



CREATING SAFE AND INCLUSIVE SCHOOLS: A FRAMEWORK FOR SELF-ASSESSMENT

Created by:
Great Lakes Equity Center

May 2015





About Great Lakes Equity Center

Great Lakes Equity Center is one of ten regional Equity Assistance Centers funded by the U.S. Department of Education under Title IV of the 1964 Civil Rights Act. The Center serves the public educational agencies in Illinois, Indiana, Michigan, Minnesota, Ohio, and Wisconsin by providing a wide range of technical assistance supports.

The mission of the Center is, to ensure equity in student access to and participation in high quality, research-based education by expanding states' and school systems' capacity to provide robust, effective opportunities to learn for all students, regardless of and responsive to race, sex, and national origin, and to reduce disparities in educational outcomes among and between groups.



About This Tool

This tool provides a framework with four domains for assessing the extent to which classroom and non-classroom spaces reflect a positive school climate, and a self assessment tool to help school and district teams prioritize domains in planning efforts.

SAFE AND INCLUSIVE SCHOOLS: FOUR DOMAINS

This graphic summarizes the four key domains presented in this tool for ensuring safe and inclusive learning environments.



SAFE AND INCLUSIVE SCHOOLS: SELF-ASSESSMENT

Instructions:

1. Assemble a group that is representative of ALL school stakeholders (leadership, staff, families, students, and community partners)
2. Individually, read and assign a score to each indicator for the four domains according to the following rating criteria:
3 = The practice is in place (*i.e., More than 80% of staff or school facilities/ operations reflect the criteria*)
2 = The practice is partially in place (*i.e., 50-80% of staff or school facilities/ operations reflect the criteria*)
1 = The practice is not in place (*i.e., Less than 50% of staff or school facilities/ operations reflect the criteria*)
3. Sum the ratings for each domain and write the value in the “Total Rating” space for each domain.
4. Discuss your ratings and justifications for your ratings as a team and come to a consensus on which domain rates the lowest overall; prioritize that domain for planning purposes.

SAFE AND INCLUSIVE SCHOOLS: SELF-ASSESSMENT

Self-Rating (1-3)	SAFE AND INCLUSIVE SCHOOL INDICATORS
Physical Safety and Inclusiveness	
	School's infrastructure and physical structure are designed to meet the needs of the whole child
	Classroom and non-classroom settings are arranged to create open, safe and equally accessible spaces
	Prevention and intervention plans are in place regarding safety in classrooms, common spaces, and surrounding community areas
	Systems are in place so that students and staff feel safe to report physical safety concerns and reports are followed up by well-established procedures
TOTAL RATING:	
NOTES AND COMMENTS:	

SAFE AND INCLUSIVE SCHOOLS: SELF-ASSESSMENT

Self-Rating (1-3)	SAFE AND INCLUSIVE SCHOOL INDICATORS
Intellectual Safety and Inclusiveness	
	Classroom cultures are such that students feel safe to engage in classroom discussions and activities without fear of judgment or reprisal
	Students and teachers are supported to feel comfortable with the ambiguity inherent in the learning process
	Teachers incorporate multiple means of representing content, assessing student learning and engaging students in the conception of daily instruction
	Formal and informal opportunities for students to critically reflect on and critique school and classroom norms occur
TOTAL RATING:	
NOTES AND COMMENTS:	

SAFE AND INCLUSIVE SCHOOLS: SELF-ASSESSMENT

Self-Rating (1-3)	SAFE AND INCLUSIVE SCHOOL INDICATORS
Cultural Safety and Inclusiveness	
	Schools and classroom cultures are such that students feel safe to be who they are and proud of their personal identities and personal histories
	Students know that their cultural backgrounds as well as their cultural practices are respected and highly appreciated
	Teachers recognize and utilize students' differences, and provide culturally responsive and culturally sustaining instruction through curricular material and instructional strategies
	School policies and procedures are designed and implemented in ways that keep everyone's cultural values and practices in mind
TOTAL RATING:	
NOTES AND COMMENTS:	

SAFE AND INCLUSIVE SCHOOLS: SELF-ASSESSMENT

Self-Rating (1-3)	SAFE AND INCLUSIVE SCHOOL INDICATORS
Socio-Emotional Safety and Inclusiveness	
	School and classroom cultures are such that students feel safe to express their personal identities and cultural practices without being afraid of being judged, punished or teased
	Difference is recognized and respected and students are supported to appreciate multiple perspectives and the lived experiences of others from backgrounds different than their own
	Adults are intentional about cultivating empowering relationships with students; students are supported to engage in social critique and make decisions that will lead to social change towards a just community
	Policies and practices are liberatory and enable students to feel free to express their own emotions, desires, and opinions constructively, as well as empower students to make decisions towards self-determination.
TOTAL RATING:	
NOTES AND COMMENTS:	



References

- DeWitt, P., & Slade, S. (2014). School climate change: How do I build a positive environment for learning?(ASCD Arias). ASCD
- González, N., Moll, L. C., & Amanti, C. (Eds.). (2013). Funds of knowledge: Theorizing practices in households, communities, and classrooms. Routledge.
- National Association of School Psychologist (2015). Creating a safe school building. Retrieved February 23rd, 2015 from: http://www.nasponline.org/resources/crisis_safety/neat_buildings.aspx
- Macey, E.M., Thorius, K.A.K., & Skelton, S.M. (2012). Equity by Design: Engaging school communities in critical reflection on policy. Great Lakes Equity Center, Retrieved February 23rd, 2015 from http://glec.education.iupui.edu/assets/files/2013_5_1_PolicyBrief_FINAL.pdf
- Morrison, L., Robbins, H.H., & Gregory R.D. (2008). Operationalizing culturally relevant pedagogy: A syntheses of classroom-based research. *Equity & Excellence in Education*, 41, 433-452.
- National School Climate Center. (2012). The 12 Dimensions of School Climate Measured. Retrieved from: http://www.schoolclimate.org/programs/documents/dimensions_chart_pagebars.pdf

IMPACT:

Educate, Engage, Empower — For Equity



Great Lakes Equity Center

902 West New York St.
Indianapolis, IN 46202
317-278-3493 - glec@iupui.edu
glec.education.iupui.edu



INDIANA UNIVERSITY
SCHOOL OF EDUCATION
IUPUI

IUPUI School of Education 902

West New York St.
Indianapolis, IN 46202
317-274-6801 - llines@iupui.edu
education.iupui.edu

Disclaimer: Great Lakes Equity Center is committed to the sharing of information regarding issues of equity in education. The contents of this practitioner brief were developed under a grant from the U.S. Department of Education. However, these contents do not necessarily represent the policy of the Department of Education, and you should not assume endorsement by the federal government.

