

# **Engaging the Community to Reduce and Prevent Bullying**

**A Project of the Winchester Coalition for a Safer  
Community**

**Winchester, MA**

**2011**

# The Need

- Conflicting Ideas, Definitions, and Understanding of Bullying among 12 core sectors of community coalition
- Increase in the number of high school students leaving district for private schools due to bullying
- Increase in YRBS data reporting bullying patterns between 2007 – 2009
- Bullying anecdotes and negative consequences identified spanning preschool through post high school.
- Supportive data from police, hospital, youth ministry, and youth sport organizations on bullying consequences.

# Common Applications for Concept Mapping

- Developing work plans and logic models
- Creating evaluation metrics
- Organizational Development
- Designing curriculum
- Strategic Planning
- Community Development

# Why Concept Mapping?

From the *participants'* perspective:

- Participatory, democratic
- Systematic, structured process with clear milestones
- Provides results in a way that facilitates use
- Helps objectify the planning and development process
- Helps build vision and consensus
- Helps manage complexity, without losing detail

# Why Concept Mapping?

From *your* perspective:

- Flexible design and participation options
- Creates a framework that is multi-purpose
- Aids in transparency of the planning, implementation, and evaluation process
- Enables one to respond with stakeholder produced results in a rapid fashion
- Presents a process that is equitable and inclusive of people and ideas
- Meets funder requirements to use a rigorous process

# The Process: 5 Steps



**Planning:** The WCSC developed a *focus prompt* and *identified participants*.



**Idea Generation:** The community *brainstormed* ideas in response to the *focus prompt*... on the web and in live sessions. Ideas were synthesized.



**Structuring:** Communities of interest and expertise *sorted and rated* the synthesized ideas, authoring the framework for understanding the universe of solutions.



**Representation:** Compute the *maps, pattern matches and "go zones,"* and prepare them for interpretation by the community.



**Interpretation and Use:** *Strategies and tactics for action (planning, implementation, evaluation, sustainability)* follow directly from the *interpretation* of the results. Pattern matches and go zones help build consensus on action.

# The Planning Group

## Winchester Coalition for a Safe Community

- Community Organizations
- Public Health and Safety
- School District Staff: Teachers and Administrators
- Parents
- Business Owners



## Circa Learning, LLC

- Project Management
- Analysis and Reporting

# Idea Generation



## Focus Prompt

***“One thing that Winchester families, schools and community groups should do to prevent bullying by children, teens and adults is..”***

- 394 ideas were contributed by the community in web based and live sessions
- Synthesized to 93 representative statements for sorting and rating



# Structuring: Sorting

Sorting: 17 participants sorted the 93 statements into categories based on their conceptual similarity, and in ways that made sense to them.



# Structuring: Rating

## Rating: The participants assign value to the ideas

### Importance: 90 participants rated on Importance

Please rate each statement below on how important it is that the community act on this idea.

- 1 = Not at all important
- 2 = Somewhat important
- 3 = Important
- 4 = Very important
- 5 = Extremely important



### Impact: 71 participants rated on Impact

Please rate each statement below on how much impact it will have on reducing and preventing bullying by children, teens and young adults.

- 1 = No impact
- 2 = Little impact
- 3 = Some impact
- 4 = A lot of impact
- 5 = The most impact

# Representation: Visual Graphs



Ideas are analyzed using multi-dimensional scaling and hierarchical cluster analysis to create visual representations of their value and relationships.



Pattern matching allows comparisons of values along a variety of dimensions.



Go Zones are x y plots showing the average ratings of each idea in a cluster, illustrating high and low priorities for action

# Demographic

We asked participants to describe themselves on 7 attributes.

Affiliation

Parenting

Gender

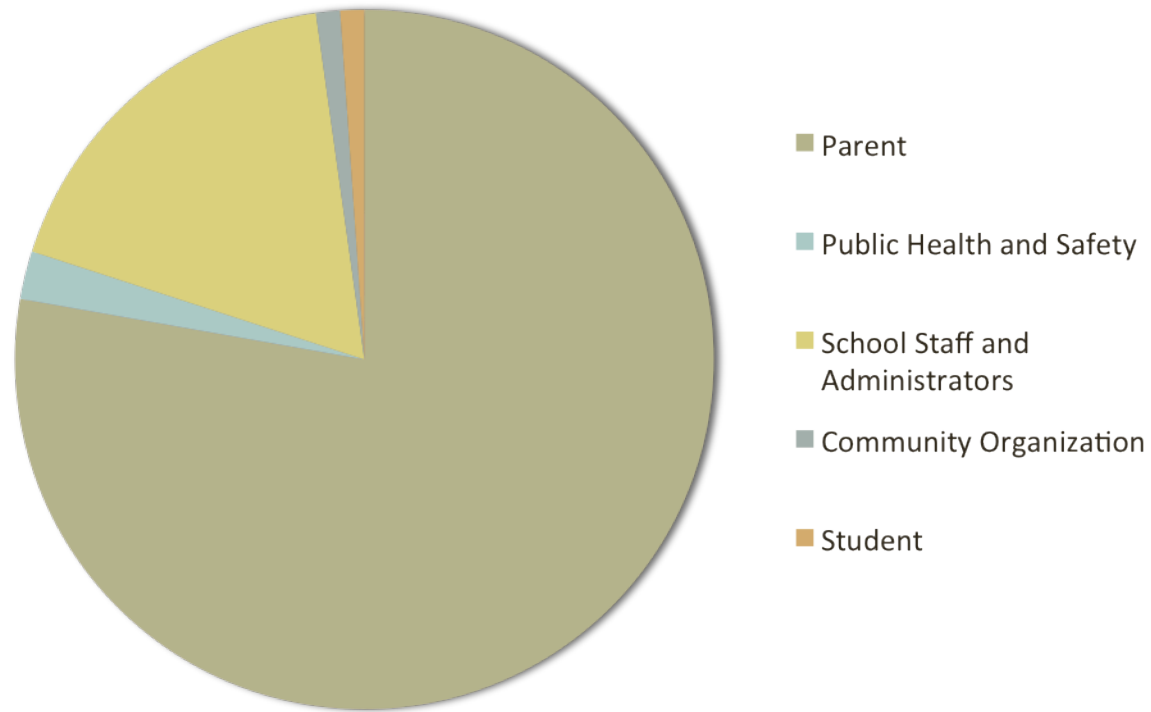
School District

Length of Residency in Winchester

Engagement with School

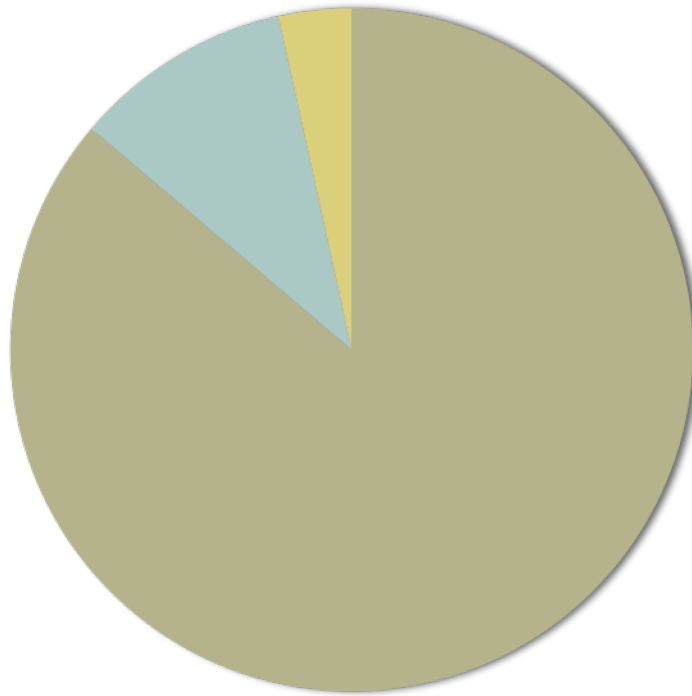
Knowledge of the Coalition

# Demographic: Affiliation



Parent N = 70  
Public Health and Safety N = 2  
School Staff and Administrators N = 16  
Community Organization N = 1  
Student N = 1

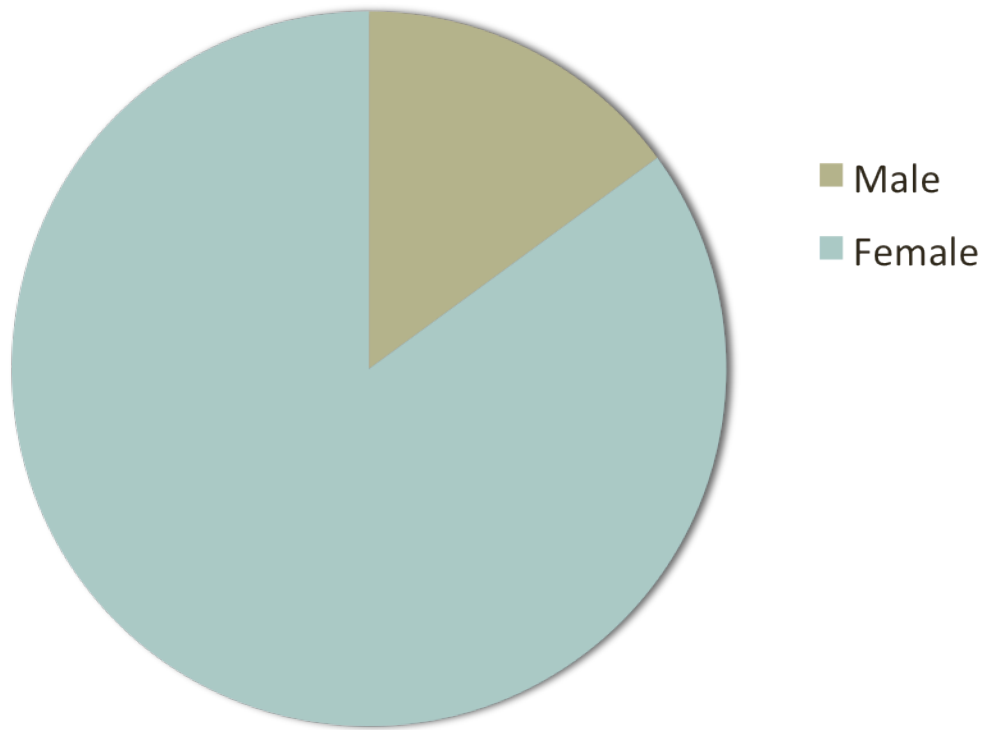
# Demographic: Parenting



- Currently have a child in school
- Do not currently have a child in school
- Not Applicable

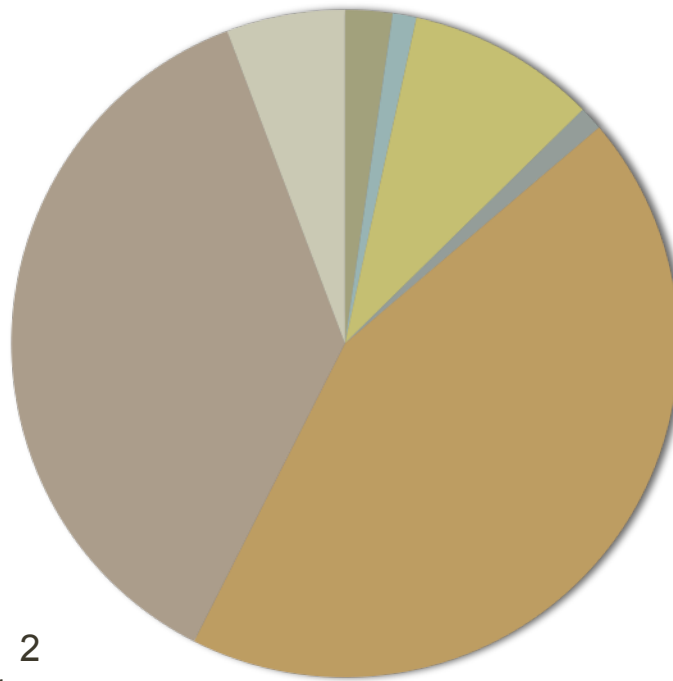
Currently have a child in schools N = 75  
Do not currently have a child in school N = 9  
Not applicable N = 3

# Demographic: Gender



Male N = 13  
Female N = 74

# Demographic: School District

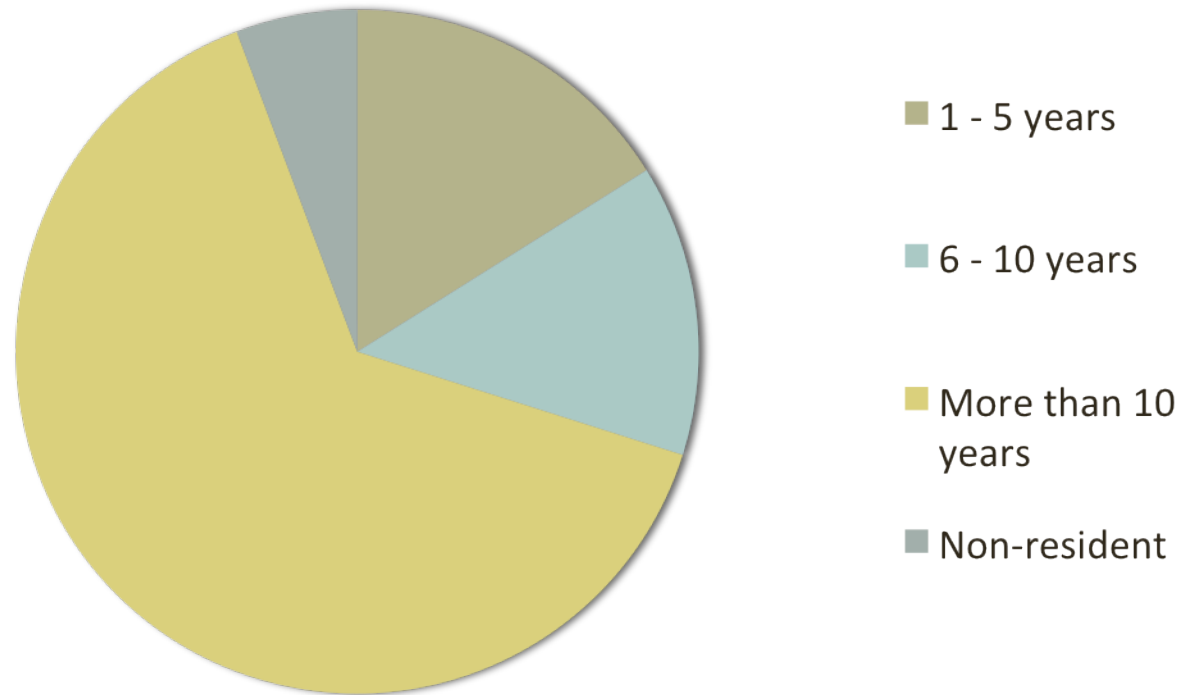


Ambrose N = 2  
Lincoln N = 1  
Muraco N = 8  
VO N = 1  
McCall N = 38  
WHS N = 32  
Private School N = 5  
Lynch N = 0  
Home School N = 0

Ambrose  
Lincoln  
Muraco  
VO  
McCall  
WHS  
Private School  
Lynch  
Home School

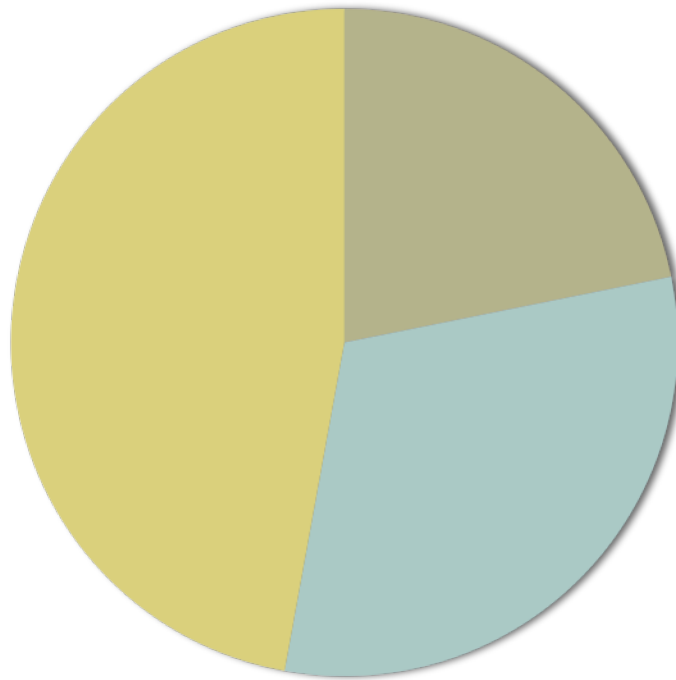


# Demographic: Residency



1 – 5 years N = 14  
6 – 10 years N = 12  
More than 10 years N = 56  
Non-resident N = 5

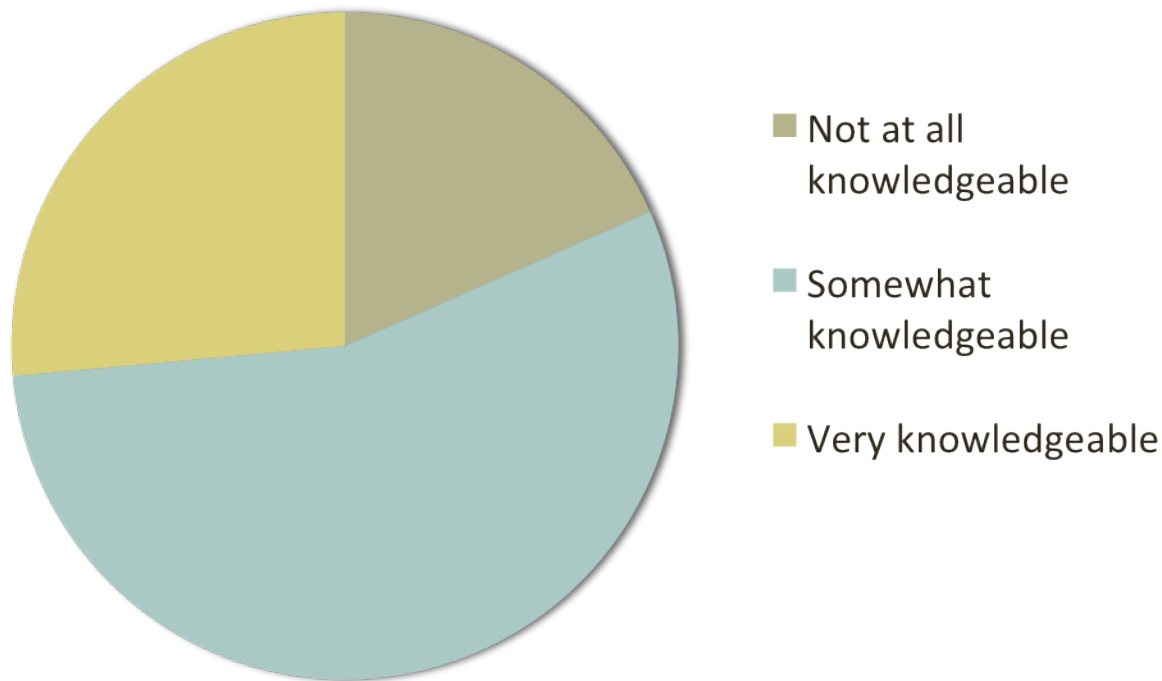
# Demographic: Engagement



- Seldom, less than 1 time per month
- Average, at least 1 - 2 times per month
- Active, at least or more than 3 times per month

Seldom N = 19  
Average N = 27  
Active N = 41

# Demographic: Knowledge of Coalition

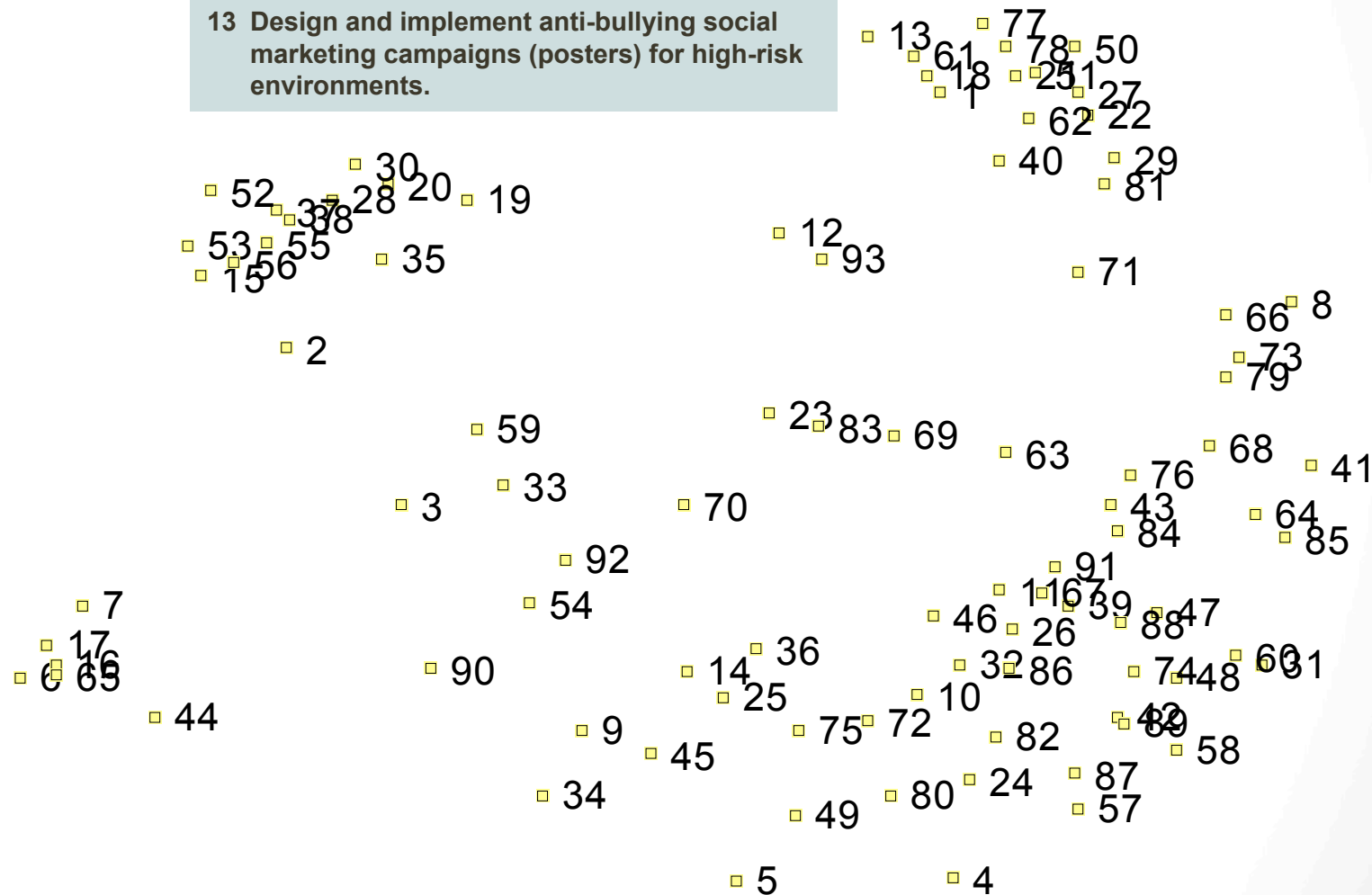


Not at all knowledgeable N = 16  
Somewhat knowledgeable N = 48  
Very knowledgeable N = 23

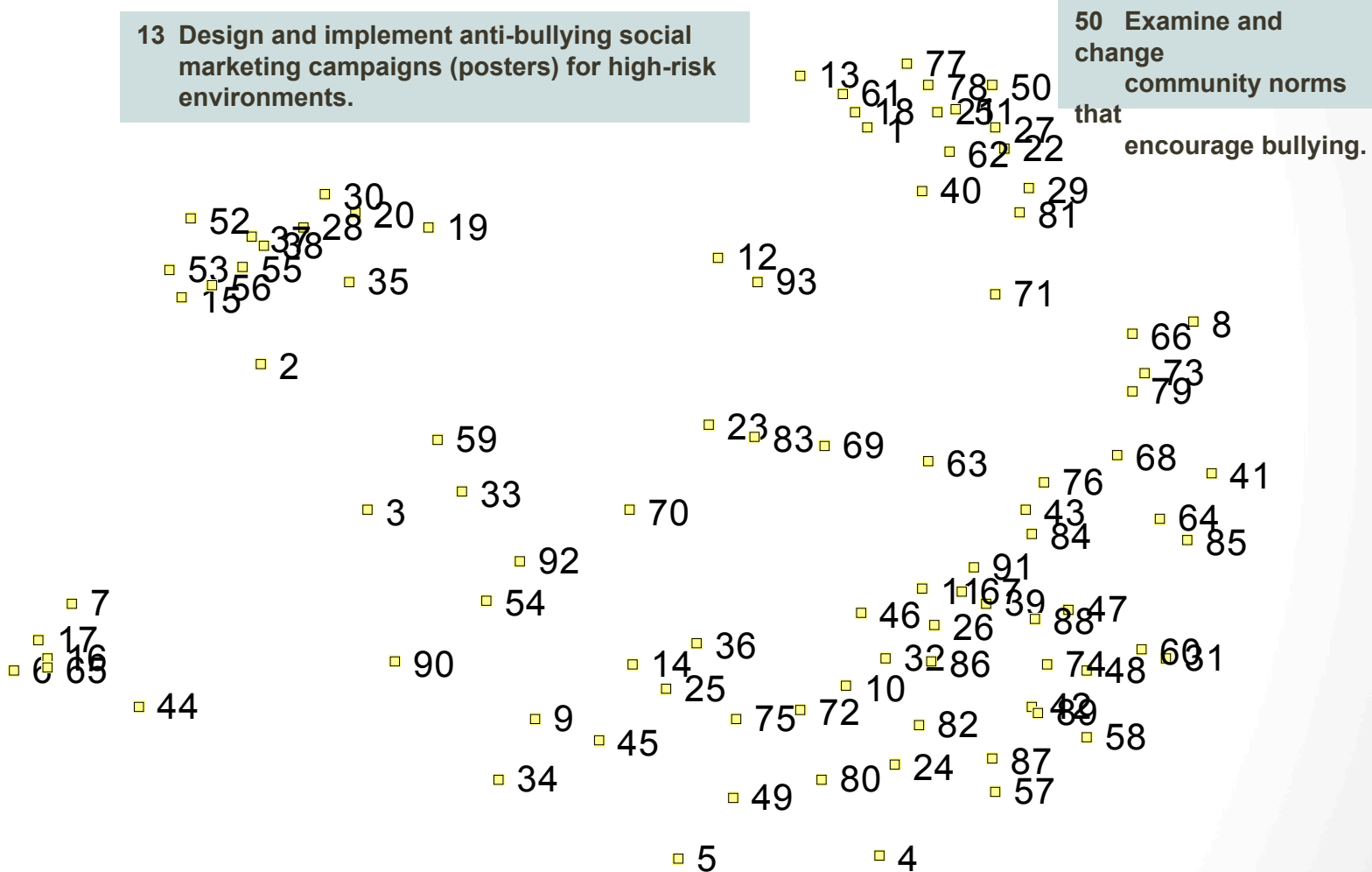
# Point Map

Each point represents one of the brainstormed ideas

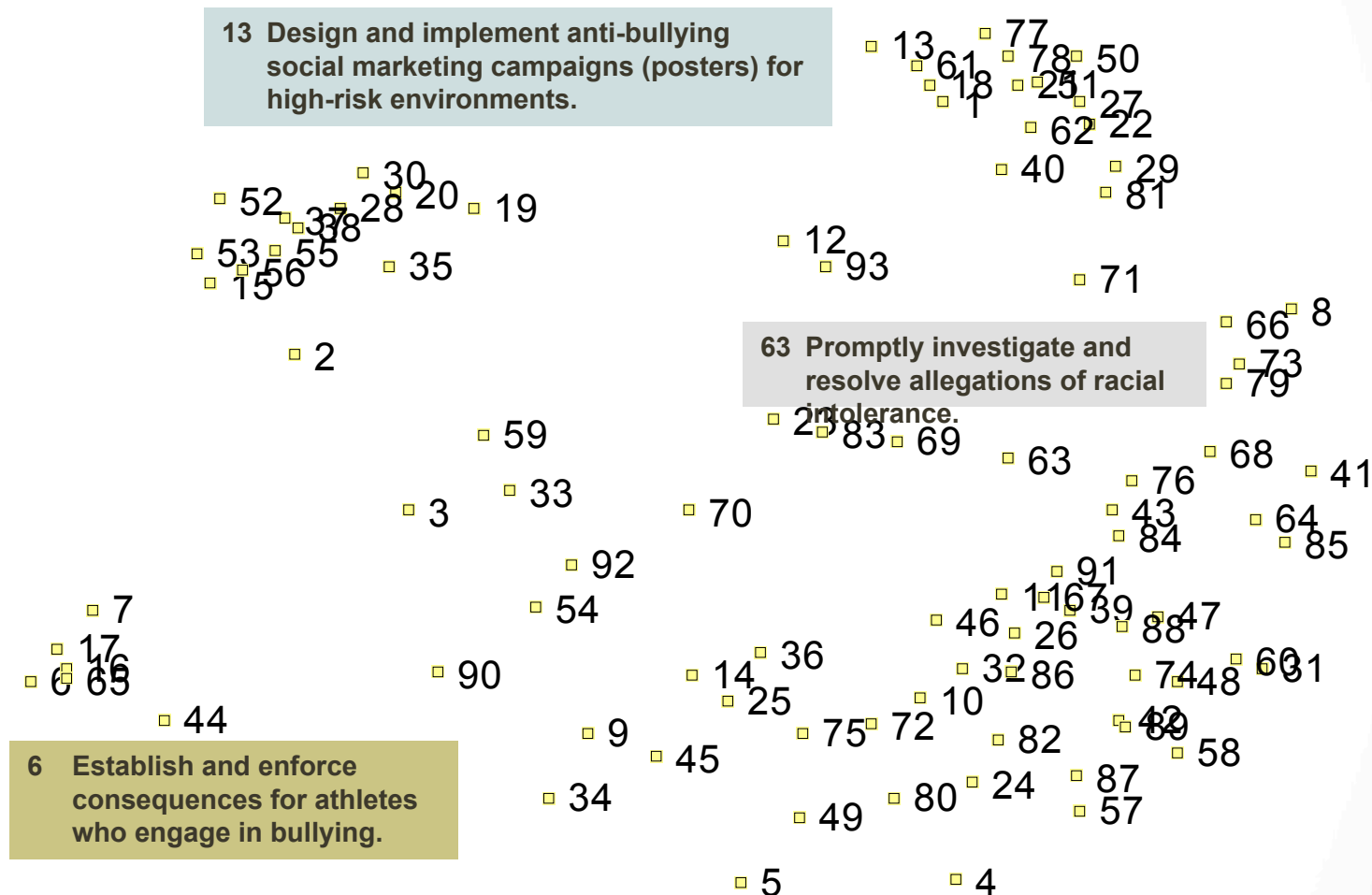
13 Design and implement anti-bullying social marketing campaigns (posters) for high-risk environments.



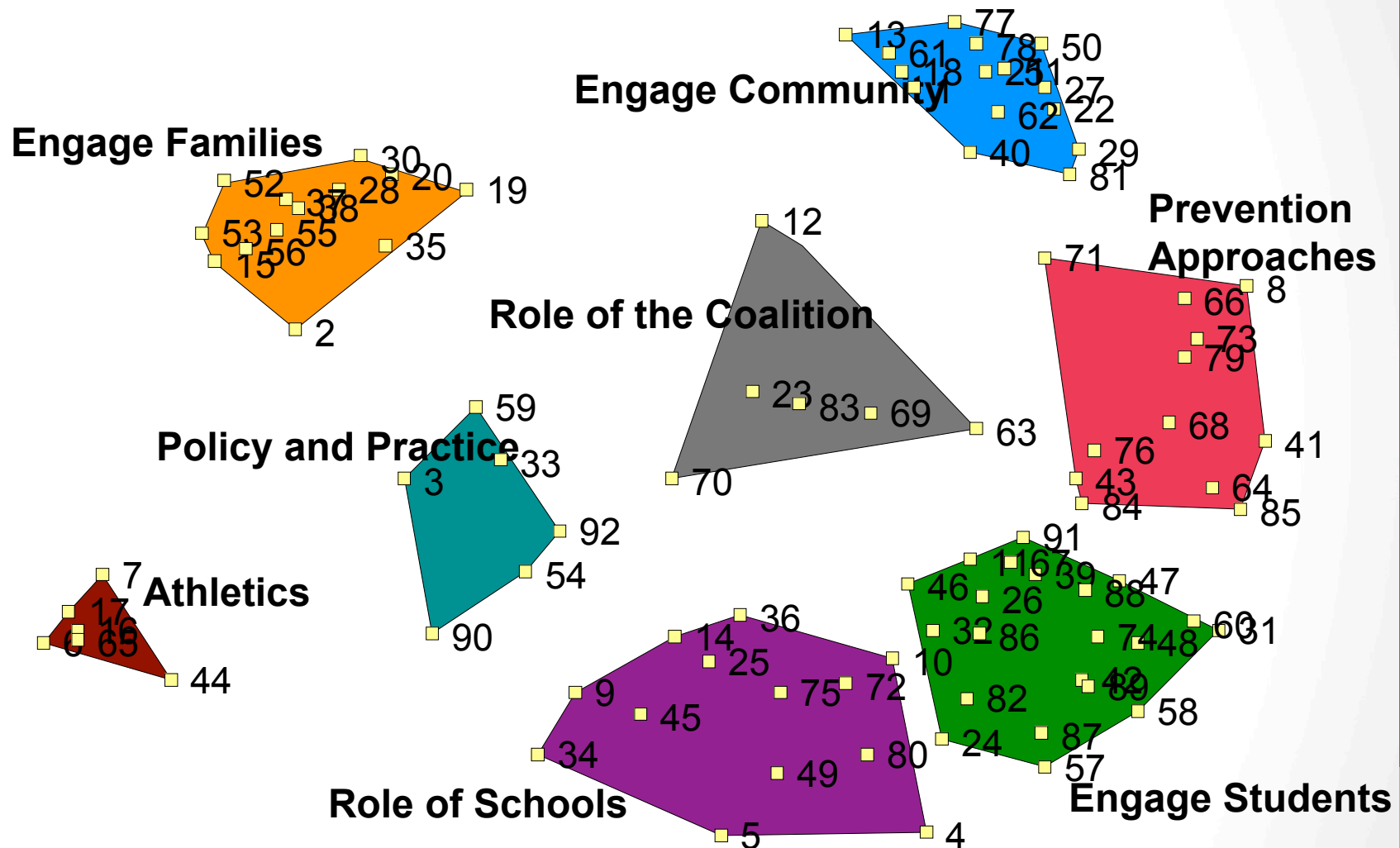
## Conceptually similar ideas are in close proximity



# Conceptually different ideas are further apart

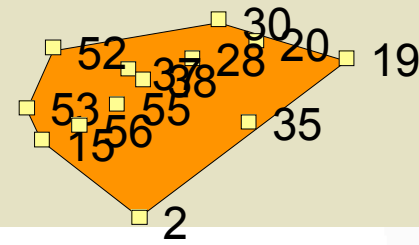


# The ideas are organized into groups...



...so that concepts can be considered in a shared structure

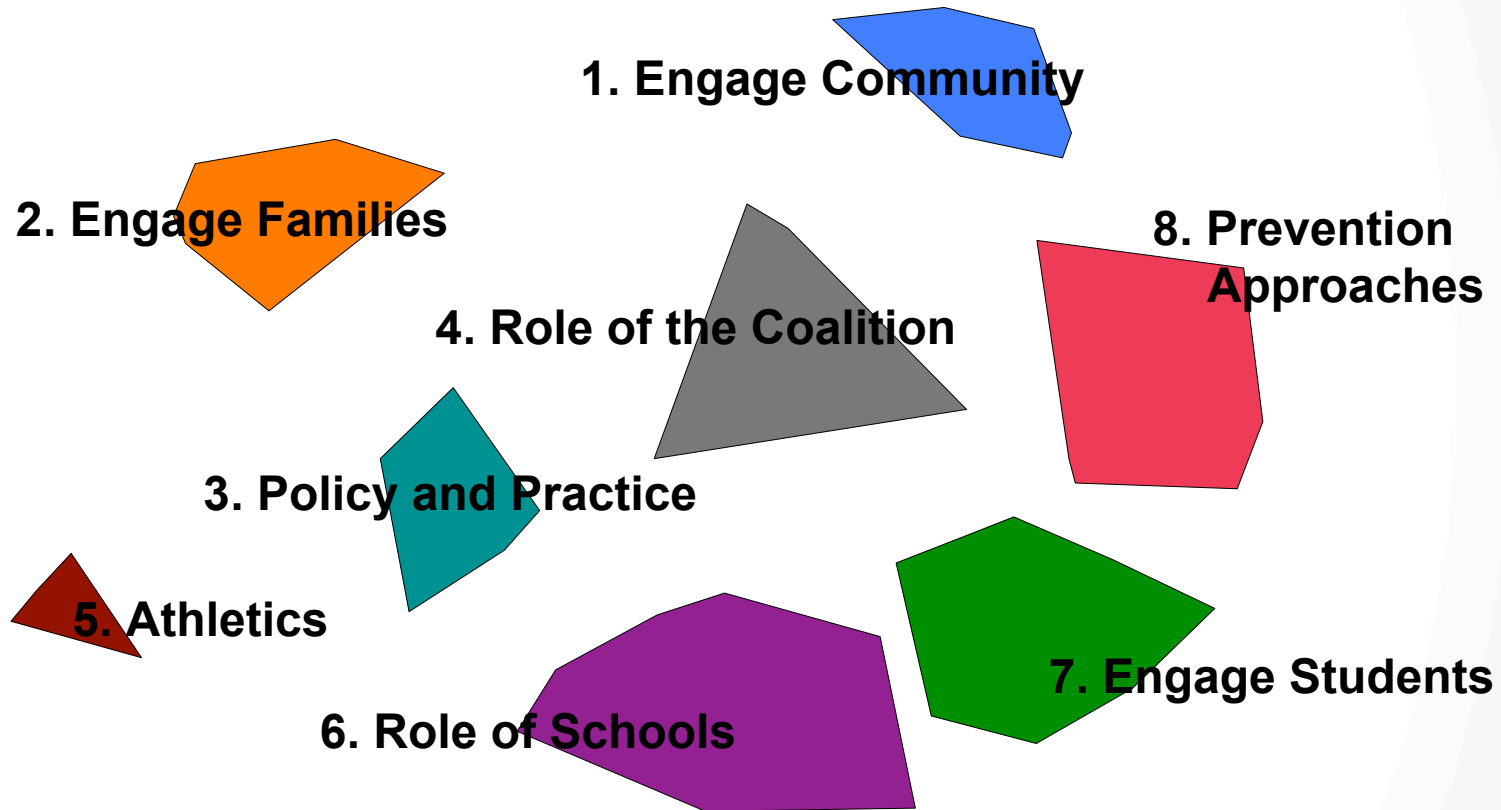
## Cluster 2: Engage Families



- 52 Identify and sponsor activities that help parents get to know one another better.
- 38 Engage fathers to recognize their role in developing non-aggressive behaviors in their children.
- 55 Educate parents about how to address bullying when it first begins.
- 37 Educate about how families can reduce or prevent bullying behavior.
- 28 Provide educational opportunities to support families who want to change.
- 56 Improve ability of parents to recognize subtle signs of bullying.
- 30 Begin parent support groups with social worker/therapist to educate parents.
- 53 Parents need to support school interventions to incidents of bullying.
- 20 Provide resources to help parents improve communication and connection with their children.
- 15 Encourage kids to talk about bullying with their parents, whether the bullying is happening to them or someone else.
- 35 Engage the parent association in addressing issues of bullying and violence in schools.
- 19 Create informal opportunities such as coffee groups to encourage parental conversations about how to prevent bullying.



# A framework emerges



# Values of All Participants: Importance

Extremely Important

4.43



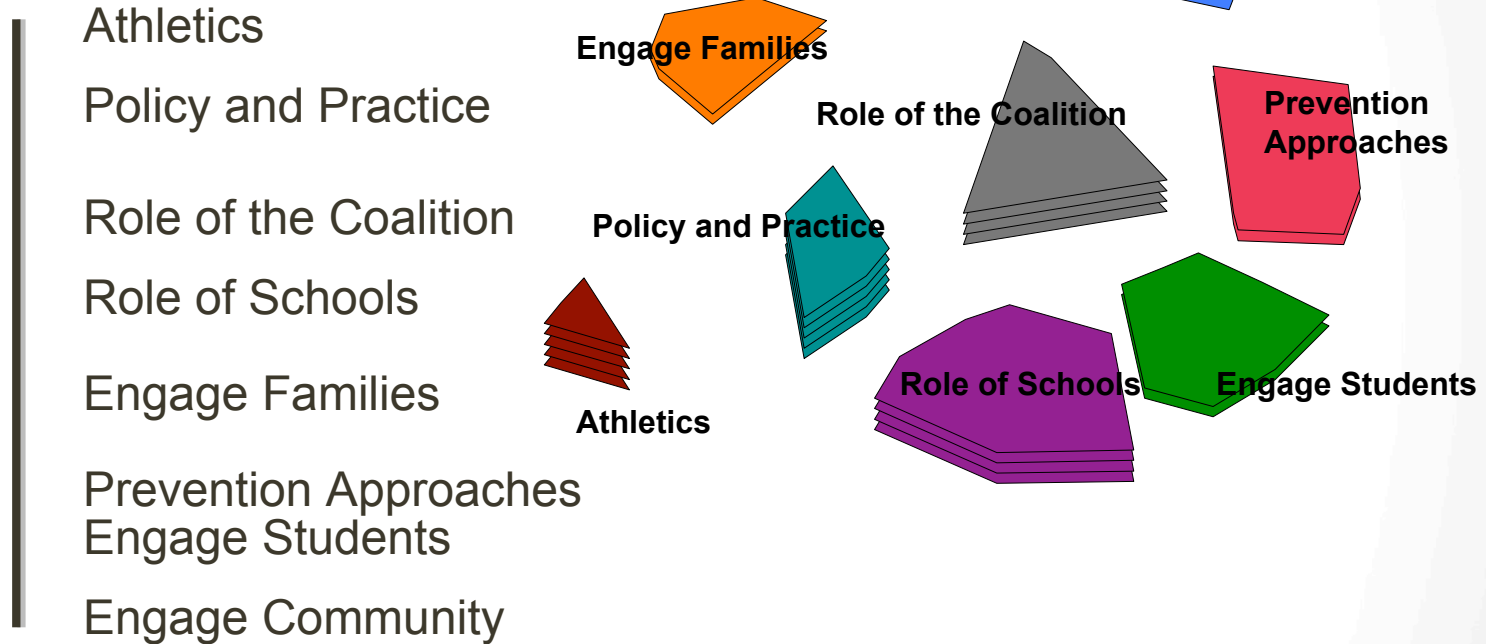
3.66

Not at All Important

# Values of all Participants: Impact

Most Impact

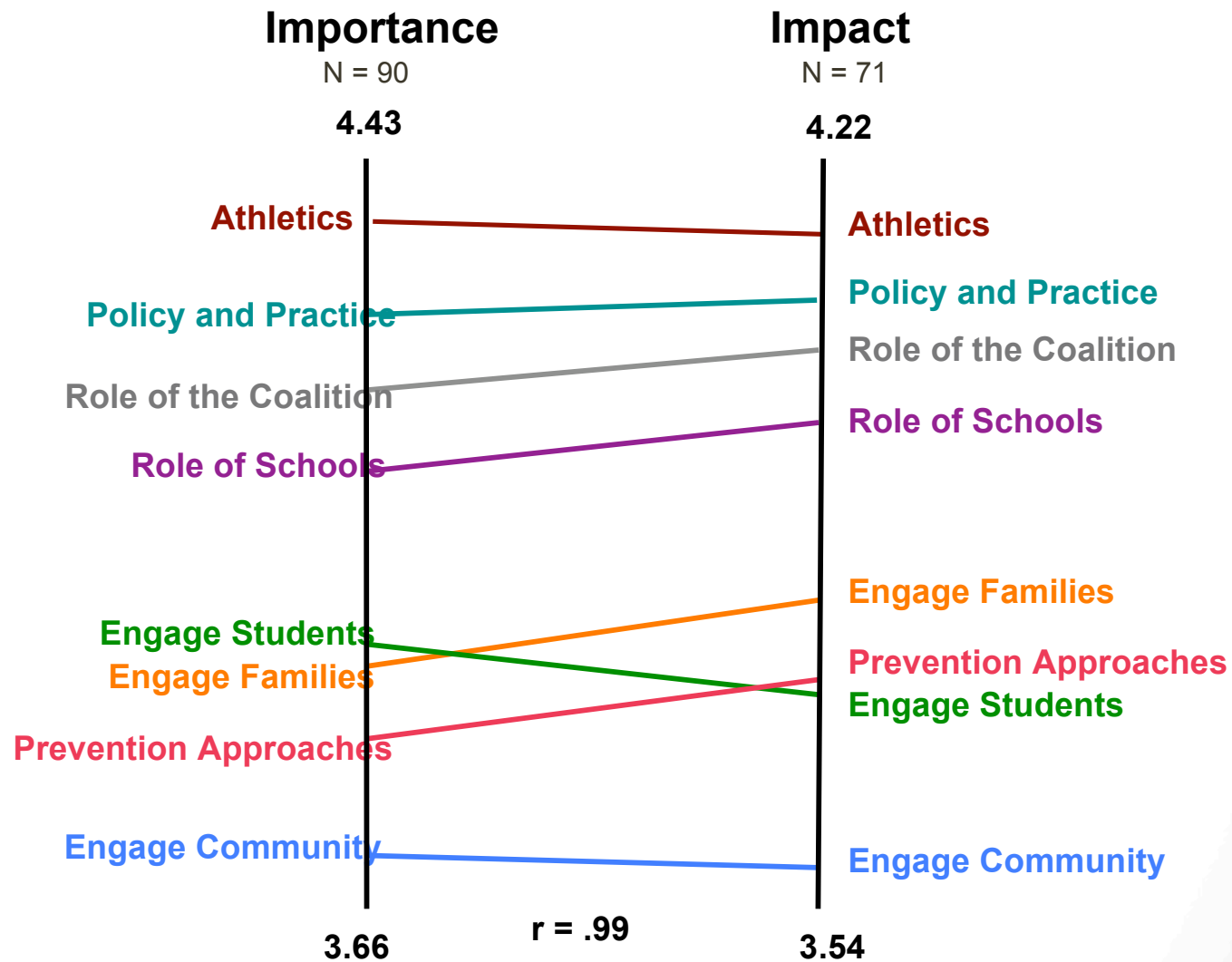
4.22



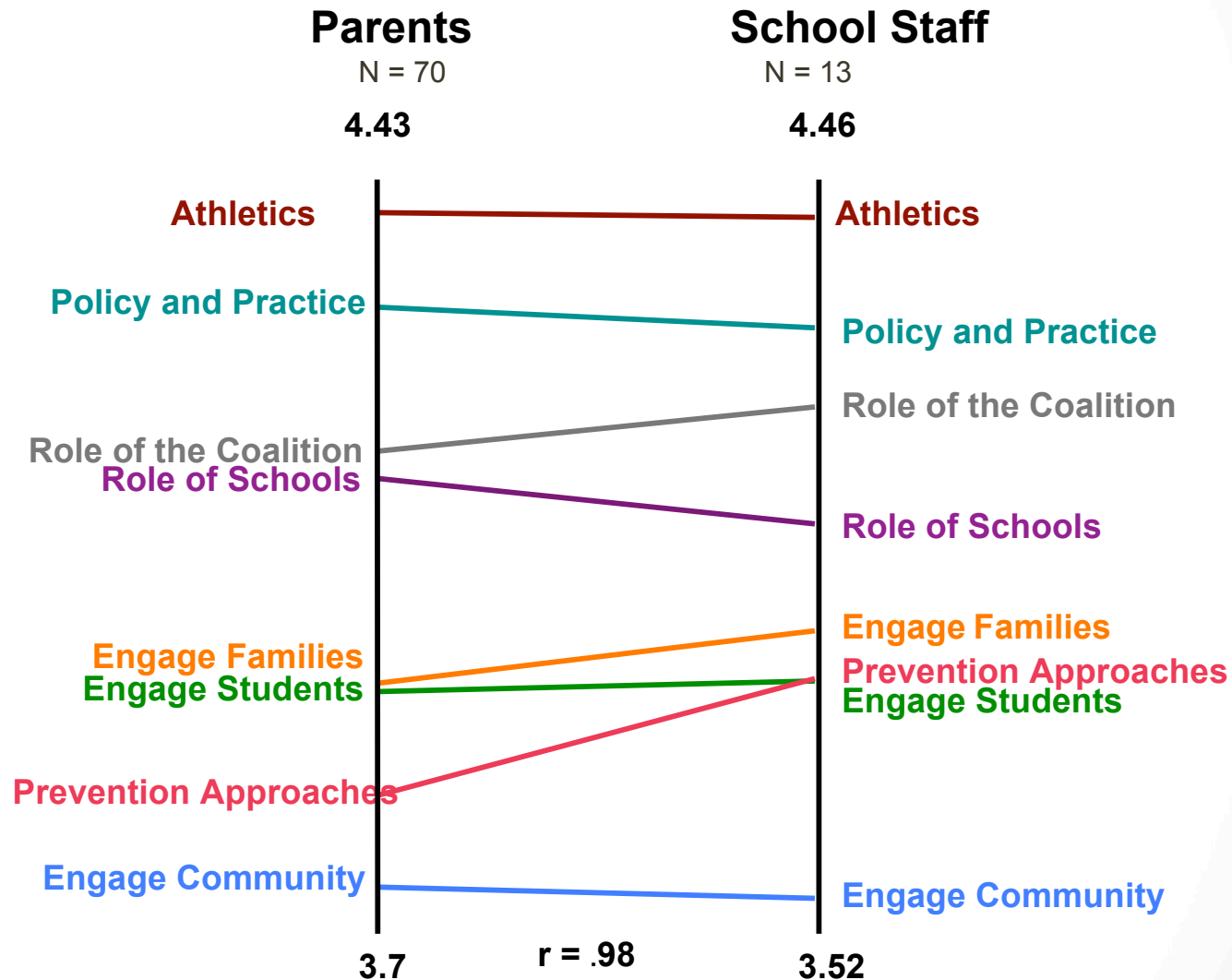
3.54

Least Impact

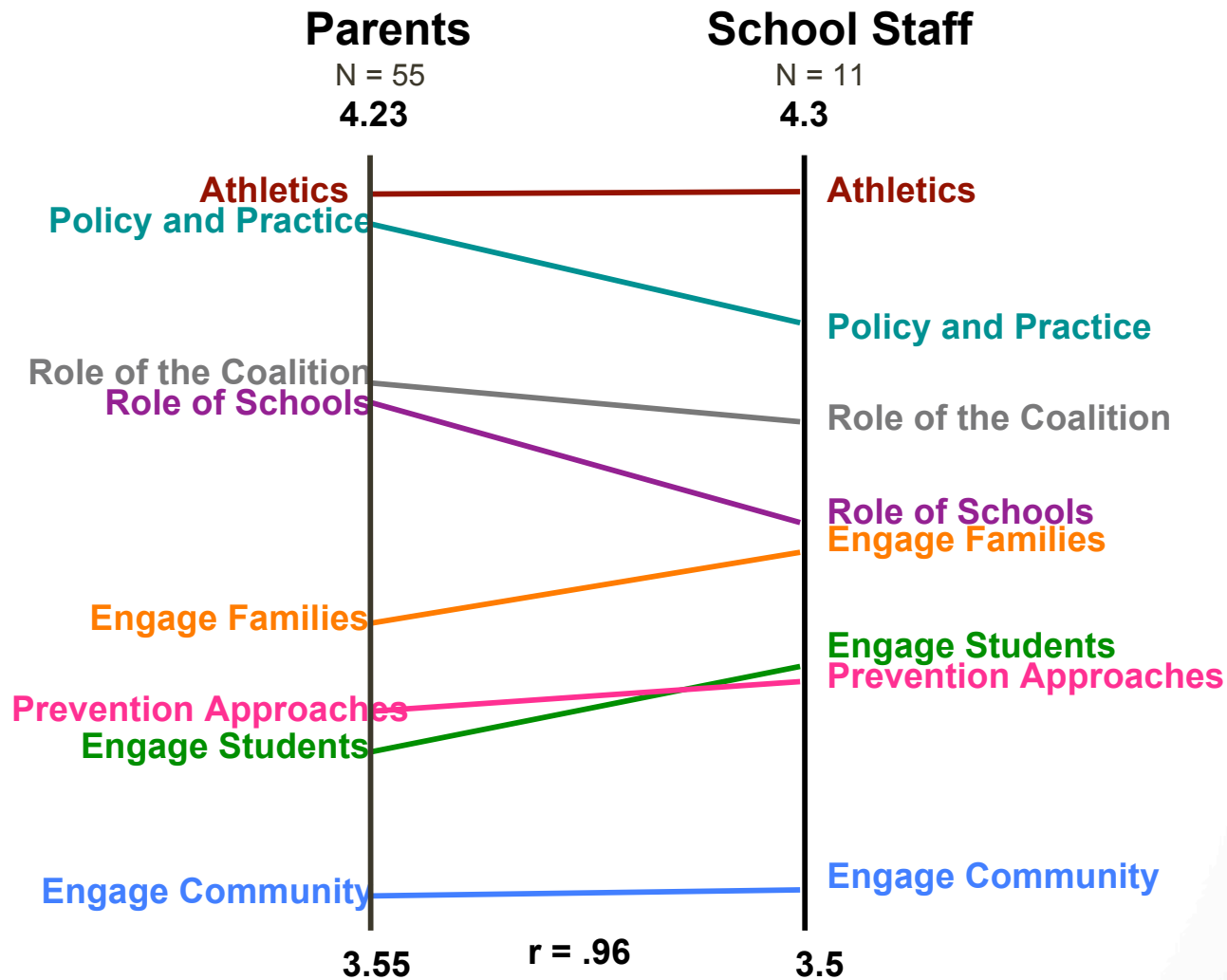
# Importance vs. Impact: All Participants



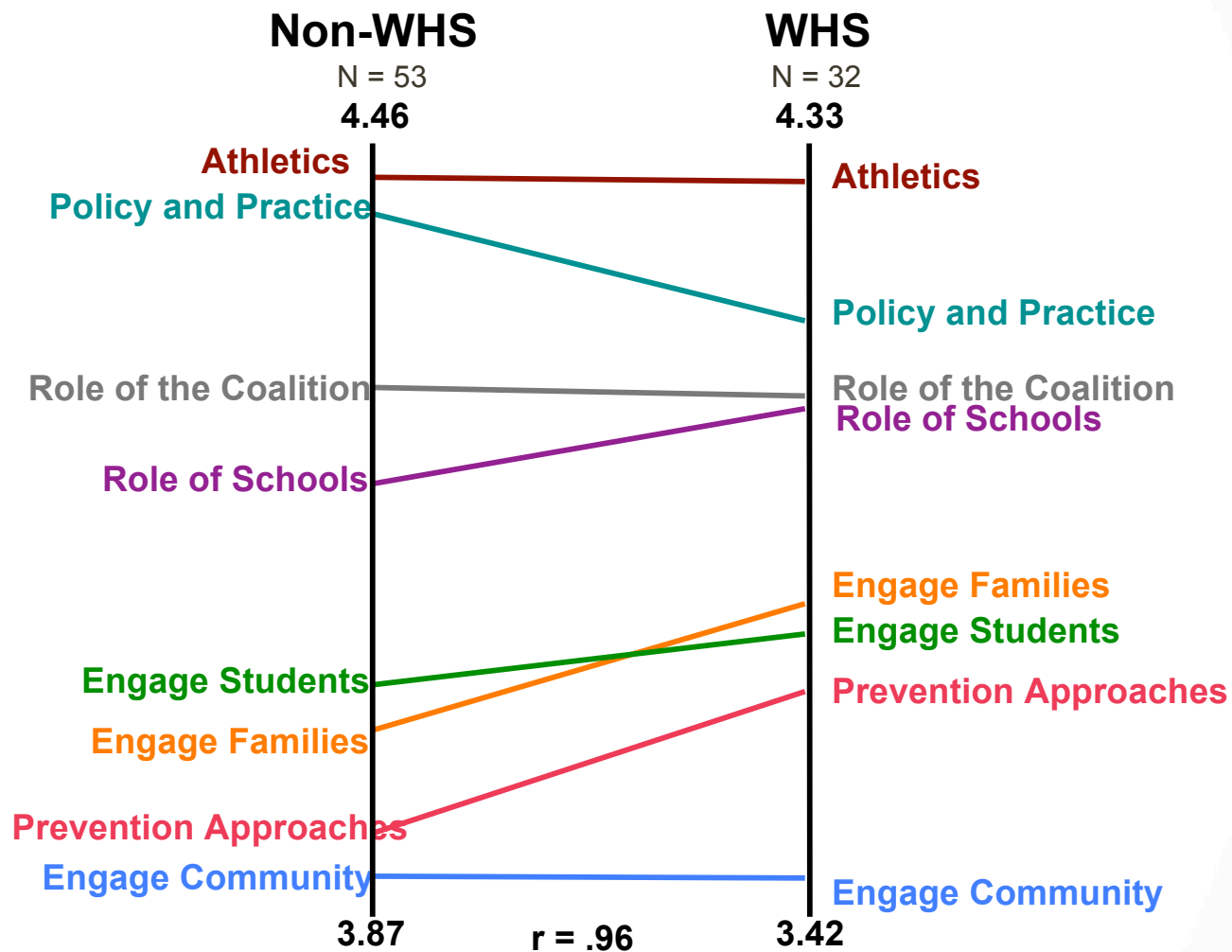
# Importance: Parents vs. School Staff



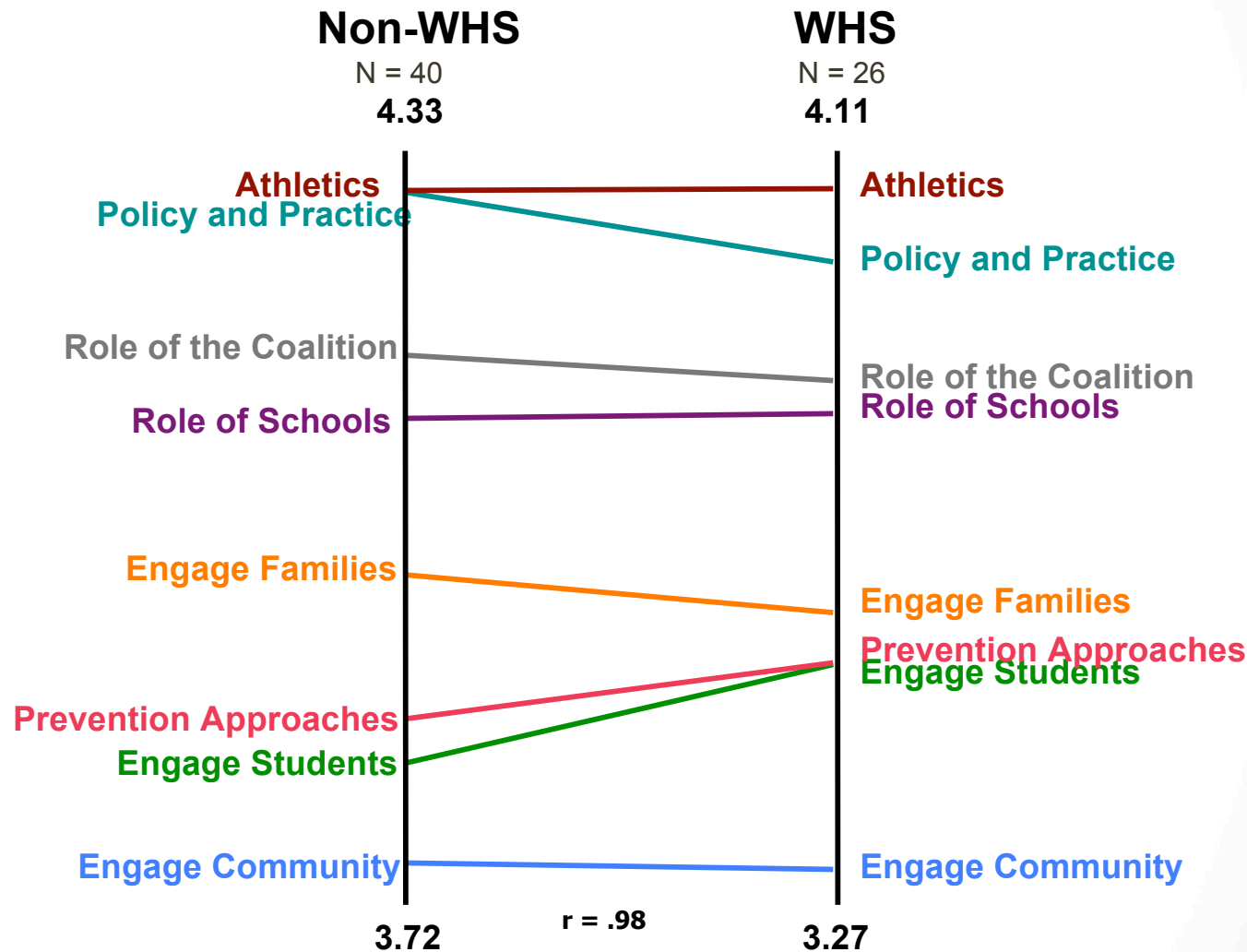
# Impact: Parents vs. School Staff



# Importance: All Districts vs. WHS



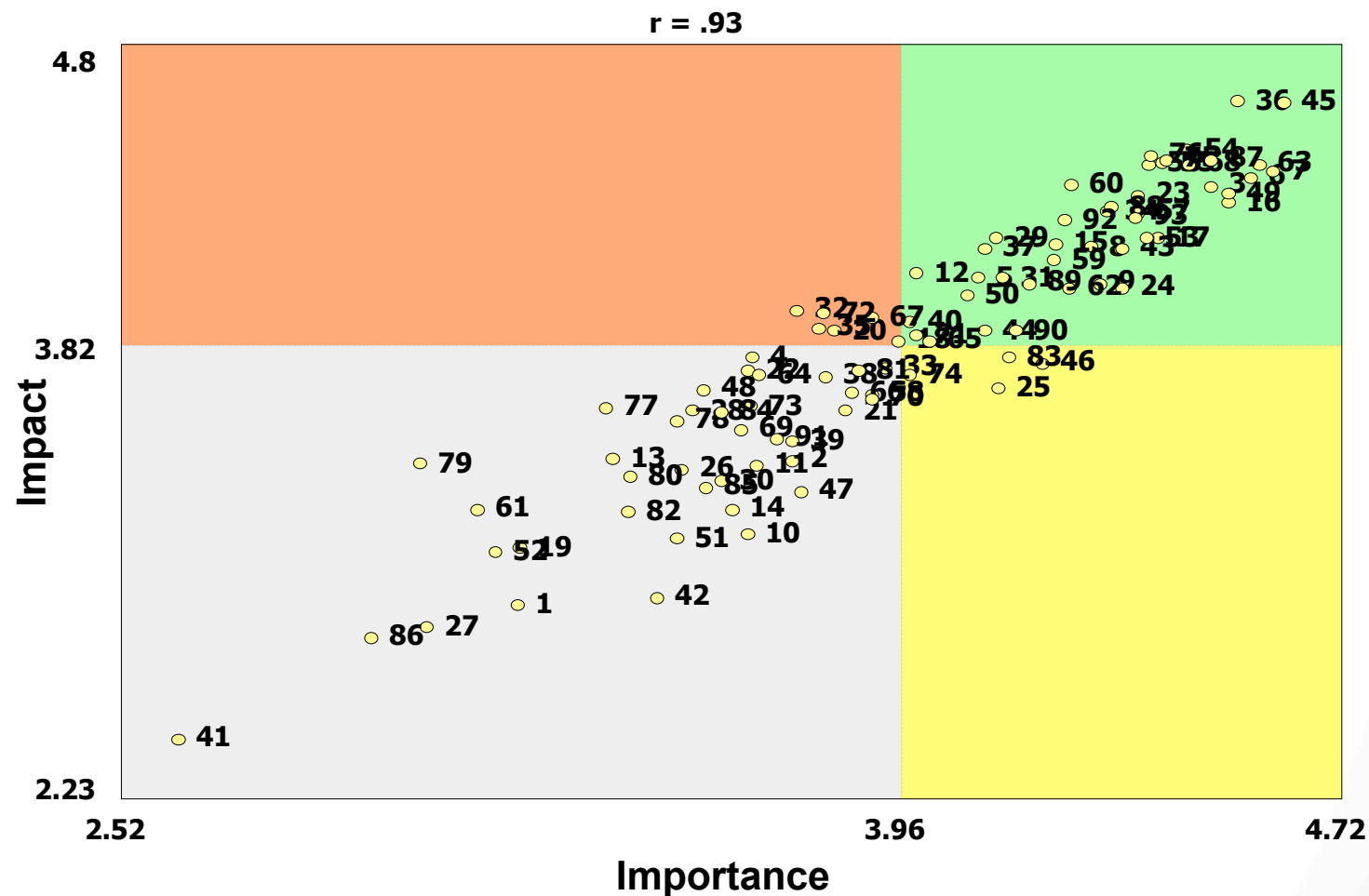
# Impact: All Districts vs. WHS



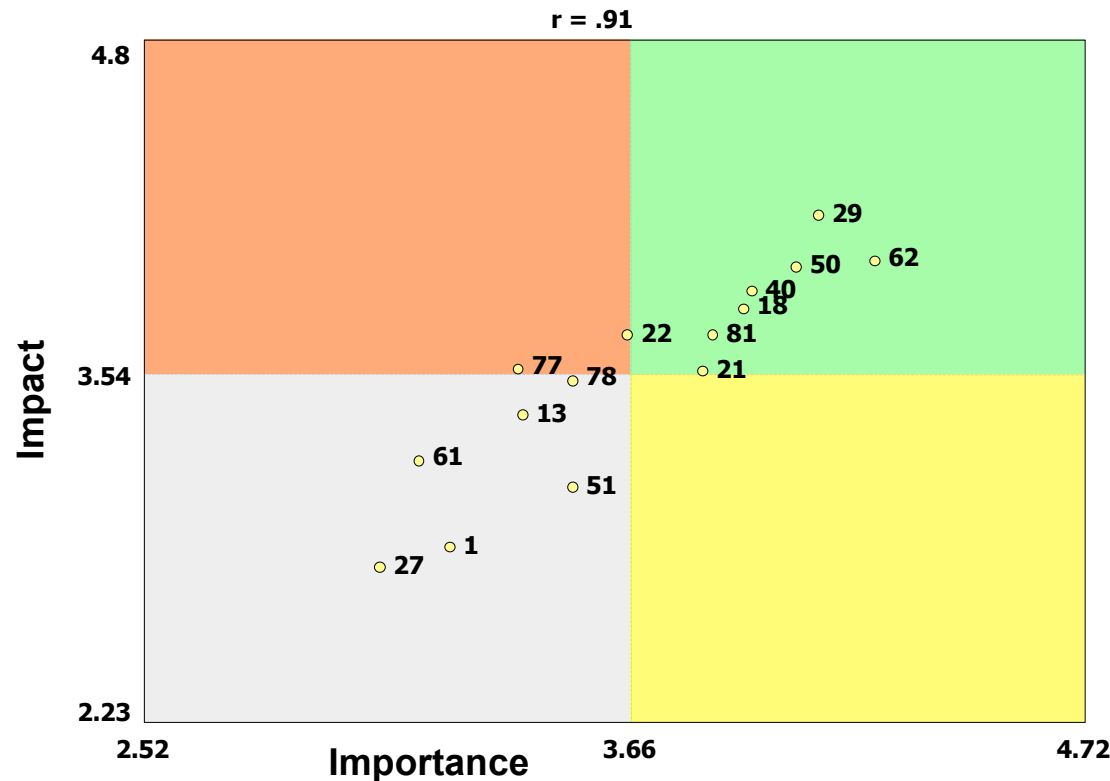


# Go Zone: Importance vs. Impact

## All Clusters



# Go Zone: Engage Community

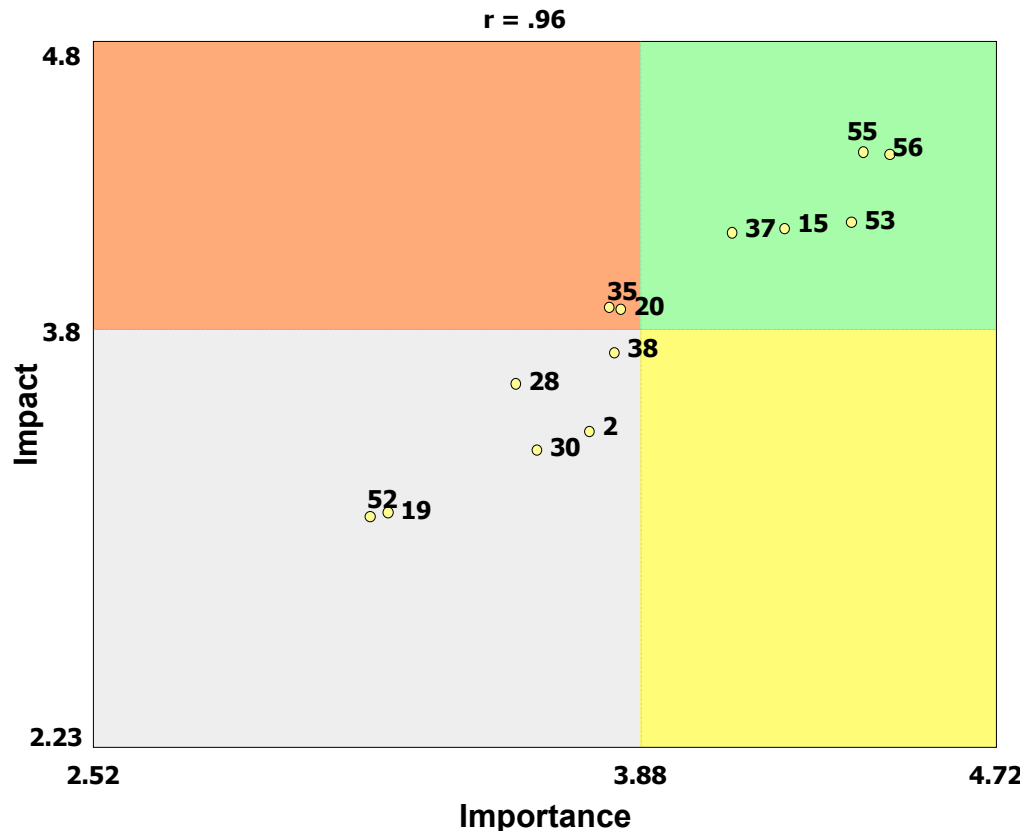
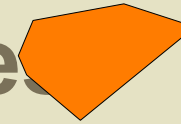


- 50 Examine and change community norms that encourage bullying.
- 18 Expand the role of the coalition to work with bullying in addition to the other health risk issues that it addresses.
- 62 Support the school, neighbor or friends when they respond proactively to bullying incidents.
- 29 Evaluate and implement an effective, community wide bullying prevention program.
- 40 Recognize and validate bullying as a school and community health issue.
- 81 Improve collaboration between the town, school and parents.
- 21 All community groups should establish policies and consequences regarding bullying.

- 22 Implement a town wide education program throughout all community institutions, education, elder services, religious institutions, schools, etc.
- 77 Facilitate a series of public service announcements about bullying that can be displayed with local merchants and public offices.

- 51 Reform membership policies and practices in community organizations to promote diversity and inclusion.
- 78 Develop and implement a public information and social media campaign.
- 1 Sponsor community activities, like music concerts, that encourage different cultures to get to know one another.
- 27 Sponsor a community reading project and book discussion about bullying.
- 13 Design and implement anti-bullying social marketing campaigns (posters) for high-risk environments.
- 61 Conduct two additional concept mapping projects to identify bullying issues specific to the families of elementary and middle school aged children.

# Go Zone: Engage Families

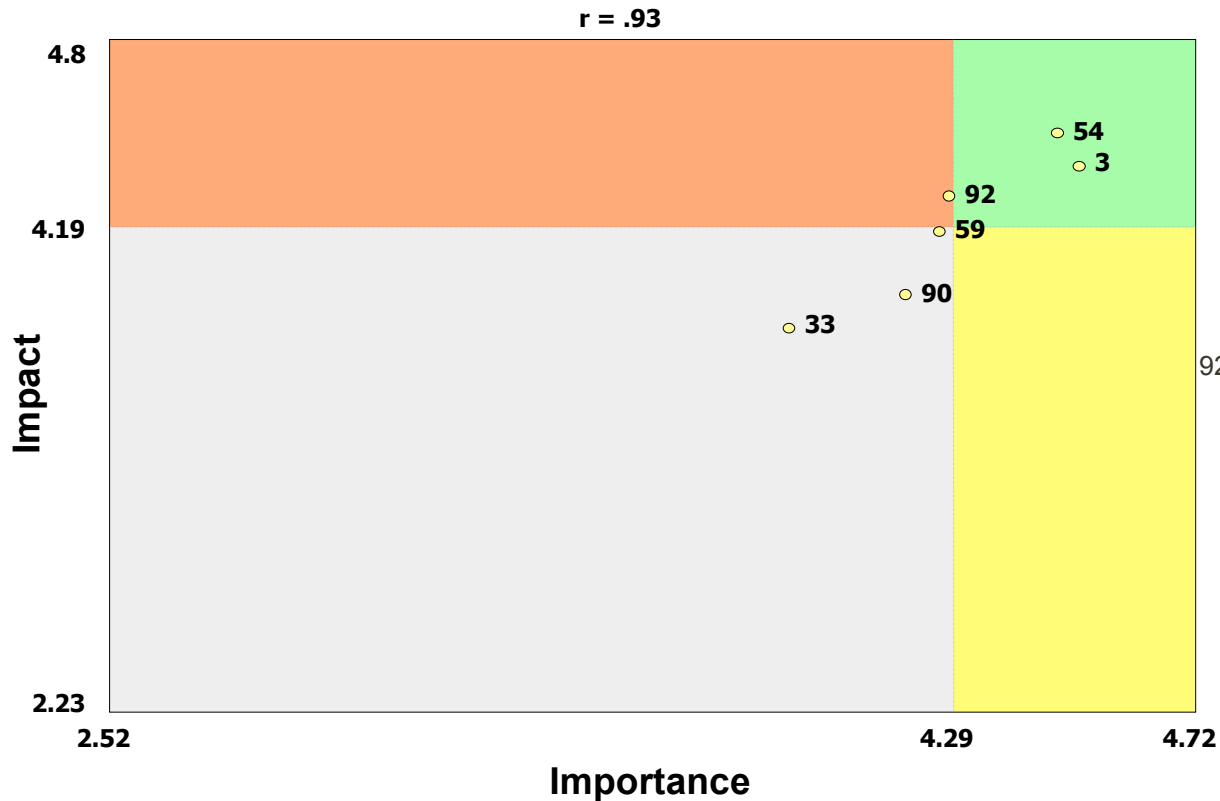


- 55 Educate parents about how to address bullying when it first begins.
- 56 Improve ability of parents to recognize subtle signs of bullying.
- 37 Educate about how families can reduce or prevent bullying behavior.
- 53 Parents need to support school interventions to incidents of bullying.
- 15 Encourage kids to talk about bullying with their parents, whether the bullying is happening to them or someone else.

- 35 Engage the parent association in addressing issues of bullying and violence in schools.
- 20 Provide resources to help parents improve communication and connection with their children.

- 38 Engage fathers to recognize their role in developing non-aggressive behaviors in their children.
- 28 Provide educational opportunities to support families who want to change.
- 30 Begin parent support groups with social worker/therapist to educate parents.
- 2 Focus on the knowledge, skills and attitudes of adults.
- 19 Create informal opportunities such as coffee groups to encourage parental conversations about how to prevent bullying.
- 52 Identify and sponsor activities that help parents get to know one another better.

# Go Zone: Policy and Practice

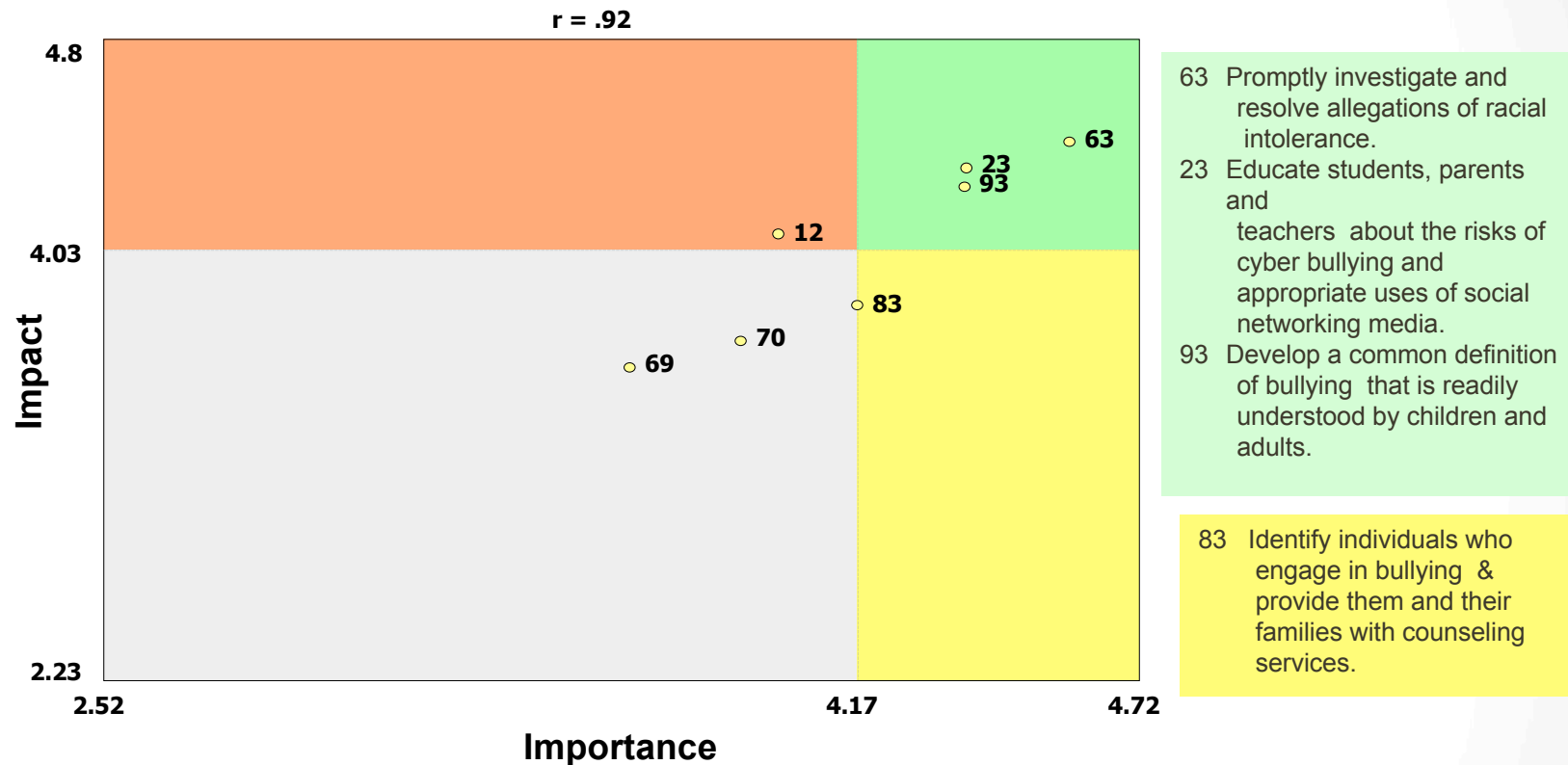


- 54 Have schools actively call parents when incidents occur so that they know what is happening.
- 3 Encourage adults to set and enforce rules and boundaries that discourage bullying.

- 92 Communicate with kids about how groups influence our personal choices and preferences and encourage individual responsibility in decision making.

- 59 Inform parents and guardians of school policies regarding bullying at the beginning of the school year.
- 90 Establish zero tolerance policies for all participants in school and extracurricular sports events.
- 33 Schools should engage and value parental involvement at all grade levels.

# Go Zone: Role of the Coalition

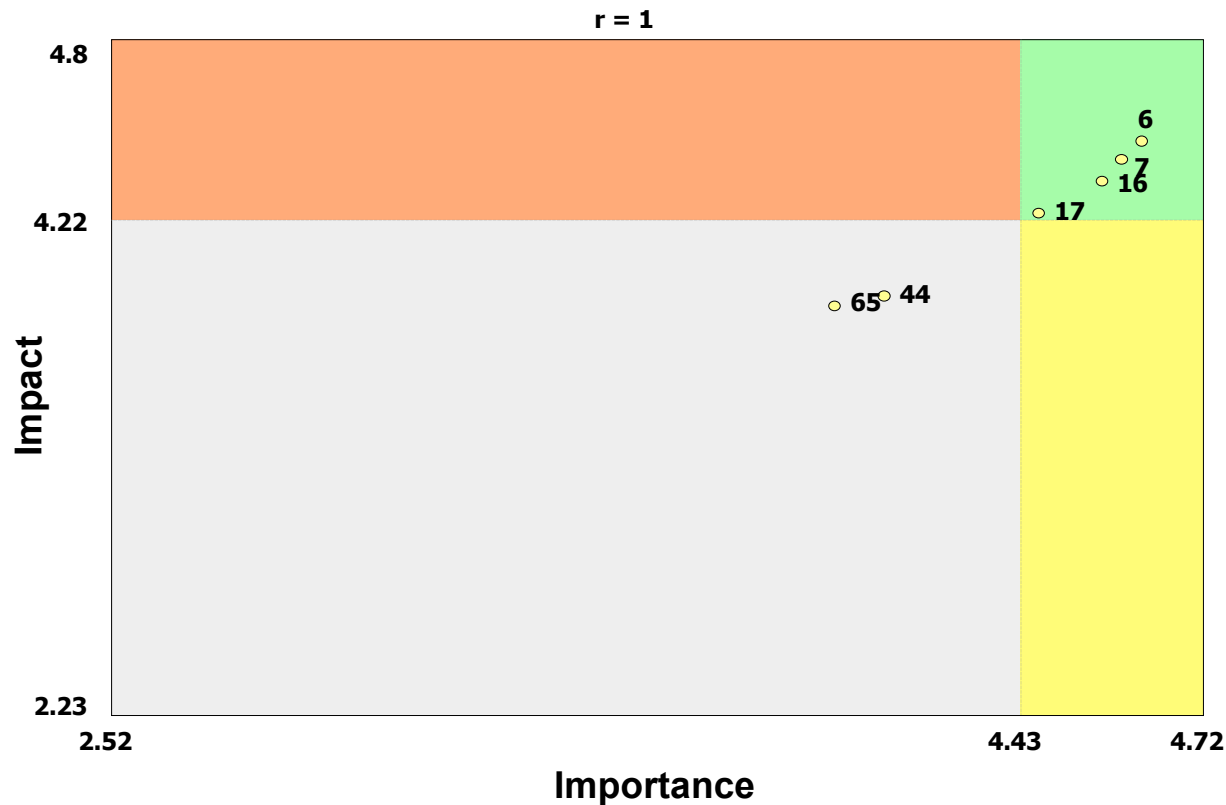


12 Construct a readily and easily understood definition of bullying.

69 Recognize and reward adults who prevent and address acts of bullying.

70 Identify the health risk behaviors that children engage in as a result of peer-to-peer bullying.

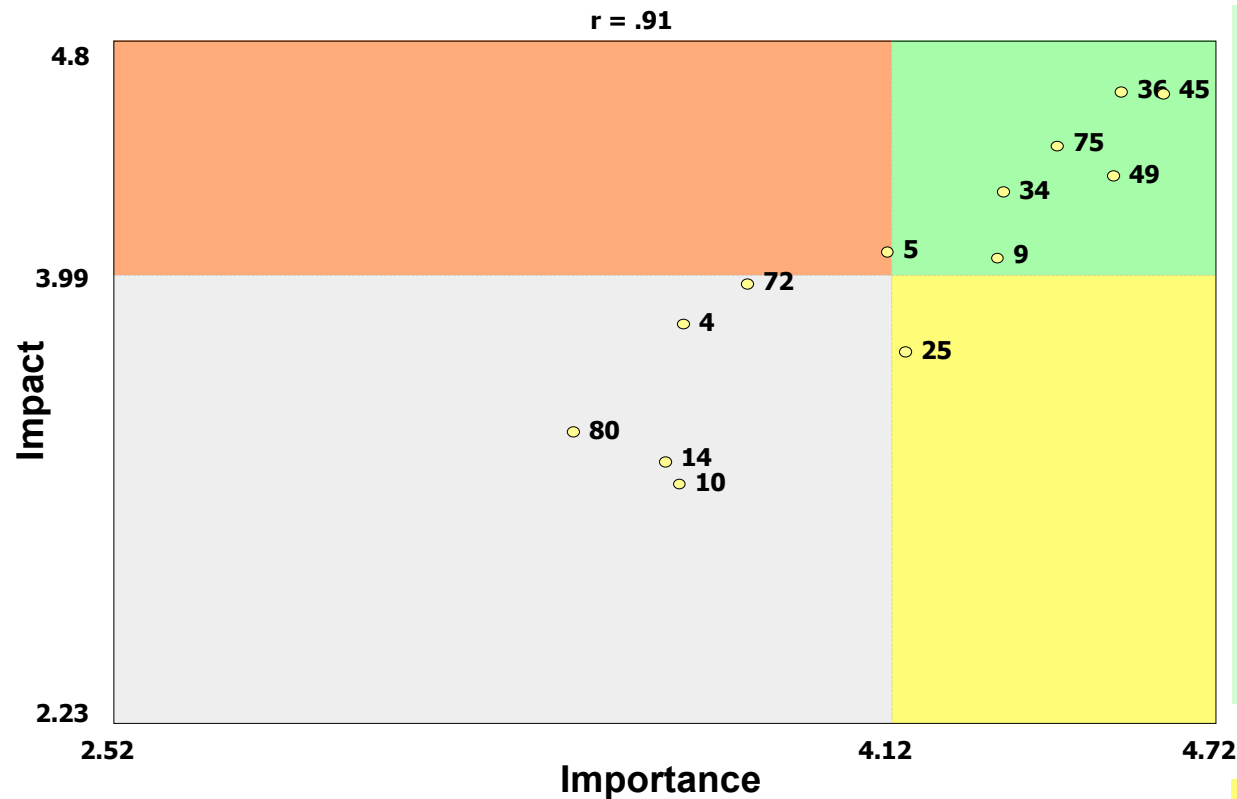
# Go Zone: Athletics



- 6 Establish and enforce consequences for athletes who engage in bullying.
- 16 Establish and enforce behavioral standards for appropriate conduct by coaches.
- 17 Hold coaches accountable for modeling and fostering behaviors that discourage bullying.
- 7 Provide training to athletic coaches on strategies and approaches for reducing bullying among athletes and on sports teams.

- 65 Institute criteria for selecting sports teams captains based on demonstrated qualities of leadership, tolerance and positive modeling.
- 44 Create more opportunities for intramural sports with an emphasis on working together, having fun, and being physically fit.

# Go Zone: Role of Schools



36 Establish and enforce policies, procedures and consequences for students who engage in bullying.

45 Validate and investigate student reports of bullying.

75 Implement k-12 professional development programs to teach all school staff and faculty how to recognize and respond to bullying incidents

49 Teachers should model positive behaviors.

34 Involve teens in developing bullying prevention strategies.

9 Empower teachers to establish rules for acceptable classroom behavior and give them authority to make disciplinary choices.

25 Implement disciplinary consequences for school staff whom ignore bullying.

5 Teach assertiveness skills.

72 Improve leadership skills in Winchester public schools.

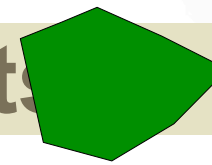
4 Anger management program for middle-school students.

80 Increase diversity in the high school staff.

14 Prohibit the use of cell phones at school.

10 Improve the balance of instructional resources between emphasizing test scores and developing healthy interpersonal skills in students.

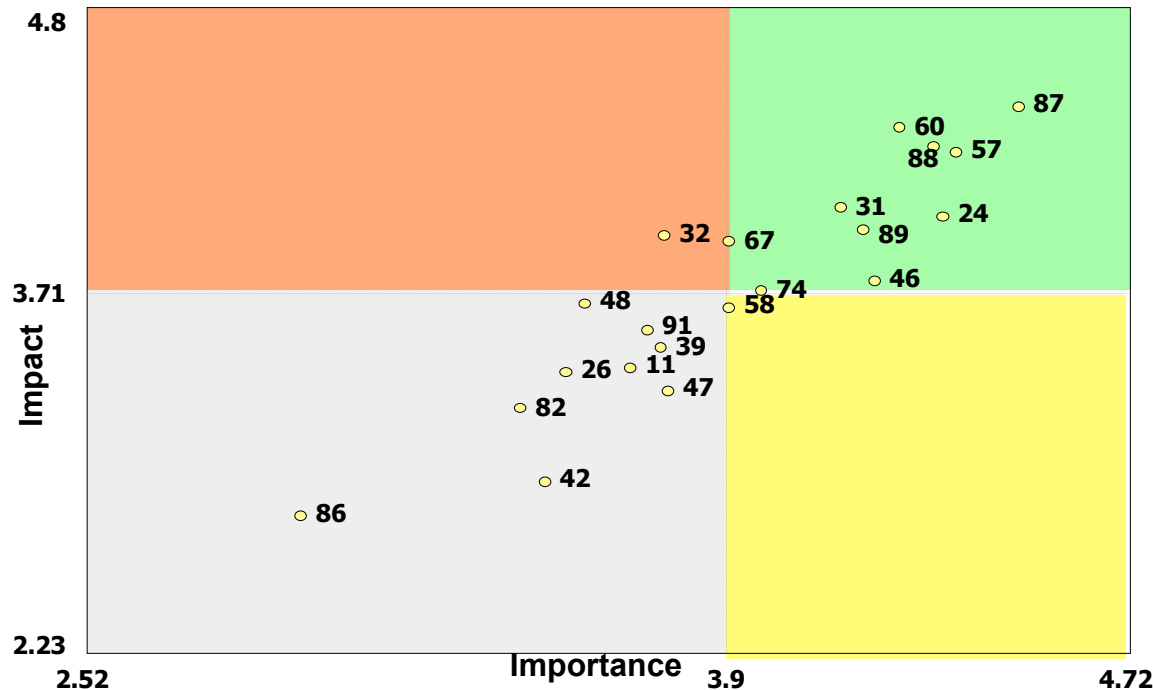
# Go Zone: Engage Students



32 Eliminate large assemblies about tolerance in favor of smaller learning opportunities.

67 Utilize the school resource officer as a bullying prevention educator.

$r = .91$

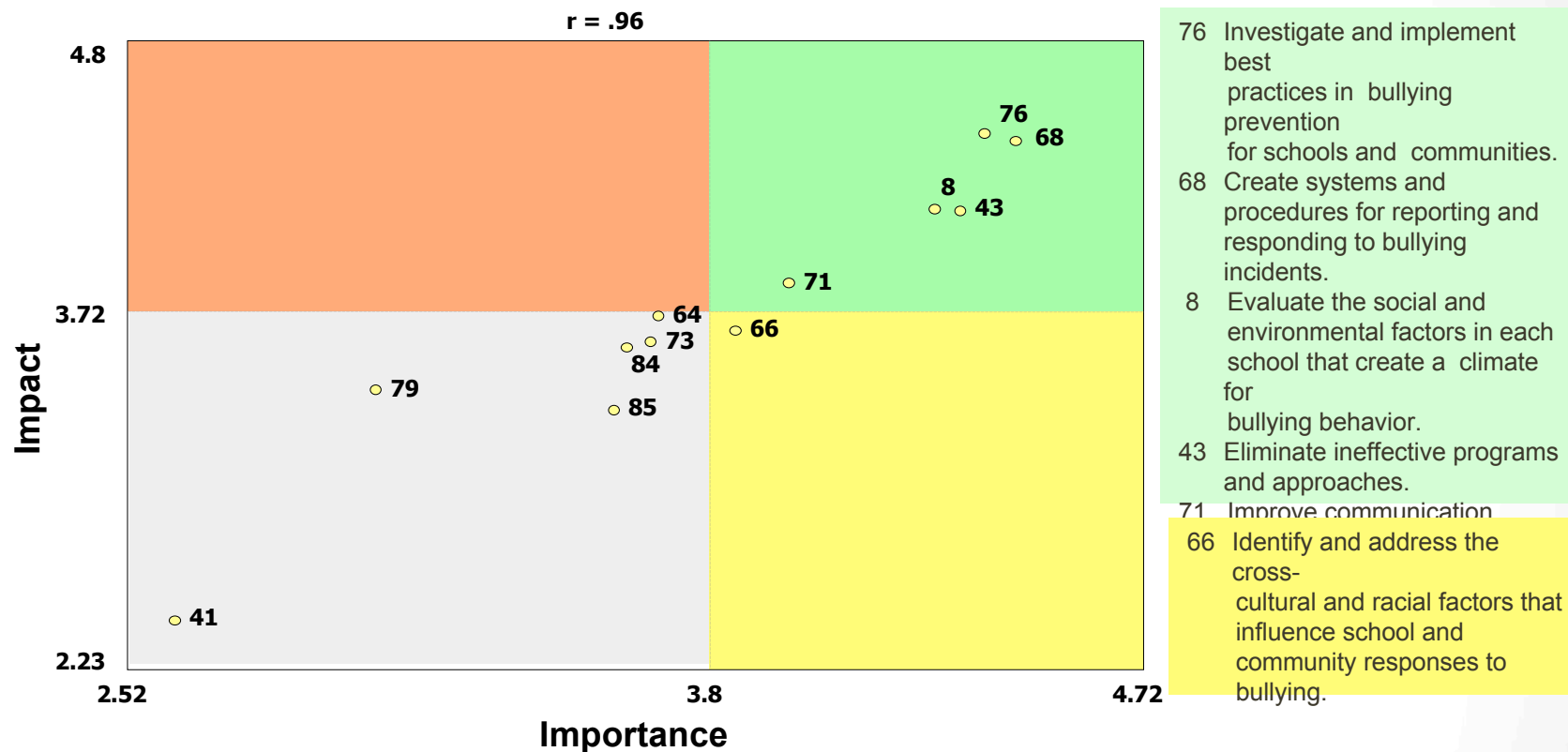
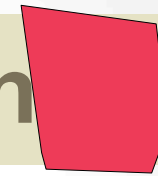


- 91 Implement multicultural curriculum to promote understanding and acceptance of diversity among students.
- 48 Concentrate bullying prevention programs on girls in 4<sup>th</sup> and 5<sup>th</sup> grade.
- 39 Target interventions to recognize gender differences in committing acts of bullying.
- 11 Target interventions to recognize the developmental factors that contribute to bullying behavior by boys.
- 47 Create friendship circles to help disconnected kids develop healthy, supportive relationships.
- 26 Implement and infuse multicultural training programs for students and school staff.
- 82 Create small advisory groups with staff and kids that meet weekly to discuss and develop strategies for creating a positive school climate.
- 42 Have a homeroom at Winchester High School which meets regularly with the same

- 87 Educate students about the various forms of bullying, including verbal, physical and emotional abuse.
- 60 Implement prevention programs at the elementary level.
- 57 Ask students their ideas about how to reduce and prevent bullying.
- 88 Improve support of school personnel when parents raise concerns about bullying.
- 24 At the beginning of the year, provide students with a list of outlets/teachers/counselors they can go to for help/advice when they are bullied.
- 31 Focus at the elementary school level on teaching friendship skills.
- 89 Make an effort to welcome students who are new to the school and check in on them throughout their first year.
- 46 Identify and address the increased risk factors for bullying.
- 74 Understand the physical, social, intellectual, and emotional components of safety at school and develop strategies to foster them.
- 58 Identify kids in school with strong leadership skills, values, and who are well respected and train them to be peer leaders and models



# Go Zone: Prevention Approach



- 76 Investigate and implement best practices in bullying prevention for schools and communities.
- 68 Create systems and procedures for reporting and responding to bullying incidents.
- 8 Evaluate the social and environmental factors in each school that create a climate for bullying behavior.
- 43 Eliminate ineffective programs and approaches.
- 71 Improve communication
- 66 Identify and address the cross-cultural and racial factors that influence school and community responses to bullying.

- 64 Require evidence of ability to establish healthy relationships with students as a qualification for administrative positions.
- 73 Increase accountability of the school committee for the environmental factors in the high school that contribute to bullying.
- 84 Employ mediation techniques between bullies and their targets.
- 85 Structure schools to encourage opportunities for every student k-12 to develop a healthy relationship with an adult.
- 79 Install pop-up software with anti-bullying messages for students to view every time they log in to a school site.
- 41 Create a longer school day for the high school.

# Next Steps



The Winchester Coalition for a Safer Community will:

- sponsor community presentations of the results of the project
- continue to interpret the project data and seek meaning from the results
- engage stakeholders in identifying high priority actions
- develop strategies to implement high priority actions
- revisit rating scales one year out

# Acknowledgements

Thank you to the following for their contributions to this project:

The Winchester Coalition for a Safer Community, Winchester, MA School Districts, Parents and other engaged and involved community members  
<http://www.winchestermass.org>

Dr. William Trochim, Professor, Cornell University, Developer of Concept Mapping Technology <http://www.socialresearchmethods.net/mapping>

Circa Learning, LLC, Alayne MacArthur, Principal Consultant, Project Management, Analysis and Reporting <http://www.preventioneducators.org>

For more information about how your community or organization can employ concept mapping, contact Circa Learning, LLC [alayne@circalearningllc.com](mailto:alayne@circalearningllc.com)