SCHOOL CONDITIONS AND CLIMATE WORK GROUP RECOMMENDATION FRAMEWORK

October 2017

ABSTRACT

Based on California State Board of Education emphasis and direction, the Superintendent of Public Instruction and the California Department of Education convened the School Conditions and Climate Work Group to explore options for the further development of school conditions and climate measures and best practices within California's accountability and continuous improvement system. This report presents their recommendations for state measures and supports for Local Control Funding Formula Priority 6: School Climate and related school conditions priorities.

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1 EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

In pursuit of greater student equity, California's accountability and continuous improvement systems are evolving rapidly. In 2013, the adoption of the landmark Local Control Funding Formula (LCFF) accelerated this imperative, moving California towards the development of a system of support that advances continuous improvement at school, district, regional, and State-Levels. In 2015, the Superintendent of Public Instruction's (SPI) Blueprint 2.0 planning team described this journey as a "transformation of California's education accountability systems from the 'test and judge' methods of the past to the 'support and improve' approaches of the future that now have irreversible momentum."[1]

The initial design of the LCFF recognized the critical role that positive school conditions and climate play in advancing student performance and equity. This recognition is grounded in a solid research base demonstrating that a positive school climate directly impacts telling indicators of success such as increased teacher retention, lower dropout rates, decreased incidences of violence, and higher student achievement.[2] It would not be an exaggeration to say that the success of schools rests upon the creation and continuous improvement of positive school conditions and climates.

The adoption of the LCFF signaled the end of California's reliance on a single standardized test for accountability purposes. The ongoing implementation of the LCFF and the new California Standards now drives an accountability system that differs from the previous one in almost every respect. As a critical part of this implementation, the California Department of Education (CDE), schools, and local educational agencies (LEAs) are reconfiguring themselves as learning organizations committed to continuous improvement.

The design and rationale for California's move to a multiple measures accountability system involving both "state" and "local" indicators has been well-documented in numerous State Board of Education (SBE) and CDE reports.[3] To date, however, investment in California's new accountability system has emphasized state indicators, while state support for local indicators, such as Priority 6: School Climate, has been stagnant or non-existent.

Recognizing the critical need for further strides forward in these areas, the CDE convened the School Conditions and Climate Work Group (CCWG) to advise the SPI through the exploration of options for the further development of school conditions and climate measures and supports in California's accountability and continuous

[1] CDE, Blueprint 2.0 Planning Team (2015) *A Blueprint for Great Schools, Version 2.0,* http://www.cde.ca.gov/eo/in/bp/documents/yr15bp0720.pdf.

[2] National School Climate Center, https://new.schoolclimate.org/about/our-approach. See also Section 3 of this report, "What Does the Research Say about School Conditions and Climate?"

[3] See the Superintendent's Advisory Task Force on Accountability and Continuous Improvement Report: *Preparing All Students for College and Career, Life, and Leadership in the 21st Century,* at http://www.cde.ca.gov/ta/ac/ar/documents/account-report-2016.pdf

improvement system.[4] This report summarizes the primary recommendations developed by the CCWG and provides a policy framework for state action. It also leverages the tremendous opportunity now facing California to continue building an accountability and continuous improvement system that addresses the needs of the whole child.

Together, we have made tremendous progress, and, together, we can deliver on the promise of the LCFF to build positive school conditions and climates for each California student. The CCWG calls on state and local policy makers to address, adopt, and implement the recommendations contained in this report with urgency. Initial critical steps should include the state making available resources to support the provision of vetted tools to LEAs and the expansion of the Statewide System of Support [5] to build capacity that supports the implementation of the CCWG recommendations.

1.1 Recommendation Framework Purpose

As its primary purpose, this framework outlines key recommendations and actions the CCWG is proposing for SPI and CDE consideration regarding statewide implementation and improvement of the LCFF Priority 6: School Climate and related school conditions supports and measures. It begins with a discussion of why improving school conditions and climate is necessary and important; outlines the guiding questions the CCWG used to produce the recommendations; offers suggestions for an implementation timeline; and concludes with the CCWG's summary recommendations and rationale for each.

1.2 Key Questions and Considerations

Summary responses to the key questions guiding the work of the CCWG can be found in Section 5.4. These include:

- How do we define school conditions and climate?
- How do we ensure the validity and reliability of California's work in school conditions and climate?
- How should California best measure school conditions and climate?
- How should California best include the measurement of school conditions and climate in its accountability system?
- How should California best support continuous improvement in school conditions and climate?

[4] See June 2017 SBE Information Memorandum: Update on School Conditions and Climate Work Group at http://www.cde.ca.gov/be/pn/im/documents/memo-exec-ocd-jun17item01.doc
[5] See September 2017 SBE Agenda: Update on the Development of California's System of Support for LEAs and Schools at http://www.cde.ca.gov/be/ag/ag/yr17/documents/sep17item03.doc.

1.3 Current SBE-adopted Approach for LCFF Priority 6

The **current** SBE-adopted approach for the School Climate Local Indicator requires the following of LEAs:[6]

- Administer a school climate survey to students in at least one grade within the grade span(s) that the LEA serves (e.g. K-5, 6-8, 9-12) at least every other year;
- Survey administered must be valid and cover at least two constructs: (1) school safety, and (2) connectedness (such as the California Healthy Kids Survey);
- Publicly report results to its local governing board at a regularly scheduled meeting;
- Report results to stakeholders and the public through the California School Dashboard (Dashboard); and
- Assess their performance on a [Met / Not Met / Not Met for Two or More Years] scale.

1.4 High-level Summary of the CCWG Recommendations

The CCWG process began with SBE direction to explore the development and inclusion of further school conditions and climate measures into the LCFF Evaluation Rubrics.[7] To do this, the CDE, in partnership with the California Comprehensive Center (CA CC) at WestEd, convened a working group of experts to review the literature on school conditions and climate and other states' approaches to incorporating school conditions and climate measures in their accountability and improvement systems.

Based on their review of the literature, the approach of other states, the experience of California LEAs and networks, and ongoing input from stakeholders, the CCWG was charged with identifying and analyzing existing measures for school conditions and climate. They identified options for how California could proceed by using or adapting existing measures, or developing one or more new measures for use in California's accountability and continuous improvement system.

The CCWG identified tools, resources, and surveys that measure broader aspects of school climate, such as, parent engagement, conditions of learning, implementation of state academic standards, access to broad courses of study, and the coordination of

[6] See page 2 of the Local Performance Indicator Quick Reference Guide at http://www.cde.ca.gov/ta/ac/cm/documents/localindicatorsquickref.pdf for the full text of the adopted approach.
[7] See June 2016 SBE Information Memorandum: Process to Identify Options for School Climate Surveys and a Composite Measure of English Learner Proficiency for the Local, State and Federal Accountability and Continuous Improvement System, Attachment 1. http://www.cde.ca.gov/be/pn/im/documents/memo-dsib-amard-jun16item02.doc

services. Thus, the CCWG's review also informs accountability and continuous improvement activities relevant to LCFF Priorities 1, 2, 3, 7, 8, 9 and 10.[8]

An underlying principle guiding the work of the CCWG is the shared commitment to view school conditions and climate through three lenses: (1) equity; (2) validity; and (3) family engagement. In consultation with stakeholders, the CCWG generated a school conditions and climate definition and set of features to establish a common foundation for the CCWG's work. All of the CCWG's recommendations are based on this common definition, which states in part:

> *"School Conditions and Climate" refers to the character and quality of school life. This includes the values, expectations, interpersonal relationships, materials and resources, supports, physical environment, and practices that foster a welcoming, inclusive, and academically challenging environment. Positive school conditions and climate ensure people in the school community (students, staff, family, and community) feel socially, emotionally, and physically safe, supported, connected to the school, and engaged in learning and teaching.*[9]

In light of this, the CCWG has developed the following recommendations at both the state and LEA-Levels to support LEAs to measure and report their progress on school conditions and climate. These recommendations apply to all LEAs, schools, and student groups (e.g., race/ethnicity, socioeconomically disadvantaged, foster youth, English learners, homeless youth, and students with disabilities).

Please see Sections 6–7 for further critical detail regarding the summary CCWG recommendations provided below. This additional detail includes a description of: (1) suggested requirements, (2) the rationale for the requirement, and (3) additional considerations.

1.5 State-Level Recommendations

Recommendations for primary implementation at the State-Level include:

1. Utilize the definition and features created by the CCWG as the CDE's official definition of school conditions and climate.[10]

2. Establish a School Conditions and Climate Validity and Reliability Technical Design Group responsible for a) developing the criteria to vet school conditions climate surveys, and b) vetting the surveys that would appear on the CDE menu of state-vetted and state-supported survey tools.

[8] See January 2017 SBE Information Memorandum: Update on the School Conditions and Climate Work Group. http://www.cde.ca.gov/be/pn/im/documents/memo-exe-jan17item01.doc
[9] See sections 2.1–2.3 for the full text of the CCWG's definition, features, and lenses or Appendix A.
[10] See sections 2.1–2.3 for the full text of the CCWG's definition, features, and lenses or Appendix A.

3. The CDE should provide a menu of state-vetted and state-supported survey tools and instruments to LEAs. The menu should contain survey tools that cover four research-based school conditions and climate domains and related constructs: (1) Safety, (2) Relationships, (3) Conditions for Teaching and Learning, and (4) Empowerment.[11] [12] LEAs could also add additional constructs to understand specific local needs.

4. Include useful tools, resources, and supports about school conditions and climate within the developing Statewide System of Support to build the capacity of system actors such as county offices of education (COEs) and LEAs as they endeavor to improve school conditions and climate.[13]

1.6 LEA-Level Recommendations

Recommendations for primary implementation at the LEA-Level include:

1. LEAs should annually administer a school conditions and climate survey to students, parents/guardians, and school staff.[14] [15] The school conditions and climate survey should be administered to students in at least one grade-level within the grade spans K-5, 6-8, and 9-12.

2. LEAs should select surveys to administer that are valid and reliable through:

    a. Selection of a survey from the state-vetted and state-supported menu of survey tools; or

    b. Election to use a survey instrument that does not appear on the state-vetted and state-supported menu and an explanation in their Dashboard narrative summary regarding how the alternative survey covers the suggested domains and constructs and is designed to produce valid and reliable results consistent with the general criteria developed by the

[11] The term domain as utilized in this framework references the overall topic areas a school conditions and climate survey should measure. Within each domain, the framework specifies constructs, which represent important aspects of each domain. For example, constructs specified in the domain of relationships include connectedness, relationships, respect for diversity, and high expectations for students. See Appendix D for a description of the school conditions and climate constructs recommended by the CCWG.
[12] See Section 3 for a summary of research regarding school conditions and climate constructs.
[13] September 2017 SBE Meeting Agenda: Update on the Development of California's System of Support at http://www.cde.ca.gov/be/ag/ag/yr17/documents/sep17item03.doc.
[14] California *Education Code EC* Section 52060(d)(6)(C) states: Other local measures, including surveys of pupils, parents, and teachers on the sense of safety and school connectedness. (School staff in the recommendation refers to certificated and classified personnel.)
[15] Currently, LCFF Priority 6 is the only local indicator with an every other year administration requirement. All other local indicators measure progress annually.

School Conditions and Climate Validity and Reliability Technical Design Group.

3. Survey tools should measure, at a minimum, the same domains and constructs for all stakeholder groups that appear on the state-vetted menu of school conditions and climate survey tools.

4. LEAs should be strongly supported and encouraged to complement and deepen understanding of their school conditions and climate survey results to make meaning of the data and to translate that meaning into new or revised actions for improvement, by collecting additional information and reporting this information on the Dashboard.[16]

5. LEAs should report the results of their school conditions and climate tools on the Dashboard through a narrative summary. The report should include a URL to a district Web site that shows the school conditions and climate survey results, disaggregated by student groups, with a minimum n-size, for each school site.

    a. The CCWG suggests the following guiding questions to help frame the narrative summary shared in a Dashboard textbox for consistency in responses across LEAs throughout California for continuous improvement purposes:

        i. Reflect on the key learnings from your results, and share what you learned.

        ii. What do the disaggregated results of your survey and other data collection methods reveal about your schools?

        iii. What revisions, decisions, or new actions will you implement in response to the results for continuous improvement purposes? Why?

2 THE IMPORTANCE OF SCHOOL CONDITIONS AND CLIMATE: TOWARDS A WORKING DEFINITION FOR CALIFORNIA

The CCWG's work has been undertaken to further the mission the SPI has articulated for the CDE:

> *California will provide a world-class education for all students, from early childhood to adulthood. The Department of Education serves our state by innovating and collaborating with educators, schools, parents, and*

[16] Suggested methods for collecting additional information include interviews or focus groups.

community partners. Together, as a team, we prepare students to live, work, and thrive in a multicultural, multilingual, and highly connected world.

As a state, we seek to ready our children and youth for successful participation in college, career, and civic life. Research suggests that positive aspects of school conditions and climate must be established and grown at school sites as baseline supports for student and educator success.[17]

Creating positive school conditions and climates ensures that all students attend schools where they feel cared for, valued, safe, connected, and have access to proper facilities and resources. It also allows parents and families to feel welcome and appreciated, and have a voice and agency as they support their student's education. Additionally, when school staff work in supportive, collegial environments, and are provided with necessary tools and resources, they are better equipped to both promote and assist in the creation of a healthy environment.

"A positive school climate means having an environment where everyone is comfortable whether it is a teacher or a student."
– 11th Grade Upward Bound Student

Ultimately, establishing positive school conditions and climate is a collective responsibility that, when undertaken, has been proven to increase student academic achievement for all student groups, improve student and staff morale, and contribute to both teacher retention and teacher feelings of effectiveness.[18] Understanding how to build these types of school conditions and climates hinges on district and school administrators and key stakeholders having access to timely information to assess their schools' conditions and climate to make evidence-based decisions to guide planning and improvement activities.

During focus groups conducted for the CCWG, students articulated that positive relationships should exist at all levels—students, teachers, parents, and administrators. They also expressed a desire for classrooms and facilities to be in good repair. Having good policies related to bullying intended to help them feel safe and connected was also a consistent theme. Schools should have "a family feeling."[19]

School climate dimensions such as safety and connectedness are vital predictors of student success. Examining systematic differences in students', staff, and families' experiences of school climate is crucial for creating a more equitable schooling experience for all students.[20] Survey results may suggest that perceptions of school

[17] See Appendix F: Summary Annotated School Conditions and Climate Research and Resources Bibliography.
[18] Klem, A. M., & Connell, J. P. (2004). Relationships Matter: Linking Teacher Support to Student Engagement and Achievement. Journal of School Health, 74(7), 262–273.
[19] See the July 20, 2017 CCWG Student Group Engagement Session Findings at the WestEd LCFF Chanel located at https://lcff.wested.org/wp-content/uploads/2017/09/UBStudentFocusGroup-August2017.pdf.
[20] American Institutes for Research (AIR) Memo on School Climate Measurement Recommendations, unpublished (2017).

conditions and climate differ by student group. Disaggregating school climate data by the groups that exist within school districts helps to uncover these differences, allowing educators and administrators to more effectively allocate resources and target supports in ways that create positive school experiences and close achievement gaps for each student.

An underlying principle guiding the work of the CCWG is the shared commitment to view school conditions and climate through three lenses: (1) equity, (2) validity, and (3) family engagement. The definition and features of school conditions and climate presented below and in Appendix A, generated in consultation with stakeholders, were created to establish a common foundation for the CCWG's work. They are used as the basis for the CCWG's recommendations, presented later in this report.

2.1 Definition

The CCWG recommends use of the following definition:

> *"School Conditions and Climate" refers to the character and quality of school life. This includes the values, expectations, interpersonal relationships, materials and resources, supports, physical environment, and practices that foster a welcoming, inclusive, and academically challenging environment. Positive school conditions and climate ensure people in the school community (students, staff, family, and community) feel socially, emotionally, and physically safe, supported, connected to the school, and engaged in learning and teaching.*

2.2 Features

Features that promote a positive school conditions and climate and affect the attitudes, behaviors, and performance of both students and staff include, but are not limited to:

- An intentional student-centric commitment to meeting the basic cognitive, social, emotional, and physical health needs of youth and fostering the competencies and mindsets that contribute to success in school, career, and life;

- Caring, trusting, respectful relationships among and between students, staff, parents, and families;

- High expectations for academic achievement and behavior and the social-emotional and pedagogical supports students need to meet those expectations;

- The presence of meaningful stakeholder participation that fosters a sense of contribution, empowerment, and ownership;

- A sense of order and safety grounded in clearly communicated rules and expectations, and fair and equitable discipline; and

- Well-maintained resources and facilities.

2.3 Lenses

The CCWG recommends that the following three lenses be used in conjunction with the definition and features described above:

2.3.1 Equity

The landscape of California schools includes a rich diversity of students with diverse needs that should be embraced to support community collaboration in a welcoming and responsive way. The CCWG's intentional equity frame is intended to drive action aimed at increasing equity utilizing multiple layers of data disaggregation, including state, LEA, school, and student group levels.

2.3.2 Validity

When considering what we measure, how we measure it, and how to interpret scores, we must work to ensure stakeholder understanding of the evidence to support particular uses of data. This includes helping data users to understand trade-offs better when making choices about instruments related to issues with validity, reliability, fairness, and bias.

2.3.3 Family Engagement

Research shows that parent engagement improves academic achievement and school connectedness. It is essential to capture and reflect a diverse set of parent voices in the recommendation. To that end, the CDE has linked existing and ongoing work supporting Family Engagement and LCFF Priority 3 (Parent Engagement) to the CCWG with the convening of the Ad Hoc Family Engagement Work Group.

3 WHAT DOES THE RESEARCH SAY ABOUT SCHOOL CONDITIONS AND CLIMATE?

The CDE and CCWG reviewed multiple resources including research, articles, assessment guides, and other items related to school conditions and climate to help guide the direction of their work. These resources, along with the expertise of the CCWG members, facilitated the development of the working definition, features, and other lenses that the CCWG would eventually use to help craft its guiding questions and recommendations. The CCWG's definition of school conditions and climate is consistent with other common definitions of school climate. For example, the National School Climate Council defined school climate as "…the quality and character of school life. It is based on patterns of school life experiences and reflects norms, goals, values,

interpersonal relationships, teaching, learning and leadership practices, and organizational structures."[21]

This section summarizes the research base on school conditions and climate, with these takeaways:

1. The science of learning and development demonstrates that safe, supportive environments, centered on strong relationships, are critical conditions for children's learning and development.

2. Studies show that school conditions and climate are linked to students' academic achievement and social and emotional development, particularly for students experiencing adversity. Positive school conditions and climate are also correlated with teacher retention.

3. There is a strong research base related to many individual aspects of school conditions and climate in addition to safety and connectedness, including relationships, engagement, facilities and resources, access to supports for social and emotional learning and physical health, parent involvement, teacher collaboration and professional development, working conditions, and leadership.

The full list of reviewed research and resources can be found in Appendix F.

3.1 The Role of Environment in Children's Development

Children's relationships with their parents and teachers are formative. While parenting literature shows that relationships that are warm, supportive, and offer appropriate limit-setting are associated with academic and social competence in children, once children enter the school setting, their relationship with teachers and the climate of the school and classroom become influential in shaping student's academic and social development. Children who have negative relationships with their teachers have higher levels of behavior problems and are less engaged in the classroom, and at increased risk for poor academic performance.[22] On the other hand, positive teacher-child relationships are associated with student engagement and play a role in children's ability to acquire skills necessary for school success.[23] [24]

[21] See the full text of the National School Climate Council definition at http://new.schoolclimate.org/about/our-approach.
[22] Ladd, G. W., & Burgess, K. B. (2001). Do relational risks and protective factors moderate the linkages between childhood aggression and early psychological and school adjustment? *Child development*: *72*(5), 1579-1601.
[23] Pianta, R. C., & Stuhlman, M. W. (2004). Teacher-child relationships and children's success in the first years of school. School psychology review, 33(3), 444.
[24] Roorda, D. L., Koomen, H. M., Spilt, J. L., & Oort, F. J. (2011). The influence of affective teacher–student relationships on students' school engagement and achievement: A meta-analytic approach. *Review of educational research*, *81*(4), 493-529.

Teachers can positively influence students' social and academic formation through fostering a classroom environment that promotes belonging and safety, stimulating motivation and learning, and helping children regulate around the development of emotional, behavioral, and academic skills.[25] A forthcoming set of papers synthesizing research on children's learning and development underscores the importance of relationships with parents and educators and how experiences at school play a central role in unlocking the full potential of each child.[26] [27]A recently released report from the National Commission for Social, Emotional, and Academic Development highlights the evidence base for healthy social and emotional development as crucial skills for the classroom and beyond.[28]

To develop the skills necessary to be successful in their pursuit of personal and group goals, students need to participate in environments that afford them the opportunities to practice, apply, and reinforce those skills.[29] When students learn in a positive school environment, it is due in large part to entering a space in which they feel connected, engaged, supported, and safe.[30]

Furthermore, teaching and learning doesn't occur in a vacuum. Research shows school conditions in the form of safe and clean school campuses and facilities are important to student learning, along with access to critical supports and resources.[31] Access to most current standards-aligned curriculum, instructional materials, technology, classroom and office supplies, and smaller classes for students and staff are all supports contributing to student achievement and can help reduce teacher attrition.[32] [33]

In addition, research finds specialized staff in the form of school counselors, and other student support services such as school psychologists, school social workers, and school nurses, are also important resources that correlate to positive effects in classroom and school environment; student academic learning; behavior and discipline;

[25] Steele, D. M., & Cohn-Vargas, B. (2013). *Identity Safe Classrooms: Places to Belong and Learn*. Corwin Press.
[26] Osher, D., Cantor, P., Berg, J., Steyer, L., Rose, T. "Malleability, plasticity, and individuality: How children learn and develop in context." Applied Developmental Science. Forthcoming.
[27] Osher, D., Cantor, P., Berg, J., Steyer, L., Rose, T. "Drivers of human development: How relationships and context shape learning and development." Applied Developmental Science. Forthcoming.
[28] Jones, S.M. & Kahn, J. (2017). The evidence base for how we learn – Supporting students' social, emotional, and academic development. Consensus statements of evidence from the Council of Distinguished Scientists. The Aspen Institute National Commission.
[29] Hawkins, J. D., Smith, B. H., & Catalano, R. F. (2004). Social development and social and emotional learning. In J. E. Zins, R. P. Weissberg, M. C. Wang, & H. J. Walberg (Eds.), *Building Academic Success on Social and Emotional Learning: What Does the Research Say?* (pp. 135–150). New York, NY: Teachers College Press.; Nagaoka, J., Farrington, C. A., Ehrlich, S. B., Heath, R. D., Johnson, D. W., Dickson, S., … Hayes, K. (2015). *Foundations for Young Adult Success: A Developmental Framework.* Chicago, IL: The University of Chicago, Consortium on Chicago School Research.
[30] (Osher, D., Dwyer, K., & Jackson, S. (2004). *Safe, supportive, and successful schools step by step.* Longmont, CO: Sopris West.)
[31] Uline, C. & Tschannen-Moran, M. (2008). The walls speak: the interplay of quality facilities, school climate, and student achievement. *Journal of Educational Administration, 46*(1), 55-73.
[32] Greenwald, R.. Hedges, L., & Laine, R. (2016). The effect of school resources on student achievement. *Review of Educational Research, 66*(3), 361-396.
[33] Ladd, H. F. (2011). Teachers' perceptions of their working conditions: how predictive of planned and actual teacher movement? *Educational Evaluation and Policy Analysis*, *33*(2), 235-261.

career development; and emotional, social, and physical well-being.[34] The services of specialized staff and the programs they offer help students resolve emotional, social, or behavioral problems and develop a clearer focus or sense of direction, all of which contribute to positive school climate environments.[35] In the following section, we review selected literature that demonstrates the connection between school conditions and climate and a variety of student outcomes.

3.2 Connection Between School Climate and Student Outcomes

Research has demonstrated that classroom and school climate can directly impact student achievement and social and emotional competencies, and it can indirectly influence the physical and mental well-being of students.[36] In their review of the school climate literature, Thapa, Cohen, Guffey, and Higgins-D'Alessandro identified multiple student outcomes that were related with a positive school climate. For example, the research suggests that a positive school climate is associated with positive mental health, a positive self-concept, self-esteem, psychological well-being, greater attendance, and a reduction in suspensions. Furthermore, Thapa et al. found that a positive school climate mitigated the negative effects of self-criticism and correlated with a reduction in substance abuse and psychiatric problems. In an additional review of school climate literature, Thapa et al. found that there is a relationship between school climate improvement efforts and violence reduction and bullying prevention efforts.[37]

Multiple research studies have also linked school climate with academic achievement.[38] [39] [40] For example, MacNeil, Prater, and Busch found that multiple dimensions of school climate suggest that students have higher achievement on standardized tests when learning in schools with more positive school climates.[41] In Berkowitz and colleagues' review of school climate literature, the authors discussed how a positive school climate helped mitigate the negative effects of coming from a low socioeconomic background, helping reduce the achievement gap between high- and low-performing students, while

[34] Allensworth, D. & Kolbe L. (1987). The comprehensive school health program: exploring and expanded concept. *Journal of School Health, 57*(10), 409-412.
[35] Whiston, S. C. & Quinby, R. F. (2009). Review of school counseling outcome research. *Psychology in Schools*, *46*: 267–272.
[36] Hammond, Z. (2014). *Culturally responsive teaching and the brain: promoting authentic engagement and rigor among culturally and linguistically diverse students*. Thousand Oaks, CA: Corwin.; Hamre, B. K., & Pianta, R. C. (2001). Early teacher–child relationships and the trajectory of children's school outcomes through eighth grade. *Child Development, 72*(2), 625–638.
[37] Thapa, A., Cohen, J., Guffey, S., & Higgins-D'Alessandro, A. (2013). A review of school climate research. Review of Educational Research, 83(3), 357–385.
[38] Berkowitz, R., Moore, H., Astor, R. A., & Benbenishty, R. (2016). A research synthesis of the associations between socioeconomic background, inequality, school climate, and academic achievement. Review of Educational Research, 87(2), 425–469.
[39] Thapa, A. (2013). *School climate research.* New York, NY: National School Climate Center. Retrieved from https://k12engagement.unl.edu/REVIEW%20OF%20EDUCATIONAL%20RESEARCH-2013-Thapa-357-85.pdf.
[40] Thapa, A., Cohen, J., Guffey, S., & Higgins-D'Alessandro, A. (2013). A review of school climate research. *Review of Educational Research, 83*(3), 357–385.
[41] MacNeil, A. J., Prater, D. L., & Busch, S. (2009). The effect of school culture and climate on student achievement. *International Journal of Leadership in Education, 12*, 73–84.

at the same time noting that more experimental research is needed to determine causal claims between academic achievement and school climate.[42]

3.3 Students Who Face Adversity

Recent research has also demonstrated that a positive school climate may mitigate some of the effects of students who experience adversity, including students who are low-income or foster youth, marginalized racial groups, and lesbian, gay, and bisexual.[43] [44] Adversity has the potential to affect students' memories, language abilities, self-regulation, interactions with others, and overall concentration.[45] Students who experience adversity, then, are more likely to disengage from school and form meaningful relationships with supportive adults and peers.[46]

Research has demonstrated that multiple personal, social, and environmental factors support student resilience in the face of adversity.[47] For example, when students feel as though they have a supportive adult at home or school, they are more likely to overcome adversity.[48] It is thus important for students who face adversity to come into schools that are safe, free from chaos, and where they have meaningful relationships with a supportive adult, all key components of school conditions and climate.

3.4 Varying Experiences of School Conditions and Climate by Student Group

3.4.1 Race and Ethnicity

It is well documented that students of different racial and ethnic groups have often starkly different perceptions of school climate than their peers. In their review of the research, Thapa et al. note that Hispanic and African-American students tend to report more negative school experiences than white and Asian

[42] Berkowitz, R., Moore, H., Astor, R. A., & Benbenishty, R. (2017). A research synthesis of the associations between socioeconomic background, inequality, school climate, and academic achievement. *Review of Educational Research, 87*(2), 425–469. doi:0034654316669821.
[43] Osher, D., & Chasin, G. (in press). An ecological approach to community collaboration in support of postsecondary attainment and success. In J. F. Zaff, E. Pufall Jones, A. E. Donlan, & S. A. Anderson (Eds.), *Optimizing child and youth development through comprehensive community initiatives*. New York, NY: Psychology Press.
[44] Espelage, D. L., Aragon, S. R., Birkett, M., & Koenig, B. W. (2008). Homophobic teasing, psychological outcomes, and sexual orientation among high school students: What influence do parents and schools have? *School psychology review, 37*(2), 202
[45] American Institutes for Research. (2016). *The robert wood johnson foundation and american institutes for research white paper: The intersection of school climate and social and emotional learning*. Unpublished draft. Washington, DC: Author.
[46] Cole, S. F., Eisner, A., Gregory, M., & Ristuccia, J. (2013). *Helping traumatized children learn: creating and advocating for trauma-sensitive schools.* Boston, MA: Massachusetts Advocates for Children Trauma and Learning Policy Initiative.
[47] American Institutes for Research. (2016). *The robert wood johnson foundation and american institutes for research white paper: the intersection of school climate and social and emotional learning*. Unpublished draft. Washington, DC: Author.
[48] Osher, D., & Chasin, G. (in press). An ecological approach to community collaboration in support of postsecondary attainment and success. In J. F. Zaff, E. Pufall Jones, A. E. Donlan, & S. A. Anderson (Eds.), *Optimizing child and youth development through comprehensive community initiatives*. New York, NY: Psychology Press.

students.[49] Research on school climate survey data shows that there is significant variation in how students of different racial-ethnic groups rate their school's culture, even within the same school. Specifically, large gaps exist between African-American students' perception of their school's climate and other student groups in the same school, "indicating these students feel less supported, less connected, have less understanding of discipline and norms, and feel less safe compared to other students in the same schools."[50] Researchers propose that these gaps might be due to different treatment and experience in school as well as different out-of-school experiences.[51]

3.4.2 Students with Disabiltites

A positive, safe, and supportive school climate is important for students with disabilities who are at greater risk than typical students for a range of social, emotional, and behavioral difficulties and negative outcomes.[52] Students with disabilities are likely to perceive school climate differently than their peers. For example, students with disabilities perceive fewer supportive relationships, are less satisfied with their teachers, and perceive school as more dangerous than students without disabilities.[53] They also experience disproportionate disciplinary rates. For example, findings from the National Longitudinal Study 2012 indicate that, compared with students without disabilities, students with disabilities are suspended, expelled, and arrested at higher rates; are less likely to report being happy at school; and are more likely to report being bullied.[54]

[49] Thapa, A., Cohen, J., Guffey, S., & Higgins-D'Alessandro, A. (2013). A review of school climate research. Review of Educational Research, 83(3), 357–385.
[50] Hough, H. J., Kalogrides, D., & Loeb, S. (2017). Using surveys of students' social-emotional learning and school climate for accountability and continuous improvement. Stanford, CA: Policy Analysis for California Education. http://edpolicyinca.org/sites/default/files/SEL-CC_report.pdf.
[51] See literature reviewed in Hough, H. J. et al. (2017). Using surveys of students' social-emotional learning and school climate for accountability and continuous improvement. Stanford, CA: Policy Analysis for California Education. http://edpolicyinca.org/sites/default/files/SEL-CC_report.pdf.
[52] Blackorby, J., & Wagner, M. (1996). Longitudinal postschool outcomes of youth with disabilities: Findings from the National Longitudinal Transition Study. *Exceptional Children, 62*(5), 399–413.; Lipscomb, S., Haimson, J., Liu, A. Y., Burghardt, J., Johnson, D. R., & Thurlow, M. L. (2017). *Preparing for life after high school: the characteristics and experiences of youth in special education. Findings from the National Longitudinal Transition Study 2012. Volume 1: Comparisons with other youth: Full report* (NCEE 2017-4016). Washington, DC: U.S. Department of Education, Institute of Education Sciences, National Center for Education Evaluation and Regional Assistance.
[53] De Boer, A.A., Pijl, S. J., Post, W., & Minnaert, A. (2013). Peer acceptance and friendships of students with disabilities in general education: the role of child, peer, and classroom variables. *Social Development*, *22*(4), 831–844; Kasari, C., Locke, J., Gulsrud, A., & Rotheram-Fuller, E. (2011). Social networks and friendships at school: comparing children with and without ASD. *Journal of Autism and Developmental Disorders*, *41*(5), 533–544.; Murray, C., & Greenberg, M. T. (2001). Relationships with teachers and bonds with school: Social emotional adjustment correlates for children with and without disabilities. *Psychology in the Schools, 38*(1), 25–41.
[54] Lipscomb, S., Haimson, J., Liu, A. Y., Burghardt, J., Johnson, D. R., & Thurlow, M. L. (2017). *Preparing for life after high school: the characteristics and experiences of youth in special education. Findings from the national longitudinal transition study 2012. Volume 1: Comparisons with other youth: Full report* (NCEE 2017-4016). Washington, DC: U.S. Department of Education, Institute of Education Sciences, National Center for Education Evaluation and Regional Assistance.

Higgins-D'Alessandro and Sakwarawich found that students with special needs benefitted from a positive school climate when they felt included and respected by their peers.[55] Positive student-teacher relationships are also associated with higher levels of social-emotional adjustment among students with learning disabilities, emotional and behavioral disabilities, and mild intellectual disabilities.[56] This evidence suggests that the quality of relationships between teachers and students with disabilities, as well as a motivating curriculum and support to increase student participation, are important parts of assessing and improving school conditions and climate.

3.5 School Conditions and Climate and Teacher Outcomes

School conditions and climate also influence teacher outcomes. For example, in a recent study, Kraft and Papay found that a positive working environment helped explain why some teachers improve during a three-year period of time compared with teachers working in less positive environments.[57] Grayson and Alvarez found that teacher perceptions of school climate (i.e., parent and community relations, administration, and student behavioral values) predicted teacher burnout.[58] Similarly, Collie, Shapka, and Perry found that teacher perceptions of school climate (i.e., teacher perceptions of student motivation and student behavior) predicted teacher stress, teacher efficacy, and teacher job satisfaction.[59] Research has demonstrated that teacher perceptions of their own working conditions relate to teacher retention, student achievement, and teacher effectiveness.[60] Reducing teacher turnover and increasing teacher attrition is important because it maintains instructional cohesion in a school; in addition, replacing teachers can be costly.[61]

[55] Higgins-D'Alessandro, A., & Sakwarawich, A. (2011, October). *Congruency and determinants of teacher and student views of school culture*. Paper presented at the Association for Moral Education annual conference, Nanjing, China.
[56] Al-Yagon, M., & Mikulincer, M. (2004). Patterns of close relationships and socioemotional and academic adjustment among school-age children with learning disabilities. *Learning Disabilities Research & Practice, 19*(1), 12–19.; Murray, C., & Greenberg, M. T. (2001). Relationships with teachers and bonds with school: social emotional adjustment correlates for children with and without disabilities. *Psychology in the Schools, 38*(1), 25–41.
[57] Grayson, J. L., & Alvarez, H. K. (2008). School climate factors relating to burnout: A mediator model. *Teaching and Teacher Education, 24*, 1349–1363.
[58] Collie, R. J., Shapka, J. D., & Perry, N. E. (2012). School climate and social-emotional learning: predicting teacher stress, job satisfaction, and teaching efficacy. *Journal of Educational Psychology, 104,* 1189–1204.
[59] Collie, R. J., Shapka, J. D., & Perry, N. E. (2012). School climate and social-emotional learning: predicting teacher stress, job satisfaction, and teaching efficacy. *Journal of Educational Psychology, 104,* 1189–1204.
[60] Boyd, D., Grossman, P., Ing, M., Lankford, H., Loeb, S., & Wyckoff, J. (2011). The influence of school administrators on teacher retention decisions. *American Educational Research Journal, 48,* 303–333.
[61] Carver-Thomas, D. & Darling-Hammond, L. (2017). Teacher turnover: why it matters and what we can do about it. Palo Alto, CA: Learning Policy Institute.

3.6 School Conditions and Climate Domains and Constructs[62]

Because school conditions and climate is a complex concept, almost all school climate frameworks—even with differing definitions of school climate—recognize that school climate is multidimensional. While aspects of school conditions and climate are not defined consistently across frameworks, a consensus is emerging around some of the essential constructs.[63] [64] California included two essential constructs of school climate that are consistently defined within the literature: sense of safety and school connectedness within the LCFF. The CCWG reviewed the literature on several additional research-based constructs of school conditions and climate, including relationships between and among students and school staff and families, engagement, facilities and resources, access to supports for social and emotional learning, family involvement, teacher collaboration, and leadership. The research related to each of these constructs, grouped within its corresponding domain, is presented below.

3.6.1 Domain: Relationships

3.6.1.1 Relationships

Relationships between students and teachers and among students are critical ingredients to student success in school and to their social, emotional, and academic development. Positive relationships afford students opportunities to feel connected to school, become more engaged in classroom efforts, and obtain higher grade point averages.[65] Positive student-teacher relationships are particularly important for students who are at risk. For example, Decker, Dona, and Christenson found that students who were identified as having behavioral problems became more engaged in school and had better outcomes when teachers reported more positive student-teacher relationships.[66]

Furthermore, student-teacher relationships in one year can influence the ways in which students engage in school in consecutive years. For example, Hamre and Pianta found that if a kindergarten student had a negative

[62] The term domain as utilized in this framework references the overall topic areas a school conditions and climate survey should measure. Within each domain, the framework specifies constructs, which represent important aspects of each domain. For example, constructs specified in the domain of relationships include connectedness, relationships, respect for diversity, and high expectations for students. See Appendix D for a description of the school conditions and climate constructs recommended by the CCWG.

[63] Garibaldi, M., Ruddy, S., Kendziora, K., & Osher, D. (2015). Assessment of climate and conditions for learning. In J. A. Durlak, C. E. Domitrovich, R. P. Weissberg, & T. P. Gullotta (Eds.), *Handbook of Social and Emotional Learning: Research and Practice* (pp. 348–360). New York City: Guilford Press.

[64] Thapa, A., Cohen, J., Guffey, S., & Higgins-D'Alessandro, A. (2013). A review of school climate research. *Review of Educational Research*, *83*(3), 357–385.

[65] Klem, A. M., & Connell, J. P. (2004). Relationships matter: Linking teacher support to student engagement and achievement. *Journal of School Health, 74*(7), 262–273.; Thapa, A., Cohen, J., Guffey, S., & Higgins-D'Alessandro, A. (2013). A review of school climate research. *Review of Educational Research, 83*(3), 357–385.

[66] Decker, D. M., Dona, D. P., & Christenson, S. L. (2006). Behaviorally at-risk African American students: the importance of student-teacher relationships for student outcomes. *Journal of School Psychology, 45,* 83–109.

student-teacher relationship, then the student was more likely to have academic and behavioral problems in higher grades.[67] Developing positive relationships with students is a delicate balance, as students need to feel supported and that the teacher cares for them, and trusts them to make autonomous decisions within the classrooms.[68]

Trust among students, staff, families, and community members is also an important ingredient in school functioning. Schools with strong relationships and trust among students, staff, families, and community members are most likely to improve academically.[69] According to Bryk, "some of the most powerful relationships found in our data are associated with relational trust and how it operates as both a lubricant for organizational change and a moral resource for sustaining the hard work of local school improvement. Absent such trust, schools find it nearly impossible to strengthen parent-community ties, build professional capacity, and enable a student-centered learning climate." [70]

3.6.1.2 Respect for Diversity

Respect among students, staff, families, and community members is also an important ingredient in school functioning. Dixon asserts that families are more likely to engage and interact with schools that foster respect by creating school environments that are safe and welcoming for them, particularly for families of color and for English language learners; suggestions for creating a welcoming environment include making phone calls, sending e-mails, holding learning events, and incorporating parent and family voice into policies and practices.[71] Parent and family engagement in school is critical for student success and has been found to be related to academic achievement for all student groups.[72]

3.6.1.3 High-expectations for students

The extent to which students are held to high expectations and receive consistent messages that they will do their best work in school, that they can

[67] Hamre, B. K., & Pianta, R. C. (2001). Early teacher–child relationships and the trajectory of children's school outcomes through eighth grade. *Child Development, 72*(2), 625–638.
[68] Klem, A. M., & Connell, J. P. (2004). Relationships matter: Linking teacher support to student engagement and achievement. *Journal of School Health, 74*(7), 262–273.
[69] Bryk, A. S., & Schneider, B. L. (2002). Trust in schools: A core resource for improvement. New York, NY: Russell Sage Foundation Publications.
[70] Bryk, A. S., Sebring, P. B., Allensworth, E., Luppescu, S., & Easton, J. Q. (2010). Organizing schools for improvement: lessons from Chicago. Chicago, IL: University of Chicago Press.
[71] Dixon, S. R. (2008). A study of parental involvement and school climate: perspectives from a middle school (Doctoral dissertation, Texas A&M University, College Station, TX). Retrieved from http://oaktrust.library.tamu.edu/bitstream/handle/1969.1/ETD-TAMU-3070/DIXON-DISSERTATION.pdf
[72] Jeynes, W. H. (2007). The relationship between parental involvement and urban secondary school academic achievement: A meta-analysis. Urban Education, 4, 82–110.

be a success, and that they do what is right are important to student success. Students' perceptions of others' expectations and their own ability affect their motivation and engagement in class.[73] [74] One large-scale study suggests that teachers' expectations are causally linked to students' college attainment, and that this matters particularly for African-American students, whose teachers tend to have systematically lower expectations of them.[75]

3.6.2 Domain: Conditions for Teaching and Learning

3.6.2.1 Supports for students' social, emotional, academic, and physical well-being

Student supports are an important complement to expectations, as research has suggested that higher expectations are associated with improved student outcomes when they are accompanied by high levels of support. This is particularly true for students of color.[76] Teacher support has been found to be associated with multiple student outcomes, including academic achievement, attendance, and graduation rates.[77] It is not sufficient, however, to support only student academic skills; schools must also support student development of social and emotional skills and overall well-being.[78] Teachers can support social and emotional development in multiple ways, including delivering specific skill instruction, integrating social and emotional learning and academic instruction, and embedding through general pedagogical practices.[79] In more than one meta-analysis of social and emotional learning programs, researchers have found that educators can support student development of social and emotional skills, prosocial behaviors, and positive attitudes.[80] [81]

[73] Wentzel, K. (1997). Student motivation in middle school: The role of perceived pedagogical caring. Journal of Educational Psychology, 89(3), 411–419.
[74] Harter, S. (1992). The relationship between perceived competence, affect, and motivational orientation within the classroom: Process and patterns of change. In A. Boggiano & T. Pittman (Eds.), Achievement and motivation: a social- developmental perspective. New York, NY: Cambridge University Press.
[75] Papageorge, N. W., Gershenson, S., & Kang, K. (2016). *Teacher expectations matter*. *IZA Discussion Paper* No. 10165.
[76] Klem, A. M., & Connell, J. P. (2004). Relationships matter: linking teacher support to student engagement and achievement. Journal of School Health, 74(7), 262–273.
[77] Schaps, E. (2005). The role of supportive school environments in promoting academic success. In getting results, developing safe and healthy kids update 5: Student health, supportive schools and academic success. Retrieved from https://www.collaborativeclassroom.org/research-articles-and-papers-the-role-of-supportive-school-environments-in-promoting-academic-success.
[78] Reddy, R., Rhodes, J. E., & Mulhall, P. (2003). The influence of teacher support on student adjustment in the middle school years. Development and Psychopathology, 15, 119–138.
[79] Yoder, N. (2014). Teaching the whole child: instructional practices that promote social and emotional learning in three instructional frameworks. Washington, DC: Center on Great Teachers and Leaders. Retrieved from http://www.gtlcenter.org/sites/default/files/TeachingtheWholeChild.pdf.
[80] Durlak, J. A., Weissberg, R. P., Dymnicki, A. B., Taylor, R. D., & Schellinger, K. B. (2011). The impact of enhancing students' social and emotional learning: a meta-analysis of school-based universal interventions. Child Development, 82(1), 405–432

Research demonstrates specialized staff in the form of school counselors and other student support services such as school psychologists, school social workers, and school nurses are also important resources demonstrating positive effects in classroom and school environment; student academic learning; behavior and discipline; career development; and emotional, social, and physical wellbeing.[82] School counselors provide counseling in three domains: academic, career, and personal/social. Their services and programs help students resolve emotional, social, or behavioral problems and develop a clearer focus or sense of direction, which contribute to positive school climates.[83] According to CDE data, California students' access to counselors vary by grade level and 29 percent of California school districts have no counseling program. The ratio of students per counselor in the state averages 945 to 1, compared to the national average of 477 to 1, ranking California last in the nation.[84]

3.6.2.2 Facilities and instructional resources

Research also shows school conditions in the form of safe and clean school campuses and facilities affect student learning, along with access to critical supports and resources.[85] Access to most current standards-aligned curriculum, technology, and smaller classes for students and staff all contribute to student achievement. According to Jaquith's research, instructional resources for teachers in the form of instructional technology, instructional knowledge, relational resources, and organizational resources are all essential conditions for learning needed in schools for continuous improvement to occur and can help reduce teacher attrition.[86] [87] [88]

In addition, access to a broad course of study including the arts, music, and physical health contribute to students' deeper engagement in learning, increased motivation to learn for understanding, positive emotional

[81] Taylor, E. D., Oberle, E., Durlak, J. A., & Weissberg, R. P. (2017). Promoting positive youth development through school-based social and emotional learning interventions: a meta-analysis of follow-up effects. Child Development, 88(4), 1156–1171.
[82] Allensworth, D. & Kolbe L. (1987). The comprehensive school health program: exploring and expanded concept. *Journal of School Health, 57*(10), 409-412.
[83] Whiston, S. C. & Quinby, R. F. (2009). Review of school counseling outcome research. *Psychology in Schools*, *46*: 267–272.
[84] See Research on School Counseling Effectiveness at http://www.cde.ca.gov/ls/cg/rh/counseffective.asp.
[85] Uline, C. & Tschannen-Moran, M. (2008). The walls speak: the interplay of quality facilities, school climate, and student achievement. *Journal of Educational Administration, 46*(1), 55-73.
[86] Jaquith, A. (2017). How to create the conditions for learning: Continuous improvement in classrooms, schools, and districts. Cambridge, MA: Harvard Education Press.
[87] Greenwald, R., Hedges, L., & Laine, R. (2016). The effect of school resources on student achievement. *Review of Educational Research, 66*(3), 361-396.
[88] Ladd, H. F. (2011). Teachers' perceptions of their working conditions: how predictive of planned and actual teacher movement? *Educational Evaluation and Policy Analysis*, *33*(2), 235-261.

development, and a decrease in disciplinary issues.[89] Students of low economic status who have access to the arts, in or out of school, also tend to have better academic results, better workforce opportunities, and more civic engagement.[90]

Similarly, Peterson, shows that regular and frequent participation in high-quality expanded learning programs significantly impacts positive social and academic outcomes for students. Key characteristics of high-quality expanded learning programs include, but are not limited to, positive relationships between students and staff, promotion of high-levels of student engagement, and blends of academic and developmental skill-building activities.[91]

3.6.2.3 Opportunities for staff collaboration and professional development

Finally, teachers' working conditions and supports, including opportunities to collaborate with one another and develop professionally— matters tremendously for teacher retention, especially in schools with low-income, diverse student bodies. Aspects of teacher collaboration that matter include whether teachers have time available to work with their colleagues or an effective process for making group decisions to solve problems.[92] [93] When teachers are able to collaborate, they are more productive and improve organizationally than when they work independently.[94] Having meaningful professional development – that is tailored to the learning needs of the teacher/educator, timely, and sustained over a length of time—can make them more effective and feel more efficacious.[95]

3.6.3 Domain: Empowerment

3.6.3.1 Participation in decision-making

Student, teacher, and parent participation in decision-making—also called voice, or agency—affects their willingness to engage in the learning process.

[89] DeMoss, K. & Morris, T. (2002). How arts integration supports student learning: students shed light on the connections. Chicago, IL: Chicago Arts Partnerships in Education.
[90] Catterall, J., Dumais, S., & Hampden-Thompson, G. (2012). The arts and achievement in at-risk youth: findings from four longitudinal studies. Washington D.C.: National Endowment for the Arts.
[91] Petersen, T.K. (Ed.) (2013). Expanding minds and opportunities: leveraging the power of afterschool and summer learning for student success. Washington, DC: Collaborative Communications Group.
[92] Kraft, M.A., Marinell, W.H., & Shen-Wei Yee, D. (2016). School organizational contexts, teacher turnover, and student achievement: evidence from panel data. American Educational Research Journal, 53(5), 1411-1449.
[93] Johnson, S. M., et al. (2012). How context matters in high-need schools: the effects of teachers' working conditions on their professional satisfaction and their students' achievement. Teachers College Record, 114.
[94] Hargreaves, A., & Fullan, M. (2012). Professional capital: transforming teaching in every school. Teachers College Press.
[95] Darling-Hammond, L., Hyler, M. E., & Gardner, M. (2017). Effective teacher professional development. Palo Alto, CA: Learning Policy Institute.

For students, having agency and the ability to make key decisions for themselves makes them more engaged in learning, which is linked to students staying in school.[96] Furlong and colleagues suggested that students should have opportunities to participate in the broader school community and have a voice in decisions that affect their education. [97] For teachers, shared governance, or "the extent to which teachers are involved in decision-making about matters of school governance," is an important part of the working conditions that determine whether teachers stay or go, and their effectiveness.[98] Finally, the literature on family involvement in schools note the importance of engaging families as partners in decisions that affect their children's learning, and the importance of parents as effective advocates for their student.[99] [100]

3.6.3.2 Engagement in learning

Engagement in learning is a key dimension of school climate; if students are not engaged in their own learning, then they will have a difficult time mastering academic tasks and being successful in school.[101] Engagement is related to multiple student outcomes, including attendance, school dropout, and academic achievement. Multiple definitions of engagement exist within the literature, including cognitive (e.g., thoughtfulness), behavioral (e.g., participation), and affective (e.g., interest) engagement in school. Each type of engagement is influenced by the environment and resources in which a student learns. For example, the degree to which a student can be thoughtful is dependent upon the level of academic rigor in the classroom. Similarly, the degree to which a student is behaviorally engaged is dependent on the norms and expectations of the classrooms.[102]

[96] Eccles, J. S., & Wang, M.-T. (2012). Part I Commentary: So what is student engagement anyway? In S. L. Christenson, A. L. Reschly, & C. Wylie (Eds.), *Handbook of Research on Student Engagement* (pp. 133–145). http://link.springer.com/10.1007/978-1-4614-2018-7.

[97] Furlong, M. J., Whipple, A. D., St. Jean, G., Simental, J., Soliz, A., & Punthuna, S. (2003). Multiple contexts of school engagement: Moving toward a unifying framework for educational research and practice. The California School Psychologist, 8, 99–114.

[98] Johnson, S. M., Kraft, M. A., & Papay, J. P. (2012). How context matters in high-need schools: The effects of teachers' working conditions on their professional satisfaction and their students' achievement. *Teachers College Record*, *114*.

[99] Henderson, A. T., & Mapp, K. L. (2002). A new wave of evidence: The impact of school, family and community connections on student achievement. *SEDL -Advancing Research, Improving Education*. Austin, TX: National Center for Family & Community Connections with Schools.

[100] Mapp, K. L., & Kuttner, P. J. (2013). Partners in education: A dual capacity-building framework for family–school partnerships. Washington, D.C.: U.S. Department of Education.

[101] Klem, A. M., & Connell, J. P. (2004). Relationships matter: linking teacher support to student engagement and achievement. Journal of School Health, 74(7), 262–273.

[102] Fredricks, J., McColskey, W., Meli, J., Mordica, J., Montrosse, B., & Mooney, K. (2011). Measuring student engagement in upper elementary through high school: a description of 21 instruments (Issues & Answers Report, REL 2011–No. 098). Washington, DC: U.S. Department of Education, Institute of Education Sciences, National Center for Education Evaluation and Regional Assistance, Regional Educational Laboratory Southeast. Retrieved from http://ies.ed.gov/ncee/edlabs.

Students are also engaged through culturally relevant teaching, and curriculum leading school districts, like Los Angeles Unified, to add ethnic studies as a requirement for graduation. Dee and Penner find ethnic studies classes have many benefits, especially for boys and Latino students, including better attendance, higher grade point average, and higher credit completion.[103] Schoolwide opportunities in extracurricular activities (such as student involvement in clubs, government, leadership, music, athletics, art, dance, community service, etc.) also impact student engagement in learning.[104]

3.6.3.3 Supportive Administration

A supportive administration that creates and communicates a clear vision, is accessible to and supportive of school staff and staff development, and offers multiple opportunities for leadership and shared decision-making can have a large effect on teacher turnover.[105] When teachers strongly disagree that their administration is supportive, they are more than twice as likely to move schools or leave teaching as when they strongly agree that their administration is supportive.[106] Principals, in particular, have been found to be a crucial school-level factor associated with student achievement—second only to teachers' classroom instruction.[107] [108] Studies show that supportive, consistent leadership improves school quality and improves teacher retention, especially administrators' ability to encourage and acknowledge staff, communicate a clear vision, and generally run a school well.[109]

4 What do Stakeholders Say About School Conditions and Climate?

In further support of the CCWG goals and objectives, the CDE and CCWG actively engaged LEAs and other external stakeholders in the process of creating and reviewing emerging ideas generated by the work group. Multiple stakeholder events were

[103] Dee, T. & Penner, E. (2016). The causal effects of cultural relevance: evidence from ethnic studies curriculum. Cambridge, M.A.: The National Bureau of Economic Research.
[104] Mahoney, J., & Cairns, R. (1997). Do extracurricular activities protect against early school dropout? *Developmental Psychology, 33*(2), 241–253.
[105] Kraft, M.A., Marinell, W.H., & Shen-Wei Yee, D. (2016). School organizational contexts, teacher turnover, and student achievement: evidence from panel data. American Educational Research Journal, 53(5), 1411-1449.
[106] Carver-Thomas, D. & Darling-Hammond, L. (2017). Teacher turnover: why it matters and what we can do about it. Palo Alto, CA: Learning Policy Institute.
[107] Leithwood, K., Seashore Louis, K., Anderson, S., & Wahlstrom, K. (2004). How leadership influences student learning. New York, NY: The Wallace Foundation.
[108] Seashore Louis, K., Leithwood, K., Wahlstrom, K. L., & Anderson, S. E. (2010). Investigating the links to improved student learning: Final report of research findings. New York, NY: The Wallace Foundation.
[109] Kraft, M.A., Papay, J.P, Charner-Laird, M., Johnson, S.M., Ng, M., & Reinhorn, S.K. (2015). Educating amidst uncertainty: the organizational supports that teachers need to serve students in high-poverty, urban schools. Educational Administration Quarterly 51(5), 753–790.

conducted to gain field perspective about school conditions and climate. Stakeholders were encouraged to share ideas and current practices to provide the CCWG with a clear picture of the current landscape. Stakeholder input and feedback shaped the recommendations presented in this framework. The table below presents a summary of stakeholder feedback themes, coupled with CCWG responses and revisions.

School Conditions and Climate Stakeholder Engagement: 2016–17 Themed Stakeholder Feedback Discoveries	
Feedback Discoveries	**Revisions**
Students want to: • Be included in the conversation around creating positive school conditions and climate; • Know that when they are asked about how they feel about their school's climate that their opinions are taken seriously and are met with action to help correct, fix, and address their concerns; • Have access to clean, safe, and functional facilities; and • Ensure that all remember that this work is about students – school is for them and that is why positive school conditions and climate matters.	(See Section 7.4) • LEAs should complement and deepen their understanding of survey results by collecting additional information about how to solve problems/take advantage of opportunities identified by the surveys, and report this process in their narrative summary response in the Dashboard reporting system. • Methods utilized to deepen understanding of survey results can include interviews, focus groups, or review of additional Dashboard data (i.e., suspension, expulsion, and chronic absenteeism rates). Talking directly with respondents about problems/opportunities and potential solutions is an important form of stakeholder engagement.

School Conditions and Climate Work Group Recommendation Framework

School Conditions and Climate Stakeholder Engagement: 2016–17 Themed Stakeholder Feedback Discoveries	
Feedback Discoveries	**Revisions**
Parents want to know that: • The schools they are sending their children to are safe and clean; • The school atmosphere is positive and welcoming; • No harm will come to their children especially when sharing data and through the collection of it; and • They will have access to data that is easy to read and useful about their child's progress and school.	(See Section 7.5) • Expansion of the narrative textbox to include helpful guiding questions that assist LEAs in their robust descriptions of school conditions and climate survey results and analysis. • Linking the survey results to the narrative textbox via the Dashboard reporting system.
Practitioners (CPAG, Administrators, and school staff) want to know that: • Their workload is being considered in the development of these recommendations – annual surveys, annual qualitative methods, and other local indicators, plus day-to-day responsibilities makes this feel overwhelming; • There will be support with managing the new workload such as analysis of survey results, reported back promptly in an easily accessible report; and • There will be support given to engage in the additional analysis work being recommended such as: methods to analyze survey results to make meaning; and approaches	(See Sections 6.2–6.4 and 7.1) • Phasing recommendation implementations. • Providing a variety of vetted surveys for LEAs to utilize free of charge including basic reporting and analysis. • Development of a support center—linked to the emerging Statewide System of Support—that offers resources to support LEAs in making valid, reliable, and equitable decisions with school conditions and climate data and implementing school improvements. This includes the provision of resources, tools, training and technical assistance to support the triangulation of data from multiple school climate sources. This could include interview and focus group protocols, data review protocols, and training on improvement tools, such as root cause analysis or the development of a theory of practice improvement.

School Conditions and Climate Stakeholder Engagement: 2016–17 Themed Stakeholder Feedback Discoveries	
Feedback Discoveries	**Revisions**
for engaging in conversations around sensitive issues and disaggregated data.	

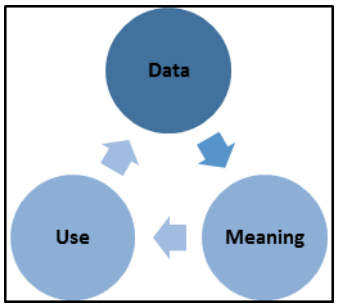
The CDE and CCWG would like to express gratitude to all participants in the stakeholder events. The involvement of stakeholders across California demonstrated the importance of school conditions and climate and its impact on students. See Appendix E for a comprehensive list of stakeholder outreach activities; summaries of stakeholder sessions are available at https://lcff.wested.org/lcff-channel/.

5 Process of Developing Recommendations

As it developed its detailed recommendations, the CCWG first articulated a proposed three-part methodology for approaching school conditions and climate accountability and continuous improvement work. It then identified the central questions that informed its work as well as important questions that it chose not to address.

5.1 Methodology

Efforts to improve school conditions and climate must include more than data collection. The CCWG articulated a three-pronged approach (see inset) to ensure that we are not collecting data for its own sake or for purely compliance purposes, but rather moves towards a helpful and practical approach to continuous improvement and accountability. The three primary components of this methodology include:



5.1.1 Data

A variety of data gathering tools should be employed and should involve major stakeholders (students, parents and families, teachers, administrators, and other school staff).

5.1.2 Meaning

From data collected, the next step is to derive meaning. School districts and schools should utilize a variety of modalities to gather input on the "meaning" of the data. For example, focus groups can be faciliated, campus walk-throughs undertaken to see if the data collected is visually and physically apparent, listening circles formed to include the stakeholders most impacted by the data (e.g. student listening circles, teacher listening circles, etc.), and interviews

conducted to explore the impact of the data with individuals and groups of stakeholders.

5.1.3 Use

One of the most significant challenges, but also one of the highest priorities for the new accountability system, and LCFF Priority 6 in particular, is the importance of effective use or application of the data gathered and the meaning derived. Both data collected and meaning derived should stimulate inquiry and deepen the meaning and understanding of "continuous improvement" for LEAs and schools. Use should directly apply to evaluating existing and incorporating new goals, actions, and services within LCAPs and the development and implementation of new programs and policies.

5.2 Central Questions the CCWG Has Addressed

The following central questions have framed the CCWG's work:

1. How do we define school conditions and climate?

2. How do we ensure the validity and reliability of California's work in school conditions and climate?

3. How should California best measure school conditions and climate?

4. How should California best include the measurement of school conditions and climate in its accountability system?

5. How should California best support continuous improvement in school conditions and climate?

CCWG has worked diligently to synthesize its thinking, incorporate SBE and stakeholder feedback, and utilize research to draft responses to these questions throughout this document and especially through its recommendations to the SPI and CDE (see Sections 6 and 7).

5.3 Central Questions the CCWG Chose Not to Address

The factors impacting school conditions and climate are broad and connect to many potential metrics and continuous improvement supports. Similarly, the potential areas of inquiry by the CCWG are extensive and relate to many potential disciplines. Given its potential relationship to school conditions and climate, advancing the social and emotional learning of our students has emerged as a frequent CCWG discussion topic. Given the limitations of time and resources, the CCWG has chosen not to focus on the measurement of social and emotional learning for accountability purposes, including addressing questions such as:

- Is it possible to measure non-cognitive skills growth?

- What are the best ways to measure and support growth in social-emotional learning?

However, the CCWG does recognize that access to supports for social and emotional learning can improve school climate. The SPI has convened a state team that is participating in the Collaborative for Academic, Social, and Emotional Learning's (CASEL) - Collaborating States Initiative (CSI). [110] Several members of the CCWG are participating in the CSI, and the CCWG recommends that the CSI team study the CCWG's recommendations and complement them as appropriate as they complete their work and vice versa.

5.4 Framing the CCWG Response to Its Central Questions

The CCWG diligently worked toward a collective understanding of how best to measure and report school conditions and climate data results to support continuous improvement efforts. The CCWG considered how best to make validity and reliability foundational to the collection, interpretation, and use of school conditions and climate. In recognition that validity and reliability are key to this work, the CCWG believes that it is vitally important that LEAs have access to high-quality survey tools and resources.

The CCWG further believes that LEAs should have guidance rooted in appropriate research-based best practices to support their understanding of how to utilize school conditions and climate survey data results in equitable and fair ways for decision-making purposes and continuous improvement.[111] [112] The work group recognized that many districts and schools already use school climate measurement tools, and that there is value in supporting the continued use of these tools, to the extent that they provide valid and reliable data that is used for continuous improvement.

Creating a valid and reliable survey is not an easy task. Research-based practices such as the 2014 Professional Testing Standards and the National Research Council's educational assessment research offer guidance in this area.[113] [114]These sources

[110] For more information on CASEL's Collaborating States Initiative, please see: http://www.casel.org/collaborative-state-initiative/
[111] The *Professional Testing Standards* (2014) and educational assessment research (NRC, 2001) are two common sources for such guidance.
[112] Development of approaches for use by LEAs and schools as they engage in the continuous improvement of LCAP development and implementation should also consider ongoing work in the field of improvement science by scholars at the Carnegie Foundation for the Advancement of Teaching and others.
[113] National Research Council. 2001. *Knowing what students know: The science and design of educational assessment*. Committee on the Foundations of Assessment. Pelligrino, J., Chudowsky, N., and Glaser, R., editors. Board on Testing and Assessment, Center for Education. Division of Behavioral and Social Sciences and Education. Washington, DC: National Academy Press.
[114] American Educational Research Association, American Psychological Association, National Council on Measurement in Education. (2014). *Standards for Educational and Psychological Testing*. Washington, DC. ISBN 978-0935-302-356.

present a standard for validity and reliability typically applied in the context of high-stakes educational and psychological testing.

As California implements the recommendations contained in this report, particularly in relation to vetting surveys, tools, and practices for LEAs and schools to utilize in LCAP continuous improvement and implementation, consideration should be given to the ongoing work in the field of improvement science by scholars at the Carnegie Foundation for the Advancement of Teaching. For practical measures of improvement, they emphasize the selection of the single most valid measure of a construct of interest to maximize the predictive utility of an instrument.[115] This also minimizes redundancy, which they contend is time-consuming and impractical in the improvement research context. With respect to internal reliability, this generally favors demonstrating consistency among multiple items measuring the same construct of interest.

Early on, the CCWG recognized challenges to reporting local school conditions and climate survey data that must be addressed. Specifically, California should work to minimize inappropriate usage of school conditions and climate data by making it as understandable and comparable as possible for LEA, school, and public use. The group suggests addressing these concerns with a School Conditions and Climate Validity and Reliability Technical Design Group and through a phased implementation of the CCWG's recommendations.

Additionally, the CCWG recognized that reporting results in the Dashboard is only an entry point into more complex levels of data analysis and interpretation, and it is, therefore, necessary to report data in several venues and modes including the Dashboard and district web sites.

As discussed above in Section 5.1 regarding methodology, school conditions and climate data should help LEAs and schools to not only assess their environments, but to inspire new action that can be turned into concrete goals and plans for improvement. Data disaggregation by school site and student groups would further support LEAs and schools as they work to address the diverse needs of their students. In addition, the CCWG considered commitments the state could make, such as:

1. Identifying and sharing exemplars of effective school conditions and climate continuous improvement cycles;

2. Integrating school conditions and climate work with California's developing System of Support, Statements of Model Practices, and ongoing continuous improvement support and related local capacity building efforts by the CDE, California Collabortive for Educational Excellence, COEs, etc.;

[115] Bryk, A. S., Sebring, P. B., Allensworth, E., Luppescu, S., & Easton, J. Q. (2010). Organizing schools for improvement: Lessons from Chicago. Chicago, IL: University of Chicago Press.

3. Identifying and disseminating guidance and exemplars of both tool use and incorporation of this data analysis into LCAPs; and

4. Disseminating materials and resources using online resource exchanges, such as Collaboration in Common, to LEAs for use

6 DETAILED STATE-LEVEL RECOMMENDATIONS

The CCWG has developed the following recommendations at the State-Level to support LEAs as they measure and report their progress on school conditions and climate (see Section 7 for LEA-level Recommendations). These recommendations apply to all LEAs, schools, and student groups (e.g., race/ethnicity, socioeconomically disadvantaged, foster youth, homeless youth, English learners, and students with disabilities). For each recommendation, a brief rationale and additional considerations are provided, as applicable.

6.1 State-Level Recommendation 1

1. Utilize the definition and features created by the CCWG as the CDE's official definition of school conditions and climate.[116]

6.1.1 Rationale

Creating a common foundation from which to understand school conditions and climate is important for all. As a state, we should seek to make clear that when we speak of school conditions and climate for accountability purposes we are talking about the elements of school conditions and climate we have the ability to control and impact within the school setting.

6.2 State-Level Recommendation 2

2. Establish a School Conditions and Climate Validity and Reliability Technical Design Group responsible for a) developing the criteria to vet school conditions climate surveys, and b) vetting the surveys that would appear on the CDE menu of state-vetted and state-supported survey tools.

6.2.1 Rationale

A School Conditions and Climate Validity and Reliability Technical Design Group can support school districts to take stock of the valid, reliable, and age appropriate surveys that are already administered, as well as other school conditions and climate data already collected. It will also provide LEAs with a clear, systematic, and logical process through which to choose surveys that are valid and reliable for their intended use.

[116] See sections 2.1–2.3 for the full text of the CCWG's definition, features, and lenses or Appendix A.

6.2.2 Additional Considerations

This work should be done collaboratively with CDE, COEs, educational organizations, advocacy groups and LEAs to provide access to exemplar tools for use in serving students in a variety of local contexts. It will also ensure the incorporation of the perspectives of multiple stakeholders throughout California.

6.3 State-Level Recommendation 3

3. The CDE should provide a menu of state-vetted and state-supported survey tools and instruments that LEAs can utilize.[117] The menu should contain surveys tools that cover four research-based school conditions and climate domains: Safety, Relationships, Conditions for Teaching and Learning, and Empowerment and their related constructs.

Domain	Construct
Safety	• Sense of safety
Relationships	• Connectedness • Relationships • Respect for diversity • High expectations (students only)
Conditions for teaching and learning	• Support for social, emotional, academic, and physical wellbeing • Facilities and instructional resources • Access to courses and extracurricular activities • Opportunities for collaboration and professional development (staff only)
Empowerment	• Participation in decision-making • Engagement in learning (students only) • Supportive leadership (staff only)

Suggested guidelines for the menu of vetted surveys include:

a. Providing 2 to 4 vetted surveys to start and expand over time as more surveys are vetted.

b. Identifying surveys that measure, at a minimum, the following domains of school conditions and climate for all stakeholder groups: Safety, Relationships, Conditions for Teaching and Learning, and Empowerment.

[117] State-vetted and state-supported means that the state of California should support the costs of providing a vetted menu of surveys including basic reporting and analysis to all LEAs.

c. Selecting surveys to be administered electronically for ease of use, faster results, and ease of analysis of results.

d. Ensuring vetted surveys come with a basic report that includes data results, summaries, and a general analysis of the results.

6.3.1 Rationale

Enrollment in LEAs throughout California ranges from 639,337 to 5 students. Many LEAs have access to staff who can help them with the local administration and analysis of a local climate survey to capture a valid measure of student perceptions of school safety and connectedness, while others do not have the same capacity. By establishing a menu of vetted surveys, the SBE and CDE will be providing LEA's much needed support, assistance, and access to valid tools.

6.3.2 Additional Considerations

The CCWG encourages consolidation of survey instruments used to measure progress on other local indicators (i.e. LCFF Priority 3) to streamline the administration of and use of survey instruments given to stakeholders. Doing so ensures the SBEs commitment to working to minimize duplication of effort at the local level to the greatest extent possible. Moreover, as the state seeks to support LEAs with their continuous improvement efforts, utilization of common surveys could support the identification of LEA and school exemplars of best practices in the area of school conditions and climate.

6.4 State-Level Recommendation 4

4. Include useful tools, resources, and supports about school conditions and climate within the developing Statewide System of Support to support the capacity of system actors such as COEs and LEAs as they endeavor to improve school conditions and climate. This should include the provision of:

    a. Resources, tools, training and technical assistance to support the triangulation of data from multiple school conditions and climate sources and interpretation that allows school site results to be used in planning and decision-making processes. This should include interview and focus group protocols, data review protocols, and training on improvement tools, such as a root-cause analysis or the development of a theory of practice.

    b. A diversity of tools, resources, technical assistance, research-based strategies, promising practices, and support that build capacity in school conditions and climate implementation. This should include support for areas that may arise in the analysis of school conditions and climate data

such as hidden biases, crucial conversations, and race/gender/sexual orientation related topics.

6.4.1 Rationale

Capacity-building is the key to improving the performance of California's schools and districts. This encompasses improving both the individual capacity of teachers and school leaders—their knowledge, skills, and material supports—and the institutional capacity of schools, districts, county offices of education, and statewide agencies to support the delivery of improved education through in part well-directed resources, helpful data, and information. Stakeholders have repeatedly asked for curated resources to support their efforts in improving their schools and districts in the area of school conditions and climate.

6.4.2 Additional Considerations

Supporting COEs' and LEAs' ability to create positive school conditions and climate aligns with the overarching goal for the Statewide System of Support: *To assist LEAs and their schools to meet the needs of each student served, with a focus on building capacity to sustain improvement and effectively address inequities in student opportunities and outcomes.* Having LEAs report on the process of continuous improvement (rather than just the data or the outcome) will facilitate cross-district learning about *how* to improve school conditions and climate.

7 DETAILED LEA-LEVEL RECOMMENDATIONS

The following recommendations include those that should primarily be implemented at the level of an individual LEA. For each recommendation, a brief rationale, recommended best practice, and additional considerations are provided as applicable.

7.1 LEA-Level Recommendation 1

1. LEAs should annually administer a school conditions and climate survey to students, parents/guardians, and school staff.[118] [119]The school conditions and climate survey should be administered to students in at least one grade level within the grade spans K-5, 6-8, and 9-12.

7.1.1 Rationale

Measuring school conditions and climate is an important step in the process of continuous improvement. It allows schools to reflect on their current climate,

[118] *EC* sections 52060(d)(6)(C) states: Other local measures, including surveys of pupils, parents, and teachers on the sense of safety and school connectedness.
[119] Currently, LCFF Priority 6 is the only local indicator with an every other year administration requirement. All other local indicators require LEAs to measure progress annually.

identify areas of strength and weakness, develop strategies that will positively impact students' experiences at school, and monitor progress over time. Because we know that school climate is a dynamic construct—shifting as schools change leadership, welcome new students and staff, and adopt new practices—data are only useful if they are collected at least annually. In addition, the annual administration of a school conditions and climate survey ensures LEAs have data necessary to complete their annual LCAP updates.

7.1.2 Recommended Best Practice

School conditions and climate measurement can be one of many mechanisms to help schools make improvements, be accountable for creating a safe and supportive learning environment, and support programs to improve school conditions and climate as part of an overall school reform strategy.[120] School districts must exercise caution to avoid survey fatigue among stakeholders. Thus, school districts should be purposeful as they identify, select, and administer a school conditions and climate survey tool. Crafting a school conditions and climate survey administration plan that addresses items such as, but not limited to, timeframe, dissemination protocols, confidentiality, and suggestions for modification for students who need additional assistance, can be helpful.[121]

7.1.3 Additional Considerations

To provide comprehensive support to all LEAs within California, phasing the recommendations allows the state time to establish the School Conditions Validity and Reliability Technical Design Group, including the vetting criteria and process. In addition, this provides LEAs time to transition from the current SBE approach to the recommended addition of stakeholders on an annual basis.

Suggested Phasing Timeline	
2017-18 and 2018-19 School Years (SY)	Continue current SBE-adopted approach where the LEA administers a local climate survey at least every other year that provides a valid measure of perceptions of school safety and connectedness, such as the California Healthy Kids Survey, to students in at least one grade within the grade span(s) that the LEA serves (e.g., K-5, 6-8, 9-12), and reports the results to its local governing board at a regularly scheduled meeting of the local governing board and to stakeholders and the public through the Dashboard.

[120] See the National School Climate Center at http://new.schoolclimate.org/services/csci.
[121] See Survey Administration, a webinar from NCSSLE, discusses best practices in survey administration at https://safesupportivelearning.ed.gov/events/webinar/survey-administration.

Suggested Phasing Timeline	
2018-19 SY	Surveys already in use by LEAs should meet the same vetting criteria established by the validity and reliability technical design group.
2019-20 SY	LEAs should administer an annual school conditions and climate survey to all students, and administer a school conditions and climate survey to school staff (certificated and classified), and parents/families every other year.
2020-21 SY	LEAs should administer an annual school conditions and climate survey to students, school staff (certificated and classified), and parents/families.

7.2 LEA-Level Recommendation 2

2. LEAs should select surveys to administer that are valid and reliable through:

    a. Selection of a survey from the state-vetted and state-supported menu of 2-4 survey tools; or

    b. Election to use a survey instrument that does not appear on the state-vetted and state-supported menu with an explanation locally to its governing board and in the Dashboard how the alternative survey covers the recommended domains and constructs and the general criteria developed by the School Conditions and Climate Validity and Reliability Technical Design Group.

7.2.1 Rationale

Enrollment in LEAs throughout California ranges from 639,337 to 5 students. Some LEAs have access to staff who can help them with the local administration and analysis of a local climate survey that captures a valid measure of student perceptions of school safety and connectedness, while others do not have the same capacity. When CDE establishes a menu of vetted surveys, it will support LEAs to accomplish their school conditions and climate goals by providing much needed support, assistance, and access to valid tools for school conditions and climate measurement.

In recognition and respect for the subsidiarity inherent in the LCFF, LEAs who have established climate survey tools, in accordance with SBE direction and LCFF statute, should continue to utilize what works best for them based on local

needs as long as it meets the same validity and reliability criteria as the state-vetted and state-supported surveys.

The utilization of common surveys throughout California sets the stage for the development of productive connections, partnerships, and communities of practice among LEAs, COEs, the California Collaborative of Educational Excellence, Institutes of Higher Education, intermediaries, and community based-organizations. Ultimately, the data collected could support the identification of LEA and school exemplars of best practices in the area of school conditions and climate.

7.2.2 Additional Considerations

The limited menu of vetted surveys positions the SBE and CDE to support LEAs in their efforts to complete the indicator by minimizing, to the extent possible, the amount of effort needed to do so.

7.3 LEA-Level Recommendation 3

3. Survey tools should measure, at a minimum, the same domains and constructs for all stakeholder groups that appear on the CDE-provided menu of vetted school conditions and climate survey tools (see State-Level Recommendation 3).

7.3.1 Rationale

Current state law only requires climate survey tools to include the constructs: sense of safety and school connectedness. The CCWG believes, however, that additional constructs, falling under the four recommended domains, are vitally important to achieve a holistic view and understanding of school functioning and student success.[122] The constructs efficiently address and weave together elements of many of the LCFF state priorities in response to the charge the CCWG received from the SBE and CDE. The four domains provide a good starting point for all LEAs and do not exceed the scope of commonly used school climate frameworks and surveys, including California Healthy Kids. [123]

7.3.2 Additional Considerations

LEAs should be encouraged to consolidate survey instruments (used to meet other progress monitoring requirements) to streamline the administration of and use of survey instruments given to students, staff (certificated and classified) and parents and families. For example, consolidating LCFF Priorities 3 and 6 into one

[122] See the research review in Section 3 and Appendix D: School Conditions and Climate Constructs.
[123] Garibaldi, M., Ruddy, S., Kendziora, K., & Osher, D. (2015). Assessment of climate and conditions for learning. In J. A. Durlak, C. E. Domitrovich, R. P. Weissberg, & T. P. Gullotta (Eds.), *Handbook of social and emotional learning: research and practice* (pp. 348–360). New York City: Guilford Press.

instrument allows LEAs to measure multiple local indicators simultaneously, thus, reducing workload.

Several of the constructs and domains described are sometimes given different names in other frameworks and surveys in common use. For example, "participation in decision-making" may be called "agency" or "voice" in other settings. The CCWG is not wedded to the use of any specific terms but to the type of information to be gathered. The intent is to create a framework for LEAs across the state to think about and work together to improve school conditions and climate.

The suggested constructs that measure school conditions and climate integrate aspects of other state priorities. For example, the six aspects of parent engagement identified by researchers at Harvard overlap significantly with these constructs.[124] Similarly, much can be learned about access to a broad course of study, another state priority, through surveys. The CCWG encourages the SBE and LEAs to look for opportunities to use a school conditions and climate survey to inform other state priorities. Doing so would ensure that the SBE and CDE are minimizing the duplication of efforts at the local level to the greatest extent possible.

7.4 LEA-Level Recommendation 4

4. LEAs should be strongly supported and encouraged to complement and deepen understanding of their school conditions and climate survey results to make meaning of the data and to translate that meaning into new or revised actions for improvement, by collecting additional information and reporting this information on the Dashboard.[125]

7.4.1 Rationale

Quantitative data gives limited information about student outcomes and potential solutions. Collecting additional information about the "why" behind survey responses helps LEAs and schools design approaches to improve school conditions and climate.

7.4.2 Additional Considerations

Talking directly with respondents about problems and potential solutions is an important form of stakeholder engagement. LEAs should collect additional information to dig deeper into why stakeholders perceive the school's climate the way they do. This can include interviews, focus groups, or review of additional

[124] Mapp, K. L., & Kuttner, P. J. (2013). Partners in education: a dual capacity-building framework for family–school partnerships. Washington, D.C.: U.S. Department of Education.
[125] Suggested methods for collecting additional information include interviews or focus groups.

Dashboard data (i.e. - suspension rate, expulsion rates, & chronic absenteeism rates). By triangulating information from different sources, schools will better understand those aspects of school conditions and climate that are working well and why other aspects of school conditions and climate need continued growth.

7.5 LEA-Level Recommendation 5

5. LEA should include a full report of their school conditions and climate data results on the Dashboard. The report should include a URL to a district website that shows the school conditions and climate survey results, disaggregated by student groups, with a minimum n-size, for each school site.

    a. The CCWG also suggests the following guiding questions to help frame the narrative summary shared in the textbox for consistency in responses across LEAs throughout California for continuous improvement purposes:

        i. Reflect on the key learnings from your results, and share what you learned.

        ii. What do the disaggregated results of your survey and other data collection methods reveal about your schools?

        iii. What revisions, decisions, or new actions will you implement in response to the results for continuous improvement purposes? Why?

7.5.1 Rationale

Research shows that staff and students' experiences of their school environment may differ significantly depending on a number of factors, including race, ethnicity, poverty, disability, gender, sexual orientation, or gender identity. Examining systematic differences in student, staff, and families' experiences of school conditions and climate is crucial for creating a more equitable schooling experience for all students. Disaggregating school conditions and climate data by student groups that exist within LEAs and schools uncovers these differences, allowing educators and administrators to more effectively allocate resources and target supports in ways that create positive school experiences and close achievement gaps for students.

7.5.2 Recommended Best Practice

LEAs are encouraged to report and house their school conditions and climate survey results publicly on their district website. Doing so ensures that LEAs are communicating effectively and meaningfully with parents, families, and other

community members. It will also ensure ease of access to data that many stakeholders have requested.

7.5.3 Additional Considerations

Disaggregated data should occur in accordance with the California School Dashboard Technical Guide to account for things like sample size of student groups and privacy protections.[126]

8 ADDITIONAL CONSIDERATIONS; IMPLEMENTATION TIMELINE

8.1 Additional Considerations

8.1.1 Demonstrating a Commitment to Multiple Measures and Equity

Under LCFF, the development of California's accountability system has utilized a multiple measures approach as a key design principle. This is in stark contrast to the previous state and federal accountability systems, which relied exclusively on standardized test measures. The design and development of the California School Dashboard emphasizes both state and local indicators covering areas including academic achievement, student engagement, parental involvement, and the school conditions and climate measures discussed by this framework.

Investments by the state of California, in indicator measurement systems still largely track, however, with the previous emphasis on standardized testing. California's 2017-18 Budget Act includes $87,727,000 in funding for multiple California Assessment of Student Performance and Progress (CAASPP) System contract costs. The funding covers the cost of test administration and development activities, Smarter Balanced consortium-managed services, including access to the Smarter Balanced summative assessments, interim assessments, and Digital Library tools, and a multi-year independent evaluation of the CAASPP System, per requirements in California *Education Code* Section 60649.[127] While these investments are necessary and essential for the state and its LEAs, they dwarf the practically non-existent investments made in school conditions and climate measurement and support.

The net impact of this lack of investment in school conditions and climate measurement and support systems has the potential to inadvertently set up inequities in the implementation of current approved indicators (see Section 1.3). Those LEAs with greater available resources may be able to invest in valid and reliable survey tools and high-quality reports and analyses, while these same

[126] See the CDE California School Dashboard Technical Guide at http://www.cde.ca.gov/ta/ac/cm/documents/dashboardguidespring17.pdf.
[127] See September SBE Item 01 California Assessment of Student Performance and Progress: Update on Program Activities, including, but not limited to, Enhancements to the Online Reporting System for more details at http://www.cde.ca.gov/be/ag/ag/yr17/documents/sep17item01.doc.

tools may be out of reach for LEAs with fewer resources. The relatively small investment required for providing and supporting high-quality school conditions and climate tools statewide to LEAs will yield a substantial return in the full development of a true multiple measures accountability system with the potential to support gains in school conditions and climate statewide.

8.1.2 Additional Issues for Further Exploration

The CCWG recommends that the positive inquiry it initiated into improvements in California's ability to support positive school conditions and climate for each and every student be continued. Key issues that merit ongoing study and action include:

- Identification of exemplars, best practices, and peer network supports for local survey adoption;
- Development of minimum standards for basic reporting of school conditions and climate survey results;
- Identification of exemplars and best practices for qualitative techniques to be used in conjunction with survey results;
- Identification and linkages between school conditions and climate tools to other LCFF priorities; and
- Development and vetting of student group specific quantitative and qualitative tools.

8.2 Implementation Timeline

In recognition of the magnitude of work required to implement the recommendations identified by this framework, the CCWG suggests phasing the implementation of the key tasks involved as outlined by the table below.

Implementation Timeline		
Phase	**Key Milestone**	**Time Frame**
Phase 1	• Secure Public and Private Resources to fund recommendations as applicable • Launch Technical Design Group o Create School Conditions and Climate Validity	November 2017–June 2018

School Conditions and Climate Work Group Recommendation Framework

Implementation Timeline		
Phase	**Key Milestone**	**Time Frame**
	and Reliability Framework o Begin Vetting Survey Tools • Curate a diverse set of school conditions and climate resource tools and disseminate using online resource exchanges, such as Collaboration in Common and the California Department of Education Website • Support tool and system integration with ongoing continuous improvement efforts including the developing Statewide System of Support and the Statements of Model Practices	
Phase 2	• Continue Phase I work with objective of vetted surveys being available for use in conjunction with development of 2018/19 LCAPs, starting with student surveys • Design recommendations for the sequenced implementation of surveys and other tools targeted at the specified stakeholder groups (students, parents, staff) • Vet and support additional tools (focus group protocols, peer-to-peer observation, etc.)	July 2018–June 2019
Phase 3	• All survey tools available for use • Interim Evaluation/Continuous Improvement School Conditions and Climate Resources and Support Systems • Monitor statewide progress	July 2019–June 2020
Phase 4	• Ongoing monitoring and improvement • Finalize independent evaluation	July 2020–June 2021

9 APPENDICES

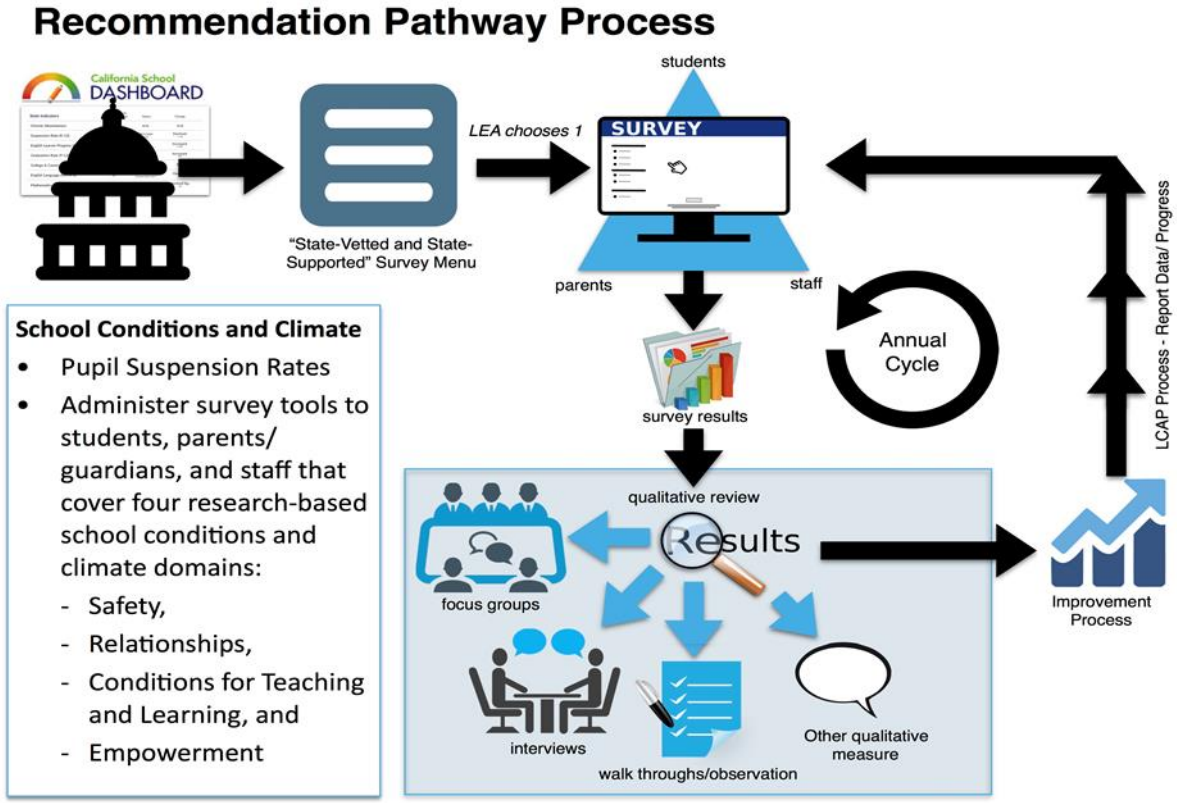
Appendix A: School Conditions and Climate Definition and Features

DEFINITION
"School Conditions and Climate" refers to the character and quality of school life. This includes the values, expectations, interpersonal relationships, materials and resources, supports, physical environment, and practices that foster a welcoming, inclusive, and academically challenging environment. Positive school conditions and climate ensure people in the school community (students, staff, family, and community) feel socially, emotionally, and physically safe, supported, connected to the school, and engaged in learning and teaching.
FEATURES
Features that promote a positive school climate and affect the attitudes, behaviors, and performance of both students and staff include, but are not limited to: ● An intentional student-centric commitment to meeting the basic-cognitive, social, emotional, and physical health needs of youth and fostering the competencies and mindsets that contribute to success in school, career, and life; ● Caring, trusting, respectful relationships among and between students, staff, parents, and families; ● High expectations for academic achievement and behavior and the social-emotional and pedagogical supports students need to meet those expectations; ● The presence of meaningful stakeholder participation that fosters a sense of contribution, empowerment, and ownership; and ● A sense of order and safety grounded in clearly communicated rules and expectations, and fair and equitable discipline ● Well-maintained resources and facilities.

Equity Lens	Validity Lens	Family Engagement Lens
The landscape of California schools includes a rich diversity of students with diverse needs that should be embraced to support community collaboration in a welcoming and responsive way. The CCWG's intentional equity frame is intended to drive action aimed at increasing equity utilizing multiple layers of data disaggregation, including state, LEA, school, and student group levels.	When considering what we measure, how we measure it, and how to interpret scores, we must work to ensure stakeholder understanding of the evidence to support particular uses of data. This includes helping data users to better understand tradeoffs when making choices about instruments related to issues with validity, reliability, fairness, and bias.	Research shows that parent engagement improves academic achievement and school connectedness. It is essential to capture and reflect a diverse set of parent voices in the recommendation. To that end, the CDE will link existing and ongoing work supporting Family Engagement to the CCWG with an additional work group and/or focus groups as necessary.

Appendix B: Graphic Organizer—Recommendation Pathway Process

The graphic organizer below illustrates the School Conditions and Climate Work Group recommendation pathway process. That is, local educational agencies (LEAs) would select from a menu of surveys, or elect to use a survey tool that is not on the menu. LEAs would then administer that survey to students, parents, and staff followed by an additional method to deepen understanding of survey results. Finally, LEAs would use all of the school conditions and climate tool results to inspire new goals for improved performance that can be included in their annual Local Control Accountability Plan process.



Appendix C: School Conditions and Climate Work Group Roles, Responsibilities, and Members

In consultation with WestEd staff at the California Comprehensive Center and School Conditions and Climate Work Group (CCWG) participants, the California Department of Education developed a scope of work for the CCWG, which included the following roles and responsibilities:

- Identify targeted questions about the use of school conditions and climate measures in California's new accountability system;
- Review research on the various dimensions of school conditions and climate;
- Support efforts to synthesize key research findings that may inform the use of school conditions and climate measures in the new accountability system;
- Review currently available, research-based school conditions and climate measures that may be used as part of the new accountability system;
- Make recommendations for integrating school conditions and climate measures into the new accountability system;
- Make recommendations for school conditions and climate continuous improvement resources;
- Actively participate in all virtual and in-person meetings and complete necessary readings; and
- Support the group's collaboration and teamwork.

Work Group Members

An outstanding set of members were selected for the CCWG representing a broad range of stakeholder perspectives, program, and research expertise. The member information is summarized in the table below.

School Conditions and Climate Work Group Membership	
Name	**Organization**
Ken Berrick	Seneca Family of Agencies
Aaron Brengard	Katherine Smith School, Evergreen School District
Shannan Brown	San Juan Unified School District
Channa Cook-Harvey	Learning Policy Institute
Brent Duckor	San Jose State University
Sherry Griffith	California Parent Teacher Association
Tom Hanson	WestEd
Tom Herman	California Department of Education
Heather Hough	CORE-PACE Research Partnership
Taryn Ishida	Californians for Justice
Hanna Melnick	Learning Policy Institute (substituting for Channa Cook-Harvey during her maternity leave)
Norma Sanchez	California Teachers Association

Appendix D: Descriptions of School Conditions and Climate Constructs

The term domain as utilized in this framework references the overall topic areas a school conditions and climate survey should measure. Within each domain, the framework specifies recommended constructs, which represent important aspects of each domain. For example, constructs specified in the domain of relationships include connectedness, relationships, respect for diversity, and high expectations for students.

The table below provides a working summary description of the constructs recommended by the School Conditions and Climate Work Group for inclusion in school conditions and climate surveys. Descriptions are not meant to be exhaustive.

Domain	Construct with description[128]
Safety	**Sense of Safety:** Sense that students and adults feel safe from physical harm and verbal abuse, teasing, and exclusion.
Relationships	**Connectedness:** Positive identification with the school and norms for broad participation in school life for students, staff, and families. For parents/guardians, this means welcoming all families into the school community, whereby families are active participants in the life of the school and feel welcomed, valued and connected to each other, to school staff and to what students are learning and doing in class.
	Relationships: Pattern of supportive and caring relationships between staff and students, in which staff show willingness to listen to students and to get to know them as individuals and personal concern for students' problems. Pattern of positive peer relationships for students, including: friendships for socializing, for problems, for academic help, and for new students. For parents/guardians, strong relationships that include effective communication, in which families and school staff engage in regular, two-way, meaningful communication and learning
	Respect for diversity: Mutual respect for individual differences (e.g., gender, race, culture) at all levels of the school—student-student; adult-student; adult-adult; and overall norms for tolerance.
	High expectations: The extent to which students receive consistent direct and indirect messages that they will do their best work in school, that they can be a success, and that they do what is right. High expectations messages represent communication that adults believe that the student has everything he or she needs to be successful.
Conditions for	**Support for social, emotional, academic, and physical wellbeing:** Use

[128] In many cases, these descriptions are adapted from the National School Climate Center's framework. https://new.schoolclimate.org/themes/schoolclimate/assets/pdf/measuring-school-climate-csci/CSCIDimensionChart-2017.pdf.

School Conditions and Climate Work Group Recommendation Framework

Domain	Construct with description[128]
teaching and learning	of supportive teaching practices and availability of staff and resources for that promote students' well-being.
	Facilities and instructional resources: Facilities are functioning, clean, in good repair, and maintained throughout the school year; instructional resources are available for students and staff in the form of current textbooks and instructional materials, up-to-date technology, and culturally responsive curriculum and instructional materials reflecting the diversity of students.
	Access to courses and extracurricular activities: Access to a full curriculum, including science, history, and the arts, and a rich array of extracurricular activities.
	Opportunities for collaboration and professional development: Opportunities for staff to meet, collaboratively plan, discuss and share learning; quality and meaningful professional development tailored to the learning needs of the teacher/educator that is timely and sustained over a length of time; positive attitudes and relationships among school staff and organizational structures that support effectively working and learning together.
Empowerment	**Participation in decision-making:** Students, families, and school staff are equal partners in decisions that affect them, and together inform, influence, and create policies, practices and programs. All stakeholders are empowered to be advocates to ensure that students are treated fairly and have access to learning opportunities that will support their success.
	Engagement in learning: Students have invested themselves, their energy, and their commitment to the learning environment, both within and outside the classroom, because school is interesting and relevant.
	Leadership / Administrative Support: Administration that creates and communicates a clear vision, and is accessible to and supportive of school staff and staff development; offers multiple opportunities for leadership and shared decision-making for teachers and staff.

Appendix E: Comprehensive List of Stakeholder Engagement Activities

School Conditions and Climate Work Group Stakeholder Engagement*		
Date	**Method**	**Event Details**
October 2016	Webinar	• Local Control Funding Formula (LCFF) Evaluation Rubrics Local Performance Indicators, Priority 3 – Parent Engagement, and Priority 6 – School Climate, October 28, 2016
November 2016	In-person	• Fall School Conditions and Climate Work Group(CCWG) Stakeholder Input Session, November 28, 2016, Location: Sacramento County Office of Education (SCOE) Conference Center, 3661 Whitehead Street, Mather, CA 95655, Suite 100, Mather, CA 95655, 1 to 2:30 p.m.
December 2016	In-person	• California Practitioners Advisory Group (CPAG), December 7, 2016
January 2017	Webinar	• LCFF Evaluation Rubrics Local Performance Indicators: Proposed Approaches to Implementation of State Academic Standards (Priority 2) and Parent Engagement (Priority 3) & Update on School Conditions and Climate Work Group (Priority 6), January 6, 2017
February 2017	In-person	• CPAG, February 16, 2017
March 2017	In-person	• California Association of African-American Superintendents and Administrators (CAAASA) Professional Development Summit Session, March 8-10, 2017, San Diego • Spring CCWG Stakeholder Input Session, March 7, 2017, location Scripps Mesa Conference Center, San Diego, CA, 2 p.m. to 4 p.m.
May 2017	Webinar	• LCFF Evaluation Rubrics Local Performance Indicators: Update on School Conditions and Climate Work Group (Priority 6), May 12, 2017, 2 to 3:30 p.m.
June 2017	In-person Webinar	• CPAG, June 1, 2017 • Webinar—LCFF Evaluation Rubrics Local Performance Indicators: Update on School Conditions and Climate Work Group (Priority 6), ACSA, June 23, 2017, 1 to 2 p.m.
July 2017	In-person	• Student Stakeholder Engagement Session , July 20, 2017, Upward Bound Students
August 2017	In-person	• Summer CCWG Stakeholder Input Session, August 22, 2017, Location: SCOE Conference Center, 3661 Whitehead Street, Mather, CA 95655, Suite 100, Mather, CA 95655, 1 to 2:30 p.m.

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