

What About Your School?

Building Trust and Well-Being Through Trauma-Informed Communities

Lisa Lachlan-Haché, EdD | Debra McLaren, EdD | Monica Ruiz | Kathleen Guarino

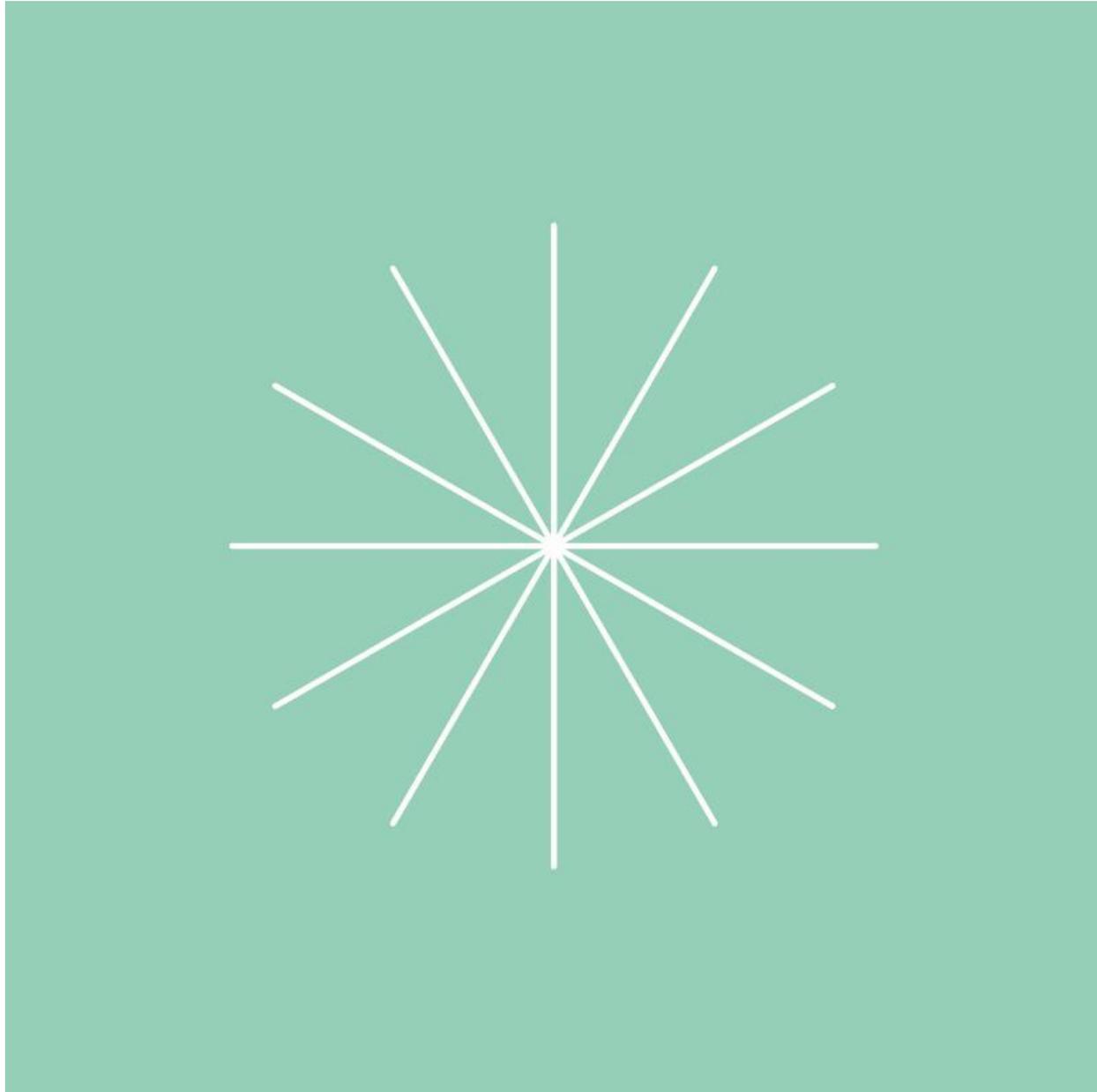
JULY 2020

Center on
GREAT TEACHERS & LEADERS

at the American Institutes for Research® ■

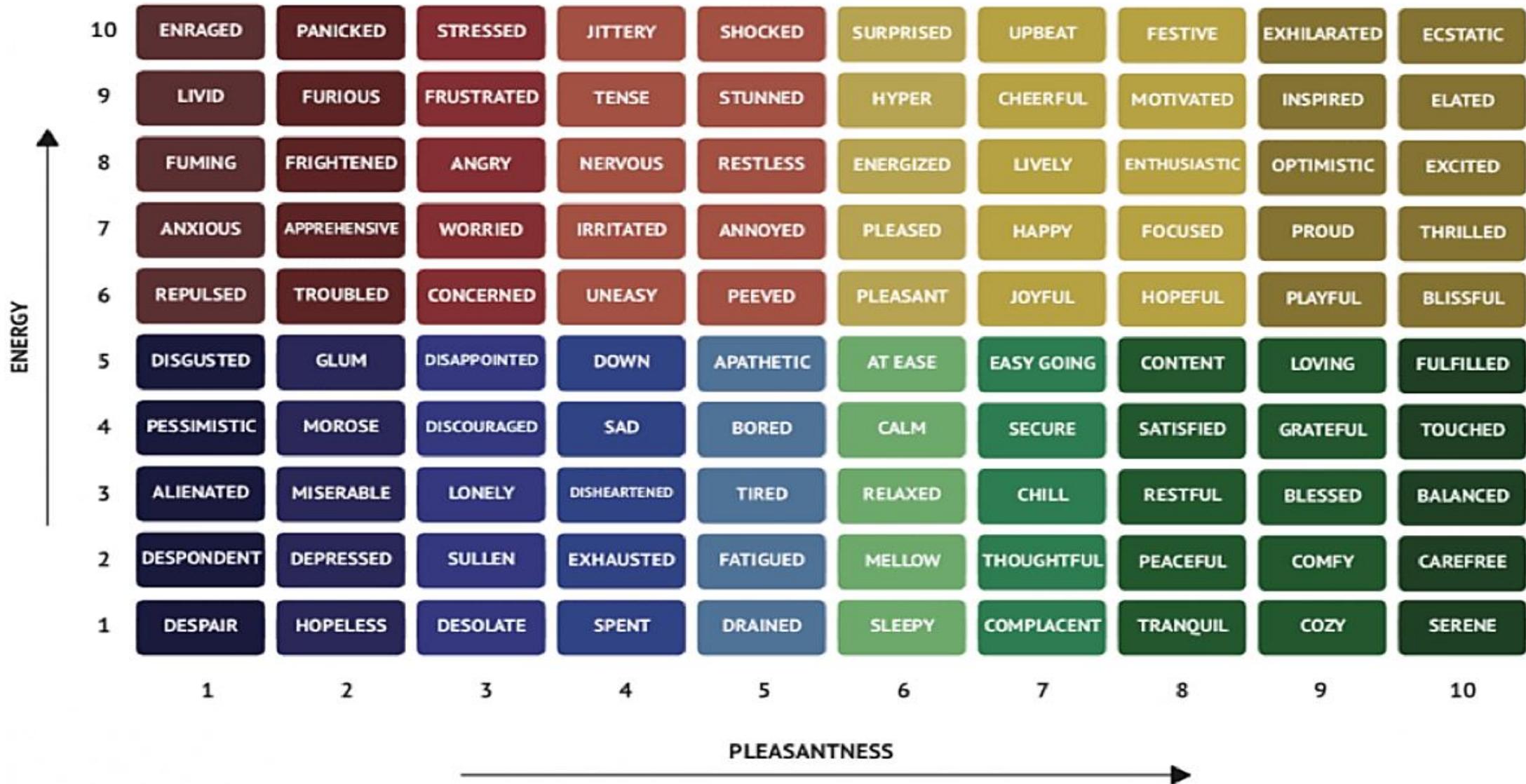


Opening: Breathe



(mondaycampaigns.org)

Your Word



Meet Our Presenters



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Overarching Goal and Session Objectives

Our overall goal is to strengthen the capacity of state education agencies, district leaders, principals, and teachers to use evidence-based research to inform their practice.

We will accomplish this with the following objectives:

- **Understand the latest research** on the effects of adversity and trauma on school communities and how schools are responding.
- **Learn from practitioners** about how they are fostering community and supporting student and educator well-being at this time.
- **Identify actionable steps** for building trust and community schoolwide using a trauma-informed approach.

PART 1: RECOGNIZING AND RESPONDING TO ADVERSITY AND TRAUMA IN THE SCHOOL COMMUNITY

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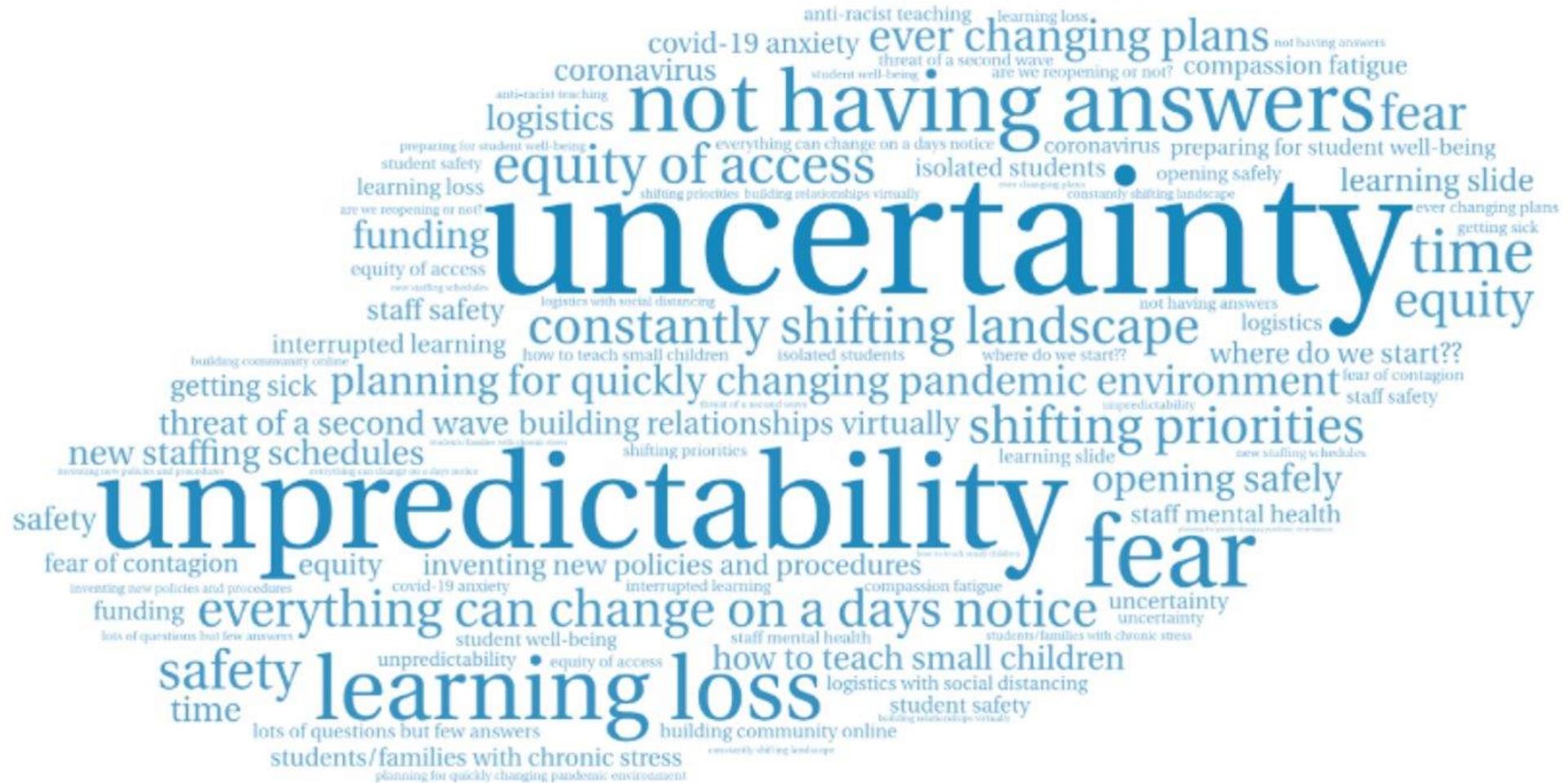
Stressors Related to COVID-19

- Sudden disruption of normal routines, relationships, structures, and predictability
- Students and staff missing out on important rituals and transitions (e.g., prom, graduation, end-of-year celebrations and goodbyes, losses)
- Confusion and uncertainty about what will happen next
- Worry and fear for the safety of self and others (for teachers, worry about their students)
- Disproportionate access to virtual education for students (e.g., technology, learning challenges)
- Learning new technology, adapting to different ways of teaching and learning, maintaining student engagement, and balancing work and home life

Stressors Related to COVID-19

- Increased challenges with mental health issues (e.g., anxiety, depression)
- Loss of resources (e.g., extended family support, job loss, access to mental health services and health care)
- Food insecurity
- Unsafe situations at home (e.g., abuse, neglect, domestic violence)
- Loss of family members, community members, teachers, and students
- The disproportionate effects of COVID-19 in communities of color and increased risk for these and other stressors

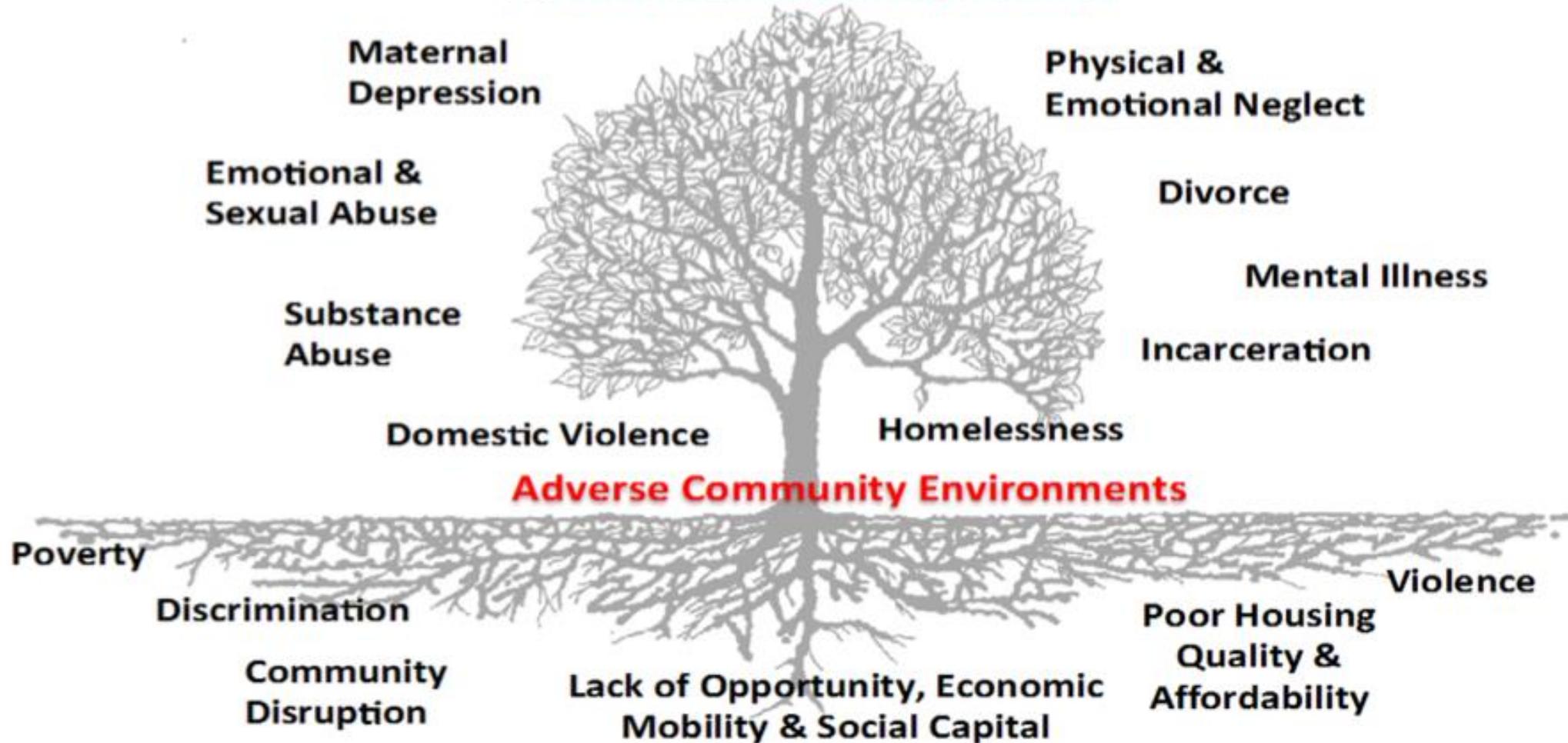
School Leader Stressors



Created with WordArt.com

The Pair of ACEs

Adverse Childhood Experiences



Ellis, W., Dietz, W. (2017) A New Framework for Addressing Adverse Childhood and Community Experiences: The Building Community Resilience (BCR) Model. *Academic Pediatrics*. 17 (2017) pp. S86-S93. DOI information: 10.1016/j.acap.2016.12.011

Practitioner and Audience Perspective

What particular stresses are school leaders feeling now?

Effects of Adversity and Trauma on Students

- Physical symptoms (headaches, stomachaches, and decline in self-care)
- Intense feelings of fear, anxiety, and concern for safety
- Difficulty identifying and controlling feelings
- More impulsive or risk-taking behavior
- Difficulty focusing, concentrating, and engaging in learning
- Increased risk of failing
- Trouble forming or maintaining relationships with others
- Increased absences, more suspensions and expulsions, or higher referrals to special education



Effects of Adversity and Trauma on Caregivers

- Difficulty focusing and managing emotions
- Less patience and tolerance for daily stressors
- Difficulty balancing work and home life while supporting student learning at home
- Worry about family members, job stability, and economic security
- General mistrust of school staff and the education system
- Difficulty connecting with school staff, especially if caregivers do not feel like valued and respected members of the school community
- Feelings of embarrassment, shame, fear, or guilt about their child's behaviors or needs that may trigger reminders of other traumas or negative school experiences
- Mental health and/or substance use issues

Impact of Trauma on School Staff

Direct exposure

- Histories of trauma
- Trauma in the work environment

Secondary traumatic stress

- Indirect exposure to others' trauma (e.g., media)
- Posttraumatic symptoms

Vicarious trauma

- Negative effects of sustained empathic engagement
- Influences view of self, others, world

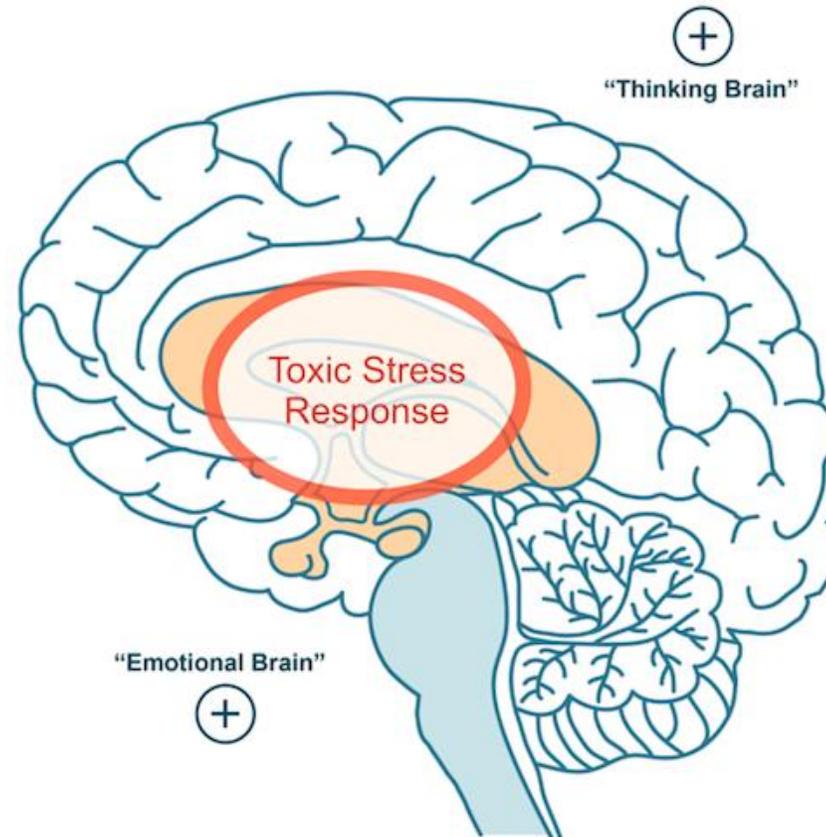
Impact of Trauma on School Climate



- Students are more likely to escalate difficult behaviors and act out.
- Adults increasingly are crisis driven, reactive, and punitive to maintain control.
- It is difficult to maintain a safe environment that is most conducive to learning.
- Schools risk retraumatizing students by creating situations that mirror or replicate other traumas (e.g., harsh, punitive discipline, disrespectful interactions, chaotic environments).

School-Level Effects

- SURVIVAL MODE
- “Fight or flight”
- Increasingly rigid
- Closed
- Suspicious/threatened
- Competitive
- Fractured
- Isolated
- Reactionary/punitive
- Cynical
- Tunnel vision
- High turnover



- Flexible
- Strengths based
- Connected (internally and externally)
- Proactive
- Creative
- Empathic
- Aware of staff needs
- Staff longevity
- Engaged students and families

Practitioner and Audience Perspective

How has your school community been affected by current stresses? Where do you see strength and resilience?

PART 2: STRATEGIES FOR BUILDING TRUST AND COMMUNITY



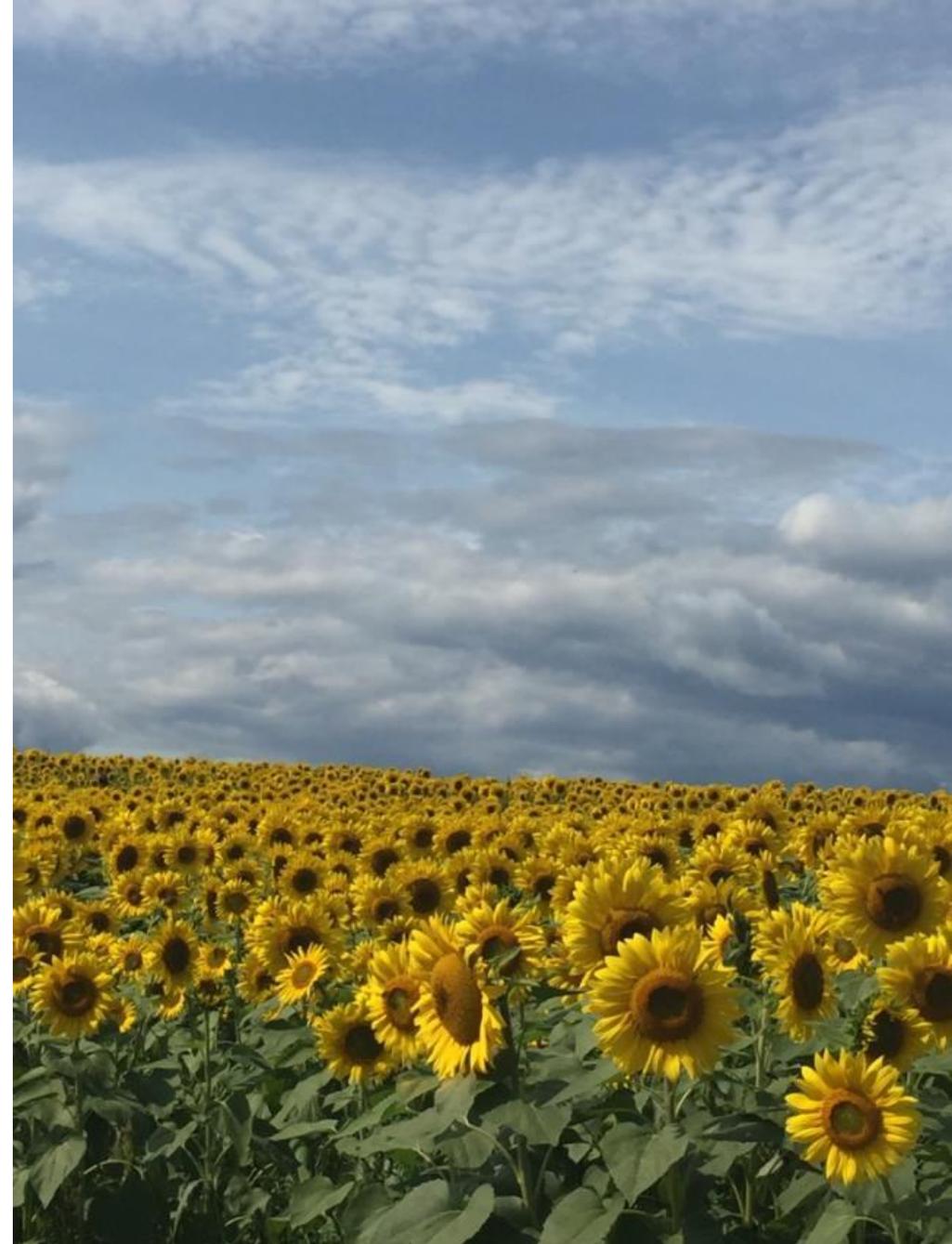
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Key Resilience Factors

- Adaptable, caring, and supportive relationships
- A sense of mastery over life circumstances
- Strong executive function and self-regulation skills
- Safe and supportive environments
- Affirming faith or cultural traditions

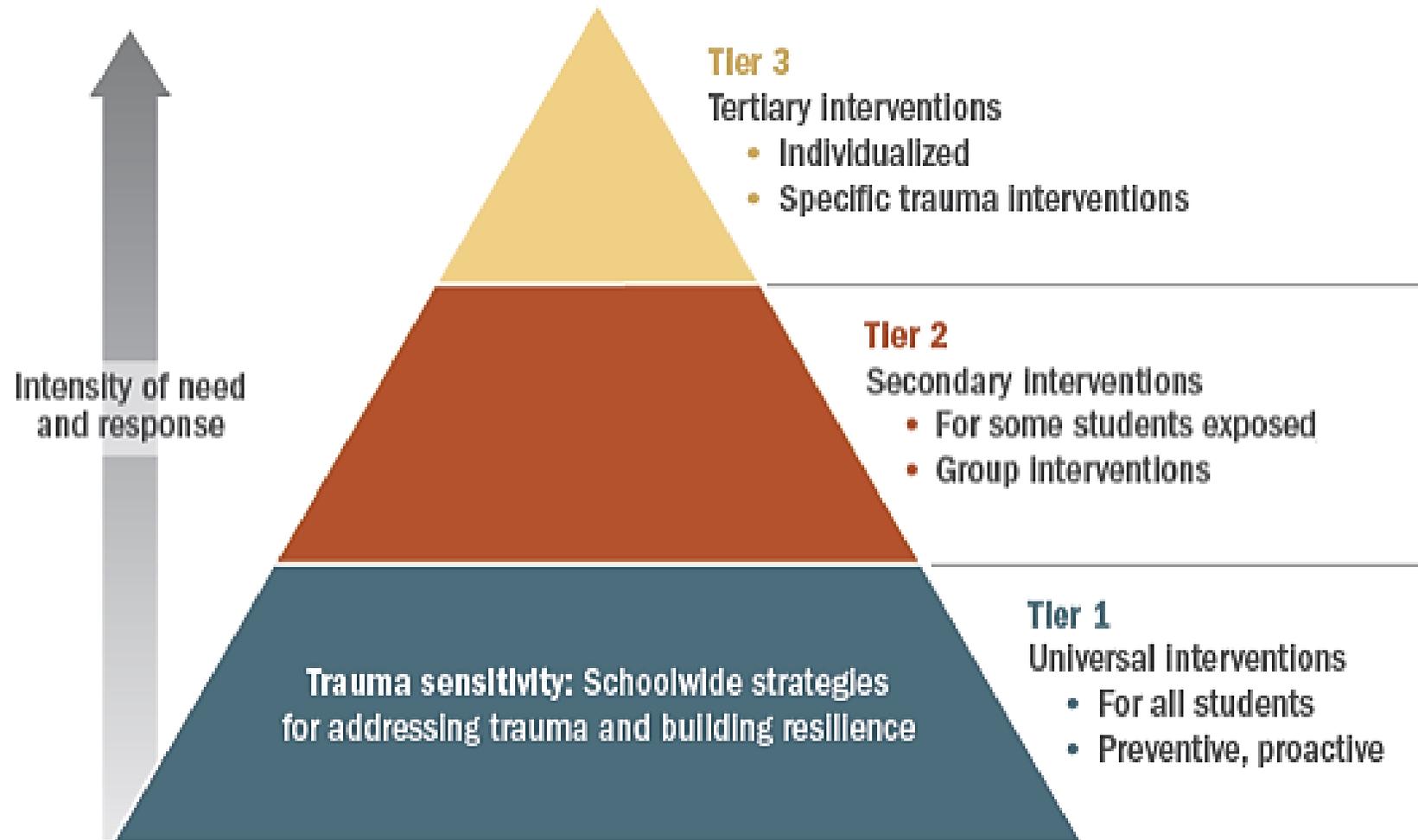
(Center on the Developing Child, 2015)



Audience Chat and Practitioner Perspective

What strategies have you used to address adversity and foster resilience in your school community?

Multi-tiered Approach to Addressing Trauma In Schools



(American Institutes for Research, 2018)

Trauma-Sensitive Schools

A trauma-sensitive school is one in which all aspects of the educational environment—from workforce training to engagement with students and families to procedures and policies—are grounded in an understanding of trauma and its impact and are designed to promote equity and resilience.

This process requires attention to mission, vision, practices, policies, and culture.

Building a Trauma-Informed Community



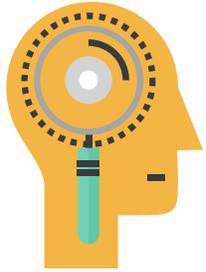
Step 3: Reason

Step 2: Relate

Step 1: Regulate



Trauma-Informed Practices for Building Trust and Community



**Education,
Mindset,
and Instruction**



Safety



**Emotional
Regulation
and Well-being**



Relationships

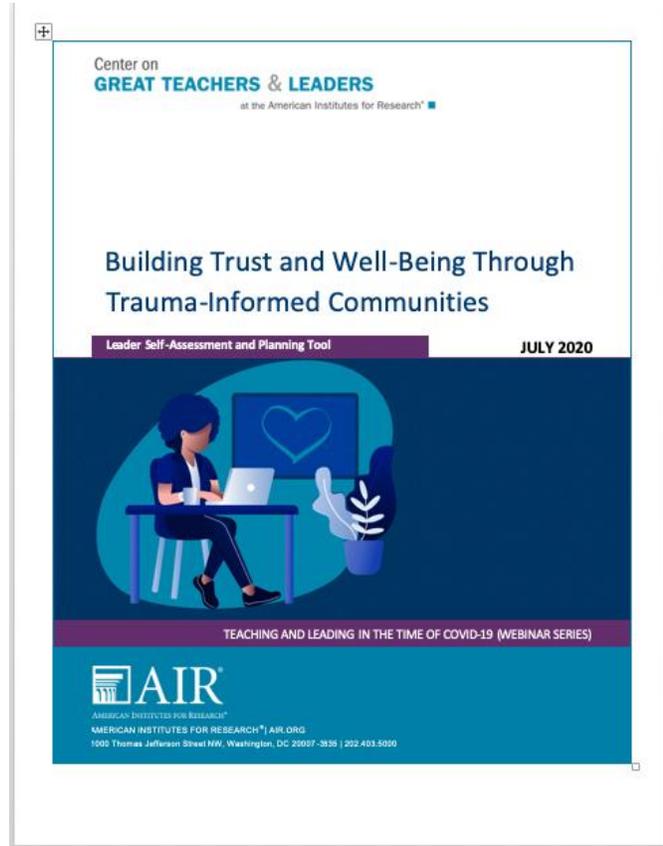


**Systems
and Structures**



EQUITY

Free Resource: Leader Assessment and Planning Tool



Explore your areas of strength and growth related to the five dimensions of trauma-informed community-building.

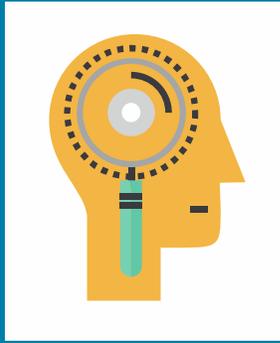
Leader Self-Assessment for Building Trust and Well-Being: <i>Education, Mindset, and Instruction</i>				
Please rate on a scale of 1 (never) to 4 (often) how often you incorporate the following strategies.				
PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT: ALL STAFF	Never	Rarely	Sometimes	Often
Educate all staff (certified and noncertified) on the types and effects of trauma, including racial and historical trauma.	1	2	3	4
Educate all staff on the unique experiences among particular groups of students (e.g., LGBTQ+; communities of color, refugee communities).	1	2	3	4
Educate all staff on key factors associated with resilience and social and emotional well-being across the life span.	1	2	3	4
Educate all staff about systemic racism and implicit bias.	1	2	3	4
Educate all staff on the effects of secondary traumatic stress and vicarious trauma.	1	2	3	4
Educate all staff on understanding their signs of stress and developing positive coping strategies.	1	2	3	4
Provide training and ongoing support to assist staff in integrating trauma-informed practices.	1	2	3	4
Provide training and ongoing support related to building social and emotional competencies for students and staff.	1	2	3	4
Provide training and ongoing support related to culturally responsive practices.	1	2	3	4
Provide training and ongoing support on positive discipline practices, such as restorative practices.	1	2	3	4
Provide training and ongoing support on student-centered practices, such as collaborative problem solving.	1	2	3	4
Provide family engagement training for staff (e.g., helping parents understand child data; informing parents of their rights; giving parent feedback on child needs; helping families support learning at home; promoting child development, learning, and wellness).	1	2	3	4

Area	Already Do	Would Like to Do
EDUCATION, MINDSET, AND INSTRUCTION 		
SAFETY 		
EMOTIONAL REGULATION AND WELL-BEING 		
RELATIONSHIPS 		
SYSTEMS AND STRUCTURES 		

https://gtlcenter.org/sites/default/files/Leader_Self-Assessment_Webinar.pdf



**SYSTEMS
AND
STRUCTURES**



**EDUCATION, MINDSET,
AND INSTRUCTION**



SAFETY



**EMOTIONAL
REGULATION
AND WELL-BEING**



RELATIONSHIPS

Audience Poll

Which areas do you see as a relative strength for your school?
Which areas do you see as places for growth?

Audience Chat and Practitioner Perspective

What is your focus moving into the next school year to foster trust, community, and well-being for all in the learning environment?

Audience Chat and Practitioner Perspective

What are some examples of good resources (e.g., activities, tools) that are particularly useful for school leaders at this time?

Resources



WEBINAR SERIES

Teaching & Leading in the Time of COVID-19

What About You? Strategies for Supporting Educator Resilience and Trauma-Informed Self-Care

Thursday, April 23, 9:30 a.m. PT/12:30 p.m. ET

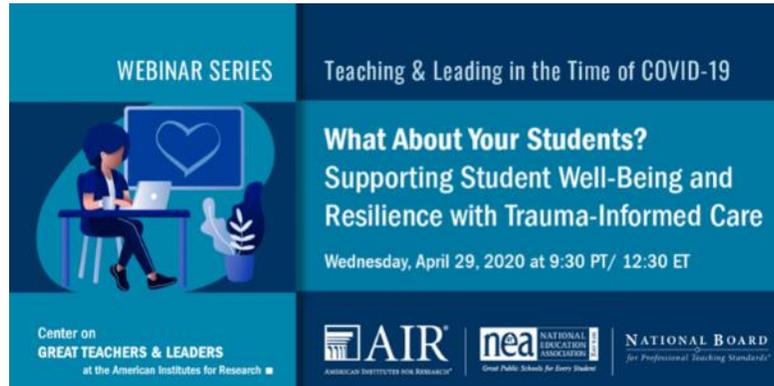
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AIR AMERICAN INSTITUTES FOR RESEARCH

nea NATIONAL EDUCATION ASSOCIATION Great Public Schools for Every Student

NATIONAL BOARD for Professional Teaching Standards

- Click to listen to a [recording of the webinar](#).
- Download [presentation slides](#).
- Access the corresponding [Educator Resilience and Trauma-Informed Self-Care Self-Assessment and Planning Tool](#).
- Review [resources and bibliography](#).



WEBINAR SERIES

Teaching & Leading in the Time of COVID-19

What About Your Students? Supporting Student Well-Being and Resilience with Trauma-Informed Care

Wednesday, April 29, 2020 at 9:30 PT/ 12:30 ET

Center on GREAT TEACHERS & LEADERS at the American Institutes for Research

AIR AMERICAN INSTITUTES FOR RESEARCH

nea NATIONAL EDUCATION ASSOCIATION Great Public Schools for Every Student

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- Click to listen to a [recording of the webinar](#).
- Download [presentation slides](#).
- Access the corresponding [Educator Self-Assessment and Planning Tool for Supporting Student Resilience and Well-Being](#).
- Review [resources and bibliography](#).

Resources



Trauma-Sensitive Schools
TRAINING PACKAGE
UNDERSTAND • BUILD • LEAD

Trauma-Sensitive Schools Training Package

UNDERSTAND Trauma and Its Impact

- E-resource
- Companion slide presentation and activity packet for in-person training

BUILD Trauma-Sensitive Schools

- Online module for all staff
- Handouts
- Facilitation guide

LEAD Trauma-Sensitive Schools

- Online module for leaders
- Action guide with steps for implementation
- Facilitation guide

<https://safesupportivelearning.ed.gov/trauma-sensitive-schools-training-package-0>

Resources

- National Child Traumatic Stress Network. (2018). *Creating, supporting, and sustaining trauma-informed schools: A system framework*. Retrieved from https://www.nctsn.org/sites/default/files/resources//creating_supporting_sustaining_trauma_informed_schools_a_systems_framework.pdf
- Halladay Goldman, J., Danna, L., Maze, J. W., Pickens, I. B., & Ake III, G. S. (2020). *Trauma-informed school strategies during COVID-19*. Los Angeles, CA, and Durham, NC: National Child Traumatic Stress Network. Retrieved from https://www.nctsn.org/sites/default/files/resources/fact-sheet/trauma_informed_school_strategies_during_covid-19.pdf
- Yoder, N., Posamentier, J., Godek, D., Seibel, K., & Dusenbury, L. (2020). *From response to reopening: State efforts to elevate social and emotional learning during the pandemic*. Chicago, IL: Collaborative for Academic, Social, and Emotional Learning. Retrieved from <https://casel.org/wp-content/uploads/2020/06/State-Covid19-Response-CASEL-CFC.pdf>

Anti-Racist Education Resources

- *Everyday Antiracism: Getting Real About Race in School*
- *Fires in the Middle School Bathroom: Advice for Teachers from Middle Schoolers*
- *Fires in the Bathroom: Advice for Teachers from High School Students*
- *Teaching When the World Is On Fire*
- *The Skin That We Speak: Thoughts on Language and Culture in the Classroom*
- *Troublemakers: Lessons in Freedom from Young Children at School*
- *Cutting School: The Segrenomics of American Education*
- *Pushout: The Criminalization of Black Girls in Schools*

Charities to Consider

DonorsChoose.org—Keep Kids Learning sends supplies directly to students based on teacher request.

AdoptAClassroom.org also sends supplies to students from underserved schools.

GiveDirectly.org provides cash to vulnerable households enrolled in SNAP.

FeedingAmerica.org serves students meals through the school pantry program. There is also a food bank locator on their website.

We would like to hear from you!

- What was helpful about today's webinar?
- What GTL Center offerings might best support your work around trauma-informed practices in education?

Please use the link in the chat to fill out our survey. Thanks!



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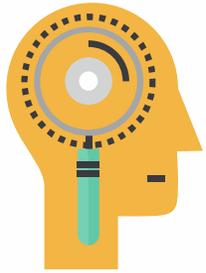
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Additional Strategies

Strategies also are in the webinar self-assessment handout.

Trauma-Informed Practices for Building Trust and Community



**Education,
Mindset,
and Instruction**



Safety



**Emotional
Regulation
and Well-being**



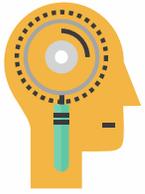
Relationships



**Systems
and Structures**



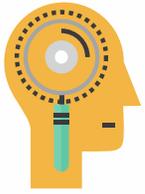
EQUITY



Education, Mindset, and Instruction

Professional Development: All Staff

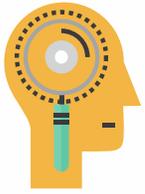
- Educate all staff (certified and noncertified) on the types and effects of trauma, including racial and historical trauma.
- Educate all staff on the unique experiences and risk for trauma among particular groups of students and staff (e.g., the Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender, Questioning community; communities of color; refugee communities).
- Educate all staff on key factors associated with resilience and social and emotional well-being across the life span.
- Educate all staff about systemic racism and implicit bias.
- Educate all staff on the effects of secondary traumatic stress and vicarious trauma.
- Educate all staff on understanding their signs of stress and developing positive coping strategies.



Education, Mindset, and Instruction

Professional Development: All Staff

- Provide training and ongoing support to assist staff in integrating trauma-informed practices.
- Provide training and ongoing support related to building social and emotional competencies for students and staff.
- Provide training and ongoing support related to culturally responsive practices.
- Provide training and ongoing support on positive discipline practices, such as restorative practices.
- Provide training and ongoing support on student-centered practices, such as collaborative problem solving.
- Provide family engagement training for staff (e.g., helping parents understand child data; informing parents of their rights; giving parent feedback on child needs; helping families support learning at home; promoting child development, learning, and wellness).



Education, Mindset, and Instruction

Professional Development: Leader-Specific

- Provide training on social and emotional competencies for principals and other school leaders.
- Provide training on emotional intelligence for school leaders.
- Providing training on systems thinking for school leaders.
- Provide training for school leaders on how to support staff in adopting new practices.



Education, Mindset, and Instruction

Trauma Education for Students, Families, and Community Partners

- Educate students about trauma, its effects on the brain and body, and stress management techniques.
- Develop a common language across your school community for talking about the brain and nervous system to help students and staff articulate which part of their brain and nervous system they may be operating from at a given time. [Examples: for younger students, you may talk about the upstairs brain/downstairs brain; for older students you may talk about the thinking brain/emotional brain or the calm system and the stress system. You may assign colors to different nervous system states, such as red for fight or flight, blue for freeze or shut down, and green for calm and connected.]
- Educate caregivers about stress and trauma and their effects, stress management techniques, and how you are working to support student well-being (e.g., newsletters, resources, in-person or virtual presentations on the topic, ways that parents can support well-being practices at home).
- Provide caregivers with strategies related to proactive, SEL techniques that can be incorporated or practiced at home.
- Communicate your vision for student well-being to community partners and ensure those partners have a similar approach to supporting students.



Education, Mindset, and Instruction

Trauma-Informed Mindset

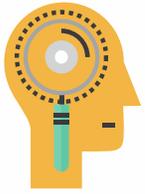
- Support staff in adopting a trauma-informed mindset. [Consider examples of core beliefs associated with a trauma-informed mindset. Spend time exploring these and other core beliefs with your staff and addressing areas with staff disagreement or issues with buy-in.]
 - Students do well if they can (versus if they want to). [Note: This applies to staff as well.]
 - Relationships are central to student success. [Note: This applies to staff as well.]
 - Behavior is communication. The misbehavior you see is a solution to a problem that you don't see (e.g., unsolved problems, unmet needs, lagging skills).
 - We cannot reward or punish students into being regulated.
 - Solutions-focused (versus punishment oriented) approaches to addressing student behavior are best.
 - Attending to student and staff social and emotional well-being is necessary for academic success.
 - Different students have different needs, including those associated with experiences of adversity and trauma. Equity is about ensuring that all needs are met versus treating all students the same.



Education, Mindset, and Instruction

Trauma-Informed Mindset

- Check your assumptions and mental talk about students and their behaviors (e.g., noticing negative thoughts, assumptions and biases).
- Avoid negative labels (e.g., disengaged, uninterested, lazy, unmotivated, doesn't care) that do not take into account the stress that students and families are experiencing; model positive talk for staff.
- Help school staff recognize their own negative assumptions or tendency toward negative labels as examples arise (ensure this is done either without giving a specific example or in private to avoid embarrassing or shaming staff).



Education, Mindset, and Instruction

Trauma-Informed Instruction

- Assist teachers in setting consistent classroom norms that explicitly include a commitment to supporting academic success and well-being and seeing and honoring the identity and experiences of all students and staff.
- Encourage teachers and staff to focus on social and emotional learning and related regulation and well-being practices during instructional time.
- Encourage staff to ask colleagues, students, and their families how to make the virtual classroom more welcoming to students.
- Plan for how to maintain alternate educational programming if returning in the fall is not possible or if some students must remain at home because of compromised immune systems or other risk factors.
- Encourage staff to consider ways to incorporate relevant student experiences during this time (COVID-19, racism, other related stressors) into instruction.



Education, Mindset, and Instruction

Staff Support

- Assist staff in practicing new skills incrementally to avoid overwhelm (e.g., institute a “practice-of-the-month,” support grade-level or department teams in trying out the same practice for a period of time and offer each other support).
- Integrate language and topics related to trauma, trauma-informed practice, and well-being into regular communication (e.g., newsletters, staff meetings).
- Encourage and model a growth mindset with staff as they gain new knowledge and try out new skills.
- Provide opportunities for teachers to come together virtually and talk openly, in a confidential space, about their most challenging students—to brainstorm strategies that will work during this time and lay the groundwork for a successful return to school.
- Encourage and support flexibility in this new learning environment (e.g., being open to trying new things, managing expectations of yourself and of staff, students, and families).
- Adjust leave policies to allow staff to stay at home because of sick family members and support staff who may have been exposed at work and now have to stay at home.



Safety

Physical Safety

- Prioritize the physical safety of the entire school community when making decisions related to reopening the school or holding any in-person events.
- Ensure the physical safety of all staff by following the latest public health recommendations related to hygiene and protective equipment, minimizing exposure as much as possible.
- Ensure that any staff on the school grounds or conducting school business are provided with the equipment, policies, and enforcement tools they need to maximize their physical safety.
- Designate safe spaces inside and outside the classroom for students to self-regulate when experiencing behavioral and emotional challenges.



Safety

Physical Safety

- Ensure that staff consistently employ de-escalation strategies, such as breathing exercises, grounding techniques, and calming spaces, to prevent and minimize behavioral escalation and the risk of physical harm.
- Actively address all instances bullying and/or violence that happen at school.
- Train school resource officers on trauma, trauma-informed practice, implicit bias, and culturally responsive practice.
- Ensure that school resource officers are not called unnecessarily for punitive responses to student behaviors.
- Integrate school resource officers into nonpunitive school activities to increase trust.



Safety

Emotional Safety

- Be aware of the possible fear and concerns for students and staff in returning to school during the time of COVID-19.
- Set clear norms and agreements for your school community; review these norms and agreements regularly (whether virtually or in person).
- Ensure that staff and students participate in developing school norms.
- Ensure that norms reflect the school's commitment to nonviolence; equity; compassion; and student voice, choice, and well-being.
- Set clear expectations for online behavior as it relates to safety and respect and establish clear consequences for cruelty and bullying online, including race-based bullying.
- Establish clear and consistent rituals and routines for the school community (e.g., how the day begins and ends, clear structures during the day).
- Establish practices to create a welcoming environment for staff and students both virtually and in person (e.g., how all are greeted, how you engage with each other throughout the day).



Safety

Emotional Safety

- Ensure that all communication with students and families is personal, warm, and respectful.
- Incorporate culturally relevant signs, posters, and other visual materials within the school environment.
- Consider cultural factors when meeting with families (e.g., how to greet, what topics may be difficult to address, cultural norms, values, practices, and experiences with the education system).
- Identify and minimize procedures and practices that may be “triggering” for students who have experienced trauma (i.e., situations, circumstances, or responses that leave students feeling helpless, vulnerable, or out of control).
- Identify and minimize procedures and practices that may be “triggering” for parents who have experienced trauma. Considerations include protecting confidentiality; giving parents advance notice of what will be discussed at a meeting, offering choices for how a meeting is conducted, recognizing signs of distress during conversations, and giving parents a chance to regroup or reschedule to finish the conversation.



Safety

Emotional Safety

- Ensure student expectations are clear and enforced consistently. [Note: Having consistent expectations does not preclude being flexible and compassionate and providing individualized assistance to help students build the necessary skills to meet those expectations.]
- Employ behavior management strategies that are relational and focused on student and staff regulation.
- Establish consequences that are nonpunitive and aim to support students in learning new behavioral skills or at least provide clear pathways for appeal. Consider students' life experiences and the potential for retraumatization when applying consequences.
- Use a collaborative approach when identifying consequences/solutions for behavior (students, teachers, support staff, administrators) once students and adults are calm.
- Integrate a restorative practices approach for assisting students in repairing harm caused by their behavior.
- Offer supportive services to students who require frequent disciplinary actions to address underlying causes of their behavior. Ensure that COVID-19-specific challenges are considered, including the family's economic and health-care situation.



Safety

Identity Safety

- Provide support and guidance for staff to engage in conversations about how race, gender, socioeconomic status, and other important identities are sources of both stress and strength for students and staff.
- Actively seek to address inequities experienced by students representing various cultural groups within the school by encouraging staff to act as advocates for students' needs and to become particularly attuned to the most vulnerable student needs.
- Actively seek to address inequities experienced by staff of various cultural groups with the school.
- Work to ensure equity of voice across staff of various cultural groups.
- Work to ensure equity of voice across staff in different roles in the school (e.g., certified, noncertified).
- Check your assumptions and biases about students and student behaviors.
- Incorporate materials and references that are culturally relevant to students.



Safety

Identity Safety

- Demonstrate respect in day-to-day communications (e.g., correctly pronouncing and spelling names, using preferred pronouns, being curious about and honoring students' cultural stories and experiences).
- Be aware of and respond to the presence and impact of historical and systemic racism on students and staff and the presence of race-based trauma.
- Establish safe, trusting, and caring environments where students feel safe taking risks in being themselves and sharing their experiences.
- Convey respect for cultural differences in communication styles, language, values, experiences with authority figures, and perceptions of safety.
- Explore how students can be part of addressing racial, identity, and social justice issues that are most relevant to your school community.



Safety

Identity Safety

- Actively address “microaggressions” related to race, gender, sexual orientation, or other factors (for students and staff). *Microaggressions are brief, everyday verbal or behavioral exchanges that intentionally or unintentionally communicate hostile, derogatory, or negative racial messages or insults.*

Examples of microaggressions include the following:

- Consistently mispronouncing (or spelling) a student’s name
- Making assumptions about a student’s intelligence based on race or ethnicity
- Insulting, diminishing, or disregarding a student’s cultural background and experiences
- Using textbooks and curricula that reflect White, upper-class experiences and overlook experiences of other student groups

Microaggressions related to sexual orientation or gender identity may include the following:

- Using the term *gay* to describe something negative
- Derogatory looks or comments about someone’s gender identity or expression
- Being told not to “flaunt” one’s sexuality
- Teachers not enforcing bullying or discrimination policies
- Not using preferred pronouns



Emotional Regulation and Well-Being

Emotional Regulation

- Support staff in adopting a lesson-planning structure that supports emotional regulation (including self-awareness and self-management practices). Consider the following three-part model from the Collaborative for Academic, Social, and Emotional Learning.
 - Welcoming opening ritual
 - » Smile, welcoming by name, virtual greetings or handshakes, virtual circle
 - » Consider a “do-now” or “entry card” that offers an opportunity to identify emotions or highs and lows
 - » Identify emotional states (e.g., mood meter, scales, thermometers)
 - Regulatory strategies throughout the lesson
 - » Brain breaks
 - » Collective pauses
 - » Mindful minute
 - Optimistic closure
 - » Accolades, appreciations, gratitude
 - » Feeling check, something I learned, something I am curious about, what I am hopeful about or looking forward to
 - » Identify emotional states



Emotional Regulation and Well-Being

Emotional Regulation

- Support staff in using grounding techniques that help students calm down and re-regulate when necessary. Examples include the following:
 - Belly breathing
 - Body scans and muscle relaxation
 - 5-4-3-2-1 (five things you see, four things you feel, three things you hear, two things you smell, one thing you can taste)
 - Journaling
 - Music
 - Rhythm and movement
 - Settling minute
 - Calming images



Emotional Regulation and Well-Being

Emotional Regulation

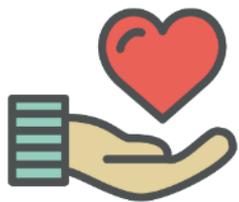
- Integrate activities for supporting emotional regulation in staff meetings and encourage staff practice in smaller team meetings.
- Integrate activities for supporting emotional regulation into larger school rituals and routines (during morning announcements, before leaving school, at the beginning and end of schoolwide gatherings).
- Support staff in identifying the situations and student and staff responses that trigger their own emotional dysregulation.
- Support staff in practicing awareness and regulation techniques for themselves throughout the school day (e.g., mindful breathing, body scans, compassion exercises).
- Consider instituting a process for supporting staff at moments of overwhelm (e.g., a tap in/tap out system where teachers can access more immediate support if they need space or an opportunity to care for themselves and re-regulate in the moment).



Emotional Regulation and Well-Being

Emotional Well-Being

- Celebrate successes in your school community regularly.
- Find ways to incorporate schoolwide activities that cultivate positive emotions.
- Incorporate regular opportunities for practicing gratitude within the school community.
- Develop plans for assisting students in transitioning from the previous school year into the next, including allowing students to spend some time in their former classrooms to celebrate accomplishments, honor their efforts during the time of virtual learning, and transition to their next grade level.



Emotional Regulation and Well-Being

Emotional Well-Being

- Incorporate formal strategies for assessing staff burnout and secondary trauma.
- Provide peer supports to assist with stress management (e.g., teacher circles, check-ins specific to emotional well-being).
- Identify and distribute resources for staff who may need additional screening, assessment, and/or treatment for stress, mental health issues, or secondary traumatic stress symptoms.
- Check in with your staff both collectively and individually. Encourage them to take time to manage their stress and take care of themselves and their families.
- Support staff in developing individual wellness plans to refer to throughout the year.



Emotional Regulation and Well-Being

Emotional Well-Being

- Share community resources with teachers that support family well-being (e.g., food and housing) and encourage them to share concerns about families with the school administration.
- Normalize stress and mention ways that mental health professionals can help children or caregivers cope with that stress when communicating with families. List symptoms that children and families could be experiencing.
- Work with your school mental health staff to develop a list of mental health resources that families can access from their homes. This list should include a suicide hotline, a disaster distress hotline, a domestic violence hotline, school mental health staff available by phone or video, and community mental health resources.
- Ensure that all staff receive training to identify reactions of trauma and mental health and know the procedures for linking a student to additional supports.



Emotional Regulation and Well-Being

Emotional Well-Being

- Ensure school assessments (e.g., educational, functional, behavioral, psychological) consider the history of trauma and potential effects on learning, behavior, test results, and diagnosis.
- Ensure the assessment process engages students and families through varied lenses, including family strengths, capacities, cultural heritage, and extended family resources.
- Ensure individualized plans include a place for addressing trauma-related issues, such as triggers, necessary accommodations and helpful adult responses, and trauma-related supports.
- Consider working with school mental health and/or community partners with expertise in trauma to explore ways to identify students who may be experiencing mental health and trauma symptoms associated with COVID-19.
- Consider using cultural insiders to assist in explaining available mental health services and address potential stigma related to accessing these services.
- Provide and/or contract with providers who provide culturally relevant and responsive mental health services.



Relationships

Staff

- Create opportunities for staff to connect with one another, through peer check-ins or using professional development time to reflect and process.
- Begin and end staff and/or team/department meetings with an opportunity for connecting (“being human”) before diving into the work. This may involve a temperature check, regulation activities, or staff/teams/departments taking turns leading the group through an opening or closing ritual that they develop.
- Create opportunities for staff to share their cultures with each other.
- Recognize and help staff identify their strengths.
- Provide opportunities for staff to share gratitude with each other.



Relationships

Staff

- Promote a culture where staff can be open about challenges and able to ask for help.
- Ensure that staff receive adequate supervision and support.
- Provide opportunities for peer mentorship for staff, particularly those who are newer to the field.
- Develop a shared process for decision making that incorporates staff feedback and voice.
- Ensure staff feedback on reentry plans.
- Provide opportunities for staff members to give input into policies and procedures.
- Ensure that staff input can be provided without negative repercussions.



Relationships

Students

- Support teachers in fostering developmental relationships with students. (Refer to the [Developmental Relationships Framework](#).)
- Assist teachers in identifying student strengths with students and building on them throughout the year.
- Assist staff in using online tools to build community when in a virtual space (e.g., Flipgrid or Seesaw—allow students to share photos and videos that classmates can watch and comment on).
- Consider ways that staff can learn more about students' cultures and systems of belief and create opportunities for students to share their stories.
- Provide ways to support student expression (e.g., art, music, videos).
- Support staff in conducting virtual or in-person community-building check-in circles (e.g., morning meetings).



Relationships

Students

- Encourage staff to attend to equity of voice, ensuring that all student voices are heard and reflected in community-building activities at the classroom level.
- Lead a relationship mapping session with colleagues (in-person or virtually) to identify adult connections among students and to target staff to support ([see virtual resource](#)).
- Establish a process for repairing relationships when connections are disrupted between students and adults or peers (this includes adults owning their missteps when they arise).
- Support staff in gathering student input regularly about what is working, what is not working, and what might work better (in person and in a virtual space).
- Assist staff in using a collaborative problem-solving approach with students (see <https://youtu.be/zuoPZkFcLVs> for an example).



Relationships

Students

- Institute formal processes for assessing student engagement.
- Examine engagement data for patterns among students who are or are not feeling a sense of connection and belonging within the school community.
- Ensure student voice in all efforts related to well-being and equity efforts in the school (e.g., presence on committees, feedback gathered on particular topics).
- Consider equitable representation related to student voice and participation in leadership positions in the school. Identify any disproportionality related to representation within the school community.
- Find ways to say goodbye to students as they end their year (virtual meetings, virtual journals to share memories and gratitude, postcards).
- Explore ways to assist staff in welcoming students back for the upcoming year (e.g., virtual meet-and-greets, welcome letters or postcards, a getting-to-know-you questionnaire).



Relationships

Families

- Recognize the types of potentially traumatic experiences that families have and may continue to face that impact their engagement with the school community.
- Identify patterns in family participation and engagement with the school community and identify those families who are less engaged.
- Identify potential barriers for families who are less engaged with the school community and ways to address those barriers.
- Use a cultural insider to help bridge gaps in engagement.
- Develop formal processes for continuous improvement related to family engagement (e.g., family satisfaction, assessments of the quality of relationships, discussion of screenings and assessments, the number of professional development activities with a family engagement focus, changes in family engagement practices).



Relationships

Families

- Ensure that all families feel welcome in the school.
- Learn about families' backgrounds, cultures, and goals for their children.
- Include families as partners in all decision making related to student plans and services (e.g., use family group or team decision-making approaches).
- Lead with family strengths when addressing student challenges and developing plans.
- Set mutually satisfactory goals that families can be part of achieving.
- Consider how to conduct meetings in trauma-sensitive ways (who leads, how the room is arranged, what signals are given regarding whether student and family voice is valued).
- Consider cultural factors when meeting with families (e.g., how to greet, what topics may be difficult to address, cultural norms, values, practices, and experiences with the education system).



Relationships

Families

- Gather feedback from families on reentry plans, including concerns for the new school year.
- Include families in the planning and implementation of schoolwide efforts related to addressing trauma and supporting well-being (e.g., trauma-informed practice, social and emotional learning, equity).
- Provide opportunities for families to give input into policies and procedures.



Systems and Structures

- Formally acknowledge the types of trauma (individual, family, community, societal) that students and staff in your school community experience (e.g., COVID-19, racism, violence, other experiences/events that may be specific to your school community context).
- Articulate a commitment to understanding the effects of adversity and trauma on students, caregivers, staff, and schools and supporting the social and emotional well-being of all in the school community (e.g., incorporate into mission and vision).
- Make the connection between a focus on trauma-informed practice, social and emotional learning, and culturally responsive and equitable learning conditions.
- Allocate resources to support efforts needed to create a trauma-informed and resilience-oriented school community.
- Ensure that your school's reentry plan reflects a commitment to equity, trauma-informed practice, and social and emotional well-being and learning for all in the school community.



Systems and Structures

- Review student data for inequities in academic performance, disciplinary actions, and student engagement and experiences of school. Find opportunities for all staff to be engaged in some way in this review and discussion of data.
- Avoid using data to make generalizations or assign labels to students.
- Develop a formal process for reviewing policies and procedures to identify and address standard practices that may adversely and disproportionately impact specific groups of students and exacerbate traumatic stress or loss reactions.
- Identify existing structures (or create new structures) for supporting ongoing efforts to address trauma and support student and staff social and emotional well-being (e.g., school climate or improvement teams, teams focused on equity, reentry teams).
- Ensure that systems and structures are in place for regularly gathering staff input and feedback on school systems and structures, a chance to participate in decision making about the creation of systems and structures, and a chance to inform outcomes.
- Ensure that emergency response protocols are clear and minimize the risk for traumatizing or retraumatizing students.



Systems and Structures

- Provide clear, concise, accurate, and timely communication to the entire school community, which increases predictability, a sense of control, and feelings of safety for others.
- Maintain clear channels of communication between administrators and staff.
- Maintain clear channels of communication between instructional staff and student support staff.
- Communicate in the language of the home, establish multilanguage hotlines, and translate materials for families.
- Use a cultural insider to help bridge cultural gaps in communication.
- Set clear expectations for staff related to their roles and responsibilities where new ways of teaching and learning, particularly in a virtual space, are involved.
- Ensure that the expectations of staff related to trauma-informed and social and emotional learning practices are aligned with performance expectations.
- Identify a community of peers/mentors who can support school leaders in their efforts to address trauma and support student and staff social and emotional well-being and growth.