Alliance for the
Study of School Climate
California State University, Los Angeles
www.calstatela.edu/schoolclimate

School Climate Assessment Instrument (SCAI)
Elementary Teacher Version

Directions: Rate each item below. For each item there are 3 descriptions. Select the rating that best describes the current state at your school as a whole - Level 3(high), 2 (middle) or 1 (low). If you feel that the practices at your school rates between two of the descriptions provided then select the middle level option. <u>Each item should receive only 1 rating/mark.</u>

1. Physical Appearance

Level – 3 (high)		*Level – 2 (middle)*		*Level – 1 (low)*
High	*high-middle*	*middle*	*middle-low*	*low*
1.a Welcoming to outsiders, the school projects its identity to visitors.		Some signage for visitors as they enter the building.		Little concern for the image of the school.
1.b School colors are easy to find and reflect a high level of school spirit.		School spirit and use of school colors is related mostly to sports.		Very little appearance of school colors and/or school spirit.
1.c Staff and students take ownership of physical appearance.		Staff regularly comments on school appearance, but students do not feel any sense of personal ownership.		The schools appearance is left solely to the janitorial staff.
1.d There is essentially no litter.		Litter cleaned at the end of day.		People have given up the battle over litter.
1.e Current student work is displayed to show pride and ownership by students.		Some student work is displayed.		Few and/or only top performances/products are displayed.
1.f Things work and/or get fixed immediately.		Things get fixed when someone complains enough.		Many essential fixtures, appliances and structural items remain broken.
1.g Staff and students have respect for custodians.		Most staff members are cordial with custodians.		Custodians are demeaned.
1.h Graffiti is rare because students feel some sense of ownership of the school.		Graffiti occurs occasionally, but is dealt with by the staff.		Graffiti occurs frequently and projects the hostility of students toward their school.

2. Faculty Relations

Level – 3 (high)	Level – 2 (middle)	Level – 1 (low)
High high-middle	**middle** middle-low	**low**

2.a ——O———————— O ——————— O ——————— O ——————— O ————

Faculty members commonly collaborate on matters of teaching.	Most faculty members are congenial to one another, and occasionally collaborate.	Typically faculty members view one another competitively.

2.b ——O———————— O ——————— O ——————— O ——————— O ————

Faculty members approach problems as a team/collective.	Faculty members attend to problems as related to their own interests.	Faculty members expect someone else to solve problems.

2.c ——O———————— O ——————— O ——————— O ——————— O ————

Faculty members use their planning time constructively and refrain from denigrating students in teacher areas.	Faculty members use time efficiently but commonly feel the need to discuss students' shortcomings.	Most of faculty members' free time is spent talking about students' shortcomings.

2.d ——O———————— O ——————— O ——————— O ——————— O ————

Faculty members are typically constructive when speaking of each other and/or administrators.	Faculty members wait for safe opportunities to share complaints about other teachers and/or administrators.	Faculty members commonly use unflattering names for other faculty and/or administration in private.

2.e ——O———————— O ——————— O ——————— O ——————— O ————

Faculty members feel a collective sense of dissatisfaction with status quo, and find ways to take action to improve.	Faculty members give sincere "lip service" to the idea of making things better.	Faculty members are content with the status quo and often resentful toward change-minded staff.

2.f ——O———————— O ——————— O ——————— O ——————— O ————

Faculty members exhibit high level of respect for one another.	Faculty members exhibit respect for a few of their prominent members.	Faculty members exhibit little respect for self or others.

2.g ——O———————— O ——————— O ——————— O ——————— O ————

Faculty meetings are attended by most all, and address relevant content.	Faculty meetings are an obligation that most attend, but are usually seen as a formality.	Faculty meetings are seen as a waste of time and avoided when possible.

2.h ——O———————— O ——————— O ——————— O ——————— O ————

Many teachers frequently go to school events.	There are few regular attendees at school events.	Faculty and staff do a minimum of investing in school-related matters.

2.i ——O———————— O ——————— O ——————— O ——————— O ————

Leadership roles are most likely performed by faculty members with other faculty expressing appreciation.	Leadership roles are accepted grudgingly by faculty.	Leadership is avoided, and those who do take leadership roles motives are questioned.

2.j ——O———————— O ——————— O ——————— O ——————— O ————

Teacher leadership is systematic and well-coordinated.	Teacher leadership develops in response to particular situations.	Teacher leadership exists informally or not at all.

2.k ——O———————— O ——————— O ——————— O ——————— O ————

Faculty members have the time and interest to commune with one another, and feel very little isolation.	Faculty members congregate in small cordial groups, yet commonly feel a sense isolation in their job.	Faculty members typically see no need to relate outside the walls of their classrooms.

3. Student Interactions

Level - 3		Level - 2		Level – 1
High	high-middle	middle	middle-low	low

3.a ----------O---------------------- O ------------------------ O ---------------------- O --------------------- O -------------------

Students feel like they are part of the school family.	Students like school and would rather come to school than not.	Students feel no sense of affiliation with the school.

3.b ------------O---------------------- O ------------------------ O ---------------------- O --------------------- O -------------------

Students of various cultures and sub-groups spent time and do things together, and all groups feel valued.	Students of various sub-groups avoid each other and some groups feel less valued.	Students of different cultures and sub-groups are hostile to one another.

3.c ------------O---------------------- O ------------------------ O ---------------------- O --------------------- O -------------------

Students readily accept the purpose of zero tolerance for "put-downs."	Students think put-downs are just part of their everyday language.	Put-downs lead to arguments and fights.

3.d ------------O---------------------- O ------------------------ O ---------------------- O --------------------- O -------------------

Many students attend school events.	A few regulars attend school events.	It is un-cool to attend school events.

3.e ------------O---------------------- O ------------------------ O ---------------------- O --------------------- O -------------------

"Popular" students feel an obligation to serve, not a sense of entitlement.	"Popular" students treat the other popular students well.	"Popular" students use their social capital to oppress those less popular.

3.f ------------O---------------------- O ------------------------ O ---------------------- O --------------------- O -------------------

All students feel safe at the school.	Most students feel safe generally, but accept minor acts of harassment from other students.	Many students do not feel safe from bullying, harassment or verbal abuse.

3.g ------------O---------------------- O ------------------------ O ---------------------- O --------------------- O -------------------

Leaders are easy to find due to the wide range of gifts that are validated and harnessed.	Leaders come from a small clique of students.	Students avoid leadership for fear of being labeled as "Teachers' Pets."

3.h ------------O---------------------- O ------------------------ O ---------------------- O --------------------- O -------------------

Athletes are positive role models and refrain from projecting entitlement.	A few athletes are given special treatment and feel a sense of entitlement.	Most athletes expect special treatment and feel entitled to be disrespectful of others.

3.i ------------O---------------------- O ------------------------ O ---------------------- O --------------------- O -------------------

Students expect that they will have a say in decisions that affect them.	Students seldom get a say in things, but don't do anything about it.	Most students assume that they have no rights.

4. Leadership/Decisions

Level - 3		Level - 2		Level – 1
High	high-middle	middle	middle-low	low

4.a --------O-------------------- O ---------------------- O ---------------------- O ---------------------- O --------------------

School has a sense of vision and a mission that is shared by all staff.	School has a set of policies, a written mission, but no cohesive vision.	School has policies that are used inconsistently.

4.b --------O-------------------- O ---------------------- O ---------------------- O ---------------------- O --------------------

Vision comes from the collective will of the school community.	Vision comes from leadership.	Vision is absent.

4.c --------O-------------------- O ---------------------- O ---------------------- O ---------------------- O --------------------

School's decisions are conspicuously grounded in the mission.	Policies and mission exist but are not meaningful toward staff action.	Mission may exist but is essentially ignored.

4.d --------O-------------------- O ---------------------- O ---------------------- O ---------------------- O --------------------

Vast majority of staff members feel valued and listened to.	Selected staff members feel occasionally recognized.	Administration is seen as playing favorites.

4.e --------O-------------------- O ---------------------- O ---------------------- O ---------------------- O --------------------

A sense of "shared values" is purposefully cultivated.	Most share a common value to do what is best for their students.	Guiding school values are absent or in constant conflict.

4.f --------O-------------------- O ---------------------- O ---------------------- O ---------------------- O --------------------

Staff understands and uses a clear system for selecting priority needs, and has a highly functional team for "shared decision-making."	There is some shared decision making but most real power is in a "loop" of insiders/decision-makers.	Decisions are made autocratically or accidentally.

4.g --------O-------------------- O ---------------------- O ---------------------- O ---------------------- O --------------------

Most of the faculty and staff have a high level of trust and respect in leadership.	Some faculty and staff members have respect for leadership.	Most faculty and staff members feel at odds with the leadership.

4.h --------O-------------------- O ---------------------- O ---------------------- O ---------------------- O --------------------

Leadership demonstrates a high level of accountability, and finds ways to "make it happen."	Leadership is highly political about how resources are allocated and often deflects responsibility.	Leadership seems disconnected to outcomes and find countless reasons why "it can't happen."

4.i --------O-------------------- O ---------------------- O ---------------------- O ---------------------- O --------------------

Leadership is in tune with students and community.	Leadership has selected sources of information about the community and students.	Leadership is isolated from the students and community.

4.j --------O-------------------- O ---------------------- O ---------------------- O ---------------------- O --------------------

Leadership is in tune with others' experience of the quality of school climate.	Leadership makes pro forma statements about wanting good school climate.	Leadership does not see school climate as a necessary interest.

5. Discipline Environment

	Level – 3		Level - 2		Level – 1
	High	**high-middle**	**middle**	**middle-low**	**low**

5.a ------------O----------------------- O ------------------- O ------------------- O ------------------- O --------------------

School-wide discipline policy is consistently applied.	School-wide discipline policy is used by some staff.	School-wide discipline policy exists in writing only.

5.b ------------O----------------------- O ------------------- O ------------------- O ------------------- O --------------------

It is evident from student behavior that there are clear expectations and consistency in the discipline policy.	In many classrooms there are clear expectations and most teachers are fair and unbiased.	Students have to determine what each teacher expects and behavioral interventions are defined by a high level of subjectivity.

5.c ------------O----------------------- O ------------------- O ------------------- O ------------------- O --------------------

Most teachers use effective discipline strategies that are defined by logical consequences and refrain from punishments or shaming.	Most teachers use some form of positive or assertive discipline but accept the notion that punishment and shaming are necessary with some students.	Most teachers accept the notion that the only thing the students in the school understand is punishment and/or personal challenges.

5.d ------------O----------------------- O ------------------- O ------------------- O ------------------- O --------------------

Classrooms are positive places, where the teacher maintains a positive disposition, and follows-through with consequences in a calm and non-personal manner.	Most teachers maintain a positive climate, but some days they just feel the need to complain about the class and/or get fed up with the "bad kids."	Classrooms are places where teachers get easily angered by students and there is a sense of antagonism between the class and the teacher.

5.e ------------O----------------------- O ------------------- O ------------------- O ------------------- O --------------------

An intention exists for a maximum use of student-generated ideas and input.	There is occasional use of student-generated ideas.	It is assumed that the teacher makes the rules and students should follow them.

5.f ------------O----------------------- O ------------------- O ------------------- O ------------------- O --------------------

Most consider teaching and discipline within the lens of basic student needs that must be met for a functional class.	Most have some sensitivity to student needs, but the primary goal of classroom management is control.	Most view all student misconduct as disobedience and/or the student's fault.

5.g ------------O----------------------- O ------------------- O ------------------- O ------------------- O --------------------

Teacher-student interactions could be typically described as supportive and respectful.	Teacher-student interactions could be typically described as fair but teacher-dominated.	Teacher-student interactions are mostly teacher-dominated and reactive.

5.h ------------O----------------------- O ------------------- O ------------------- O ------------------- O --------------------

When disciplining students, teachers typically focus on the problematic behavior, not the student as a person.	When disciplining students, teachers are typically assertive yet often reactive, and give an overall inconsistent message.	When disciplining students, teachers are typically personal and often antagonistic.

5.i ------------O----------------------- O ------------------- O ------------------- O ------------------- O --------------------

Management strategies consistently promote increased student self-direction over time.	Management strategies promote acceptable levels of classroom control over time, but are mostly teacher-centered.	Management strategies result in mixed results: some classes seem to improve over time, while others seem to decline.

5.j ------------O----------------------- O ------------------- O ------------------- O ------------------- O --------------------

Teachers successfully create a sense of community in their classes.	Teachers successfully create a functioning society in their classes.	Teachers create a competitive environment in their classes.

6. Learning/Assessment

	Level – 3		Level – 2		Level – 1
	High	**high-middle**	**middle**	**middle-low**	**low**

6.a ----------O----------------------- O ----------------------- O ----------------------- O ----------------------- O -------------------

Assessment targets are clear and attainable for all learners.	Most high-achieving students can find a way to meet the teacher's target.	Students see grades as relating to personal or random purposes.

6.b ----------O----------------------- O ----------------------- O ----------------------- O ----------------------- O -------------------

Instruction/Assessment promotes students' internal locus of control, and sense of responsibility.	Instruction/Assessment is most often focused on relevant learning, yet mostly rewards the high-achievers.	Instruction/Assessment is focused on bits of knowledge that can be explained and then tested.

6.c ----------O----------------------- O ----------------------- O ----------------------- O ----------------------- O -------------------

Student-controlled behavior (investment, process, effort, etc.) is rewarded and even assessed when possible.	Student-controlled behavior (investment, process, effort, etc.) is verbally rewarded.	Only quantifiable academic and athletic outcomes are rewarded.

6.d ----------O----------------------- O ----------------------- O ----------------------- O ----------------------- O -------------------

Teachers have some mode of making sense of, and being responsive to, varying learning styles.	Teachers are aware of learning styles as a concept, and make some attempt in that area.	Teachers expect all students to conform to their teaching style.

6.e ----------O----------------------- O ----------------------- O ----------------------- O ----------------------- O -------------------

Instruction is dynamic, involving, learner-centered, and challenging.	Instruction is mostly based on relevant ideas but often seems to be busy-work.	Instruction is mostly independent seatwork.

6.f ----------O----------------------- O ----------------------- O ----------------------- O ----------------------- O -------------------

Students learn to work cooperatively and as members of teams.	Some teachers buy into and incorporate cooperative learning..	Cooperative learning is rare as it is seen as leading to chaos and cheating.

6.g ----------O----------------------- O ----------------------- O ----------------------- O ----------------------- O -------------------

Students are given systematic opportunities to reflect on their learning progress.	Mostly advanced students are given opportunities to reflect on their learning in some classes.	Teaching is seen as providing maximum input, and little opportunity for reflection exists.

6.h ----------O----------------------- O ----------------------- O ----------------------- O ----------------------- O -------------------

Students are seen as the primary users of assessment information, and assessment is used for the purpose of informing the learning process.	Assessment is regular and systematic, but mostly used to make judgments related to student achievement level.	Assessment is seen as something that occurs at the end of assignments. Grades are used primarily for student-to-student comparison.

6.i ----------O----------------------- O ----------------------- O ----------------------- O ----------------------- O -------------------

Classroom dialogue is characterized by higher-order thinking (e.g., analysis, application, and synthesis).	Classroom dialogue is active and engaging but mostly related to obtaining right answers.	Classroom dialogue is infrequent and/or involves a small proportion of students.

6.j ----------O----------------------- O ----------------------- O ----------------------- O ----------------------- O -------------------

Students consistently feel as though they are learning subjects in-depth.	Students are engaged in quality content, but the focus is mostly on content coverage.	Students feel the content is only occasionally meaningful and rarely covered in-depth.

6.k ----------O----------------------- O ----------------------- O ----------------------- O ----------------------- O -------------------

Teachers promote the view that intelligence and ability are a function of each students' effort and application, and are not fixed. The major emphasis is placed on the process over the product.	Teachers promote the view that effort has a lot to do with how much students are able to accomplish. The major emphasis is placed on working to produce good products.	Teachers promote the view that intelligence and ability are fixed/innate traits and not all students have what it takes. The major emphasis is on the comparison of products/grades.

7. Attitude and Culture

	Level – 3		Level – 2		Level – 1
	High	high-middle	middle	middle-low	low

7.a

Level – 3	Level – 2	Level – 1
Most students feel as though they are part of a classroom family/ community.	Most students feel as though they are part of a functioning classroom society.	Many students feel as though they just putting in time.

7.b

Students self-correct peers who use destructive and/or abusive language.	Students seek adult assistance to stop blatant verbal abuse.	Students accept verbal abuse as a normal part of their day.

7.c

Students feel as though they are working toward collective goals.	Students feel as though they are working toward independent goals.	Students feel as though they are competing with other students for scarce resources.

7.d

Most students speak about the school in proud, positive terms.	Most students speak of the school in neutral or mixed terms.	Many students denigrate the school when they refer to it.

7.e

Most students feel listened to, represented, and that they have a voice in their classroom.	Most students see some evidence of student voice in their classroom.	Most students feel that they have very little voice in their classroom.

7.f

Most students feel a sense of belonging to something larger.	Most students see some evidence that efforts are made to promote school spirit.	Most students feel alone, alienated and/or part of a hostile environment.

7.g

Teachers share commonly high expectations for all students.	Most teachers have high expectations for students who show promise.	Often teachers openly express doubts about the potential of some students.

7.h

Most students feel like their school is the best around.	Most students think their school is pretty good.	Most students are envious of those at other schools.

7.i

Students feel welcome and comfortable in talking to adults and/or designated peer mediators.	Some students have a few staff that they target for advice.	Students assume adults do not have any interest in their problems, and mistrust the motives of peer mediators.

7.j

School maintains traditions that promote school pride and a sense of historical continuity.	School maintains traditions that some students are aware of but most see as irrelevant to their experience.	School has given up on maintaining traditions due to apathy.

8. Community Relations

	Level – 3		Level – 2		Level – 1
	High	high-middle	middle	middle-low	low

8.a----------O----------------------- O ----------------------- O ----------------------- O ----------------------- O --------------------

School is perceived as welcoming to all parents.	School is perceived as welcoming to certain parents.	School is suspicious of why parents would want to visit.

8.b----------O----------------------- O ----------------------- O ----------------------- O ----------------------- O --------------------

School sends out regular communication to community, including invitations to attend key events.	School sends out pro forma communication that may be plentiful but is not created with the consumers' needs in mind.	School sends out pro forma communication only.

8.c----------O----------------------- O ----------------------- O ----------------------- O ----------------------- O --------------------

Community members are regularly invited to speak or volunteer in classes.	Inconvenience leads to few community members speaking or volunteering in classes.	The vast majority of community members have not seen the inside of the school.

8.d----------O----------------------- O ----------------------- O ----------------------- O ----------------------- O --------------------

Service learning efforts are regular, promoting student learning and positive community-relations.	Service learning is performed, but very infrequently due to perceived inconvenience.	Service learning is seen as just a glorified field trip and therefore not worth the time or expense.

8.e----------O----------------------- O ----------------------- O ----------------------- O ----------------------- O --------------------

Parents and coaches all work for the best interest of student-athletes.	Parents support the coaches and teams if things are going well.	Parents feel free to challenge coaches, coaches mistrust parents.

8.f----------O----------------------- O ----------------------- O ----------------------- O ----------------------- O --------------------

Volunteer efforts are well coordinated, volunteers are plentiful, and conspicuously appreciated.	Volunteers are willing, but are often unaware of the events and/or feel a lack of guidance.	Volunteers are hard to find or unreliable.

8.g----------O----------------------- O ----------------------- O ----------------------- O ----------------------- O --------------------

School events are well attended due to deliberate efforts toward promotion.	School events are attended by a die-hard following.	School events are poorly attended.