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Trauma informed educator self assessment

A trauma-informed educator **realizes** both the widespread impact of trauma and the role s/he can play in promoting resiliency; **recognizes** the signs and symptoms of trauma in students, families and staff; and **responds** by fully integrating knowledge about trauma into policies, procedures, and practices, and seeks to actively **resist re-traumatization** of students and staff.¹

The purpose of this assessment (which is non evaluative) is to identify where there are perceived areas of growth and effectiveness among the educators in a school community. The results of this anonymous self assessment will help guide future professional development in the area of trauma informed practices.

Characteristic ²	Level of performance			
	I am learning	I understand and am starting to practice	My understanding is fully observable in my practice	I could teach or coach this to others in my school
REALIZES Brain science	I am learning about brain architecture and the areas in which physical, emotional, and cognitive functioning exist.	I have a basic understanding of brain architecture and how fear and stress responses can bring the thinking parts of the brain 'off line'.	I understand that student executive functioning, self-control and other cognitive functions required in a classroom setting are negatively impacted by an elevated stress response.	I understand how students who have been exposed to violence and trauma are experiencing a chronically elevated stress response and that this has negative cognitive and physical impacts over the long term.

¹ Adapted from SAMHSA's Concept of Trauma and Guidance for Trauma Informed Approach, 2014

² Adapted from The Heart of Teaching and Learning, 2011



<p>REALIZES</p> <p>Assumptions and biases</p>	<p>I am learning how my own background, including experiences of privilege, and beliefs influence how I interact with my students and their caregivers.</p>	<p>I have identified a few of my own assumptions and beliefs (i.e. education, parenting, ability, sexual orientation, language and behavior) and understand how these can influence my work with students and their families.</p>	<p>I am intentional about my inquiries, interactions and approaches with students and families. I actively work to understand the viewpoints and experiences of my students and their families and caregivers.</p>	<p>I have unconditional positive regard for students and their families, even when their actions might run contrary to my own beliefs about what is best for the student. I am always curious about the experiences that have influenced how students and their families respond to me and the school.</p>
<p>REALIZES</p> <p>Intersections of trauma and race.</p>	<p>I am learning about the concepts of privilege and levels of racism. I want to learn how students in my school might have a different educational experience based on race.</p>	<p>I have a basic understanding of concepts related to racism, white privilege and historical trauma. I can perceive how students of color, and their families, at my school might be having a disparate educational experience compared to their white peers.</p>	<p>I understand the concepts of implicit bias and micro aggression and how this can have negative impacts on students and their families. I understand that experiencing micro aggression or racism can be traumatizing over the long term for students of color.</p>	<p>I participate in formal and informal dialogue in my school community about the intersections of race and trauma, how experiences at this intersection might negatively impact students of color in my building, and methods for mitigating that negative impact.</p>
<p>RECOGNIZES</p> <p>Ability of student to self regulate and to perceive safety.</p>	<p>I am learning that students are NOT always in control of their behavior and that it is not a matter of their 'choice' but more about their skills or abilities (or lack of) to regulate their emotions and perceptions of safety.</p>	<p>I can occasionally recognize when a student is experiencing emotional upset. I am learning that a student's response can be the result of feeling unsafe because of a 'perceived threat', or one that is not really there.</p>	<p>I share with the students what emotions I perceive them to be experiencing. I check-in with students to see if this matches what they are experiencing. I make myself available to participate in safety planning for students who often feel unsafe.</p>	<p>I identify and manage environmental prevention to minimize 'perceived threats' for all my students. I collaborate with students to create safety plans. I partner with other school staff, as needed to best serve my students.</p>

<p>RESPONDS</p> <p>Teacher self-regulation</p>	<p>It is sometimes difficult for me to respond calmly to students. I want to learn to identify when I am too stressed to continue working with a student.</p>	<p>I can occasionally predict situations that can cause me stress. I have a few default strategies for keeping myself calm. I understand the importance of modeling for my students good emotional regulation.</p>	<p>I regularly practice and share calming strategies with my students when I anticipate stressful interactions or situations. I reach out to colleagues for formal and informal support.</p>	<p>I use healthy strategies to keep myself calm and take good care of myself both onsite and away from the work environment. I share with colleagues my self-regulation skills and practices. I participate in my building's efforts to support these things.</p>
<p>RESPONDS</p> <p>Strengths based</p>	<p>I want to focus primarily on student strengths and have high expectations for student improvement. I want to consider environmental supports for students by setting up for success rather than focusing on isolated, unexpected student behaviors.</p>	<p>I understand that unwanted or unexpected student behaviors are often adaptive responses to an unmet need. I can separate the behavior from the student in order to perceive student strengths.</p>	<p>I regularly look for and seek out inherent student strengths and communicate those to the student, parents, caregivers and other professionals in the building. I seek out positive supports for the student in the school.</p>	<p>I practice and communicate a holistic view of the student - as a person, a part of a community, a neighborhood and a family with inherent strengths that can be nurtured and grown.</p>
<p>RESPONDS</p> <p>Routines and rituals</p>	<p>I want to learn to implement consistent routines in the classroom, during transitions and in the building. I want to make school day activities predictable. I want to conduct some monthly/annual rituals or celebrations with my students.</p>	<p>I have a basic understanding of the importance of routine and ritual in providing predictability and support to students who have experienced trauma and can occasionally implement that at the classroom level and during transition.</p>	<p>I regularly conduct classroom rituals, including class meetings or circles, and celebrations in my classroom. I can often identify difficult transitions and time periods for individual students in the classroom schedule. I provide</p>	<p>I share with other teachers, staff and caregivers of students who need individualized support the successful routines and rituals to encourage and support a community of care outside the classroom.</p>

			students positive alternatives for those times.	
RESPONDS Student self regulation and skill building	I want to learn how to use elements of self-regulation (movement, tactile, audio, visual, etc.) into classroom instruction to support individual students who need more help.	I understand how self-regulation skills can be used to bring students' brains back 'on line'. I am able to occasionally provide skill building for individual students about emotional regulation, modulation and expression. I occasionally use these strategies in my class.	I am aware of and regularly implement at a classroom level a broad array of self-regulation skill building that may include movement, tactile, audio, and breathing activities. In addition I have individualized plans for students who need more assistance with self-regulation.	I coordinate with other teachers, staff and caregivers by sharing the successful activities and techniques that support student self-regulation skill building. I encourage and assist in the building of a community of care for students outside of the classroom.
RESPONDS Behavior guidance	I want to learn how to use PBIS and restorative practices to teach and care for my students. I want to understand how the current brain research indicates there are more effective ways to support students, especially those impacted by trauma, than rewards and punishments and classroom removal.	I occasionally use classroom wide PBIS or restorative practices to ensure expectations are clear and skill building occurs. I understand that a student must be calm before behavior planning is verbally discussed. I occasionally make positive contact with student's family/ caregivers.	I regularly use a variety individualized PBIS strategies. I re-teach to provide clear expectations and skill building to all students. I regularly work with other school staff and caregivers to create individualized support plans for students in my classroom. I am consistent, yet flexible, in meeting my students learning needs.	I implement PBIS strategies comprehensively. I augment with individualized plans created in collaboration with the student, other teachers in the building and caregivers. This plan is communicated responsibly, respectfully and widely to all who work with the student.

<p>RESPONDS</p> <p>Physical space</p>	<p>I want to learn how to evaluate my classroom or space where I serve students for common triggers and how to set up opportunities for students to calm themselves.</p>	<p>I have examined my classroom for potential triggers and trouble spots and have taken steps to see that the environment encourages a sense of safety for students.</p>	<p>I regularly examine my classroom, and solicit feedback from students, on how to increase a sense of safety there. I have a ‘calm down’ spot in my classroom, or another spot designated for students to calm themselves on their own or with some staff support.</p>	<p>I am aware of the physical spaces of my classroom <i>and</i> outside my classroom and advocate for making them feel safe for all students.</p>
<p>RESPONDS</p> <p>Helpful participation and student identity</p>	<p>I want to learn how to provide opportunities within the classroom for helpful participation in activities where students can share positive aspects of their identity.</p>	<p>I understand that students who may have experienced trauma often have negative belief systems about themselves and their caregivers. I occasionally offer students opportunities to build positive identity.</p>	<p>I regularly provide student opportunities for helpful participation, meaningful work, and facilitate opportunities for students to share positive aspects of their background, experience and identity.</p>	<p>Students are given frequent opportunities in the classroom to develop skills and build positive self identity. Students and their caregivers take a collaborative role with the teacher to identify roles and skill development.</p>
<p>RESIST RETRAUMITAZTION OF STUDENTS AND STAFF</p> <p>Parallel process</p>	<p>I want to learn how my teaching strategies or classroom space can mitigate, minimize or eliminate re-traumatization for students.</p>	<p>I want to understand how my responses to student behavior may be re-traumatizing in order to change it. I want to learn more about my own stress symptoms and how to use my colleagues and district resources for support.</p>	<p>I stay aware about how my classroom and responses could be contributing to retraumatization of students. I regularly consult with colleagues or supervisors when I am stressed at work to get additional support.</p>	<p>I share positive information, encourage support and advocate for healthy staff practices & care in order to mitigate burnout and low morale in my school building and district.</p>

