



I. Introduction

The 13 Dimensions of School Climate Measured by the CSCI

Dimensions	Major Indicators
Safety	
1 Rules and Norms	Clearly communicated rules about physical violence; clearly communicated rules about verbal abuse, harassment, and teasing; clear and consistent enforcement and norms for adult intervention.
2 Sense of Physical Security	Sense that students and adults feel safe from physical harm in the school.
3 Sense of Social-Emotional Security	Sense that students feel safe from verbal abuse, teasing, and exclusion.
Teaching and Learning	
4 Support for Learning	Use of supportive teaching practices, such as: encouragement and constructive feedback; varied opportunities to demonstrate knowledge and skills; support for risk-taking and independent thinking; atmosphere conducive to dialog and questioning; academic challenge; and individual attention.
5 Social and Civic Learning	Support for the development of social and civic knowledge, skills, and dispositions including: effective listening, conflict resolution, self-reflection and emotional regulation, empathy, personal responsibility, and ethical decision making.
Interpersonal Relationships	
6 Respect for Diversity	Mutual respect for individual differences (e.g. gender, race, culture, etc.) at all levels of the school—student-student; adult-student; adult-adult and overall norms for tolerance.
7 Social Support—Adults	Pattern of supportive and caring adult relationships for students, including high expectations for students' success, willingness to listen to students and to get to know them as individuals, and personal concern for students' problems.
8 Social Support—Students	Pattern of supportive peer relationships for students, including: friendships for socializing, for problems, for academic help, and for new students.
Institutional Environment	
9 School Connectedness/Engagement	Positive identification with the school and norms for broad participation in school life for students, staff, and families.
10 Physical Surroundings	Cleanliness, order, and appeal of facilities and adequate resources and materials.
Social Media	
11 Social Media	Sense that students feel safe from physical harm, verbal abuse/teasing, gossip, and exclusion when online or on electronic devices (for example, facebook, twitter, and other social media platforms, by an email, text messaging, posting photo/video, etc.).
Staff Only	
12 Leadership	Administration that creates and communicates a clear vision, and is accessible to and supportive of school staff and staff development.
13 Professional Relationships	Positive attitudes and relationships among school staff that support effectively working and learning together.



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SAFETY

Safety is a basic need. Feeling unsafe naturally undermines learning and healthy development. Safe schools promote student achievement and school success. Historically, schools have concentrated on physical safety, showing less sensitivity to emotional safety. In recent years, schools have become more attuned to how social safety and the problem of social bullying shapes learning and development. This survey looks at three aspects of safety: rules and norms (institutional safety) and actual sense of security—both physical and social-emotional.

Safety: Rules and Norms

This scale focuses on the clarity of the school's rules for maintaining safety, both physical safety and social-emotional safety, and the consistency and fairness with which rules are enforced. For example, is it clear that there are rules about physical and social bullying? Are they fairly enforced by adults in the school?

Safety: Sense of Physical Security

This scale focuses on the degree to which people feel physically safe in the school building and in the area surrounding the school. For example, have individuals themselves experienced physical abuse and to what extent have they seen others being subjected to physical harm such as pushing, slapping or punching?

Safety: Sense of Social-Emotional Security

This scale focuses on the degree to which people feel safe in social-emotional terms. Questions on this scale probe experience and witnessing of verbal abuse, harassment, and exclusion.

TEACHING AND LEARNING

The goal of schooling is to foster learning and development. Educational research has identified factors that influence school success, including the use of varied and customized instructional strategies and the promotion of students' reflective, self-monitoring, and decision-making skills. Students are also more able learners when they are made comfortable taking risks, when they feel safe "not knowing", and can genuinely ask for help in understanding. Adults' expectations for students—and the ability to communicate this—also powerfully shape learning and school engagement. Teaching and learning is always social, emotional and ethical as well as cognitive in nature. Active and purposeful social, emotional, and ethical teaching and modeling also supports students' academic achievement and school success, as well as their development into responsible and productive citizens.

Teaching and Learning: Support for Learning

This scale highlights adults' and students' interactions in the learning process. For example, do students feel that teachers let them know when they do a good job and offer them constructive feedback? Is schoolwork challenging? Is there support for learning from mistakes? Is there an opportunity to demonstrate knowledge and skills in a variety of ways?

Teaching and Learning: Social and Civic Learning

This scale describes the extent to which social and civic knowledge and skills are actively incorporated into school learning and how ethical dispositions are recognized and valued. For example, do students learn to listen and cooperate with others? Are they encouraged to think about "right" and "wrong"? Are they supported in the development of skills for reflection and self-control? Do they learn how to resolve conflicts effectively and amicably?



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INTERPERSONAL RELATIONSHIPS

School experiences are based on relationships. The extent to which adults and students listen to, respect and trust one another shapes the school community. How do students treat one another and do they have a network of friends they can count on for support? What is the quality of support they feel they can expect from adults in the school? Do they feel there are adults who care about them as individuals and to whom they can turn for help? Finally, how well do adults communicate and collaborate with one another and what tone does that set for students? How all of this is perceived by students profoundly affects their expectations for appropriate behavior and the quality of their school experience.

Interpersonal Relationships: Respect for Diversity

This scale focuses on the extent to which adults and students in the school respect each others' differences with regard to such factors as gender, race/ethnicity, or physical differences. It focuses on peer relationships among students and among adults and on the relationships between adults and students.

Interpersonal Relationships: Social Support—Adults

This scale deals with quality of social relationships among adults and students. Is there mutual trust and support? Do adults appear to work well with their peers? Do students feel that adults in the school show an interest in them and listen to what they have to say?

Interpersonal Relationships: Social Support—Students

This scale deals with quality of social support among students. Do students have a network of friends that sustain them academically and socially?

INSTITUTIONAL ENVIRONMENT

The institutional environment in the school is defined in both physical and social terms. Socially, this entails students' positive sense of connectedness to and engagement in the life of the school as an institution. Do they identify positively with the school and have a sense that both they and their families belong there and are welcome. This is an important aspect of a student's school experience and contributes substantially to school success. The physical environment—facilities and resources—is also important. Naturally, how clean, cared for, orderly and attractive the school is affects teaching, learning, school engagement and overall morale.

Institutional Environment: School Connectedness/Engagement

This scale focuses on how positively students feel about their school and the degree to which they and their families are encouraged to participate in school life. Do students feel good about their school and what they accomplish there? Do they feel that they are encouraged to become involved in school life beyond academics? Does the school reach out to families, by keeping them informed and making them feel comfortable speaking with teachers or attending school events?

Institutional Environment: Physical Surroundings

This scale focuses on the school's physical plant. This includes the range of school facilities, their attractiveness, cleanliness and condition, and the adequacy of the space and resources for positive school life.



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SOCIAL MEDIA

Safety is a basic need. Feeling unsafe naturally undermines learning and healthy development. Safe schools promote student achievement and school success. Historically, schools have concentrated on how the problem of social-emotional bullying in school shapes learning and development. In recent years, as technology has become more pervasive in students' lives, schools have become more attuned to social-emotional bullying that occurs online and through the phone due to its effect on students' experience with peers within the school.

Social Media

This scale focuses on the degree to which people feel safe in social-emotional terms on social media. Questions on this scale probe experience and exposure to verbal abuse, harassment, and exclusion on social media.

STAFF ONLY DIMENSIONS

A school's leadership team, as well as professional relationships between staff members, are important when evaluating a school's overall work environment. Whether or not the leadership team has defined a clear vision and what decisions they make to fulfill that vision tremendously affects not only the work environment, but the school climate as well.

Staff Only: Leadership

This scale focuses on the leadership characteristics and decision making style of the school's administration. Do school leaders establish and communicate a clear vision? Are they accessible and open? Are they supportive and appreciative of school staff? Do they involve staff in key decisions?

Staff Only: Professional Relationships

This scale focuses on the quality of working relationships among school staff. Do staff work well together and learn from one another? Is there mutual trust and constructive collaboration? Are staff supportive of one another and generous with their help?