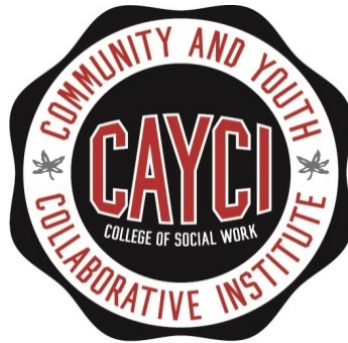


Community and Youth Collaborative Institute
School Experience Survey – Technical Report



**CAYCI Perceptions of School
Climate Scale**
Teacher/Staff Version

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THE OHIO STATE UNIVERSITY
COLLEGE OF SOCIAL WORK

Updated: Spring 2016

PERCEPTIONS OF SCHOOL CLIMATE

Teacher/Staff Version

I. Definition of Construct

The Teacher/Staff *Perceived School Climate* scale measures the extent to which teachers/staff perceive the overall school environment favorably.

II. Relevance for Practice

The school environment – social, emotional, civic, ethical, and academic – affects student engagement and learning (Larson, 2014). Schools that foster safety, relationships, academic purpose, and structure contribute to increased engagement among students (Thapa, Cohen, Guffy, & Higgins-D'Alessandro, 2013). Together, when students feel engaged and a part of a positive environment, they have better academic outcomes (Larson, 2014). Furthermore, when teachers have a positive view of the school and high expectations for students, outcomes also improve (Brault, Janosz, & Archambault, 2014). As such, the assessment of teacher and staff perceptions of school climate can inform the need for capacity building and policy changes to support student learning and development.

III. Scale Description and Instructions

A. Items

My school...

1. Sets clear expectations for students.
2. Is bully-free.
3. Has adopted a clear set of rules.
4. Has a positive climate.

B. Response Options

Response options for each item include the following:

- 1 = Almost Never
- 2 = Sometimes
- 3 = Half of the Time
- 4 = Frequently
- 5 = Almost Always
- * = Don't Know

C. Instructions for Respondents

These questions ask you about your experiences at school. Please mark how strongly you feel about each sentence.

D. Instructions for Scale Administrators

For complete instructions on how to administer the survey, reference the “Student Survey Directions” that are printed on the survey itself. Once each student has a survey, explain that the purpose of the survey is to learn more about their experiences at school. They should mark one answer per statement, selecting the choice that best reflects how they feel.

As students finish, look thoroughly through the surveys to make sure that they did not miss any items or questions. Please remember that students do NOT have to answer every question, but do encourage them to complete as much of the survey as possible. Remind students that their answers will help the school know how to best support them.

IV. Scoring Procedures

An average of the response scores from the 4 items should be calculated and used as an indicator of perceived school climate, with higher scores reflecting greater levels of positive perceptions of school climate.

V. Psychometric Properties of the Scale (Teachers/Staff)

A. Description of Sample

Participants used to explore the psychometric properties of the scale included 275 school staff members from various elementary schools (48.7%), middle schools/junior high schools (15.6%) and high schools (35.6%) in Ohio and Utah. The majority of participants indicated that their primary role at the school included teaching (73.1%), with the remainder reporting non-teaching roles (e.g., support staff, administration). The amount of experience working at the school ranged from 1-10 (62.2%) or 11-20 (21.8%) to over 20 years (10.9%). Staff members (71.3% female) almost all identified themselves as Caucasian (86.9%). The participants varied in age with 17.1% reporting they were under 30 years of age, 37.5% indicated they were 30-45, and 37.8% were older than 45 years.

Data on these staff members were collected as part of a needs assessment within each school's improvement planning process. Some data were collected using an online instrument, whereas others were collected via paper/pencil survey. School administrators informed teachers and school staff of the survey and distributed the surveys in a meeting or through mailboxes or provided the staff with a link to the online survey. All completed paper/pencil surveys were returned to a specified location in the building or to a person who was identified as the lead. All versions of the survey were anonymous. The final sample includes those with no missing data and no "Do Not Know" responses.

B. Basic Descriptive Statistics and Relevant Group Differences

Sample	Mean	SD	Range	α
Full Sample ($N=275$)	3.84	.99	1.00-5.00	.85
Gender				
Males ($n=61$)	3.93	.96	1.00-5.00	.84
Females ($n=196$)	3.80	1.02	1.00-5.00	.87
Age				
Less than 30 years ($n=47$)	3.89	.93	1.25-5.00	.84
30-45 years ($n=103$)	3.73	1.06	1.00-5.00	.88
Above 45 years ($n=104$)	3.91	.97	1.25-5.00	.84
Experience at the School				
1-10 years ($n=171$)	3.73	1.03	1.00-5.00	.86
11-20 years ($n=60$)	4.00	.95	1.00-5.00	.84
More than 20 years ($n=30$)	4.03	.94	1.75-5.00	.88
Primary Role as Staff Member				
Teaching ($n=201$)	3.84	.96	1.00-5.00	.84
Non-teaching ($n=74$)	3.83	1.06	1.00-5.00	.89
School-Type				
Elementary School ($n=134$)	3.58	1.10	1.00-5.00	.87
Middle School ($n=43$)	4.11	.83	1.50-5.00	.82
High School ($n=98$)	4.07	.78	1.25-5.00	.79

Note. Group specific data omits respondents who did not indicate their status. No groups were significantly different ($p<.05$), with the exception of school level. The effect sizes (η^2) for this comparison indicated that group membership accounted for 6.6% of the variance in the scores. All other effect sizes indicated that group membership accounted for less than 1% of the variance in the scores.

C. Relationship between scale scores and other Teacher/Staff Constructs

Construct ^a	<i>r</i> =
Student Academic Motivation	.51*
Student School Connectedness	.57*
Student Academic Press	.65*
Student Internalizing Behaviors	.32*
Student Well-Being	.46*
Student Externalizing Behaviors	.41*
Student Social Skills	.54*
Safety	.52*
Support for Students' Basic Needs	.34*
Family Support for Learning	.28*
Perceived Family History	.15*
Family Support for Prosocial Activities	.28*
Community Services and Supports	.30*
Community Supports for Positive Youth Development	.25*
Perceived Learning Supports	.52*
School Support for Pro-Social Activities	.44*
Staff Commitment	.83*
Student College and Career Readiness	.42*

Notes. ^a Average score on the respective subscale scores from the CAYCI surveys (Anderson-Butcher, Amorose, Iachini, & Ball, 2013). * relationship significant ($p < .05$)

D. Factorial Validity

A confirmatory factor analysis (CFA) was conducted using robust maximum likelihood estimation procedures in LISREL 9.2 (Scientific Software International, Inc., Chicago). The CFA model specified that the 4 items loaded on a single latent School Climate factor. The factor variance was freely estimated, as was the uniqueness for each item. No covariances between uniquenesses were modeled.

The overall fit of the model to the data was reasonably good based on commonly recommended cut off values for evaluating model fit (see Hu & Bentler, 1999), S-B $\chi^2 = 4.06$, $df = 2$, $p = .12$; RMSEA = .081 (90% CI = .000-.119), SRMR = .02; CFI = .99, IFI = .99. The table below presents the completely standardized factor loadings and uniquenesses for each item. Squared multiple correlations ranged from .47-.74.

Item	Loading	Uniqueness
Sets clear expectations for students.	.86	.26
Is bully-free.	.68	.53
Has adopted a clear set of rules.	.82	.33
Has a positive climate.	.72	.49

VI. Past and Future Scale Development

A previous version of the scale included the following additional items: (1) “Is physically safe,” (2) “Is psychologically safe,” (3) “Has a clear discipline policy,” (4) “Has a clear attendance policy,” and (5) “Embraces diversity.” Results from preliminary analyses indicated that these items did not fit well with the other scale items. Thus the current recommendation is to use the 4-item version of the measure as described in

this report. Future scale development work is needed to test the factor structure with a larger and more diverse sample, as well as testing for invariance in the factor structure across relevant groups and time.

VIII. Summary

Overall, the results of the psychometric testing indicate support for the reliability and validity of this scale. The use of this measure could provide valuable information about teacher and staff perceptions of the schools climate. More positive school climates have been shown to enhance students' overall performance (Green et al., 2012; Fortier, Vallerand, & Guay, 1995). Teacher/Staff perceptions in this area can provide insights that are valuable for improvement planning.

IX. References

- Brault, M.C., Janosz, M., & Archambault, I. (2014). Effects of school composition and school climate on teacher expectations of students: A multilevel analysis. *Teaching and Teacher Education, 44*, 148-159.
- Larson, A.S. (2014). How student-teacher relationships influence school climate: A literature review. Paper presented at the Texas Women's University Symposium, Texas.
- Thapa, A., Cohen, J., Guffey, S., & Higgins-D'Alessandro, A. (2013). A review of school climate research. *Review of Educational Research, 83*, 357-385.
- Vallerand, R. J., Pelletier, L. G., Blais, M. R., Briere, N. M., Senecal, C., & Vallieres, E. F. (1992). The academic motivation scale: A measure of intrinsic, extrinsic, and amotivation in education. *Educational and Psychological Measurement, 52*(4), 1003-1017.

X. Recommended Citation of Scale

When using the Perceived School Climate Scale for program evaluation or research purposes, we recommend using the following citation:

Anderson-Butcher, D., & Amorose, A. J. (2012). Community and Youth Collaborative Initiative School Experience Surveys: Perceptions of School Climate in Teachers & Staff. Columbus, OH: College of Social Work, The Ohio State University.

If this scale is used along with additional Community and Youth Collaborative Initiative School Experience Surveys, then the following citation would be appropriate to cover all scales:

Anderson-Butcher, D., & Amorose, A. J. (2012). Community and Youth Collaborative Initiative School Experience Surveys. Columbus, OH: College of Social Work, The Ohio State University.