

# **Cal-SCHLS: Surveys of Students, Staff, and Parents**

## *A Self-Assessment Tool and Data Analysis System for Improving Special Education Services at the Local Level*

### **PURPOSE:**

To provide a cost-effective, user-friendly self-assessment tool and data analysis system to be used at the local level to identify school practices and district policies that contribute to creating a positive school climate, as well as those practices and policies that detract from creating a positive school climate for students and staff.

### **BACKGROUND:**

The California School Climate, Health, and Learning Survey (Cal-SCHLS) System (Outside Source) is a comprehensive learning support data system providing comparable data from students, staff, and parents. Cal-SCHLS was developed by West-ED for the California Department of Education (CDE) and is comprised of the following:

- [California Healthy Kids Survey \(CHKS\)](#) for students
- [California School Climate Survey \(CSCS\)](#) for school staff
- [California School Parent Survey \(CSPS\)](#) for parents

Title IV of ESEA no longer requires the surveys, but many districts are continuing to administer these three surveys simultaneously, once every two years.

### **SPECIAL EDUCATION SUPPORTS INFORMATION SYSTEM:**

To address the need for more data with regard to school climate, administrative support, and working conditions related to special education, WestEd and the CDE/Special Education Division expanded the CSCS to include a Special Education Supports Information System (SEIS).

[http://cscs.wested.org/survey\\_content/seis](http://cscs.wested.org/survey_content/seis)

This system includes the following reports and products that are a culmination of work provided as a courtesy of the CDE Special Education Division:

- Addition of a Special Education Supports Module (SESM) to the CSCS and questions to identify staff who have special education responsibilities. This new module, combined with new questions related to closing the racial/ethnic achievement gap, significantly enhances the value of the CSCS to assist schools in improving the learning environment for all students and the working environment for all staff. Module survey questions are research-based (Futernick, 2007).

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- Preparation of a supplemental CSCS Special Education Report for each district, comparing results reported by special education and general education staff
- Biennial preparation of similar aggregated statewide and regional reports for each Special Education Local Planning Area (SELPA)
- Annual website report posting for public dissemination
- Guide to the CSCS Survey Content that discusses each of the survey questions
- Development of the School Climate Data Workbook that has worksheets to help identify and discuss the key findings related to special education staff and students to assist in understanding the survey results, and complement other school improvement efforts

**CONTACT INFORMATION:** CSCS Helpline at 888-841-7536

**REFERENCE:** Futernick, K. (2007). A possible dream: Retaining California's teachers so all students learn. Sacramento, California State University:  
[http://www.calstate.edu/teacherquality/documents/possible\\_dream.pdf](http://www.calstate.edu/teacherquality/documents/possible_dream.pdf)