Connecticut Association of Schools
Elementary Level
Exemplary School Climate
Self-Assessment Scoring Instrument

School   _____

Address   _____

City/Town   _____

This document is intended as a school self-assessment instrument for *CAS Elementary Level Exemplary School Climate* certification. *A collaborative and inclusive process representative of all stakeholders should be used in the collection of the data and the completion of the application.* Please download and fill out the form completely and accurately. Each item should be assigned a point value in column one from 0 to the maximum of 4. Please remember that the certification is designed to recognize elementary **CAS member** schools with exemplary school climate**.**

Possible Points: **0= Never**   **1= Rarely**   **2= Sometimes**   **3= Often**   **4= Always**

School   **CAS**   **Documentation**   **Characteristics**
                     (For CAS Use)
  ↓   ↓

1. The school provides a safe and healthy environment

School	CAS	Documentation	Characteristics
			Security and safety procedures are known, documented and practiced; i.e. lockdown, evacuation etc.
			The school is safe from outside threats, i.e. locked outside doors, visitor identification, name tags, and requirements for visitors to report to the office.
			Teachers/Staff are visible in the hallways.
			Building shows evidence of monitoring and upkeep.
			Clear expectations for behavior are stated in positive terms. Expectations are consistent, well communicated, and result in consequences for those who do not adhere. (Look for clearly articulated layers of disciplinary consequences administered by teachers and administrators.)
			Curricula supports the establishment and maintenance of healthy eating patterns and a physically active lifestyle for students. (Look for evidence of *Healthy and Active Life* content standards in the curriculum)
			Food offerings in the cafeteria promote healthy lifestyles. (Look for healthy alternatives to high sugar, high carbohydrate, high fat, and snack foods in menu choices and vending machines.)
			Students feel connected to the school; i.e., all students are included in the lunchroom, activities, and classrooms.
			Programs are in place to promote intergroup understanding and respect. (Look for anti-bullying programs, developmental guidance lessons, character education, and diversity programs.)
			Teachers feel safe and supported in behavior management. (Teachers report a high degree of satisfaction with policy and procedure.)
			Students, parents, and the community express satisfaction with student safety. (Look for surveys and other vehicles for feedback.)
			There are programs/curriculum in place to promote making healthy choices. (Look for programs such DARE, Great Body Works, and conflict resolution programs.)
			Student-adult interactions are characterized by mutual respect. (Look for friendly, personal interactions during transitions, recess and cafeteria.)

			Peer interactions are characterized by mutual respect. (Look for positive results on student surveys, anti-bullying programs, and participation in activities such as *Don't Laugh at Me or Respect me,* in addition to character education.
			Teacher and student dress shows evidence of self-respect. (Look for evidence that teacher dress sets a positive tone, that there are clear expectations for dress for both students and teachers, and the dress code is enforced.)
			There is at least one adult who knows and takes responsibility for each student. (Look for evidence of goal setting with adults, advisor/advisee and small group engagement with students, staff/student mentoring programs, student support center, and student assistant teams.)
			There is some form of screening or procedure for volunteers/mentors.

2. The school welcomes students and visitors

			Signs are *user-friendly*: *Welcome* rather than *Do Not.* (Look for multi-language signs, where appropriate, posted on doors and in hallways that use positive, affirmative language to direct, suggest, and/or recommend.)
			The office staff and/or security people are friendly and helpful. (Look for Someone who greets visitors courteously and quickly. Observe how promptly and courteously office staff interacts with visitors and how thoroughly they address questions and give directions.)
			There are convenient parent and visitor parking spaces. (Look for clear directions leading to convenient parking areas with well marked signs and visible parking spaces for visitors and handicapped drivers).
			School grounds are well maintained. (Look for trimmed lawns, a neat and finished look, an absence of litter, and adequate lighting.)
			The building is clean and cheerful. (Look for clean shiny floors and well-maintained rooms.)
			Student work is displayed throughout the building. (Look for evidence of current student work displayed in the classrooms, hallways, library, cafeteria, and school offices. If no student work, ask *why.*)
			There are programs/processes to welcome new students and families into the school. (Look for student procedures to welcome new students and families such as peer buddies, summer picnic, breakfast/programs, or neighborhood meetings.)
			There are supportive transition programs. Components include curricular information from preschool to elementary, and elementary to middle school. (Look for orientation programs for students and parents, transition team meetings among faculties, documentation reflective of parent and student concerns for acclimation to a new school.)

3. Stakeholders are involved in planning and decision-making

			There is a formal advisory group or committee that works collegially with administrators to improve climate. (Look for agendas and minutes, newsletter articles, and other parent communications.)
			Faculty members have input into the development of school rules and disciplinary procedures. (Look for shared decision-making procedures.)
			The school is a place where collegial interaction and collaboration across grade levels and within grade levels is encouraged and enabled. (Look for scheduling that enables team planning, all school units, and cross-grade professional development activities.)
			The school encourages students to contribute ideas for all school activities, school-wide service projects, and all-school units. (Look for evidence of student input in school activities, service projects, and all-school units, and cross-grade reading partners, etc.)
			Students have input in the development of school and class rules. (Look for student participation in creating school rules through class meetings, student leadership advisory groups, and handbook preparation.)

4. Parents, the community at large and students are involved in their school

			Parents feel welcome in the school. (Look for parents in classrooms, on field trips, at parent conferences, volunteering during the school day, library volunteers, and parent's resource center.)
			There is a PTO/ PTA or similar group. (Look for regularly scheduled meetings, parent group activities, opportunities for parent involvement in school service, and regular meetings as evidenced by agenda /minutes.)
			Parents are consulted or involved in decision making about school procedure. (Look for newsletter articles inviting feedback, parent/teacher or parent/administrator forums, surveys, and parent representation on school improvement teams.)
			The school promotes outreach into the community. (Look for school/business partnerships; community service projects; school/senior citizen initiatives; preschool collaboration; and community participation in community or civic events such as parades and patriotic ceremonies. Look for community leaders as speakers in school, shadow day programs, and student art displays in public buildings and libraries.)
			Mechanisms for communication are in place. (Look for newsletters, phone chains, school and teacher web sites, and e-mail access to school administrators and teachers; cable TV.)

5. The school encourages active student participation in a variety of programs

			There are a variety of before and after school activities programs. (Look for clubs, activity nights, documentation to include monthly calendars, message boards, and student/parent handbooks or website.)
			There are programs in place to honor and recognize diversity. (Look for international celebrations, world language programs, Black History month celebrations, research projects/field trips on ethnic backgrounds, library displays on diversity, special dramatic multi-cultural presentations and/or programs, and facilitated conversations about diversity.)
			The school recognizes and rewards good citizenship. (Look for formal programs such as *Catch Someone Doing Something Good,* citizen of the month, citizenship component on report cards, school wide character education programs, and character elements in the school mission statement.)
			There are opportunities for student leadership in a variety of venues. (Look for student council, community service activities, environment club, technology club, etc.)
			The school provides a wide variety of programs to encourage student participation in art, music, and physical education experiences. (Look for Dream Reach Succeed, HOT Schools Program, Character Counts, and Responsive Classroom, etc.)
			The school recognizes good citizenship. (Look for student of the month awards programs, honor roll, breakfast recognition, citizenship assembly programs, privileges for good citizens, and scholar leader displays.)

Form Completed by   _____

Please describe the process used in the completion of this application _____

_____

_____

_____

Principal's Name   _____

Principal's Email   _____

Signature of Principal   _____ _____

Date   _____

Please complete and return to: **Mrs. Regina S. Birdsell, Assistant Executive Director**
                                      Connecticut Association of Schools
                                       30 Realty Drive
                                       Cheshire, Connecticut 06410