

NewSchools

Since 2015, [NewSchools](#) has been working with teams of educators, school leaders, researchers, funders, and policymakers to reimagine learning opportunities that meet the academic and social-emotional needs of students in an integrated way. Our [expanded definition of student success](#) (EDSS) framework is the foundation of this work. To help all young people graduate high school prepared and inspired to pursue their most ambitious dreams and plans, they need a strong academic foundation, an excellent and equitable learning environment, and a combination of essential mindsets, habits, and skills associated with lifelong fulfillment and success.

Our student surveys of school culture and climate and social-emotional learning are an important way we help school communities embrace a broader and more meaningful framework of success. Below are the constructs we measure and the specific survey items in our EDSS surveys. The schools in our national [Innovative Public Schools](#) portfolio administer these surveys every fall and spring semester, and have done so since 2016–17. You can read more about the development of our surveys and practical lessons generated with our schools in our measurement working paper, [2018 Insight Brief](#), [2019 Insight Brief](#), [2020 Insight Brief](#), [Greater Good Magazine research summary](#), [2022 insight blog](#), and [COVID-era findings summary](#).

We encourage anyone who might be interested to use these validated instruments in their own efforts to embrace and measure holistic student development.

NewSchools EDSS Survey Constructs and Items for SY2024–25

Student-reported social-emotional competencies, grades 4–12

28 total items

1. [Curiosity, 4 items](#)
2. [Growth mindset, 4 items](#)
3. [Perseverance, 4 items](#)
4. [Self-awareness, 4 items](#)
5. [Self-efficacy, 4 items](#)
6. [Self-management, 4 items](#)
7. [Social awareness, 4 items](#)

Student perceptions of school culture and climate, grades 4–12

31 total items

1. [Fairness, 4 items](#)
2. [Learning strategies, 4 items](#)
3. [Rigorous expectations, 4 items](#)
4. [School safety, 3 items](#)
5. [Sense of belonging, 4 items](#)
6. [Student engagement, 4 items](#)
7. [Teacher and student relationships, 4 items](#)
8. [Inclusion, 4 items](#)

Curiosity, 4 items

A strong desire to learn information or know something for its own sake (Character Lab). Students with high curiosity have the willingness to engage in more effortful thinking, higher intrinsic motivation to perform challenging cognitive tasks, and are willing to make adjustments to existing attitudes and behaviors once they have been exposed to new ideas or situations (ETS).

Look back on everything you did this past week. How many of these things are true?

1. I got so focused on learning that I didn't pay attention to the time.
2. I heard or read something that made me think differently.
3. I chose to learn more about one of my favorite interests.
4. I looked into a new idea, just because I thought it would be cool or fun to learn about it.

Response options 1–5: Not at all true, A little true, Somewhat true, Mostly true, Completely true

Source: Inspired and adapted from [Character Lab](#)

Growth mindset, 4 items

The belief that one's abilities and skills can grow with effort. Students with a growth mindset see effort as necessary for success, embrace challenges, learn from criticism, and persist in the face of setbacks (Dweck).

In this section, please indicate how true each of the following statements is for you:

1. I can change my intelligence with hard work.
2. I can increase my intelligence by challenging myself.
3. I am capable of learning anything.
4. I can do well in a subject even if I am not naturally good at it.

Response options 1–5: Not at all true, A little true, Somewhat true, Mostly true, Completely true

Source: Carol Dweck

Perseverance, 4 items

The tendency to stay focused on a goal despite obstacles and to forego distractions or temptations, prioritizing higher pursuits over lower pleasures. Students with high perseverance are often passionate and committed to a long-term goal and work hard despite experiencing failure or hardships (Character Lab). Academic perseverance is the difference between doing the minimal amount of work to pass a class and putting in long hours to truly master course materials and excel (CCSR).

How much does each of the following statements describe a person like you?

1. I finish whatever I begin.
2. I try very hard even after making mistakes.
3. I keep working hard even when I feel like quitting.
4. I keep trying to improve myself, even when it takes a long time to get there.

Response options 1–5: Not at all like me, Not much like me, Somewhat like me, Mostly like me, Very much like me

Source: Adapted from [Angela Duckworth](#)

Self-awareness, 4 items

The ability to accurately recognize one's own emotions, thoughts, and values and how they influence behavior (CASEL). Students who are self-aware can demonstrate knowledge of their emotions, personal strengths, challenges and potential, and awareness of how to get help and support when needed (Washoe County School District); they also self-monitor and constantly reassess where they are in relation to a goal (CCSR).

Please let us know how easy or difficult each of the following are for you:

1. Knowing the emotions I feel.
2. Knowing ways to make myself feel better when I'm sad.
3. Noticing what my body does when I am nervous.
4. Knowing ways I calm myself down.

Response options 1-5: Very difficult, Difficult, Somewhat difficult, Easy, Very easy

Source: Washoe County School District–CASEL Long Version, developed through an [IES grant](#)

Self-efficacy, 4 items

The belief in one's own ability to succeed in achieving an outcome or reaching a goal. Self-efficacy reflects confidence in the ability to exert control over one's motivation, behavior, and environment. Students with a high sense of self efficacy may approach difficult tasks as challenges, quickly recover from and persist despite setbacks, and see failure as a need for more effort and strengthened skills (Bandura).

How confident are you about the following at school?

1. I can earn an A in my classes.
2. I can do well on all my tests, even when they're difficult.
3. I can master the hardest topics in my classes.
4. I can meet all the learning goals my teachers set.

Response options 1-5: Not at all confident, A little confident, Somewhat confident, Mostly confident, Completely confident

Source: CORE Districts Social Emotional Learning Survey

Self-management, 4 items

The ability to regulate one's emotions, thoughts, and behaviors effectively in different situations. This includes managing stress, delaying gratification, motivating oneself, and setting and working toward personal and academic goals (CASEL). Students with strong self-regulation skills arrive to class prepared, pay attention, follow directions, allow others to speak without interruption, and work independently, and with focus.

We'd like to know how you approach your classes in general. When answering these items, please think specifically about the last month in your classes. During the past 30 days...

1. I came to class prepared.
2. I remembered and followed directions.
3. I got my work done right away instead of waiting until the last minute.
4. I paid attention and resisted distractions.

Response options 1-5: Almost never, Once in a while, Sometimes, Often, Almost all the time

Source: CORE Districts SEL Survey, adapted from [Park et al. \(2017\)](#)

Social awareness, 4 items

The ability to take the perspective of and empathize with others from diverse backgrounds and cultures, to understand social and ethical norms for behavior, and to recognize family, school, and community resources and supports (CASEL). This involves being aware of other people and their emotions, as well as other settings/contexts and their social rules, and using that to determine appropriate behaviors for varying social situations (CCSR), as well as the ability to engage in positive relationships with others (Raver & Zigler).

In this section, please help us better understand your thoughts and actions when you are with other people. When answering these items please think specifically about the past month in school. During the last 30 days...

1. I listened carefully to other people's points of view.
2. I noticed and complimented someone else's accomplishments.
3. I got along with students who were different from me.
4. I respected the views of others even if I disagreed with them.

Response options 1-5: Almost never, Once in a while, Sometimes, Often, Almost all the time

Source: [Washoe County School District](#), adapted from CASEL & AIR

Fairness, 4 items

A set of congruent behaviors, attitudes, and policies that come together in a system or agency, and enable them to work effectively in cross-cultural situations (National Center on Safe Supportive Learning Environments).

How strongly do you agree or disagree with the following statements about this school?

1. Adults working at this school treat all students respectfully.
2. People of different backgrounds get along well at this school.
3. All students are treated the same, regardless of whether their parents are rich or poor.
4. Students of different genders are treated equally well.

Response options 1-5: Strongly agree, Agree, Somewhat agree, Disagree, Strongly disagree

Source: Drawn from the [US Department of Education's School Climate Surveys](#)

Learning strategies, 4 items

Students' deliberate use of strategies to manage their own learning processes in class (Panorama).

In this section, we would like for you to think about your overall learning experience at school. Please answer the following questions to help us better understand how you learn in general.

1. How confident are you that you can choose an effective strategy to get your schoolwork done well?
 - Not at all confident, Slightly confident, Somewhat confident, Quite confident, Extremely confident
2. Before you start on a challenging project, how often do you think about the best way to approach the project?
 - Almost never, Once in a while, Sometimes, Frequently, Almost always
3. Overall, how well do your learning strategies help you learn more effectively?
 - Not well at all, Slightly well, Somewhat well, Quite well, Extremely well
4. How often do you use strategies to learn more effectively?
 - Almost never, Once in a while, Sometimes, Frequently, Almost always

Source: [Panorama Student Survey](#)

Rigorous expectations, 4 items

Students' feelings about how much they're held to high expectations around effort, understanding, persistence and performance in class (Panorama).

Please tell us about how much your teachers encourage you to do your best.

1. When you feel like giving up on a difficult task, how likely is it that you teachers will make you keep trying?
 - Not at all likely, Slightly likely, Somewhat likely, Quite likely, Extremely likely
2. How much do you teachers encourage you to do your best?
 - Do not encourage me at all, Encourage me a little, Encourage me some, Encourage me quite a bit, Encourage me a tremendous amount
3. How often do your teachers take time to make sure you understand the material?
 - Almost never, Once in a while, Sometimes, Frequently, Almost always
4. Overall, how high are your teachers' expectations of you?
 - Not high at all, Slightly high, Somewhat high, Quite high, Extremely high

Source: [Panorama Student Survey](#)

School safety, 4 items

Perceptions of student physical and psychological safety while at school (Panorama).

In this section, we would like to understand how you feel about your school.

1. How likely is it that someone from your school will bully you online?
 - Not at all likely, Slightly likely, Somewhat likely, Quite likely, Extremely likely
2. How often do you worry about violence at your school?
 - Almost never, Once in a while, Sometimes, Frequently, Almost always
3. If a student is bullied in school, how difficult is it for him/her to get help from an adult?
 - Not at all difficult, Slightly difficult, Somewhat difficult, Quite difficult, Extremely difficult

Source: [Panorama Student Survey](#)

Sense of belonging, 4 items

How much students feel that they are valued members of the school community (Panorama). Students with a sense of belonging in school feel socially connected, supported, and respected. They trust their teachers and their peers, and they feel like they fit in at school. They are not worried about being treated as a stereotype and are confident that they are seen as a person of value (Romero).

In this section, we would like to understand how you feel about your school.

1. How well do people at your school understand you as a person?
 - Do not understand at all, Understand a little, Understand somewhat, Understand quite a bit, Completely understand
2. How much support do the adults at your school give you?
 - No support at all, A little bit of support, Some support, Quite a bit of support, A tremendous amount of support
3. How much respect do students at your school show you?
 - No respect at all, A little bit of respect, Some respect, Quite a bit of respect, A tremendous amount of respect
4. Overall, how much do you feel like you belong at your school?
 - Do not belong at all, Belong a little bit, Belong somewhat, Belong quite a bit, Completely belong

Student engagement, 4 items

Students' level of attentiveness and investment in their classes (Panorama).

In this section, we would like to know about your experience in your classes.

1. How excited are you about going to your classes?
 - Not at all excited, Slightly excited, Somewhat excited, Quite excited, Extremely excited
2. How often do you get so focused on activities in your classes that you lose track of time?
 - Almost never, Once in a while, Sometimes, Frequently, Almost always
3. In your classes, how excited/eager are you to participate?
 - Not at all excited/eager, Slightly excited/eager, Somewhat excited/eager, Quite excited/eager, Extremely excited/eager
 - Change to "excited for ES" and use "eager" for MS and HS
4. Overall, how interested are you in your classes?
 - Not at all interested, Slightly interested, Somewhat interested, Quite interested, Extremely interested

Source: [Panorama Student Survey](#)

Teacher and student relationships, 4 items

How strong the social connection is between teachers and students within and beyond the classroom (Panorama).

Please tell us about how you feel about your current teachers and classes.

1. If you walked into class upset, how many of your teachers would be concerned?
2. If you came back to visit class three years from now, how many of your teachers would be excited to see you?
3. When your teachers ask how you are doing, how many of them are really interested in your answer?
4. How many of your teachers would you be excited to have again in the future?

Response options 1-5: None of my teachers, A few of my teachers, About half of my teachers, Most of my teachers, All of my teachers

Source: [Panorama Student Survey](#)

Inclusion, 4 items (Optional)

1. How often do you spend time at school with students from different races, ethnicities, or cultures?
 - Answer options: Almost never, Once in a while, Sometimes, Frequently, Almost always
2. How often do you have classes with students from different racial, ethnic, or cultural backgrounds?
 - Answer options: Almost never, Once in a while, Sometimes, Frequently, Almost always
3. At your school, how often do students from different races, ethnicities, or cultures hang out with each other?
 - Answer options: Almost never, Once in a while, Sometimes, Frequently, Almost always
4. At your school, how common is it for students to have close friends from different racial, ethnic, or cultural backgrounds?
 - Answer options: Not at all common, Slightly common, Somewhat common, Quite common, Extremely common

Source: [Panorama Equity and Inclusion Survey](#)