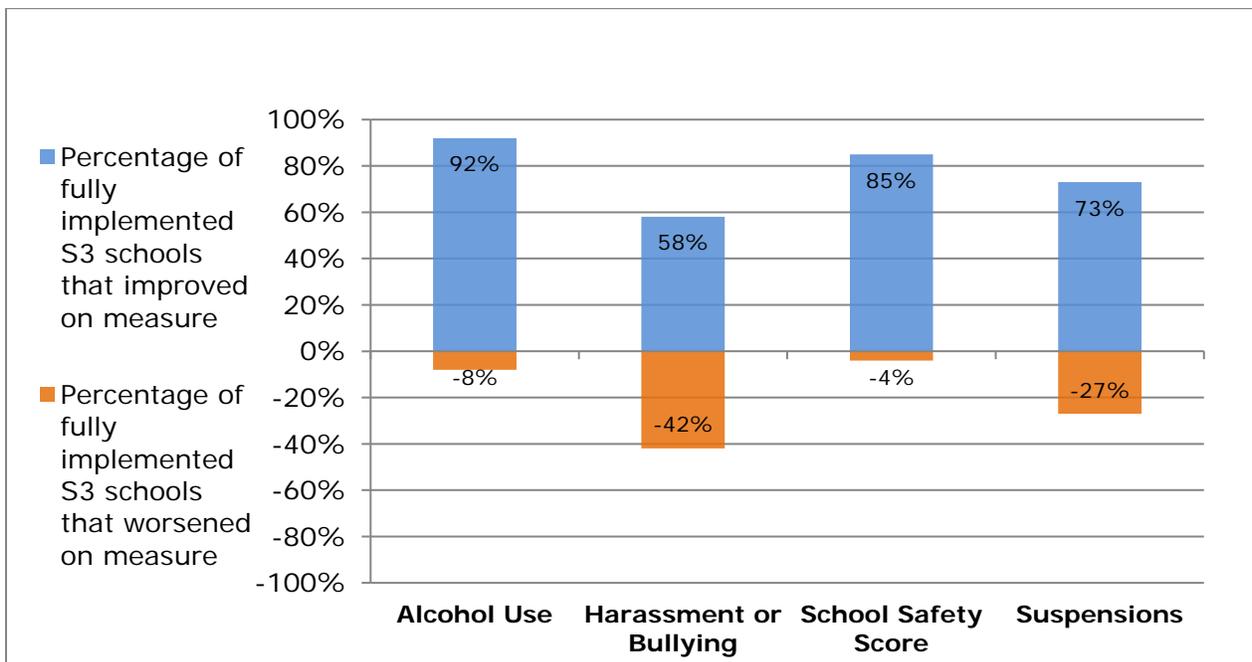
- Suspensions for violence without injury (GPRA measures g and h).<sup>16</sup>

**GPRA Performance Summary**

At the end of the grant period, the 26 participating schools that had fully implemented<sup>17</sup> their selected interventions reported the following successes (see also Figure 1):

- Ninety-two percent reported reductions in student-reported alcohol use;
- Fifty-eight percent reported a reduction in harassment or bullying on school property;
- Eighty-five percent improved their CI school safety score; and
- Seventy-three percent reported a reduction in student suspensions for violence without injury.

**Figure 1. Arizona GPRA results baseline (2010–11) to final year (2013–14)**



Note: Data are based on 26 of the original 28 participating schools as two schools were unable to fully implement their programmatic interventions (one was removed as a participating intervention school, and the second closed down at the end of year 3). The baseline for the school safety score (measuring the prevalence of high-risk behaviors and perception of school safety and school connectedness) is 2010–11 for all schools except two alternative schools. In 2012, the student survey was modified for those two alternative schools to enhance the accuracy of student responses; thus, the baseline for those schools is 2011–12. Detail may not sum to 100 percent due to schools that experienced no statistically significant change or that had missing data.

<sup>16</sup> Readers should note that suspension data, in particular, might be affected by changes in State policies during the course of the S3 grant period that may be unrelated to S3 programming.

<sup>17</sup> A school was considered “fully implemented” if the majority of programmatic interventions in the school were fully implemented as planned and the remainder of programs were close to being implemented and/or would be finished by the end of the school year.



AZ S3 reported that decreases or worsening on GPRA indicators was likely attributable to:

- Increased awareness of and attentiveness to issues among administration, staff, students, and parents, leading to a more comprehensive definition of issues and increased reporting of certain behaviors such as bullying;
- Policy changes at the district and school levels that may have affected how incidents were reported and which interventions were available (i.e., alternatives to suspension); and
- Untracked events beyond the control of the schools and district, including fatalities, school closures, and school emergencies.

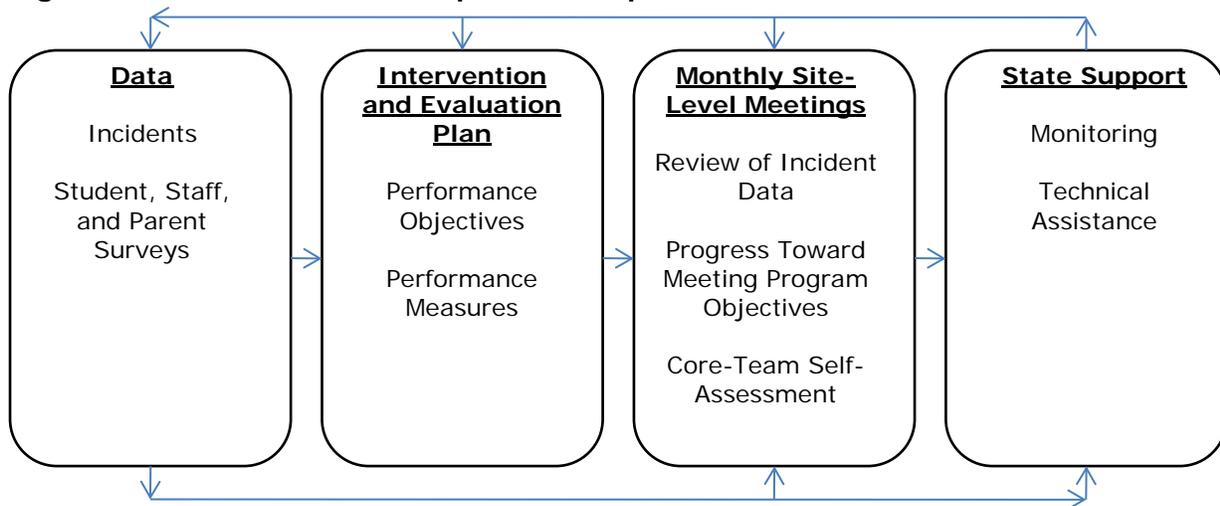
### Additional Analyses

As part of its evaluation approach, AZ S3 designed a continuous improvement process that ensured all schools were implementing programmatic interventions according to their approved plans. Each school’s Leadership Core Team (LCT) (see the Coaching and Technical Assistance Model section for additional details on the LCT structure) met monthly to review data and progress toward the school’s performance objectives. AZ S3 developed the following process for project evaluation:

- LCTs submitted standardized monthly summaries to the ADE;
- ADE program monitors completed annual monitoring forms for each school to ensure interrater reliability;
- Internal monitoring occurred within the LCTs via self-assessments and oversight from the district coordinators; and
- School-level self-assessment data were utilized by the district coordinator for mid- and end-year reporting to ADE.

Figure 2 illustrates this process.

**Figure 2. AZ S3 continuous improvement process**





AZ S3 also investigated the relationships between school climate constructs and Arizona's Instrument to Measure Standards (AIMS) achievement test scores and the impact of Student Assistance Programs (SAPs) on student attendance in school.

- The first study, conducted as part of research performed to validate the AZ S3 student survey (the SCCS), investigated whether student perceptions of school climate were correlated to AIMS State achievement test scores. But, because AIMS achievement data for individual students could not be linked to the anonymous school climate surveys, it was not possible to determine the link between AIMS data and school climate perception. However, AZ S3 did find a strong relationship between student self-reported GPA and student report of school climate at the school level (*Evaluator: Dr. Keith Zullig at West Virginia University; see Zullig et al., 2014*).
- The second study, an evaluation of SAPs and student attendance, used a semi-structured interview process to interview SAP coordinators about processes, data collection activities, lessons learned, and outcomes. The study then compared these data to school reports of student attendance. Schools implementing SAPs that also reported attendance data all showed improvements in student attendance. Some schools saw a reduction in disciplinary infractions for students in SAPs by up to 50 percent, which is noteworthy considering most SAP groups only ran for a period of six weeks. Qualitative data from students indicated that participation in SAPs increased perceptions of school connectedness, which encouraged students to come to school. Schools also noted that student attendance for at-risk students was higher on the days of SAP programming.\*
- Ongoing studies are exploring how AZ S3 performance as indicated by "A" (high-performing), "B" (moderately performing), and "C" (low-performing) schools is linked to climate outcomes for students (*Evaluator: Nadia Ghani, research/evaluation consultant*).\*

\* *These studies conducted for internal use and not published.*

## Lessons Learned

As with any pilot program, AZ S3 experienced its share of implementation challenges and learning opportunities. The following notable issues may be of interest to others.

### Leadership

- Leadership support was essential to team functioning and school climate improvement efforts. State-level, district-level, and school-level leadership support was needed for making effective plans, providing financial support, and so on. According to the coaches, the difference in keeping the Leadership Core Team (LCT) and school staff motivated and progressing was the commitment made by principals and S3 leaders.
- A team approach allowed stakeholders to be represented and give voice to the selected objectives. A strong team was needed for making plans to meet identified goals and objectives. Effective teams needed to have the right people in the right roles. In schools with strong and effective teams, principal turnover had less of a negative impact.
- Leadership development provided tools, purpose, and focus for teams and helped people feel comfortable in their roles.
- Time to meet was extremely valuable in order to provide the opportunity for teams to examine data, discuss goals and objectives, monitor progress of program implementation, and network with other schools.



### Data

- The survey data collected for S3 (student, parent, and staff) were used by schools and districts to identify concerns, to plan, and to communicate with the staff, district, and community.
- Data provided information for evaluation at the school, district, and State levels. Access to different sources of data allowed schools to change the way things were done and how they measured success.
- Schools increased their collection, access, and use of data from a variety of sources.
- Schools improved their level of comfort with using data during the grant process.

### Student Involvement and Support

- Students from different social groups served as leaders for school safety and change. At some schools, these students were the most effective advocates for school safety, especially in presentations to school board members and community groups.
- SAPs required a designated coordinator to develop logistical arrangements, collect and examine data, and design activities to meet student needs.
- All schools with SAPs implemented student support groups, which were most successful when based on student-reported needs. However, more training and support were needed for schools to implement other SAP components well.

### Climate

- Improving school climate includes changing how adults interact with students—more support and meeting students' needs rather than only discipline.
- Improving school climate requires the development of more relationships within the school and district but also between the community and schools. Changing climate must include all stakeholders (teachers, administration, students, families, communities).
- Smaller schools were able to make bigger changes in school climate.

### Coaching

- Having coaches assigned to schools helped LCTs focus and plan. By developing relationships with teams and leaders and with a strong knowledge of school safety, school climate and culture, and a planning process, coaches were able to offer support and guidance to schools so they could reach their goals. Teams reported that they would not have reached the level of success they achieved had it not been for their assigned coach.

## **Sustainability and Scaling Up**

By the close of the grant, AZ S3 left the State in a strong position to continue school climate improvement efforts. Specifically:

- Schools were required to submit action plans focused on sustainability of their grant efforts. These sustainability plans included what actions and tasks would be completed May through September 2015 to sustain efforts. These actions included:
  - Attending or providing trainings to staff;
  - Purchasing additional curriculum materials (staff resources, workbooks);
  - Purchasing PBIS materials (resources, posters, signage);
  - Creating/revising PBIS lesson plans;
  - Scheduling LCT and other subcommittee meeting dates;
  - Time to plan and prepare for the upcoming school year to support S3 programs; and
  - Supports to continue building school board, administration, staff, student, parent, and community knowledge of S3 programs on campus.
- During the transition out of the grant period, AZ S3 made its Web site content and resources less grant-specific and more accessible to non-AZ S3 schools and districts



## S3 Grantee Profile Arizona Department of Education

across the State. These resources include Team Development and Tier 2/3 System Development toolkits, which are based on trainings provided during the grant period.

- Former paper and pencil surveys are now available online.

### Contact Information

For more information about AZ S3, please refer to the information below.

*Grant holder:* Arizona Department of Education (ADE)

*Arizona Department of Education AZ S3 Web site:* <http://www.azed.gov/prevention-programs/arizonasafesupportiveschools/>

*AZ S3 Web site:* <http://s3az.org/node/11>

*Project director:* Rani Collins

*Project specialist:* Tori Havins, [Victoria.Havins@azed.gov](mailto:Victoria.Havins@azed.gov)

S3 Grantee Profiles were prepared for each of the 11 S3 grantees as part of the S3 Descriptive Study (S3DS). The profiles provide detailed information about how each S3 grantee approached and executed their grant, including how intervention schools were selected, key data collection tools and activities, use of programmatic interventions and related supports, products created, findings from their data, lessons learned, and plans for sustainability of their school climate improvement work. The 11 S3 grantee profiles and a cross-grantee executive summary can be accessed here:

<https://safesupportivelearning.ed.gov/state-grantees/safe-and-supportive-school-s3-grants>.

Grantee profile published on June 4, 2018.



## Appendix A: List of Arizona Participating Districts and Schools

<b>Participating Districts</b>	<b>Participating Schools</b>
1. Cave Creek Unified	1. Cactus Shadows High School
2. Dysart Unified	2. Dysart High School 3. Sundown Mountain
3. Flagstaff Unified	4. Coconino High School 5. Flagstaff High School
4. Holbrook Unified	6. Holbrook High School
5. Kingman Unified	7. Kingman High School
6. Marana Unified	8. Marana High School 9. Mountain View High School
7. Mesa Unified	10. Mesa High School 11. Riverview Alternative Program 12. Superstition Alternative Program 13. Westwood High School
8. Paradise Valley Unified	14. North Canyon High School 15. Paradise Valley High School
9. Phoenix Union High School District	16. Alhambra High School 17. Carl Hayden High School 18. South Mountain High School
10. Scottsdale Unified	19. Coronado High School 20. Saguaro High School
11. Sunnyside Unified	21. Desert View High School 22. Sunnyside High School
12. Tolleson Union High School District	23. Copper Canyon High School 24. Sierra Linda High School
13. Willcox District	25. Willcox High School
14. Winslow Unified	26. Winslow High School