

Scoring Key for California School Staff Survey

(2025–26)

WestEd

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CSSS Scoring Key

The California School Staff Survey (CSSS), along with its companion student and parent surveys—the California Healthy Kids Survey (CHKS) and the California School Parent Survey (CSPS)—form the California Department of Education’s California School Climate, Health, and Learning Surveys (CalSCHLS) System. CalSCHLS is the largest, most comprehensive effort in the nation to regularly assess students, staff, and parents at the local level to provide key data on school climate and safety, learning supports and barriers, and stakeholder engagement, as well as youth development, health, and well-being.

The CSSS assesses student developmental supports, school supports for students and staff, and school environment using scales. Described below is the scoring key for scales in the Core and Student Wellness Modules (Staff CSSS).

This scoring key documents how scores for the scales are computed. Scale scores are calculated by averaging the percentage of respondents who report select response categories on the survey questions that comprise each scale. For example, a value of 60 on the “Student Learning Environment” scale means that on average, students report “Strongly agree” on four of the six “Student Learning Environment” survey questions.

Survey questions, select response categories used to calculate the scale, and the required number of items for each scale are listed in the following tables. Response options of the survey questions and the corresponding numeric codes are listed in the footnotes.

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Core Module

Table 1. Student Learning Environment Scale

Score	Response Range
Student Learning Environment	
Student learning environment scale questions (<i>requires 5–6 items</i>)	
<i>This school...</i>	
is a supportive and inviting place for students to learn.	1–4
promotes academic success for all students.	1–4
emphasizes helping students academically when they need it.	1–4
emphasizes teaching lessons in ways relevant to students.	1–4
is a safe place for students.	1–4
motivates students to learn.	1–4

Source of survey questions: Core Module, California School Staff Survey (CSSS).

Notes: Survey response options are “Strongly agree” (1); “Agree” (2); “Disagree” (3); and “Strongly disagree” (4).

Scale is based on average reporting of “Strongly agree.”

Table 2. Staff Working Environment Scale

Scale	Response Range
Staff Working Environment	
Staff working environment scale questions (<i>requires 3–4 items</i>)	
<i>This school...</i>	
is a supportive and inviting place for staff to work.	1–4
promotes trust and collegiality among staff.	1–4
is a safe place for staff.	1–4
promotes personnel participation in decision-making that affects school practices and policies.	1–4

Source of survey questions: Core Module, California School Staff Survey (CSSS).

Notes: Survey response options are “Strongly agree” (1); “Agree” (2); “Disagree” (3); and “Strongly disagree” (4).

Scale is based on average reporting of “Strongly agree.”

Table 3. Staff Collegiality Scale

Scale	Response Range
Staff Collegiality	
Staff collegiality scale questions (<i>requires 2–3 items</i>)	
<i>Adults who work at this school...</i>	
have close professional relationships with one another.	1–4
support and treat each other with respect.	1–4
feel a responsibility to improve this school.	1–4

Source of survey questions: Core Module, California School Staff Survey (CSSS).

Notes: Survey response options are “Strongly agree” (1); “Agree” (2); “Disagree” (3); and “Strongly disagree” (4).

Scale is based on average reporting of “Strongly agree.”

Table 4. Caring Relationships Scale

Scale	Response Range
Caring Relationships	
Caring relationships scale questions (<i>requires 2–3 items</i>)	
<i>Adults who work at this school...</i>	
really care about every student.	1–4
acknowledge and pay attention to students.	1–4
listen to what students have to say.	1–4

Source of survey questions: Core Module, California School Staff Survey (CSSS).

Notes: Survey response options are “Strongly agree” (1); “Agree” (2); “Disagree” (3); and “Strongly disagree” (4).

Scale is based on average reporting of “Strongly agree.”

Table 5. High Expectations Scale

Scale	Response Range
High Expectations—Adults in School	
High expectations scale questions (<i>requires all items</i>)	
<i>Adults who work at this school...</i>	
want every student to do their best.	1–4
believe that every student can be a success.	1–4

Source of survey questions: Core Module, California School Staff Survey (CSSS).

Notes: Survey response options are “Strongly agree” (1); “Agree” (2); “Disagree” (3); and “Strongly disagree” (4).

Scale is based on average reporting of “Strongly agree.”

Table 6. Student Meaningful Participation Scale

Scale	Response Range
Student Meaningful Participation	
Student meaningful participation scale questions (<i>requires 3–4 items</i>)	
<i>This school...</i>	
encourages opportunities for students to decide things like class activities or rules.	1–4
gives all students equal opportunity to participate in classroom discussions or activities.	1–4
gives all students equal opportunity to participate in numerous extracurricular and enrichment activities.	1–4
gives students opportunities to “make a difference” by helping other people, the school, or the community (e.g., service learning).	1–4

Source of survey questions: Core Module, California School Staff Survey (CSSS).

Notes: Survey response options are “Strongly agree” (1); “Agree” (2); “Disagree” (3); and “Strongly disagree” (4).

Scale is based on average reporting of “Strongly agree.”

Table 7. Promotion of Parental Involvement Scale

Scale	Response Range
Promotion of Parental Involvement	
Promotion of parental involvement scale questions (<i>requires 4–5 items</i>)	
This school is welcoming to and facilitates parent involvement.	1–4
This school encourages parents to be active partners in educating their child.	1–4
Teachers at this school communicate with parents about what their children are expected to learn in class.	1–4
Parents feel welcome to participate at this school.	1–4
School staff take parents’ concerns seriously.	1–4

Source of survey questions: Core Module, California School Staff Survey (CSSS).

Notes: Survey response options are “Strongly agree” (1); “Agree” (2); “Disagree” (3); and “Strongly disagree” (4).

Scale is based on average reporting of “Strongly agree.”

Table 8. Support for Social Emotional Learning Scale

Scale	Response Range
Support for Social Emotional Learning	
Support for social emotional learning scale questions (requires 4–5 items)	
This school encourages students to feel responsible for how they act.	1–4
This school encourages students to understand how others think and feel.	1–4
Students are taught that they can control their own behavior.	1–4
This school helps students resolve conflicts with one another.	1–4
This school encourages students to care about how others feel.	1–4

Source of survey questions: Core Module, California School Staff Survey (CSSS).

Notes: Survey response options are “Strongly agree” (1); “Agree” (2); “Disagree” (3); and “Strongly disagree” (4).

Scale is based on average reporting of “Strongly agree.”

Table 9. Student Readiness to Learn Scale

Scale	Response Range
Student Readiness to Learn	
Student readiness to learn scale questions (requires 3–4 items)	
Students are healthy and physically fit.	1–4
Students start/arrive at school alert and rested.	1–4
Students are motivated to learn.	1–4
Students in this school are well-behaved.	1–4

Source of survey questions: Core Module, California School Staff Survey (CSSS).

Notes: Survey response options are “Strongly agree” (1); “Agree” (2); “Disagree” (3); and “Strongly disagree” (4).

Scale is based on average reporting of “Strongly agree.”

Table 10. Fairness and Rule Clarity Scale

Scale	Response Range
Fairness and Rule Clarity	
Fairness and rule clarity scale questions (requires 3–4 items)	
This school handles discipline problems fairly.	1–4
The school rules are fair.	1–4
This school clearly informs students what will happen if they break school rules.	1–4
Students know what the rules are.	1–4

Source of survey questions: Core Module, California School Staff Survey (CSSS).

Notes: Survey response options are “Strongly agree” (1); “Agree” (2); “Disagree” (3); and “Strongly disagree” (4).

Scale is based on average reporting of “Strongly agree.”

Table 11. Respect for Diversity Scale

Scale	Response Range
Respect for Diversity	
Respect for diversity scale questions (requires 2–3 items)	
Students respect each other’s differences (e.g., gender, race, culture, sexual orientation).	1–4
Adults from this school respect differences in students (e.g., gender, race, culture, sexual orientation).	1–4
Teachers show that they think it is important for students of different races and cultures at this school to get along with each other.	1–4

Source of survey questions: Core Module, California School Staff Survey (CSSS).

Notes: Survey response options are “Strongly agree” (1); “Agree” (2); “Disagree” (3); and “Strongly disagree” (4).

Scale is based on average reporting of “Strongly agree.”

Table 12. Instructional Equity Scale

Scale	Response Range
Instructional Equity	
Instructional equity scale questions (requires 4–5 items)	
<i>This school...</i>	
emphasizes using instructional materials that reflect the culture or ethnicity of its students.	1–4
has staff examine their own cultural biases through professional development or other processes.	1–4
considers closing the racial/ethnic achievement gap a high priority.	1–4
has high expectations for all students, regardless of their race, ethnicity, or nationality.	1–4
fosters an appreciation of student diversity and respect for each other.	1–4

Source of survey questions: Core Module, California School Staff Survey (CSSS).

Notes: Survey response options are “Strongly agree” (1); “Agree” (2); “Disagree” (3); and “Strongly disagree” (4).

Scale is based on average reporting of “Strongly agree.”

Table 13. Student Peer Relationships Scale

Scale	Response Range
Student Peer Relationships	
Student peer relationships scale questions (requires 2–3 items)	
Students care about one another.	1–4
Students treat each other with respect.	1–4
Students get along well with one another.	1–4

Source of survey questions: Core Module, California School Staff Survey (CSSS).

Notes: Survey response options are “Strongly agree” (1); “Agree” (2); “Disagree” (3); and “Strongly disagree” (4).

Scale is based on average reporting of “Strongly agree.”

Table 14. Antibullying Climate Scale

Scale	Response Range
Antibullying Climate	
Antibullying climate scale questions (requires 4–5 items)	
Teachers make it clear to students that bullying is not tolerated.	1–4
If a student was bullied, he or she would tell one of the teachers or staff at school.	1–4
Students tell teachers when other students are being bullied.	1–4
If a student tells a teacher that someone is bullying her or him, the teacher will do something to help.	1–4
Students try to stop bullying when they see it happening.	1–4

Source of survey questions: Core Module, California School Staff Survey (CSSS).

Notes: Survey response options are “Strongly agree” (1); “Agree” (2); “Disagree” (3); and “Strongly disagree” (4).

Scale is based on average reporting of “Strongly agree.”

Table 15. Disciplinary Harshness Scale

Scale	Response Range
Disciplinary Harshness	
Disciplinary harshness scale questions (requires 3–4 items)	
The rules at this school are too strict.	1–4
It is easy for students to get kicked out of class or get suspended.	1–4
Students get in trouble for breaking small rules.	1–4
Teachers are very strict here.	1–4

Source of survey questions: Core Module, California School Staff Survey (CSSS).

Notes: Survey response options are “Strongly agree” (1); “Agree” (2); “Disagree” (3); and “Strongly disagree” (4).

Scale is based on average reporting of “Strongly agree” or “Agree.” This scale is based on the top two response categories because there is no variation on the first category, “Strongly agree.”

Student Wellness Module

Table 16. Staff Efficacy for Promoting Student Well-Being Scale

Scale	Response Range
Staff Efficacy for Promoting Student Well-Being	
Staff efficacy for promoting student well-being scale questions (<i>requires 5–6 items</i>)	
<i>How confident you are that you can successfully...</i>	
develop caring relationships with students.	1–4
create a classroom climate that fosters a sense of safety and belonging for all students.	1–4
recognize a student who may be in emotional distress or at risk due to stressful or traumatic life events.	1–4
refer a student in need to mental health supports or services.	1–4
integrate self-care approaches and strategies into your life that will foster your own mental well-being.	1–4
respond to a student who discloses sensitive information to you in relation to mental health and well-being (e.g., suicidal intent).	1–4

Source of survey questions: Student Wellness Module, California School Staff Survey (CSSS).

Notes: Survey response options are “Not at all confident” (1); “A little confident” (2); “Somewhat confident” (3); and “Very confident” (4).

Scale is based on average reporting of “Very confident.”

Table 17. Staff Compassion Satisfaction Scale

Scale	Response Range
Staff Compassion Satisfaction	
Staff compassion satisfaction scale questions (<i>requires 3–4 items</i>)	
My work makes me feel satisfied.	1–5
I feel good about how I am able to support students with their overall well-being.	1–5
I believe I can make a difference through my work.	1–5
I feel that I am successful in supporting my students who have experienced trauma or stressful life events.	1–4

Source of survey questions: Student Wellness Module, California School Staff Survey (CSSS).

Notes: Survey response options are “Never” (1); “Rarely” (2); “Sometimes” (3); and “Often” (4); and “Very Often” (5).

Scale is based on average reporting of “Often” or “Very Often.”

Table 18. Staff Secondary Traumatic Stress Scale

Scale	Response Range
Staff Secondary Traumatic Stress	
Staff secondary traumatic stress scale questions (<i>requires all items</i>)	
I find it difficult to separate my personal life from my work life.	1–5
I think that I might have been affected by the traumatic or stressful life experiences of the youth I work with.	1–5

Source of survey questions: Student Wellness Module, California School Staff Survey (CSSS).

Notes: Survey response options are “Never” (1); “Rarely” (2); “Sometimes” (3); and “Often” (4); and “Very Often” (5).

Scale is based on average reporting of “Often” or “Very Often.”

Table 19. Staff Burnout Scale

Scale	Response Range
Staff Burnout	
Staff burnout scale questions (<i>requires all items</i>)	
I feel worn out because of my work.	1–5
I feel overwhelmed because my workload seems endless.	1–5

Source of survey questions: Student Wellness Module, California School Staff Survey (CSSS).

Notes: Survey response options are “Never” (1); “Rarely” (2); “Sometimes” (3); and “Often” (4); and “Very Often” (5).

Scale is based on average reporting of “Often” or “Very Often.”

Trauma-Informed Practice

Table 20. Staff Emotional Safety at School Scale

Score	Response Range
Staff Emotional Safety at School	
Staff emotional safety at school scale questions (requires 4–5 items)	
I feel connected to other adults at my school.	1–5
I feel comfortable discussing feelings, worries, and frustrations with my supervisor.	1–5
People at this school care about me as a person.	1–5
Staff at this school trust each other.	1–5
It is OK in this school to discuss feelings, worries, and frustrations with other staff.	1–5

Source of survey questions: Trauma-Informed Practice Module, California School Staff Survey (CSSS).

Notes: Survey response options are “Strongly disagree” (1); “Disagree” (2); “Neither disagree nor agree” (3); “Agree” (4); and “Strongly Agree” (5).

Scale is based on average reporting of “Strongly agree.”

Table 21. Staff-Student Personalization Scale

Score	Response Range
Staff-Student Personalization	
Staff-Student Personalization scale questions (requires 3–4 items)	
Students share their concerns with me.	1–5
Students express their feelings with me.	1–5
Students talk with me about their homes and families.	1–5
Students talk freely about their lives outside of school.	1–5

Source of survey questions: Trauma-Informed Practice Module, California School Staff Survey (CSSS).

Notes: Survey response options are “Strongly disagree” (1); “Disagree” (2); “Neither disagree nor agree” (3); “Agree” (4); and “Strongly Agree” (5).

Scale is based on average reporting of “Strongly agree.”

Table 22. Relationship with School Leadership Scale

Score	Response Range
Relationship with School Leadership	
Relationship with school leadership scale questions (<i>requires 4–5 items</i>)	
How much do your school leaders care about you as an individual? ^A	1–5
When you face challenges at work, how supportive are your school leaders? ^B	1–5
How respectful are your school leaders to you? ^C	1–5
When challenges arise in your personal life, how understanding are your school leaders? ^D	1–5

Source of survey questions: Trauma-Informed Practice Module, California School Staff Survey (CSSS).

Notes: ^ASurvey response options are “Do not care at all” (1); “Care a little bit” (2); “Care somewhat” (3); “Care quite a bit” (4); and “Care a tremendous amount” (5).

^BSurvey response options are “Not at all supportive” (1); “Slightly supportive” (2); “Somewhat supportive” (3); “Quite supportive” (4); and “Extremely supportive” (5).

^CSurvey response options are “Not at all respectful” (1); “Slightly respectful” (2); “Somewhat respectful” (3); “Quite respectful” (4); and “Extremely respectful” (5).

^DSurvey response options are “Not at all understanding” (1); “Slightly understanding” (2); “Somewhat understanding” (3); “Quite understanding” (4); and “Extremely understanding” (5).

Scale is based on average reporting “Care a tremendous amount,” “Extremely supportive,” “Extremely respectful,” or “Extremely understanding.”

Table 23. Underlying Causes of Problem Behavior and Symptoms Scale

Score	Response Range
Underlying Causes of Problem Behavior and Symptoms	
Underlying causes of problem behavior and symptoms scale questions (requires 5–6 items)	
<i>Sample question 1</i>	1–7
<i>Response options:</i> Students could act better if they really wanted to. (1)... Students are doing the best they can with the skills they have. (7)	
<i>Sample question 2</i>	1–7
<i>Response options:</i> If things aren’t going well, it is because the students are not doing what they need to do. (1)... If things aren’t going well, it is because I need to shift what I am doing. (7)	
<i>Question 3</i>	1–7
(Item wording suppressed)	
<i>Question 4</i>	1–7
(Item wording suppressed)	
<i>Question 5</i>	1–7
(Item wording suppressed)	
<i>Question 6</i>	1–7
(Item wording suppressed)	

Source of survey questions: Trauma-Informed Practice Module, California School Staff Survey (CSSS).

Average percent of respondents reporting the top two categories, i.e., “6” or “7,” on survey questions that comprise the scale. Responses “1” or “2” are used for reverse-coded items.

Scale is based on six questions measuring attitudes related to trauma-informed care developed by the Traumatic Stress Institute and Dr. Courtney Baker from Tulane University. For more information about the full ARTIC scale, see www.traumaticstressinstitute.org/the-artic-scale/

This scale assesses behavior that is perceived as external and malleable versus internal and fixed.

Two of the six questions that comprise the scale are presented.

Table 24. Response to Problem Behavior and Symptoms Scale

Score	Response Range
Response to Problem Behavior and Symptoms	
Response to problem behavior and symptoms scale questions (requires 5–6 items)	
<i>Sample question 1</i>	1–7
<i>Response options:</i> Students need to be held accountable for their actions. (1)... Students often are not yet able or ready to take responsibility for their actions. They need to be treated flexibly and as individuals. (7)	
<i>Sample question 2</i>	1–7
<i>Response options:</i> When managing a crisis, enforcement of rules is the most important thing. (1)... When managing a crisis, flexibility is the most important thing. (7)	
<i>Question 3</i>	1–7
(Item wording suppressed)	
<i>Question 4</i>	1–7
(Item wording suppressed)	
<i>Question 5</i>	1–7
(Item wording suppressed)	
<i>Question 6</i>	1–7
(Item wording suppressed)	
<i>Question 7</i>	1–7
(Item wording suppressed)	

Source of survey questions: Trauma-Informed Practice Module, California School Staff Survey (CSSS).

Average percent of respondents reporting the top two categories, i.e., “6” or “7,” on survey questions that comprise the scale. Responses “1” or “2” are used for reverse-coded items.

Scale is based on seven questions measuring attitudes related to trauma-informed care developed by the Traumatic Stress Institute and Dr. Courtney Baker from Tulane University. For more information about the full ARTIC scale, see www.traumaticstressinstitute.org/the-artic-scale/

This scale assesses attitudes about flexibility, feeling safe, and building healthy relationships versus rules, consequences, and eliminating problem behaviors.

Two of the seven questions that comprise the scale are presented.