Engagement Monitoring & Support Tools: Student Engagement Surveys

This document includes information about and instructions for using the Student Engagement Surveys. If you have any questions about the survey, please contact Michael Huang, Vice President of Learning and Practice, at huangm@cisnet.org.

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Overview & Sources

What is the purpose of the Student Engagement Surveys?

In 2020, Communities In Schools (CIS®) and the American Institutes for Research (AIR) partnered to develop the Engagement Monitoring & Support Tools, a set of tools to understand engagement at the individual, classroom, and school levels. One of these tools is a brief set of survey items for students in Grades 6–12 (and parents/guardians of students in Grades K–5) to report how they (or their children) are engaging in school. These items allow schools to monitor the students' global engagement levels and identify areas for additional supports to meet the students where they are in the moment.

What topics are covered?

The set of 15 survey items covers four key domains of engagement: Emotional, Social, Behavioral, and Cognitive.

- **Emotional engagement** (items 1-2, 14-15) captures students' positive and negative feelings about school and feelings of belonging (e.g., "I feel like I am part of my school.").
- **Social engagement** (items 3-6) addresses how students are connecting with teachers and other school adults (e.g., "There is an adult at my school I can talk to when I am upset.") as well as friends (e.g., "I regularly talk to/connect with friends from school.").
- **Behavioral engagement** (items 7-10) measures how involved students are in school or how they are participating (e.g., "When given the chance, I participate in class discussions or activities.").
- **Cognitive engagement** (items 11-13) refers to students' level of interest and how they value school (e.g., "School is important to me.").

There is also one item regarding the learning setting (in person, at home, or hybrid). Demographic items (e.g., grade, race, ethnicity, gender) can also be added to the survey to examine responses by subgroups.

What topics are covered?

There are three versions of the survey provided for use with different age groups.

1. The first version, *Elementary Student Engagement Survey: Parent/Caregiver Responses*, is written for parents/guardians of elementary students to answer with or on behalf of elementary students.
2. The second version, *Elementary Student Engagement Survey: Student Responses*, is written for elementary students to answer on their own. Both versions are provided as options for use with elementary students.
3. The third version, *Middle/High School Student Engagement Survey: Student Responses*, is written for students in middle or high school to respond on their own.

Where do the survey items come from?

Most of the items included in this brief survey were adapted from other well-established and validated school climate surveys. The sources are listed below (in alphabetical order):

- Alaska School Climate and Connectedness Survey (SCCS)—https://aasb.org/wp-

- American Institutes for Research Conditions for Learning (CFL) Surveys— https://supportiveschooldiscipline.org/resources/air-conditions-learning-surveys
- Authoritative School Climate Survey (ASCS)—https://curry.virginia.edu/authoritative-school-climate-survey-and-school-climate-bullying-survey
- Community and Youth Collaborative Institute (CAYCI) School Experience Surveys— http://cayci.osu.edu/surveys
- REACH Survey from the Search Institute—http://www.search-institute.org/sites/default/files/a/REACH-Survey-Tech-Summary.pdf
- U.S. Department of Education School Climate Surveys (EDSCLS)— https://safesupportivelearning.ed.gov/edscls

Elementary Student Engagement Survey: Parents/Caregivers Responses

We want to understand how your child feels about learning and school in this moment so that we can provide your child and other students with the support needed to be successful. Please answer these questions as honestly as you can.

Student Name: _____

Parent/Caregiver Name: _____

School Name: _____

Student ID Number: _____

Age: _____   **Grade:** _____

Race (check all that apply):   **Hispanic (Y/N):**
   ☐ American Indian/Alaska Native   ☐ Yes
   ☐ Asian   ☐ No
   ☐ African American
   ☐ Hawaiian/Other Pacific Islander
   ☐ White
   ☐ Other: _____

How strongly do you agree or disagree with the following statements? Mark one response only.

1. My child feels like [she/he/they] is part of [her/his/their] school.
   - o Strongly disagree
   - o Disagree
   - o Agree
   - o Strongly agree

2. My child's teachers provide instructional materials (e.g., videos, readings, handouts) that reflect our cultural background, ethnicity, and identity.
   - o Strongly disagree
   - o Disagree
   - o Agree
   - o Strongly agree

How strongly do you agree or disagree with the following statements? Mark one response only.

3. There is an adult at school my child can talk to when [she/he/they] is/are upset.
   - o Strongly disagree
   - o Disagree
   - o Agree
   - o Strongly agree

4. My child is comfortable asking [her/his/their] teachers or other adults at school for help with their schoolwork.
   - o Strongly disagree
   - o Disagree
   - o Agree
   - o Strongly agree

5. My child has friends at school that support and care about [her/him/them].

   - o Strongly disagree
   - o Disagree
   - o Agree
   - o Strongly agree

6. My child regularly talks to/connects with friends from school.
   - o Strongly disagree
   - o Disagree
   - o Agree
   - o Strongly agree

How strongly do you agree or disagree with the following statements? Mark one response only.

7. When given the chance, my child participates in class discussions or activities.
   - o Strongly disagree
   - o Disagree
   - o Agree
   - o Strongly agree

8. My child sets goals related to [her/his/their] schoolwork and tries to reach them.
   - o Strongly disagree
   - o Disagree
   - o Agree
   - o Strongly agree

9. My child tries hard to do well in school.
   o Strongly disagree
   o Disagree
   o Agree
   o Strongly agree

10. My child works hard on all assignments even if they won't affect [her/his/their] grade.
   o Strongly disagree
   o Disagree
   o Agree
   o Strongly agree

How strongly do you agree or disagree with the following statements? Mark one response only.

11. At least one of the topics my child is studying is interesting and challenging to my child.
   o Strongly disagree
   o Disagree
   o Agree
   o Strongly agree

12. My child likes the challenges of learning new things in school.

   o Strongly disagree
   o Disagree
   o Agree
   o Strongly agree

13. School is important to my child.
   o Strongly disagree
   o Disagree
   o Agree
   o Strongly agree

14. My child feels excited about going to school
   o Strongly disagree
   o Disagree
   o Agree
   o Strongly agree

15. My child feels good when they are at school.
   o Strongly disagree
   o Disagree
   o Agree
   o Strongly agree

Elementary Student Engagement Survey: Student-Response

We want to understand how you feel about learning and school in this moment so that we can provide you and other students with the support needed to be successful. Please answer these questions as honestly as you can.

Student Name: _____

School Name: _____

Student ID Number: _____

Age: _____   **Grade:** _____

Race (check all that apply):
- ☐ American Indian/Alaska Native
- ☐ Asian
- ☐ African American
- ☐ Hawaiian/Other Pacific Islander
- ☐ White
- ☐ Other: _____

Hispanic (Y/N):
- ☐ Yes
- ☐ No

How strongly do you agree or disagree with the following statements? Mark one response only.

1. I feel like I am part of my school.
   - o Strongly disagree
   - o Disagree
   - o Agree
   - o Strongly agree

2. My teacher's lessons include stories and activities that talk about people like me or my family.
   - o Strongly disagree
   - o Disagree
   - o Agree
   - o Strongly agree

3. There is an adult at my school I can talk to when I am upset.
   - o Strongly disagree
   - o Disagree
   - o Agree
   - o Strongly agree

4. I am comfortable asking my teachers or other adults at school for help with my schoolwork.
   - o Strongly disagree
   - o Disagree
   - o Agree
   - o Strongly agree

5. I have friends at school that support and care about me.
   - o Strongly disagree
   - o Disagree
   - o Agree
   - o Strongly agree

6. I regularly talk to/connect with friends from school.
   - o Strongly disagree
   - o Disagree
   - o Agree
   - o Strongly agree

7. When I can, I join in/take part in class activities.
   - o Strongly disagree
   - o Disagree
   - o Agree
   - o Strongly agree

8. I set goals related to my schoolwork and try to reach them.
   - o Strongly disagree
   - o Disagree
   - o Agree
   - o Strongly agree

9. I try hard to do well in school.
   - o Strongly disagree
   - o Disagree
   - o Agree
   - o Strongly agree

10. I work hard on all classwork and assignments.
   - o Strongly disagree
   - o Disagree
   - o Agree
   - o Strongly agree

11. I am interested in at least one thing that I am learning in school.
   - o   Strongly disagree
   - o   Disagree
   - o   Agree
   - o   Strongly agree

12. I like learning new things in school.
   - o   Strongly disagree
   - o   Disagree
   - o   Agree
   - o   Strongly agree

13. School is important to me.
   - o   Strongly disagree
   - o   Disagree
   - o   Agree
   - o   Strongly agree

14. I feel excited about going to school.
   - o   Strongly disagree
   - o   Disagree
   - o   Agree
   - o   Strongly agree

15. I feel good when I am at school.
   - o   Strongly disagree
   - o   Disagree
   - o   Agree
   - o   Strongly agree

Middle and High School Student Engagement Survey

We want to understand how you feel about learning and school in this moment so that we can provide you and other students with the support needed to be successful. Please answer these questions as honestly as you can.

Student Name: _____

School Name: _____

Student ID Number: _____

Age: _____   **Grade:** _____

Race (check all that apply):   **Hispanic (Y/N):**
- ☐ American Indian/Alaska Native   ☐ Yes
- ☐ Asian   ☐ No
- ☐ African American
- ☐ Hawaiian/Other Pacific Islander
- ☐ White
- ☐ Other: _____

How strongly do you agree or disagree with the following statements? Mark one response only.

1. I feel like I am part of my school.
   - ○ Strongly disagree
   - ○ Disagree
   - ○ Agree
   - ○ Strongly agree

2. My teachers provide instructional materials (e.g., videos, readings, handouts) that reflect my cultural background, ethnicity, and identity.
   - ○ Strongly disagree
   - ○ Disagree
   - ○ Agree
   - ○ Strongly agree

How strongly do you agree or disagree with the following statements? Mark one response only.

3. There is an adult at my school I can talk to when I am upset.
    o Strongly disagree
    o Disagree
    o Agree
    o Strongly agree

4. I am comfortable asking my teachers or other adults at school for help with my schoolwork.
    o Strongly disagree
    o Disagree
    o Agree
    o Strongly agree

5. I have friends at school that support and care about me.
    o Strongly disagree
    o Disagree

    o Agree
    o Strongly agree

6. I regularly talk to/connect with friends from school.
    o Strongly disagree
    o Disagree
    o Agree
    o Strongly agree

How strongly do you agree or disagree with the following statements? Mark one response only.

7. When given the chance, I participate in class discussions or activities.
    o Strongly disagree
    o Disagree
    o Agree
    o Strongly agree

8. I set goals related to my schoolwork and try to reach them.
    o Strongly disagree
    o Disagree
    o Agree
    o Strongly agree

9. I try hard to do well in school.
    o Strongly disagree
    o Disagree
    o Agree
    o Strongly agree

10. I work hard on all assignments even if they won't affect my grade.
    o Strongly disagree
    o Disagree
    o Agree
    o Strongly agree

How strongly do you agree or disagree with the following statements? Mark one response only.

11. At least one of the topics I am studying is interesting and challenging to me.
    o Strongly disagree
    o Disagree
    o Agree
    o Strongly agree

12. I like the challenges of learning new things in school.
    o Strongly disagree
    o Disagree

    o Agree
    o Strongly agree

13. School is important to me.
    o Strongly disagree
    o Disagree
    o Agree
    o Strongly agree

14. I feel excited about going to school.
    o Strongly disagree
    o Disagree
    o Agree
    o Strongly agree

15. I feel good when I am at school.
    o Strongly disagree
    o Disagree
    o Agree
    o Strongly agree

Scoring Instructions

This section summarizes AIR's recommended approach to scoring the survey items for the Student Engagement Surveys.

Response Values

All engagement items have four response options. Each response option is assigned a numeric value; more positive responses receive higher numeric values compared with less positive responses, as specified below. Only one response is permitted per item. Responses should be coded as follows:

- Strongly agree (value of 4)
- Agree (value of 3)
- Disagree (value of 2)
- Strongly disagree (value of 1)

Identifying Which Items to Include in Each Domain

Items are grouped by domain under the appropriate headers. Items to include in each of the four domains are listed below:

- **Emotional Engagement**: items 1-2, 14-15
- **Social Engagement**: items 3-8
- **Behavioral Engagement**: items 7-10
- **Cognitive Engagement:** items 11-13

Calculating the Global and Domain Scores for Engagement

The process AIR proposes for calculating the Global Engagement Scores and domain scores involves using item means as described next.

- **Within each domain, calculate the average numeric value for the student or parent/guardian's responses to the items.** For example, for Emotional Engagement, there are four items; a student or parent/caregiver who answered *agree* (value of 3), *disagree* (value of 2), *agree* (value of 3) and *strongly agree* (value of 4) would have an Emotional Engagement domain average of 3. *Note: For any skipped item, do not include that item in the calculation.*
- **Then, average the domain averages to obtain the Global Engagement Score.** The scores will range from 1 to 4.

To examine engagement levels in aggregate (i.e., for a group of students), average individuals' scores within areas of interest (e.g., Global Engagement, Emotional Engagement, etc.). Alternatively, review the distribution of scores across categories (e.g., XX% of scores were Higher Global Engagement). See the next section for more information about score categories.

Categorizing Engagement Scores

Based on data received thus far from CIS students across the network since the measures were released in 2020, the following ranges for categorizing scores have been established. Students falling in the "sliding" category may be at risk of disengaging in the near future and likely warrant support and intervention. Students falling in the "low" category are already disengaged from school and warrant support and intervention.

- **High:** Scores equal to or greater than 3.0
- **Moderate:** Scores ranging from 2.5-2.99
- **Sliding:** Scores ranging from 2.0-2.49
- **Low:** Scores below 2.0