

**Interpretation Topical Discussion Guide**

# Interpreting Cultural and Linguistic Competence School Climate Survey Data

## Introduction

This *Discussion Guide* provides suggestions to help you use your school climate data to make meaningful interpretations about the topic of Cultural and Linguistic Competence within your state, district, or school, taking into account the viewpoints of the people who took the survey in your state, district, or school (i.e., students, instructional staff, noninstructional staff, parents/guardians).<sup>1</sup> It accompanies the School Climate Improvement Resource Package (SCIRP) [Data Interpretation Guide](#), which contains information, support, and resources to help you interpret and use your survey results, using the U.S. Department of Education (ED) School Climate Surveys (EDSCLS) [model](#) of school climate domains and topic areas as a framework. We encourage you to read the full *Data Interpretation Guide*, another resource within the SCIRP, before using this *Discussion Guide* so that you have a better understanding of the model and types of results you will see.

---

This document is intended for use by EDSCLS users as well as users of other school climate surveys, which often include a topic area similar in composition to the Cultural and Linguistic Competence topic area in the EDSCLS. Directions specific to EDSCLS users are denoted in this guide with the EDSCLS logo (right).



This guide, along with the [Data Interpretation Guide](#), can help you to derive meaning from your state's, district's, or school's Cultural and Linguistic Competence results, which you can use to identify areas for improvement.<sup>2,3</sup> In the following sections, you will find:


- A definition of cultural and linguistic competence as it relates to school climate
- Guiding questions to help you think through your Cultural and Linguistic Competence data from a multi-tiered perspective—universal and targeted (Click on the [Data Interpretation Guide](#) and the [Reference Manual](#) to find additional information on multi-tiered approaches.)
- Guiding questions organized by data types (Cultural and Linguistic Competence scale scores and item-level Cultural and Linguistic Competence data):
  - Initial and deeper guiding questions about cultural and linguistic competence for **districts** ([Appendix A](#))
  - Initial and deeper guiding questions about cultural and linguistic competence for **schools** ([Appendix B](#))

---

<sup>1</sup> This document provides strategies applicable to public schools and districts, including charter authorizers, charter management organizations, education management organizations, individual charter schools, and charter local educational agencies.

<sup>2</sup> Information in this *Discussion Guide* is pertinent to EDSCLS pilot sites as well as those administering the EDSCLS before fall 2017, at which time benchmark data are slated to be available in the web-based platform. This guide will be updated accordingly after the release of benchmark data.

<sup>3</sup> States that host the EDSCLS can use the same suggestions as given for districts; states will also be able to compare data across their districts, as well as across their schools.

- 
- A link to a [Cultural and Linguistic Competence webpage](#) that includes resources on interventions that districts and schools can implement immediately to address specific areas of need as well as longer term resources for improving cultural and linguistic competence
  - Additional guiding questions for those wishing to use average (mean) Cultural and Linguistic Competence values:
    - Initial and deeper guiding questions about cultural and linguistic competence for **districts** using average (mean) Cultural and Linguistic Competence values ([Appendix C](#))
    - Initial and deeper guiding questions about cultural and linguistic competence for **schools** using average (mean) Cultural and Linguistic Competence values ([Appendix D](#))

Schools and districts are also required to report information about school climate pursuant to the ED's Civil Rights Data Collection (CRDC). Information collected by EDSCLS or other similar surveys may help schools and districts prepare their responses to the CRDC survey. More information about the CRDC can be found at [ocrdata.ed.gov](http://ocrdata.ed.gov).

## What Is Cultural and Linguistic Competence?

For the purposes of interpreting data, we have defined cultural and linguistic competence as a set of congruent behaviors, attitudes, and policies that come together in a system or agency or among professionals and that enable that system, agency, or those professionals to work effectively in cross-cultural situations.

You can find a brief overview on cultural and linguistic competence as it relates to school climate [here](#).

## Guidance for Districts and Schools

### 1. Examining Cultural and Linguistic Competence Data Overall: Focus on a Universal Approach

You can use your Cultural and Linguistic Competence scale scores to focus on a universal approach to improving cultural and linguistic competence. [Scale scores](#) (described in the *Data Interpretation Guide*) are the premier way that the EDSCLS as well as many other school climate surveys measure school climate. A scale score, which combines multiple survey items related to different aspects of a topic area such as Cultural and Linguistic Competence, is a more robust measure than attempting to measure that topic by asking about it with a single item.<sup>4</sup>

After you have these data for your district's or school's students and staff, and you have read the [Data Interpretation Guide](#), you can use initial guiding questions in Appendix A (for districts) and in Appendix B (for schools) to help make meaningful interpretations of your results.

---

<sup>4</sup> Click on the [reverse-coding](#) section of the *Data Interpretation Guide* to go to important details about how average (mean) topic area values are calculated.



If you are a **district**, click on [Appendix A](#) to go to initial guiding questions for overall Cultural and Linguistic Competence scale scores.



If you are a **school**, click on [Appendix B](#) to go to initial guiding questions for overall Cultural and Linguistic Competence scale scores.

[Average \(mean\) topic area values](#) (see “Appendix C. Average (Mean) Topic Area Values” in the [Data Interpretation Guide](#)) also can be used to focus on a universal approach to improving cultural and linguistic competence. As described in the [Data Interpretation Guide](#), average (mean) topic area values can be used to gauge how favorably respondents perceive the topic.<sup>5</sup>



If you are a **district**, click on [Appendix C](#) to go to initial guiding questions for overall average (mean) Cultural and Linguistic Competence values.



If you are a **school**, click on [Appendix D](#) to go to initial guiding questions for overall average (mean) Cultural and Linguistic Competence values.

## 2. Examining Cultural and Linguistic Competence Data Across Student and Staff Respondent Characteristics: Focus on a Targeted Approach


Cultural and Linguistic Competence scale scores broken out by respondent characteristics provide a richer set of data and a way to see how perceptions of cultural and linguistic competence differ across subgroups of students and staff.



Scale scores are produced for EDSCLS users for the following subgroups.<sup>6</sup>

- Student scale scores per topic area can be examined by:
  - Gender,
  - Race/ethnicity, and
  - Grade.
- Staff (instructional and noninstructional) scale scores per topic area can be examined by:
  - Gender and
  - Race/ethnicity.

*Note:* In the event of a possible disclosure risk that would allow a respondent or small subgroup of respondents to be identified (e.g., if there is only one Asian teacher in the school), the EDSCLS platform will suppress the results for that subgroup (i.e., results for that subgroup will not be shown).



**WHAT ABOUT EXAMINING SURVEY RESULTS BY PARENT/GUARDIAN CHARACTERISTICS?**

Because of the brevity of the parent/guardian survey, the EDSCLS was not designed to produce scale scores or average (mean) Cultural and Linguistic Competence values for parents; however, parent results can be examined at the item level, which is discussed in the section [Digging Deeper Into the Data by Using Item-Level Data](#).

<sup>5</sup> Average (mean) topic area values are not directly available from the EDSCLS platform but can be calculated from raw survey data. See [Appendix C](#) in the [Data Interpretation Guide](#) for information about calculating, using, and interpreting average (mean) topic area values.

<sup>6</sup> Note that the EDSCLS platform does not produce crossed demographics (e.g., Asian females). Users can obtain crossed demographics analytically by downloading the raw data file.

(To understand how a small subgroup perceives school climate, see the [Reference Manual](#) for tips on conducting interviews and focus groups.)

Examining student and staff perceptions of cultural and linguistic competence in your district or school by respondent characteristics can be extremely useful, not only in understanding the areas of strength and weakness in your school environment, but also in targeting interventions. For example, if perceptions of cultural and linguistic competence differ by student characteristics (gender, race/ethnicity, grade), this will help you highlight areas of targeted need.

Supports should be designed to improve school climate for the students who are most in need regardless of the subgroup(s) to which they belong. Targeting supports based on need as opposed to membership in a subgroup will support compliance with relevant civil rights laws.



If you are a **district**, click on [Appendix A](#) to go to initial guiding questions for Cultural and Linguistic Competence scale scores **by respondent characteristics**.



If you are a **school**, click on [Appendix B](#) to go to initial guiding questions for Cultural and Linguistic Competence scale scores **by respondent characteristics**.

[Average \(mean\) topic area values](#) also can be used to focus on a targeted approach to improving cultural and linguistic competence.



If you are a **district**, click on [Appendix C](#) to go to initial guiding questions for overall average (mean) Cultural and Linguistic Competence values **by respondent characteristics**.



If you are a **school**, click on [Appendix D](#) to go to initial guiding questions for overall average (mean) Cultural and Linguistic Competence values **by respondent characteristics**.

### 3. Digging Deeper Into the Data by Using Item-Level Data: Focus on a Targeted Approach

After you have examined your scale scores (and average [mean] values, if you wish to use them), looking at item-level data may help you to dig deeper to target specific areas or issues. (See page 8 the *Data Interpretation Guide* to learn more detail on examining [item-level data](#).) Item-level results often can provide districts and schools with concrete information on cultural and linguistic competence that may be more actionable, warranting more immediate implementation of interventions included in the [Cultural and Linguistic Competence webpage](#), as well as planning and preparation for longer term interventions and strategies.




#### WHAT ABOUT USING ITEM-LEVEL DATA TO EXAMINE PARENTS'/GUARDIANS' PERCEPTIONS?

**Yes!** As noted earlier, the EDSCLS parent data do not include Cultural and Linguistic Competence scale scores or average (mean) Cultural and Linguistic Competence values; however, parent/guardian item-level data can be used to consider how parents perceive specific areas of cultural and linguistic competence.



Sites using the EDSCLS receive percentage distributions and item averages (means) for each item in the survey that is included in the Cultural and Linguistic Competence scale produced by the platform as well as any important Cultural and Linguistic Competence



items that are not in the scale but have been kept on the survey as stand-alone items. For pilot sites, they are included in your District or School Report PDF and are marked for you.

These guiding questions include suggestions for examining item-level data about how:

- a. A Cultural and Linguistic Competence item is perceived by individual respondent groups;
- b. A Cultural and Linguistic Competence item is perceived across respondent groups, but only for items *worded exactly the same way* for each group (called *comparable items*); and
- c. Cultural and Linguistic Competence items organized by content (called an *item content group*) are perceived across respondent groups.

These types of guiding questions are detailed here.

## A. Examining Cultural and Linguistic Competence Items Within a Respondent Group

You can compare individual Cultural and Linguistic Competence items with each other within an individual respondent group (students, instructional staff, noninstructional staff, or parents/guardians). Comparing items in this way may provide districts and schools with concrete examples of cultural and linguistic competence that may be more actionable, warranting more immediate implementation of interventions included in the [Cultural and Linguistic Competence webpage](#), as well as planning and preparation for longer term interventions and strategies.

However, we strongly encourage you *not* to focus excessively on a single item rather than the more robust construct (topic area) of which it is a part. If you focus change efforts solely on behaviors and attitudes as defined by specific items, you may run the risk of a form of unintentional “teaching to the test” in which you are able to show growth with respect to specific items even though perceptions of the underlying topic area have not changed.



When comparing the averages (means) of individual items, it is important to make sure that you are comparing “apples to apples.” Sometimes a high average (mean) item value represents a positive perception and sometimes a high average (mean) item value represents a negative perception, depending on how the item response options of 1–4 are valenced, or directed. If you want to compare averages (means) of items, go to the *Data Interpretation Guide* section on [item valence and reverse-coding](#) to access important information you will need before comparing them.<sup>7</sup>



For sites using the EDSCLS, negatively valenced items are marked for you in the EDSCLS platform, the District or School Report PDF (for pilot sites), and in [Table 1](#).

## B. Comparing Cultural and Linguistic Competence Items Across Respondent Groups if Worded Exactly the Same Way

Item frequencies and averages (means) can be examined across respondent groups, *but only if the items are worded exactly the same way*. This approach is helpful in cases where differences

---

<sup>7</sup> Note that all of the items in Cultural and Linguistic Competence are positively valenced; therefore, item averages (means) within this topic area can be compared directly.



between groups or subgroups of respondents were found in the Cultural and Linguistic Competence scale scores (or average [mean] values, if applicable). For example, both instructional staff and noninstructional staff are presented with the item “This school emphasizes showing respect for all students’ cultural beliefs and practices.” Because the survey items are identical, you can compare the responses of instructional staff to the responses of noninstructional staff on this item.

### C. Considering Cultural and Linguistic Competence Item Content Groups

Although looking at scale scores and items in the survey is important in examining and interpreting your data, it may be overwhelming to examine all of the items at once, and you may want to look at them in chunks or groups by substantive content. You are free to use groups of items of similar substantive content that are important to your district or school. We provide examples from the EDSCLS in [Table 1](#), although similar groupings may be found in other school climate surveys.

Table 1 displays items included in the EDSCLS Cultural and Linguistic Competence scale from all respondent groups as well as any important stand-alone items that have been retained. In the table, we suggest the following areas of focus using the Cultural and Linguistic Competence items in the EDSCLS: Materials; Academic Equality; Promoting Diversity; Equal Treatment/Respect; and Prioritizing Resources.

**Table 1. Item Content Groupings for the Cultural and Linguistic Competence Topic Area**

#### Materials

|                        |  |
|------------------------|--|
| Student                | This school provides instructional materials (e.g., textbooks, handouts) that reflect my cultural background, ethnicity, and identity.             |
| Instructional staff    | This school provides instructional materials (e.g., textbooks, handouts) that reflect students’ cultural backgrounds, ethnicities, and identities. |
| Noninstructional staff | This school provides instructional materials (e.g., textbooks, handouts) that reflect students’ cultural backgrounds, ethnicities, and identities. |
| Parent                 | This school provides instructional materials (e.g., textbooks, handouts) that reflect students’ cultural backgrounds, ethnicities, and identities. |

#### Academic Equality

|                        |  |
|------------------------|--|
| Instructional staff    | This school encourages students to take challenging classes no matter their race, ethnicity, nationality, and/or cultural background (e.g., honor-level courses, gifted courses, Advanced Placement [AP] or International Baccalaureate [IB] courses). |
| Noninstructional staff | This school encourages students to take challenging classes no matter their race, ethnicity, nationality, or cultural background (e.g., honor-level courses, gifted courses, AP or IB courses).  |
| Parent                 | This school encourages students to take challenging classes no matter their race, ethnicity, nationality, or cultural background (e.g., honor-level courses, gifted courses, AP or IB courses).  |





### Promoting Diversity

|                        |  |
|------------------------|--|
| Instructional staff    | This school emphasizes showing respect for all students' cultural beliefs and practices.     |
| Noninstructional staff | This school emphasizes showing respect for all students' cultural beliefs and practices.     |
| Parent                 | This school communicates how important it is to respect the practices of all cultures.       |
| Parent                 | This school communicates how important it is to respect students of all sexual orientations. |

### Equal Treatment/Respect

|                        |   |
|------------------------|---|
| Student                | All students are treated the same, regardless of whether their parents are rich or poor.                |
| Student                | Boys and girls are treated equally well.  |
| Student                | Adults working at this school treat all students respectfully.  |
| Student                | People of different cultural backgrounds, races, or ethnicities get along well at this school.          |
| Instructional staff    | At this school, all students are treated equally, regardless of whether their parents are rich or poor. |
| Noninstructional staff | At this school, all students are treated equally, regardless of whether their parents are rich or poor. |

### Prioritizing Resources

|                        |  |
|------------------------|--|
| Instructional staff    | This school provides effective resources and training for teaching students with individualized education programs (IEPs) across different languages and cultures.                                     |
| Instructional staff    | This school provides effective supports for students needing alternative modes of communication (e.g., manual signs, communication boards, computer-based devices, picture exchange systems, braille). |
| Noninstructional staff | This school provides effective resources and training for teaching students with IEPs across different languages and cultures.   |
| Noninstructional staff | This school provides effective supports for students needing alternative modes of communication (e.g., manual signs, communication boards, computer-based devices, picture exchange systems, braille). |

These content areas provide an example of how you can examine Cultural and Linguistic Competence items in a meaningful way across respondent groups. Identifying differences in the perceptions of different respondent groups within the same block of items may be especially helpful in targeting action items for improvement.<sup>8</sup>

<sup>8</sup> Note that these groupings are different than those for scale scores or average (mean) topic area values, which are derived analytically. The groupings in Table 1 are based on items with similar substantive content or areas of focus that may prove more actionable for districts and schools.





For example, at least one question on each survey (i.e., students, instructional staff, noninstructional staff, parents) asks respondents about materials at school, as follows:

|                        |  |
|------------------------|--|
| Student                | This school provides instructional materials (e.g., textbooks, handouts) that reflect my cultural background, ethnicity, and identity.             |
| Instructional staff    | This school provides instructional materials (e.g., textbooks, handouts) that reflect students' cultural backgrounds, ethnicities, and identities. |
| Noninstructional staff | This school provides instructional materials (e.g., textbooks, handouts) that reflect students' cultural backgrounds, ethnicities, and identities. |
| Parent                 | This school provides instructional materials (e.g., textbooks, handouts) that reflect students' cultural backgrounds, ethnicities, and identities. |

Looking at these items in tandem may provide you with more in-depth information on whether your district or school needs to place more emphasis on materials for cultural and linguistic competence. If you find that student responses on the Materials item grouping are not as you would like (or if you find a discrepancy between the perceptions of students and other respondents), you may want to think about the following question:

**?** What can my district or school do to provide a greater focus on providing culturally and linguistically competent materials at school?

Similarly, there are survey items that group together as Promoting Diversity. Looking at the results for this item content group may help you to gauge how well your cultural and linguistic competence efforts around promoting diversity are being practiced. If you find that responses are not as favorable as you would like (or if you find a discrepancy among the perceptions of different respondent groups), consider the following:

**?** What can my district or school do to better ensure that our cultural and linguistic competence efforts around promoting diversity are addressing the needs of students, staff, and parents?

What policies and procedures are currently in place in my school to support promoting diversity? What new policies and procedures need to be implemented? Which policies and procedures should we consider modifying or eliminating? What are our state requirements in this area? What are our obligations under federal civil rights laws in this area?

*Note:* In all cases, you must comply with your obligations under federal civil rights laws and any applicable state requirements.



# Appendix A: Guiding Questions for Districts

You can use the guiding questions in this appendix to help use your data to focus on universal and targeted approaches to improve cultural and linguistic competence. In this appendix, you will find:

- Initial guiding questions (scale scores);
- Deeper guiding questions (overall);
- Deeper guiding questions (focused on interventions); and
- Other questions to consider.

## Initial Guiding Questions (GQs): District Scale Scores

Scale scores are the premier way that the EDSCLS as well as many other school climate surveys measure school climate. A scale score, which combines multiple survey items related to different aspects of a topic area, is a more robust measure than attempting to measure the topic by asking about it with a single item. For more information on scale scores, please see the [Data Interpretation Guide](#).

### A Universal Approach

GQ1. What does our **student** Cultural and Linguistic Competence scale score tell us about how students perceive cultural and linguistic competence in our district?

For example, you can examine:

- How do the student Cultural and Linguistic Competence scale scores compare across schools in our district?
- How does our district's student Cultural and Linguistic Competence scale score compare with our state's score (if available)?
- How does our district's student Cultural and Linguistic Competence scale score compare with our district's student scores on other topic areas within the Engagement domain—is it relatively low or high, or in the middle?

GQ2. What does our **instructional staff** Cultural and Linguistic Competence scale score tell us about how these staff perceive cultural and linguistic competence in our district?

For example, you can examine:


- How do the instructional staff Cultural and Linguistic Competence scale scores compare across schools in our district?
- How does our district's instructional staff Cultural and Linguistic Competence scale score compare with our state's score (if available)?



Using scale scores, you can compare topic areas within the same respondent group (students, instructional staff, noninstructional staff) or within the same domain (Safety, Environment, and Engagement). These comparisons will help you make meaningful interpretations of the scale scores.

For more information, please see [Appendix A](#) in the *Data Interpretation Guide* for scale score interpretation do's and don'ts.

For EDSCLS users, consider using the [EDSCLS Data Analysis Worksheet](#) to guide your analysis and interpretation of scale scores.

- 
- How does our district’s instructional staff scale score compare with our district’s instructional staff scores on other topic areas within the Engagement domain—is it relatively low or high, or in the middle?
- 

GQ3. What does our **noninstructional staff** Cultural and Linguistic Competence scale score tell us about how staff perceive cultural and linguistic competence in our district?

For example, you can examine:


- How do the noninstructional staff Cultural and Linguistic Competence scale scores compare across schools in our district?
  - How does our district’s noninstructional staff Cultural and Linguistic Competence scale score compare with our state’s score (if available)?
  - How does our district’s noninstructional staff scale score compare with our district’s noninstructional staff scores on other topic areas within the Engagement domain—is it relatively low or high, or in the middle?
- 

### A Targeted Approach

GQ4. What do the district Cultural and Linguistic Competence scale scores **by respondent characteristics** tell us about how different subgroups perceive cultural and linguistic competence in our district?

For example, you can examine:

- How the perceptions of cultural and linguistic competence compare across various subgroups of students (e.g., White students versus Asian students)?
  - How the perceptions of cultural and linguistic competence compare across various subgroups of instructional staff (e.g., Black or African-American staff versus Asian staff)?
  - How the perceptions of cultural and linguistic competence compare across various subgroups of noninstructional staff (e.g., males versus females)?
-



Now that you have considered these questions, what would you like to do next? You can:

- Click on [item-level data](#) to see how item-level results can help provide you with concrete examples of cultural and linguistic competence that may be more immediately actionable.

Taking a deeper look within a single respondent group using item-level data will allow for a more thorough picture of that group's perceptions. You also can:

- Click on [deeper guiding questions](#) to help you to put all your data (survey, administrative, and qualitative) into context.
- Click on [Cultural and Linguistic Competence](#) to go a webpage with suggestions for interventions that can be implemented immediately as well as longer term strategies and interventions.

Examining the deeper guiding questions will help you more thoroughly put your data into context and use them moving forward whereas the webpage will provide suggestions for strategies and interventions that may be implemented immediately.

If you have calculated average (mean) Cultural and Linguistic Competence values, you also can:

- Click on [average \(mean\) Cultural and Linguistic Competence values](#) to look at Cultural and Linguistic Competence values across respondent groups.

## Deeper Guiding Questions (DGQs) About Data for Districts

### A Universal Approach

- DGQ1. Are there other district-level databases that can give us additional information about what is going on **across stakeholders in the district** and what actions to take (e.g., administrative data such as incident data, attendance/truancy data, graduation rates, office discipline referrals and disciplinary actions, as well as other data such as Youth Risk Behavior Surveillance System survey data, if available)? (Click on the [Reference Manual](#) for more information on aligning indicators.)
- a. Do they show the same picture of school climate as your district school climate survey data?
  - b. What additional information do these data give us?
  - c. How can we use these data to help us understand universal cultural and linguistic competence needs in our district?
- DGQ2. Based on our overall Cultural and Linguistic Competence scale scores, should we consider cultural and linguistic competence a priority for improvement in our district?

### A Targeted Approach

- DGQ3. Are there other district-level databases that can tell us more about **subgroups of students or staff** who need support in cultural and linguistic competence (e.g., administrative data such as incident data, attendance/truancy data, graduation rates, office discipline referrals and disciplinary actions, as well as other data such as Youth Risk Behavior Surveillance System survey data, if available)?
- a. Do they show the same picture of school climate as your district school climate survey data for these subgroups?



- b. What additional information do these data give us?
- c. How can we use these data to help us understand targeted cultural and linguistic competence needs in our district?

DGQ4. If we are using a three-tiered system of support in our district, what do these data tell us about our use of resources within that system? Are our practices and programs addressing the needs identified by our data?

- a. What are our district's Tier 1 resource distribution needs? Tier 2 needs? Tier 3 needs?

DGQ5. Based on our scale scores by respondent characteristics, should we consider cultural and linguistic competence for certain subgroups of students and staff a priority for improvement in our district?

### Other Questions to Consider

DGQ6. How can we drill down to further understand what students and other stakeholders think about cultural and linguistic competence needs in our district (e.g., convene focus groups of students, staff, parents/guardians; conduct student fishbowls and facilitated discussion sessions)?

DGQ7. Based on our answers to these questions, what conversations do we need to have about using our resources, and with whom should we have them?

## Deeper Guiding Questions About Interventions<sup>9</sup> for Districts

### A Universal Approach

DGQ8. What interventions pertaining to cultural and linguistic competence are currently in place in our district and how can we best evaluate whether these interventions are working?

DGQ9. How can we ensure that these cultural and linguistic competence interventions are implemented with fidelity?

DGQ10. How do we know which interventions are effective?

- a. How can we best evaluate whether these interventions are working?


### A Targeted Approach

DGQ11. If we are using a three-tiered system of support in our district, what interventions pertaining to cultural and linguistic competence have been shown to work that should be continued or expanded at each tier?

DGQ12. What interventions pertaining to cultural and linguistic competence have been shown to work in other districts, per tier, and what are the conditions under which they work?

---

<sup>9</sup> Click on the [Reference Manual](#) for more information about interventions such as best practices, strategies, and programs; multi-tiered systems of support; and fidelity of implementation.

- 
- DGQ13. What resources do we need to improve cultural and linguistic competence for our students, per tier, in our district?
- DGQ14. Which subgroups of respondents have been found to be in need of targeted support?
- DGQ15. What interventions pertaining to cultural and linguistic competence have worked or are working and should be continued or expanded for students at higher levels of risk in our district?
- DGQ16. What new interventions pertaining to cultural and linguistic competence can be introduced and implemented that will either provide new support or complement what is already being done at each tier?
- Why do we think these interventions would be more effective than current or past efforts?
- DGQ17. How can we sustain (institutionalize) tiered support for improving conditions pertinent to cultural and linguistic competence in our district?

### Other Questions to Consider

- DGQ18. How can we best fold training for implementing cultural and linguistic competence interventions into professional development efforts?
- Which training efforts have been successful or unsuccessful in the past?
  - Why were some efforts more successful than others?

Now that you have considered these questions, what would you like to do next? You can:

- Click on [item-level data](#) to see how item-level results can help provide you with concrete examples of cultural and linguistic competence that may be more immediately actionable.
- Click on [Cultural and Linguistic Competence](#) to go to a webpage with suggestions for what interventions can be implemented immediately as well as longer term strategies and interventions.

If you have calculated average (mean) Cultural and Linguistic Competence values, you can:

- Click on [average \(mean\) Cultural and Linguistic Competence](#) values to look at Cultural and Linguistic Competence values across respondent groups.

# Appendix B: Guiding Questions for Schools

You can use the guiding questions in this appendix to help you use your data to focus on universal and targeted approaches to cultural and linguistic competence. In this appendix, you will find:

- Initial guiding questions (scale scores);
- Deeper guiding questions (overall);
- Deeper guiding questions (focused on interventions); and
- Other questions to consider.

## Initial Guiding Questions: School Scale Scores

Scale scores are the premier way that the EDSCLS as well as many other school climate surveys measure school climate. A scale score, which combines multiple survey items related to different aspects of a topic area, is a more robust measure than attempting to measure the topic by asking about it with a single item. For more information on scale scores, please see the [Data Interpretation Guide](#).

### A Universal Approach

GQ1. What does our **student** Cultural and Linguistic Competence scale score tell us about how students perceive cultural and linguistic competence in our school?

For example, you can examine:

- How does our school's student Cultural and Linguistic Competence scale score compare with our district's student Cultural and Linguistic Competence scale score (if available)?
- How does our school's student Cultural and Linguistic Competence scale score compare with our state's score (if available)?
- How does our school's student Cultural and Linguistic Competence scale score compare with our school's student scores on other topic areas within the Engagement domain—is it relatively low or high, or in the middle?

GQ2. What does our **instructional staff** Cultural and Linguistic Competence scale score tell us about how these staff perceive cultural and linguistic competence in our school?

For example, you can examine:


- How does our school's instructional staff Cultural and Linguistic Competence scale score compare with our district's score (if available)?
- How does our school's instructional staff Cultural and Linguistic Competence scale score compare with our state's score (if available)?



Using scale scores, you can compare topic areas within the same respondent group (students, instructional staff, noninstructional staff) or within the same domain (Safety, Environment, and Engagement). These comparisons will help you make meaningful interpretations of the scale scores.

For more information, please see [Appendix B](#) in the *Data Interpretation Guide* for scale score interpretation do's and don'ts.

For EDSCLS users, consider using the [EDSCLS Data Analysis Worksheet](#) to guide your analysis and interpretation of scale scores.

- 
- How does our school's instructional staff scale score compare with our school's instructional staff scores on other topic areas within the Engagement domain—is it relatively low or high, or in the middle?
- 

GQ3. What does our **noninstructional staff** Cultural and Linguistic Competence scale score tell us about how staff perceive cultural and linguistic competence in our school?

For example, you can examine:


- How does our school's noninstructional staff Cultural and Linguistic Competence scale score compare with our district's score (if available)?
  - How does our district's noninstructional staff Cultural and Linguistic Competence scale score compare with our state's score (if available)?
  - How does our school's noninstructional staff Cultural and Linguistic Competence scale score compare with our school's noninstructional staff scores on other topic areas within the Engagement domain—is it relatively low or high, or in the middle?
- 

### A Targeted Approach

GQ4. What do the school Cultural and Linguistic Competence scale scores **by respondent characteristics** tell us about how each subgroup perceives cultural and linguistic competence in our school?

For example, you can examine:

- How the perceptions of cultural and linguistic competence compare across various subgroups of students (e.g., White students versus Asian students)?
  - How the perceptions of cultural and linguistic competence compare across various subgroups of instructional staff (e.g., Black or African-American staff versus Asian staff)?
  - How the perceptions of cultural and linguistic competence compare across various subgroups of noninstructional staff (e.g., males versus females)?
-



Now that you have considered these questions, what would you like to do next? You can:

- Click on [item-level data](#) to see how item-level results can help provide you with concrete examples of cultural and linguistic competence that may be more immediately actionable.

Taking a deeper look within a single respondent group will allow for a more thorough picture of that group's perceptions. You also can:

- Click on [deeper guiding questions](#) to help you to put all your data (survey, administrative, and qualitative) into context.
- Click on [Cultural and Linguistic Competence](#) to go to a webpage with suggestions for interventions that can be implemented immediately as well as longer term strategies and interventions.

Examining the deeper guiding questions will help you more thoroughly put your data into context and use them moving forward, whereas the webpage will provide recommendations on strategies and interventions that may be implemented immediately.

If you have calculated average (mean) Cultural and Linguistic Competence values, you also can:

- Click on [average \(mean\) Cultural and Linguistic Competence values](#) to look at Cultural and Linguistic Competence values across respondent groups.

## Deeper Guiding Questions About Data for Schools


### A Universal Approach

- DGQ1. Are there school-level databases that can give us additional information about what is going on **across stakeholders in the school** and what actions to take (e.g., administrative data such as incident data, attendance/truancy data, graduation rates, office discipline referrals and disciplinary actions, as well as other data such as Youth Risk Behavior Surveillance System survey data, if available)? (Click on the [Reference Manual](#) for more information on aligning indicators.)
- Do they show the same picture of school climate as your school's school climate survey data?
  - What additional information do these data give us?
  - How can we use these data to help us understand universal cultural and linguistic competence needs in our school?
- DGQ2. Based on our overall Cultural and Linguistic Competence scale scores, should we consider cultural and linguistic competence a priority for improvement in our school?

### A Targeted Approach

- DGQ3. Are there other school-level databases that can tell us more about **subgroups of students or staff** needing support in cultural and linguistic competence (e.g., administrative data such as incident data, attendance/truancy data, graduation rates, office discipline referrals and disciplinary actions, as well as other data such as Youth Risk Behavior Surveillance System survey data, if available)?
- Do they show the same picture of school climate as your school's school climate survey data?



- 
- b. What additional information do these data give us?
  - c. How can we use these data to help us understand targeted cultural and linguistic competence needs in our school?

DGQ4. If we are using a three-tiered system of support in our school, what do these data tell us about our use of resources within that system? Are our practices and programs addressing the needs identified by our data?

- a. What are our school's Tier 1 resource distribution needs? Tier 2 needs? Tier 3 needs?

DGQ5. Based on our scale scores **by respondent characteristics**, should we consider cultural and linguistic competence for certain subgroups of students and staff a priority for improvement in our school?

### Other Questions to Consider

DGQ6. How can we drill down to further understand what students and other stakeholders think about cultural and linguistic competence needs in our school (e.g., convene focus groups of students, staff, parents/guardians; conduct student fishbowls and facilitated discussion sessions).

DGQ7. Based on our answers to these questions, what conversations do we need to have about using our resources, and with whom should we have them?

## Deeper Guiding Questions About Interventions<sup>10</sup> for Schools

### A Universal Approach

DGQ8. What interventions pertaining to cultural and linguistic competence are currently in place in our school, and how can we best evaluate whether these interventions are working?

DGQ9. How can we ensure that these cultural and linguistic competence interventions are implemented with fidelity?

DGQ10. How do we know which interventions are effective?

- a. How can we best evaluate whether these interventions are working?


### A Targeted Approach

DGQ11. If we are using a three-tiered system of support in our school, what interventions pertaining to cultural and linguistic competence have been shown to work that should be continued or expanded at each tier?

DGQ12. What interventions pertaining to cultural and linguistic competence have been shown to work in other schools, per tier, and what are the conditions under which they work?

---

<sup>10</sup> Click on the [Reference Manual](#) for more information about interventions such as best practices, strategies, and programs; multi-tiered systems of support; and fidelity of implementation.

- 
- DGQ13. What resources do we need to improve cultural and linguistic competence for our students, per tier, in our school?
- DGQ14. Which subgroups of respondents have been found to be in need of targeted support?
- DGQ15. What interventions pertaining to cultural and linguistic competence have worked or are working for students in our school at higher levels of risk that should be continued or expanded?
- DGQ16. What new interventions pertaining to cultural and linguistic competence can be introduced and implemented that will either provide new support or complement what is already being done at each tier?
- Why do we think these interventions would be more effective than current or past efforts?
- DGQ17. How can we sustain (institutionalize) tiered support for improving conditions pertinent to cultural and linguistic competence in our school?

### Other Questions to Consider

- DGQ18. How can we best fold training for implementing cultural and linguistic competence interventions into professional development efforts?
- Which training efforts have been successful or unsuccessful in the past?
  - Why were some efforts more successful than others?

Now that you have considered these questions, what would you like to do next? You can:

- Click on [item-level data](#) to see how item-level results can help provide you with concrete examples of cultural and linguistic competence that may be more immediately actionable.
- Click on [Cultural and Linguistic Competence](#) to go to webpage with suggestions for interventions that can be implemented immediately as well as longer term strategies and interventions.

If you have calculated average (mean) Cultural and Linguistic Competence values, you also can:

- Click on [average \(mean\) Cultural and Linguistic Competence](#) values to look at Cultural and Linguistic Competence values across respondent groups.

# Appendix C: Additional Guiding Questions: District Average (Mean) Cultural and Linguistic Competence Values

You can use the guiding questions in this appendix to help you use your data to focus on universal and targeted approaches to cultural and linguistic competence. In this appendix, you will find:

- Additional guiding questions (average [mean] Cultural and Linguistic Competence values)
- Average (mean) Cultural and Linguistic Competence values (on a scale of 1–4) can help you see how favorably respondents perceive the topic area. Click on the [Data Interpretation Guide](#) to go to more information on average (mean) Cultural and Linguistic Competence values and an explanation of the scale of 1–4.

## A Universal Approach

GQ1. What does our **student** average (mean) Cultural and Linguistic Competence value tell us about how students perceive cultural and linguistic competence in our district?

For example, you can think about these comparisons:

Comparing across respondent groups:

- How does our **student** average (mean) Cultural and Linguistic Competence value compare with the average (mean) Cultural and Linguistic Competence value for instructional staff in our district? For noninstructional staff in our district?

Comparing across topic areas:

- How does our student average (mean) Cultural and Linguistic Competence value compare with the student average (mean) value of other topic areas of interest within and outside of the Engagement domain?

GQ2. What does our **instructional staff** average (mean) Cultural and Linguistic Competence value tell us how these staff perceive cultural and linguistic competence in our district?

For example, you can think about these comparisons:

Comparing across respondent groups:

- How does our instructional staff average (mean) Cultural and Linguistic Competence value compare with the average (mean) Cultural and Linguistic Competence value for noninstructional staff in our district? For students in our district?



Using average (mean) Cultural and Linguistic Competence values, you can compare the perceptions of students and staff within and outside of the Engagement domain. These comparisons will help you make meaningful interpretations of the average (mean) Cultural and Linguistic Competence values.

See [Appendix C](#) in the *Data Interpretation Guide* for more information on interpreting average (mean) topic area values and do's and don'ts for EDSCLS users.



Comparing across topic areas:

- How does our instructional staff average (mean) Cultural and Linguistic Competence value compare with the instructional staff average (mean) value of other topic areas of interest, within and outside of the Engagement domain?
- 

GQ3. What does our **noninstructional staff** average (mean) Cultural and Linguistic Competence value tell us about how staff perceive cultural and linguistic competence in our district?

For example, you can think about these comparisons:

Comparing across respondent groups:

- How does our noninstructional staff average (mean) Cultural and Linguistic Competence value compare with the average (mean) Cultural and Linguistic Competence value for instructional staff in our district? For students in our district?

Comparing across topic areas:

- How does our noninstructional staff average (mean) Cultural and Linguistic Competence value compare with the noninstructional staff average (mean) value of other topic areas of interest within and outside of the Engagement domain?
- 

## A Targeted Approach

GQ4. What do our average (mean) Cultural and Linguistic Competence values **by respondent characteristics** tell us about how **students** perceive cultural and linguistic competence in our district?

For example, you can think about these comparisons:

Comparing across topic areas:

- How does the average (mean) Cultural and Linguistic Competence value for certain subgroups of students (e.g., female students) compare with that subgroup's average (mean) values on other topic areas within the Engagement domain (e.g., female student average (mean) values on school participation)?

Comparing across respondent subgroups:


- How does the average (mean) Cultural and Linguistic Competence value for certain student subgroups (e.g., female students) compare with that subgroup of instructional staff and noninstructional staff (i.e., female instructional staff and female noninstructional staff)?
- 

GQ5. What do our average (mean) Cultural and Linguistic Competence values **by respondent characteristics** tell us about how **instructional staff** perceive cultural and linguistic competence in our district?

For example, you can think about these comparisons:

Comparing across topic areas:

- How does the average (mean) Cultural and Linguistic Competence value for certain subgroups of instructional staff (e.g., Asian instructional staff) compare with that subgroup's average



(mean) values on other topic areas within the Engagement domain (e.g., Asian instructional staff average [mean] values on school participation)?

Comparing across respondent subgroups:

- How does the average (mean) Cultural and Linguistic Competence value for certain instructional staff subgroups (e.g., Black or African-American instructional staff) compare with that subgroup of noninstructional staff and students (i.e., Black or African-American students and Black or African-American noninstructional staff)?
- 

GQ6. What do our average (mean) Cultural and Linguistic Competence values **by respondent characteristics** tell us about how **noninstructional staff** perceive cultural and linguistic competence in our district?

For example, you can think about these comparisons:

Comparing across topic areas:

- How does the average (mean) Cultural and Linguistic Competence value for certain subgroups of noninstructional staff (e.g., male noninstructional staff) compare with that subgroup's average (mean) values on other topic areas within the Engagement domain (e.g., male noninstructional staff average [mean] values on school participation)?

Comparing across respondent subgroups:

- How does the average (mean) Cultural and Linguistic Competence value for certain noninstructional subgroups (e.g., Asian noninstructional staff) compare with that subgroup of instructional staff and students (i.e., Asian students and Asian instructional staff)?
- 

Now that you have considered these questions, what would you like to do next? You can:

- Click on [item-level data](#) to see how item-level results can help provide you with concrete examples of cultural and linguistic competence that may be more immediately actionable.

You also can:

- Click on [deeper guiding questions](#) to help you put all your data (survey, administrative, and qualitative) into context.
- Click on [Cultural and Linguistic Competence](#) to go to a webpage with suggestions for interventions that can be implemented immediately as well as longer term strategies and interventions.

Examining the deeper guiding questions will help you more thoroughly put your data into context and use them moving forward, whereas the webpage will provide suggestions for strategies and interventions that may be implemented immediately.

# Appendix D: Additional Guiding Questions: School Average (Mean) Cultural and Linguistic Competence Values

You can use the guiding questions in this appendix to help you use your data to focus on universal and targeted approaches to Discipline. In this appendix, you will find:

- Additional guiding questions (average [mean] Cultural and Linguistic Competence values)

Average (mean) Cultural and Linguistic Competence values (on a scale of 1–4) can help you see how favorably respondents perceive the topic area. Click on the [Data Interpretation Guide](#) to go to more information on average (mean) Cultural and Linguistic Competence values and an explanation of the scale of 1–4.

## A Universal Approach

GQ1. What does our **student** average (mean) Cultural and Linguistic Competence value tell us about how students perceive cultural and linguistic competence in our school?

For example, you can think about these comparisons:

Comparing across respondent groups:

- How does our student average (mean) Cultural and Linguistic Competence value compare with the average (mean) Cultural and Linguistic Competence value for instructional staff in our school? For noninstructional staff in our school?

Comparing across topic areas:

- How does our student average (mean) Cultural and Linguistic Competence value compare with the student average (mean) value of other topic areas of interest within and outside of the Engagement domain?

GQ2. What does our **instructional staff** average (mean) Cultural and Linguistic Competence value tell us about how these staff perceive cultural and linguistic competence in our school?

For example, you can think about these comparisons:

Comparing across respondent groups:

- How does our instructional staff average (mean) Cultural and Linguistic Competence value compare with the average (mean) Cultural and Linguistic Competence value for noninstructional staff in our school? For students in our school?


Comparing across topic areas:

- How does our instructional staff average (mean) Cultural and Linguistic Competence value compare with the instructional staff average (mean) value of other topic areas of interest within and outside of the Engagement domain?



Using average (mean) Cultural and Linguistic Competence values, you can compare the perceptions of students and staff within and outside of the Engagement domain. These comparisons will help you make meaningful interpretations of the average (mean) Cultural and Linguistic Competence values.

See [Appendix C](#) in the *Data Interpretation Guide* for more information on interpreting average (mean) topic area values and do's and don'ts for EDSCLS users.



GQ3. What does our **noninstructional staff** average (mean) Cultural and Linguistic Competence value tell us about how staff perceive cultural and linguistic competence in our school?

For example, you can think about these comparisons:

Comparing across respondent groups:

- How does our noninstructional staff average (mean) Cultural and Linguistic Competence value compare with the average (mean) Cultural and Linguistic Competence value for instructional staff in our school? For students in our school?

Comparing across topic areas:

- How does our noninstructional staff average (mean) Cultural and Linguistic Competence value compare with the noninstructional staff average (mean) value of other topic areas of interest within and outside of the Engagement domain?
- 

### A Targeted Approach

GQ4. What do our average (mean) Cultural and Linguistic Competence values **by respondent characteristics** tell us about how **students** perceive cultural and linguistic competence in our school?

For example, you can think about these comparisons:

Comparing across topic areas:

- How does the average (mean) Cultural and Linguistic Competence value for certain subgroups of students (e.g., female students) compare with that subgroup's average (mean) values on other topic areas within the Engagement domain (e.g., female student average [mean] values on school participation)?

Comparing across respondent subgroups:

- How does the average (mean) Cultural and Linguistic Competence value for certain student subgroups (e.g., female students) compare with that subgroup of instructional staff and noninstructional staff (i.e., female instructional staff and female noninstructional staff)?
- 

GQ5. What do our average (mean) Cultural and Linguistic Competence values **by respondent characteristics** tell us about how **instructional staff** perceive cultural and linguistic competence in our school?

For example, you can think about these comparisons:

Comparing across topic areas:

- How does the average (mean) Cultural and Linguistic Competence value for certain subgroups of instructional staff (e.g., Asian instructional staff) compare with that subgroup's average (mean) values on other topic areas within the Engagement domain (e.g., Asian instructional staff average [mean] values on school participation)?



Comparing across respondent subgroups:

- How does the average (mean) Cultural and Linguistic Competence value for certain instructional staff subgroups (e.g., Black or African-American instructional staff) compare with that subgroup of noninstructional staff and students (i.e., Black or African-American students and Black or African-American noninstructional staff)?
- 

GQ6. What do our average (mean) Cultural and Linguistic Competence values **by respondent characteristics** tell us about how **noninstructional staff** perceive cultural and linguistic competence in our school?

For example, you can think about these comparisons:

Comparing across topic areas:

- How does the average (mean) Cultural and Linguistic Competence value for certain subgroups of noninstructional staff (e.g., male noninstructional staff) compare with that subgroup's average (mean) values on other topic areas within the Engagement domain (e.g., male noninstructional staff average [mean] values on school participation)?

Comparing across respondent subgroups:

- How does the average (mean) Cultural and Linguistic Competence value for certain noninstructional subgroups (e.g., Asian noninstructional staff) compare with that subgroup of instructional staff and students (i.e., Asian students and Asian instructional staff)?
- 

Now that you have considered these questions, what would you like to do next? You can:

- Click on [item-level data](#) to see how item-level results can help provide you with concrete examples of cultural and linguistic competence that may be more immediately actionable.

You also can:

- Click on [deeper guiding questions](#) to help you to put all your data (survey, administrative, and qualitative) into context.
- Click on [Cultural and Linguistic Competence](#) to go to a webpage with suggestions for interventions that can be implemented immediately as well as longer term strategies and interventions.

Examining the deeper guiding questions will help you more thoroughly put your data into context and use them moving forward, whereas the webpage will provide suggestions for strategies and interventions that may be implemented immediately.



## Disclaimer

This *Interpreting Cultural and Linguistic Competence Topic Area Discussion Guide* was designed and written under the U.S. Department of Education (Department) Contract Number EDESE12O0035 by American Institutes for Research, the National Center on Safe Supportive Learning Environments (NCSSLE). Rita Foy Moss served as the contracting officer's representative (COR) for the NCSSLE technical assistance center. This document contains resource materials that are provided for the user's convenience. The inclusion of these materials is not intended to reflect their importance, nor is it intended to endorse any views expressed, or products or services offered. These materials may contain the views and recommendations of various subject matter experts as well as hypertext links, contact addresses, and websites to information created and maintained by other public and private organizations. The opinions expressed in any of these materials do not necessarily reflect the positions or policies of the Department. The Department does not control or guarantee the accuracy, relevance, timeliness, or completeness of any outside information included in these materials.

January 2017

This document is in the public domain. Authorization to reproduce it in whole or in part is granted. While permission to reprint this product is not necessary, the following citation is preferred:

U.S. Department of Education, Office of Safe and Healthy Students. (2016). *Data interpretation topical discussion guide: Interpreting cultural and linguistic competence school climate survey data*. Washington, DC: Author.

This resource is available free of charge at <http://safesupportivelearning.ed.gov/SCIRP/topical-discussion-guide/CLC>.

## Availability of Alternate Formats

Requests for documents in alternate formats such as Braille or large print should be submitted to the Alternate Format Center by calling 202.260.0852 or by contacting the 504 coordinator via e-mail at [om\\_eeos@ed.gov](mailto:om_eeos@ed.gov).

## Notice to Limited-English-Proficient Persons

If you have difficulty understanding English, you may request language assistance services for Department information that is available to the public. These language assistance services are available free of charge. If you need more information about interpretation or translation services, please call 1-800-USA-LEARN (1.800.872.5327) (TTY: 1.800.877.8339) or e-mail us at [ED.Language.Assistance@ed.gov](mailto:ED.Language.Assistance@ed.gov). You also can write to U.S. Department of Education, Information Resource Center, LBJ Education Building, 400 Maryland Ave. SW, Washington, DC, 20202.