SCHOOL CLIMATE ASSESSMENT

This School Climate Assessment has been designed for both informal and formal school safety assessments for K–5 educators and administrators. This tool is based on the main categories that were measured in an evaluation of a multi-state pilot of *Welcoming Schools*. The evaluation looked at the following areas: school policies and procedures, school climate, attitudes of educators, comfort level of educators, and teaching practices of educators

As an informal tool, an individual teacher may complete the survey to better understand his or her own practices as well as school policies that contribute to the school's diversity and safety. As a formal tool, the survey can help faculty and staff pinpoint any school climate challenges and clarify areas that need additional attention. Areas of weakness can become the basis for a school climate improvement plan.

This assessment tool can be administered to the staff of an entire school or to any subgroup, such as fourth-grade teachers or a curriculum committee. It is not intended for use with students. To do a comprehensive school assessment, it is important to receive feedback from school staff, administrators, students and parents/guardians.

POLICIES AND ADMINISTRATIVE SUPPORT

1. Our school has a core values or mission statement that includes respect for diversity and multiculturalism.

    Yes ___ No ___ Don't know ___

2. Our school has a written policy protecting students from harassment, violence and discrimination with regard to:

Race/Ethnicity	Yes ___	No ___	Don't know ___
Religion	Yes ___	No ___	Don't know ___
Actual or Perceived Sexual Orientation	Yes ___	No ___	Don't know ___
Ability/Disability	Yes ___	No ___	Don't know ___
Nationality	Yes ___	No ___	Don't know ___
Actual or Perceived Gender Identity	Yes ___	No ___	Don't know ___
Language	Yes ___	No ___	Don't know ___
Learning Style (Differences)	Yes ___	No ___	Don't know ___
Appearance and Physical Attributes	Yes ___	No ___	Don't know ___

3. Our school district has an anti-bullying policy that specifically identifies bias-based bullying.

    Yes ___ No ___ Don't know ___

4. Our forms that parent/guardians and students fill out are designed to reflect the diversity of households, including parents of the same gender.

    Yes ___ No ___ Don't know ___

- Look at the questions where you responded "No." Keep these in mind as you plan your next steps.

- If you responded "Don't Know," it is time for some research to see what policies your school and school district already have in place. Then you can identify what work needs to be done.

SCHOOL-SPONSORED TRAININGS AND WORKSHOPS

4. In the last three years, our school has held workshops for educators inclusive of gender roles and gender stereotypes.

   Yes ___ No ___ Don't know ___

5. In the last three years, our school has held trainings on welcoming all types of families, including topics such as divorce, multiracial families, same-sex parents, grandparent-headed families, and immigrant families.

   Yes ___ No ___ Don't know ___

6. In the last three years, our school has held trainings for teachers on bullying and name-calling that address bias-based harassment, including harassment related to a person's real or perceived race, sexual orientation, gender, religion, learning status, size and language of origin.

   Yes ___ No ___ Don't know ___

7. In the last three years, our school has held trainings for staff that monitor lunch and recess on bullying and name-calling that address bias-based harassment, including harassment related to a person's real or perceived race, sexual orientation, gender, religion, learning status, size and language of origin.

   Yes ___ No ___ Don't know ___

8. In the past two years, our school has held workshops for parents/guardians on family diversity.

   Yes ___ No ___ Don't know ___

9. In the past two years, our school has held workshops for families on name-calling and bullying.

   Yes ___ No ___ Don't know ___

- Were the trainings effective? If not, consider further trainings as part of a comprehensive school plan to create a more welcoming school. If trainings were effective, are there ways to build upon them?
- Notice where you said "No." Include trainings on these topics as part of your overall plans.
- For more ideas see *Connecting with Colleagues* or *Family Education and Community Building for Your School* in *Welcoming Schools*.

SCHOOL CLIMATE

10. In the last two weeks, have you heard students use words related to any of the following as slurs at your school:

Gender (including word such as sissy, girl or tomboy used negatively)	Yes ____	No ____
Race (including comments such as, "I can't play with you because…")	Yes ____	No ____
Religion	Yes ____	No ____
Sexual Orientation (including phrases such as "that's gay")	Yes ____	No ____
Size (including words like fatso, phrases like "you can't do that because")	Yes ____	No ____
Academic Ability (including comments regarding special education)	Yes ____	No ____

    Other:_____

11. If yes, have you interrupted this behavior?

    Always ____ Sometimes ____ Rarely ____ Never ____

12. In the last two weeks, have you seen students physically harass other students while using slurs or put-downs related to the above?

Yes ＿＿ No ＿＿

13. If yes, have you interrupted this behavior?

Always ＿＿ Sometimes ＿＿ Rarely ＿＿ Never ＿＿

14. School staff intervene if racial slurs are used in student interactions.

Always ＿＿ Sometimes ＿＿ Never ＿＿ Don't Know ＿＿

15. School staff intervene if slurs related to special education are used in student interactions.

Always ＿＿ Sometimes ＿＿ Never ＿＿ Don't Know ＿＿

16. School staff intervene if gender slurs or gender-based name-calling are used in student interactions.

Always ＿＿ Sometimes ＿＿ Never ＿＿ Don't Know ＿＿

17. School staff intervene if anti-gay slurs or anti-gay name-calling is used in student interactions.

Always ＿＿ Sometimes ＿＿ Never ＿＿ Don't Know ＿＿

- Spend some time reflecting upon the kinds of slurs you have heard and who or what groups of people are being targeted. Have conversations with others to see if they have similar or different perceptions.

- Notice where you responded "Sometimes," "Never" or "Don't Know." Staff training is recommended to ensure that all types of slurs and name-calling are stopped.

- If you are not confident in your ability or if you rarely or never interrupt negative language or behavior, you may want to talk with school support staff or administration about developing effective strategies.

- Alternatively, you may want to attend a workshop that addresses bias-related bullying and name-calling that specifically includes handling LGBT- and gender-related put-downs.

- If you feel you successfully respond to negative language or behavior, are there ways in which you can help others learn these skills?

- See *What Do You Say to "That's So Gay"* or *Connecting with Colleagues* from *Welcoming Schools*.

TEACHING PRACTICES AND RESOURCES

18. Our school's curriculum includes multicultural perspectives.

Yes ＿＿ No ＿＿ Don't know ＿＿

19. Our school library offers a range of multicultural books.

Yes ＿＿ No ＿＿ Don't know ＿＿

20. Our school library has books that show a diversity of families, including families with two moms or two dads, immigrant parents, single parents, multiracial parents, etc.

Yes ＿＿ No ＿＿ Don't know ＿＿

21. The classrooms in our school have books that show a diversity of families, including families with two moms or two dads, immigrant parents, single parents, multiracial parents etc.

Yes ＿＿ No ＿＿ Don't know ＿＿

22. If educators are doing a lesson plan to enhance understanding of different kinds of families, they include diverse families — including some with two moms or two dads.

Yes ＿＿ No ＿＿ Don't know ＿＿

23. In a lesson plan on name-calling or bullying, educators include gender, LGBT or bias related put-downs.

Yes ___ No ___ Don't know ___

24. Educators in our school feel comfortable defining the words "gay" or "lesbian" to students.

In the classroom? Yes ___ No ___ Don't know ___
One on one? Yes ___ No ___ Don't know ___

- Notice where you responded "Yes." Have conversations with other educators about ways in which school curriculum has become more reflective of the world in which we live.

- Notice where you responded "No." Keep these in mind as you plan your next steps.

- See lesson plans on Family Diversity, Name-calling and Gender from *Welcoming Schools*.

- See the Annotated Bibliographies in *Welcoming Schools*

PERSONAL COMFORT LEVEL

25. If a parent or care-giver "came out" to me I would feel…

very comfortable,   comfortable,   uncomfortable,   very uncomfortable,   I don't know

26. If I had to address students' stereotypic opinions of families of color I would feel...

very comfortable,   comfortable,   uncomfortable,   very uncomfortable,   I don't know

27. If I had to work closely with lesbian or gay parents or care-givers, I would feel…

very comfortable,   comfortable,   uncomfortable,   very uncomfortable,   I don't know

28. If I had to answer a student's question about why a mother would decide to have her child adopted by another family, I would feel…

very comfortable,   comfortable,   uncomfortable,   very uncomfortable,   I don't know

29. If I had to answer a student's questions about how someone can have two moms or two dads, I would feel…

very comfortable,   comfortable,   uncomfortable,   very uncomfortable,   I don't know

30. If I had to answer a student's question about how a white parent can have a child who is a different race, I would feel…

very comfortable,   comfortable,   uncomfortable,   very uncomfortable,   I don't know

- Notice what makes you more or less comfortable. Start conversations with colleagues or find books or online resources that might help you increase your comfort level.

- See *Connecting with Colleagues* or *Bibliography for Educators and Parents/Guardians*.

SCHOOL AND COMMUNITY ATTITUDES

31. Obstacles to addressing **family diversity or name-calling inclusive of LGBT families or LGBT slurs** with students by staff in our school are based on: (Check all that apply)

____ Fear of parental dissatisfaction	____ Educators lack resources
____ Students are too young	____ Religious objections
____ Lack of time in curriculum	____ Inappropriate to discuss outside of the home|
____ Educators lack training	____ Need time for basics (writing, reading, math)
____ Other _____	____ There are no objections

32. Obstacles to addressing **gender roles and expression** with students by staff in our school are based on: (Check all that apply)

____ Fear of parental dissatisfaction	____ Educators lack resources
____ Students are too young	____ Religious objections
____ Lack of time in curriculum	____ Inappropriate to discuss outside of the home
____ Educators lack training	____ Need time for basics (writing, reading, math)
____ Other _____	____ There are no objections

33. People/institutions that might **support** addressing family diversity, gender-stereotyping, and bullying include:

____ Educators	____ Members of civic organizations
____ Administrators	____ Religious organizations
____ Parents/Guardians	____ Others: _____

- Look at the categories that you have checked. As you plan next steps, think about how you can work with supporters and address potential concerns.

- Think about holding school community forums or holding trainings.

- See *Family Education and Community Building for Your School* or *Connecting with Colleagues* from *Welcoming Schools.*

SELF-REFLECTION AND NEXT STEPS

Each section of this survey provides information that can be used to plan future staff development workshops. Discussing the following topics can help inform the direction of a school climate improvement plan by identifying the school's strengths and challenges:

- The Three Things We Do Best…

- The Three Things We Most Need to Work On…

- Perceived Obstacles to Improvement…

- The First Steps Toward Positive Change Are…and Who Will Complete Them…

- In Order to Improve Our School Climate We Need the Following Help and Resources…

Once the assessment is complete and some strategies are identified, share the results with other educators and administrators in your school if they have not already been involved in the process. The school guidance counselor or social worker can be an especially effective ally in creating a safer school. This assessment tool leads to identifying individual school strengths and areas that need further development.

This tool is only as effective as the follow-up strategies it generates. Its purpose is to lead to action.