Let Your Data Do the Talking: Building Trauma-Informed Schools through Comprehensive Needs Assessment and Action Planning

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Why Trauma Informed Schools?

"…traumatic experiences in childhood can diminish concentration, memory, and the organizational and language abilities children need to succeed in school."

-Trauma and Learning Policy Initiative

Child Trauma: National Incidence

- **50%** of the nation's children have experienced **at least one or more** types of serious childhood traumas.

  National Survey of Children's Health, 2013

- **Over 40%** of the children and adolescents receiving services through NCTSN funded partners experienced **4 or more** different types of trauma and adversity.

  Pynoos et.al, 2014

Decreased IQ and reading ability
(Jimenez et al., 2016; Kira et al., 2012; Sharkey, 2010)

Lower grade-point average
(Borofsky, et al. 2013; Mathews et al, 2009)

More days of school absence
(Mathews et al, 2009)

Increased behavior problems, expulsions, & suspensions
(Jimenez et al., 2016)

Decreased rates of high school graduation
(Porche et al., 2011)

Why Trauma-Informed Schools?

"Not only are individual children affected by traumatic experiences, but other students, the adults on campus, and their communities can be impacted by interacting or working with a child who has experienced trauma."

National Child Traumatic Stress Network

SAMHSA's "4 Rs" Approach to Trauma-Informed Care

Vision of school environment that:

1. *Realizes* the widespread impact of trauma and pathways to recovery

2. *Recognizes* traumas signs and symptoms

3. *Responds* by integrating knowledge about trauma into all facets of the system

4. *Resists* re-traumatization of trauma-impacted individuals by decreasing the occurrence of unnecessary triggers

NCTSN Framework for a Trauma Informed School (System)

Rooted in Multi-Tiered Systems of Support model

Tier 1
- **Safe Environments and Universally Healthy Students**
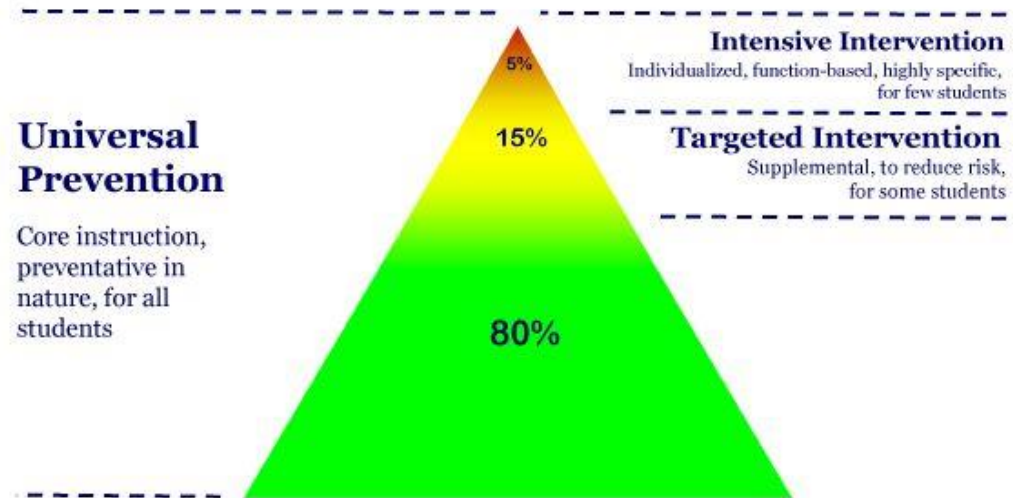- **Creating and Supporting a Trauma-Informed School Community**

Tier 2
- **Early Intervention/Identifying Students and Staff At-Risk**

Tier 3
- **Intensive Support**

School-Wide Support Systems for Student Success

Universal Prevention

Core instruction, preventative in nature, for all students

Intensive Intervention
Individualized, function-based, highly specific, for few students

Targeted Intervention
Supplemental, to reduce risk, for some students

5%

15%

80%

NCTSN Framework for a Trauma Informed School (System)

Core Areas of a Trauma-Informed School

1. Identifying and Assessing Traumatic Stress
2. Addressing and Treating Traumatic Stress
3. Trauma Education and Awareness
4. Partnerships with Students and Families
5. Creating a Trauma-Informed Learning Environment (Social/Emotional Skills and Wellness)
6. Cultural Responsiveness
7. Emergency Management/Crisis Response
8. Staff Self-Care and Secondary Traumatic Stress
9. School Discipline Policies and Practices

Components of Trauma-Informed Care

Creating a Safe Environment

Building Relationships and Connectedness

Supporting and Teaching Emotional Regulation

Participating Schools

	Grades	Location	Low-Income	% Non-White
School 1	Elementary	Medium sized city	54% (district)	63% (district)
School 2	Middle	Medium sized city	54% (district)	63% (district)
School 3	High School	Suburban	31% (school)	44% (school)
School 4	Alternative High School	Urban	95% qualify for reduced lunch (district)	95% (district)
School 5	Alternative High School	Urban	95% qualify for reduced lunch (district)	95% (district)

Measures

1) Trauma-Responsive Schools-Implementation Assessment (TRS-IA; Treatment and Adaptation Center for Resilience, Hope, and Wellness in Schools, 2017)
  – Completed by school leadership teams in a conversation facilitated by consultant
  – Consensus ratings
  – 8 domains

2) Professional Quality of Life (ProQol; Stamm, 2009)
  – Staff survey
  – 3 subscales: Compassion Satisfaction, Burnout, and Secondary Traumatic Stress

Measures (continued)

3) Attitudes Related to Trauma-Informed Care (ARTIC; Baker, et al., 2016)
  – Staff survey, 35 items
  – Five subscales
  – Scores can range from 1 to 7; higher scores are indicative of more favorable attitudes towards trauma-informed care
  – Sample Items:

| 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 |

Focusing on developing healthy, healing relationships is the best approach when working with people with trauma histories.   ○ ○ ○ ○ ○ ○ ○   Rules and consequences are the best approach when working with people with trauma histories.

Many students just don't want to change or learn.   ○ ○ ○ ○ ○ ○ ○   All students want to change or learn.

The ups and downs are part of the work so I don't take it personally.   ○ ○ ○ ○ ○ ○ ○   The unpredictability and intensity of work makes me think I'm not fit for this job.

Healthy relationships with students are the way to good student outcomes.   ○ ○ ○ ○ ○ ○ ○   People will think I have poor boundaries if I build relationships with my students.

The fact that I'm impacted by my work means that I care.   ○ ○ ○ ○ ○ ○ ○   Sometimes I think I'm too sensitive to do this kind of work.

Measures (continued)

4) Trauma-Informed Walk-Through Checklist (New Orleans Trauma-Informed Schools Learning Collaborative, 2017)
- Observational checklist and rating form
- 65+ items keyed to the 6 principles articulated in the SAMHSA framework
- Sample items:

Safety Indicators	1	2	3	4	×
Spaces are actively supervised by staff members (e.g., there are enough staff to oversee students; teacher is actively supervising all students in the room).	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐

Trustworthiness & Transparency Indicators	1	2	3	4	×
Activities are structured in predictable ways (e.g., clearly stated classroom routines, explicit routines, specific directions).	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐

Indicator of Empowerment, Voice & Choice	1	2	3	4	×
Students are able to make personal choices throughout the school day (e.g., choosing to work in a group or alone).	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐

5) Focus Groups with Staff, Students, and/or Caregivers
- Facilitated by consultants; semi-structured format

Process

Standard

- Facilitated all staff awareness presentation

- Established Leadership Team

- Conducted needs assessment

- Provided ongoing professional development

- Created data driven action plans

Tailored

- Needs Assessment
  - Timing and format of administration

- Professional Development
  - Participants:
    - Leadership Team (PLCs); All staff; Clinical Staff
  - Subjects:
    - Self-Care, Adult SEL; Psychological First Aid/Crisis Preparedness
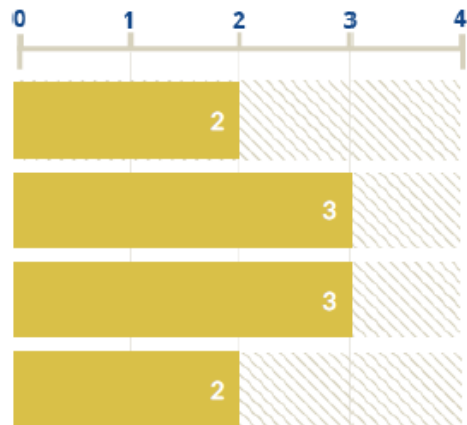
- Support Partners
  - District partners/resources

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WHOLE SCHOOL SAFETY PLANNING

OVERALL COMPOSITE SCORE: 2.50
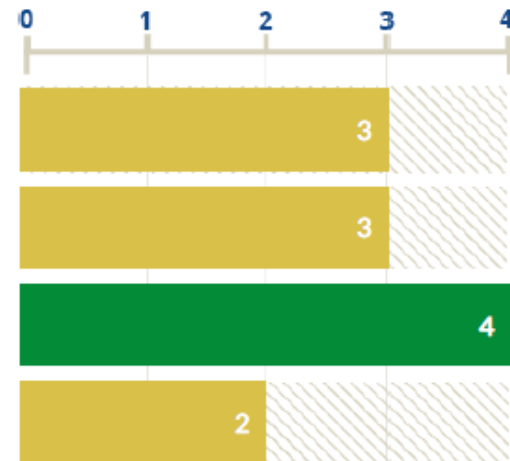
Category	Score
Safe/predictable campus	2
Adequate supervision	3
Threat assessment strategy	3
Bullying prevention	2

OVERALL COMPOSITE SCORE: 3.00

Category	Score
Safe/predictable campus	3
Adequate supervision	3
Threat assessment strategy	4
Bullying prevention	2

Sample Results: TRS-IA (School #2, Middle School; School #5, Alternative High School)

WHOLE SCHOOL PREVENTION PLANNING

OVERALL COMPOSITE SCORE: 1.80
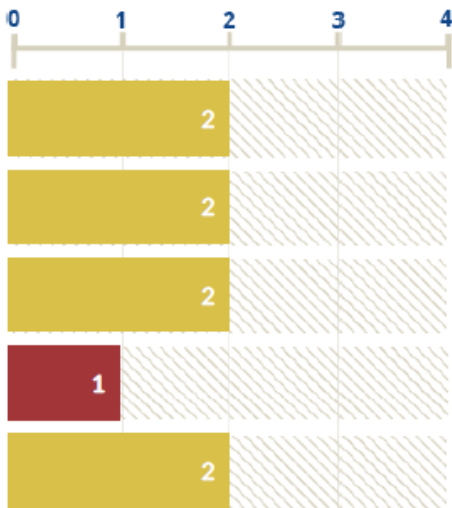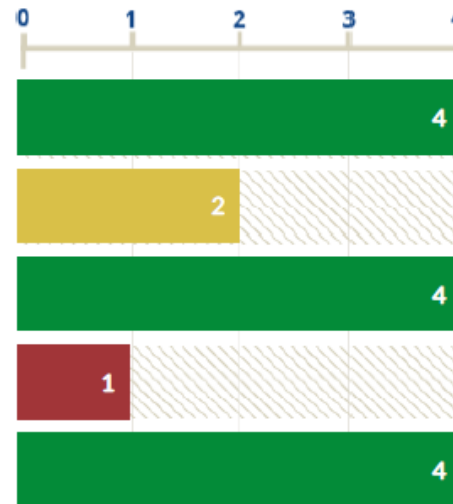
Category	Score
Peer reporting	2
Record sharing	2
School climate assessment	2
Trauma-informed emergency drills	1
Schoolwide behavioral expectations	2

OVERALL COMPOSITE SCORE: 3.00

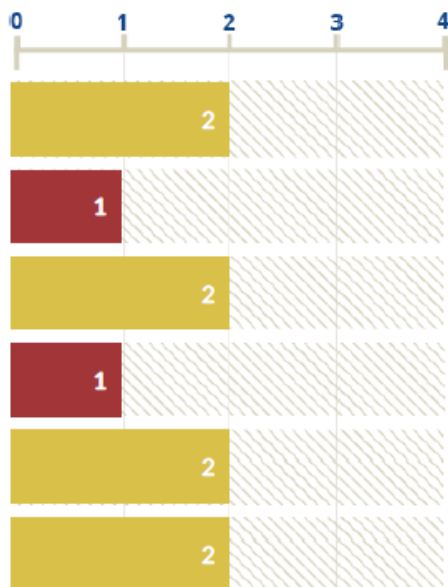| Category	Score
Peer reporting	4
Record sharing	2
School climate assessment	4
Trauma-informed emergency drills	1
Schoolwide behavioral expectations	4

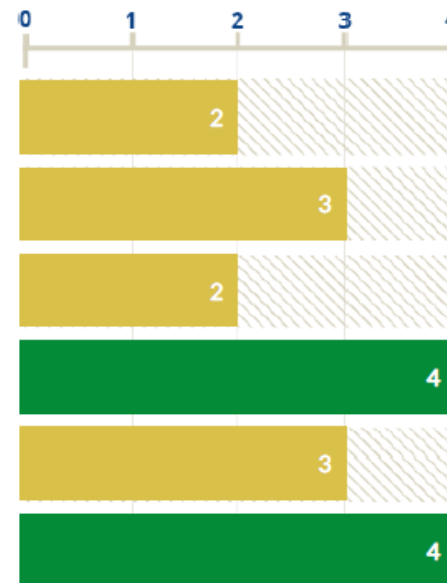# Sample Results: TRS-IA (School #2, Middle School; School #5, Alternative High School)

WHOLE SCHOOL TRAUMA PROGRAMMING

OVERALL COMPOSITE SCORE: 1.67

	Score
Crisis response training	2
Trauma-informed discipline	1
Trauma-informed security staff	2
Restorative practices	1
Staff trauma knowledge	2
Staff trauma skills	2

OVERALL COMPOSITE SCORE: 3.00

	Score
Crisis response training	2
Trauma-informed discipline	3
Trauma-informed security staff	2
Restorative practices	4
Staff trauma knowledge	3
Staff trauma skills	4

Sample Results: TRS-IA (School #2, Middle School; School #5, Alternative High School)

CLASSROOM STRATEGIES

OVERALL COMPOSITE SCORE: 1.00
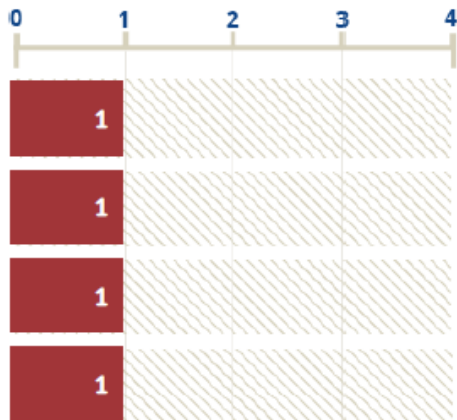
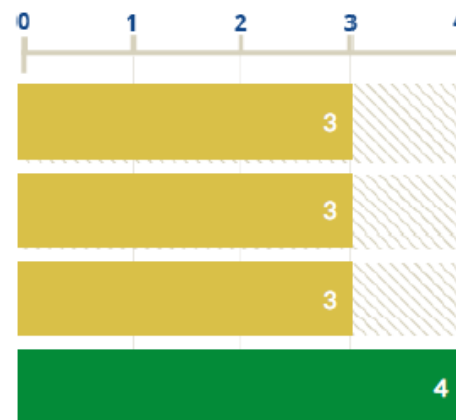|	Score
Social-emotional learning programs	1
Calm and safe classrooms	1
Behavioral accommodations	1
Academic accommodations	1

OVERALL COMPOSITE SCORE: 3.25

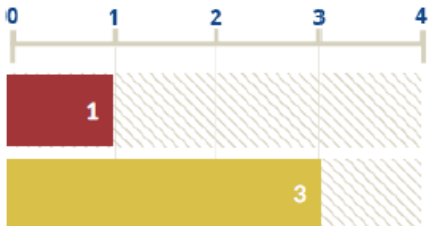|	Score
Social-emotional learning programs	3
Calm and safe classrooms	3
Behavioral accommodations	3
Academic accommodations	4

Sample Results: TRS-IA (School #2, Middle School; School #5, Alternative High School)

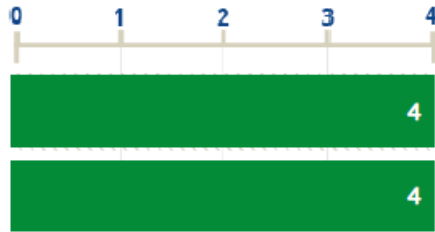PREVENTION/EARLY INTERVENTION TRAUMA PROGRAMMING

OVERALL COMPOSITE SCORE: 2.00

	Score
Trauma exposure assessment	1
Trauma-informed evidence-based practices	3

OVERALL COMPOSITE SCORE: 4.00

	Score
Trauma exposure assessment	4
Trauma-informed evidence-based practices	4

TARGETED TRAUMA-INFORMED PROGRAMMING

OVERALL COMPOSITE SCORE: 1.50
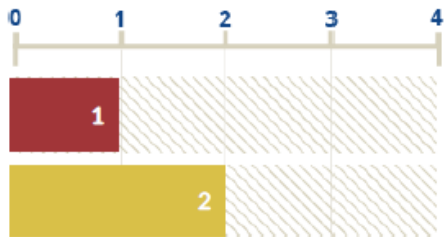
	0	1	2	3	4	
	1					Multidisciplinary team
	2					Community mental health partnerships

OVERALL COMPOSITE SCORE: 3.00
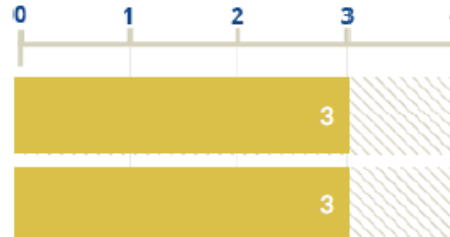
	0	1	2	3	4	
			3			Multidisciplinary team
			3			Community mental health partnerships

STAFF SELF CARE

OVERALL COMPOSITE SCORE: 1.67
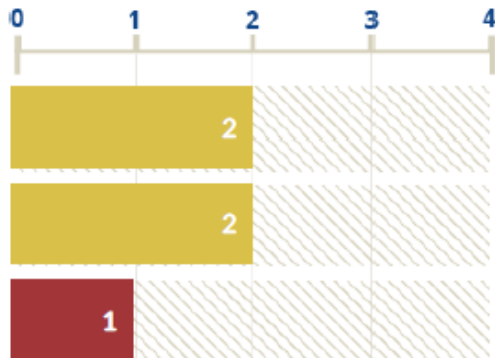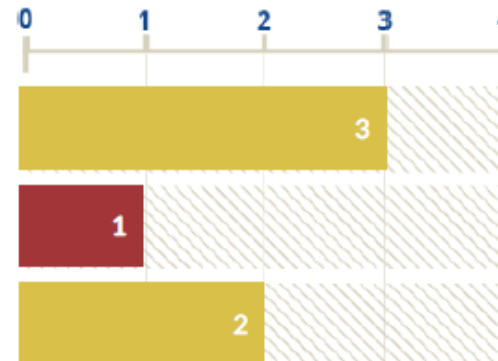
0	1	2	3	4

Staff awareness — 2

Peer support — 2

Wellness resources — 1

OVERALL COMPOSITE SCORE: 2.00

0	1	2	3	4

Staff awareness — 3

Peer support — 1

Wellness resources — 2

Sample Results: TRS-IA (School #2, Middle School; School #5, Alternative High School)
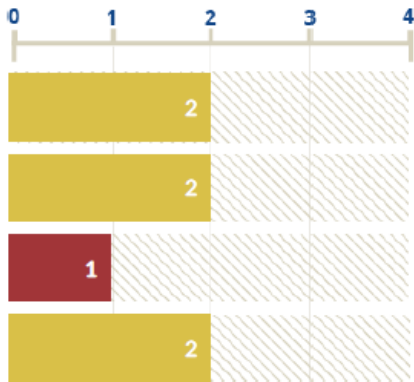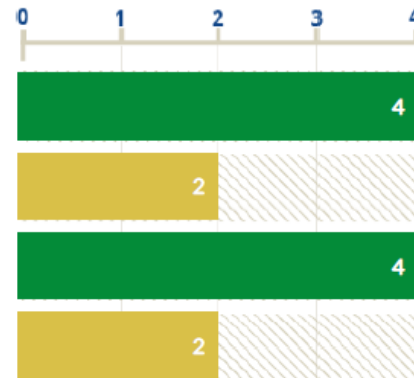
Sample Results: Professional Quality of Life (School #4, Alternative High School)

Professional Quality of Life
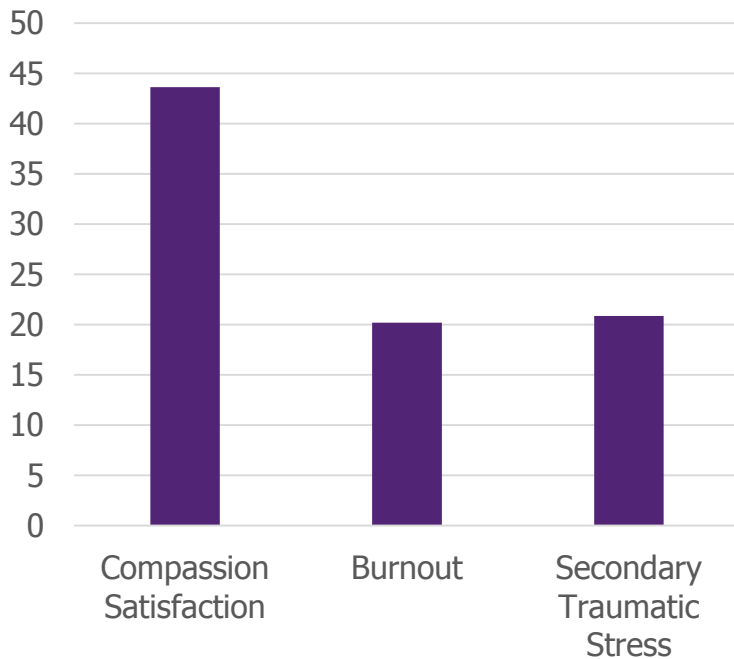
Mean = 50; Standard Deviation = 10

	Low	Average	High
Compassion Satisfaction	0%	29%	71%
Burnout	71%	29%	0%
Secondary Traumatic Stress	67%	33%	0%

ProQol differences across schools

- No significant differences in compassion satisfaction

- Some significant differences in burnout, with the suburban high school and the middle school significantly higher than other schools

- No significant differences in secondary traumatic stress

Sample Results: ARTIC (School #3; Suburban High School)
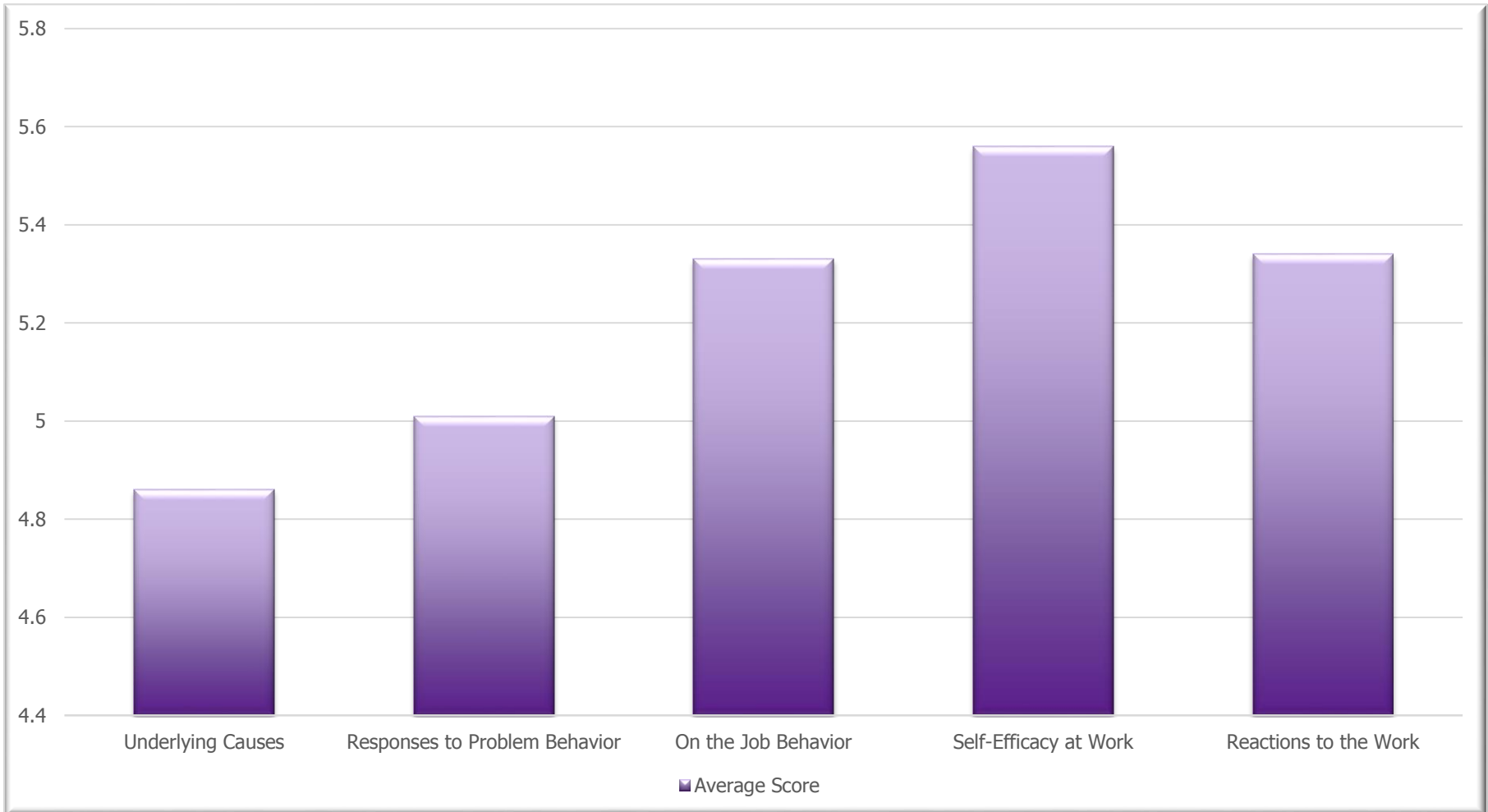
ARTIC differences across schools

- Very few significant differences across schools at baseline, despite differing school types and communities

- The elementary school had significantly higher scores than other schools on four subscales of the ARTIC

- No significant differences among the five schools on "Self-Efficacy at Work" subscale

- Scores on all five subscales were above 4.5 for all 5 schools at baseline

Trauma-Informed Environmental Walk-Through and Focus Groups

- Supplement data with qualitative observations and feedback

- Allow for a more holistic appreciation of the school community

- Allow for consultants to be a more integrated part of the school and for feedback to be more acceptable

Part 1. Trauma Responsive School-Implementation Assessment (TRS-IA)

Domain	Mean Score	Area for Improvement
Safety Planning	3.5	
Prevention Planning	2.6	
Trauma Programming	2.83	
Classroom Strategies	2.25	
Prevention/Early Intervention	3	
Targeted Trauma-Informed Programming	3	
Staff Self-Care	2	
Community Context	2	

Note: The scores can range from 1 (limited, inconsistent) to 4 (comprehensive, consistent)

Part 2. Professional Quality of Life (ProQOL) Staff Survey

Domain	Score	Areas for Improvement
Compassion Satisfaction	40.22 (Avg)	
Burnout	30.96 (Avg)	
Secondary Traumatic Stress	21.88 (Low)	

Note: The average score on for each subscale is 50 (with a standard deviation of 10). About 25% of people score below 43 and about 25% of people score above 57.

Part 3. Attitudes Related to Trauma Informed Care (ARTIC) Staff Survey

Subscale	Score	Areas for Improvement
Underlying Causes of Problem Behavior & Symptoms	4.86	
Responses to Problem Behavior & Symptoms	5.01	
On-the-Job Behavior	5.33	
Self-Efficacy at Work	5.56	
Reactions to the Work	5.34	

Sample Data Summary Sheet

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Sample Data Summary Sheet (cont.)

| Part 4. Environmental Scan Observational Data		
Principle	**Areas of Strength**	**Areas for Improvement**
Cultural Humility	*Spaces are accessible and inviting *Students, staff, and visitors are spoken to positively and politely *Examples of student work are displayed *Symbols representing the history and culture of the school and student population are displayed *Students are free to express their cultures through their attire	*Limited staff diversity *No signs in languages other than English
Safety	*Visitor procedures *Spaces are well lit and clean *Students move in orderly manner *Posted emergency procedures *Spaces are clearly designated *Staff are calm when interacting with students	*Some unmonitored entrances or propped doors *Relatively few adults in some spaces and limited circulation of adults in cafeteria
Trustworthiness & Transparency	*Schedules and posted events *clear classroom routines and clear directions *Para-professionals were very positive with students *Teachers' interactions with students were respectful	*More consistency in posting behavioral expectations and proactively reminding students of expectations *More consistency in use of procedures for student behavior (hallway passes, phone usage, arrival on late start days)
Collaboration & Mutuality	*Teachers interact in respectful ways with one another *Lots of opportunities for students to collaborate with teachers in the classroom setting to participate in classroom activities and decision making	*Relatively few informal interaction between staff as well as between students and staff
Empowerment, Voice & Choice	*Many opportunities for student voice *Information is presented in a variety of ways and active learning is encouraged *Student successes are celebrated	*Relatively little signage about SEL *No observed active use or modeling of SEL skills or emotion regulation techniques
Peer Support	*Positive peer interactions within group work in the classroom *Staff are respectful with one another	*No bullying prevention signage *Few spaces within the building for informal peer interactions

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Part 5. Staff Focus Group Themes		
Currently doing to support students	**Strengths:** *Dedicated staff *Relationships *Collaboration with SW *Self-awareness *Processing and collaborating with colleagues *De-escalation *Concrete assistance (food, transportation) *Clear expectations with room for flexibility	**Areas of growth:**
Barriers to providing support to students	*Limited time for staff to talk to one another for processing and shared learning about student needs *High concentrations of students exposed to trauma in the same classroom *Class size *Time *Lack of information about particular students' needs and circumstances	
Solutions to barriers	*more coaching on boundaries and how to respond appropriately to student disclosures *Policies and training about sharing confidential information *More opportunities for use of relaxation in school	
Self-Care: Organizational and Personal	**Strengths:** *PD on Self-Care *Paraprofessionals have "sunshine club" *Massages on Thursdays	**Areas of Growth:**
Additional training	*De-escalation *Integration of SEL and academics *Diversity and cultural competence	

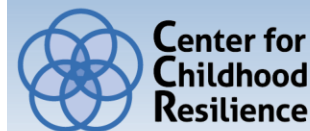| Part 6. Other Data		
Data Source	Areas of Strength	Areas for Improvement

Sample Data Summary Sheet (cont.)

Action Plans
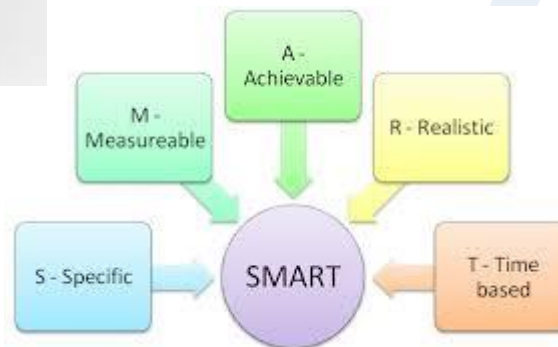
Trauma-Informed Schools Action Plan

School Name: _____ Date: _____ April 30, 2018 _____

Need/Priority: *Provide a brief description of the current need/priority with information/data from needs assessment process that highlighted this need.*

Teachers continuing to ask for additional strategies to meet the needs of students with trauma exposure in their classrooms (staff focus groups)

Environmental Checklist observations showed few SEL strategies being integrated into classrooms

Goal 3: Increase knowledge and use of classroom based trauma strategies

Goal Alignment with Trauma-Informed Schools Key Components
(Check the below domain(s) that align with the above goal)

Trauma Responsive Schools Implementation Assessment (TRS-IA) Key Domains:

☒ Whole School Safety Planning ☐ Whole School Prevention Planning ☐ Whole School Trauma Programming ☒ Classroom-Based Strategies

☐ Early Intervention Trauma Programming ☐ Targeted Trauma Programming ☐ Staff Self Care for Secondary Traumatic ☐ Community Context

**SAMHSA's Key Principles of Trauma-Informed Schools:**

☐ Cultural Humility ☒ Safety ☒ Trustworthiness & Transparency ☒ Collaboration & Mutuality ☐ Empowerment, Voice & Choice ☐ Peer Support

Action Items	Owner(s)	Deadline/Timeline
Extend Crisis Prevention and Intervention (CPI) de-escalation strategies to additional staff		September 2018
Curriculum Leadership Team and Behavioral Leadership Team members will all receive a modified version of CPI Level I		October 2018
Continue RULER SEL curriculum for incoming freshmen		September 2018
Expand RULER into health class (10th graders) while also implementing the Personal Learner Profile		November/December 2018
Shift monthly school-wide SEL lessons for 18-19 school year to be classroom-based		Monthly throughout 2018-2019
Lurie support/partnership 18-19 school year to focus on supporting classroom practices		Four full-day coaching sessions scheduled quarterly
Increase building-wide communication about SEL programming and initiatives		Monthly staff meetings

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Sample Action Plan

Lessons Learned

- Determine readiness

- Introduce process to whole staff
  - Keep staff in loop

- Customize process
  - Each community is unique

- Critically examine assessment tools
  - ARTIC and ProQol: ceiling effect

- Be more intentional about timing of process
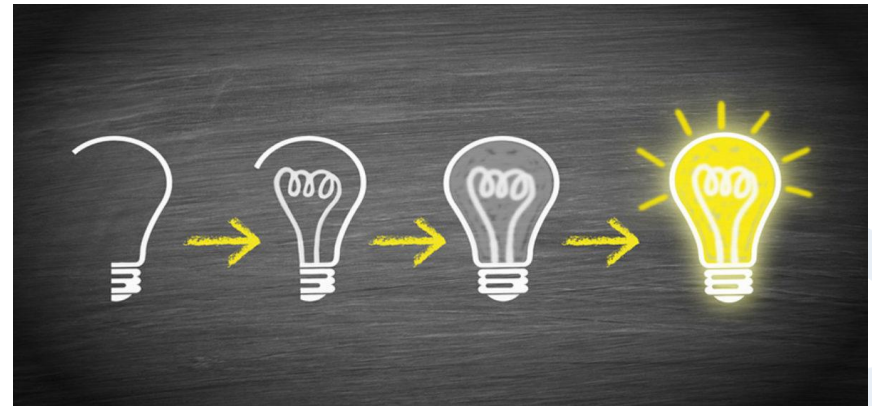
Future Directions

- Find increasingly effective assessment tools
- Facilitate greater inclusivity in process
  - Broaden representation on Leadership Team; focus groups
  - Include all staff in professional development
- Schedule:
  - Assessment/Action planning first semester
  - Supported Implementation second semester
- Collect post data
- Plan for sustainability

Trauma-Informed Care

Schools that Heal

Creating trauma-informed
school communities

MAY 2017

EDUCATORS
FOR EXCELLENCE

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