Trauma-Sensitive School Checklist

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Center for Special Education

Trauma and Learning Policy Initiative
of Massachusetts Advocates for Children
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School _____   Date _____

Team Members (name and position)

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This checklist is organized by five components involved in creating a trauma-sensitive school. Each component consists of several elements. Please assess your school on each element according to the following scale:

1 Element is **not at all** in place

2 Element is **partially** in place

3 Element is **mostly** in place

4 Element is **fully** in place

A trauma-sensitive school is a safe and respectful environment that enables students to build caring relationships with adults and peers, self-regulate their emotions and behaviors, and succeed academically, while supporting their physical health and well-being.
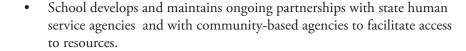
School-wide Policies and Practices

1	**2**	**3**	**4**	
☐	☐	☐	☐	• School contains predictable and safe environments (including classrooms, hallways, playgrounds, and school bus) that are attentive to transitions and sensory needs.
☐	☐	☐	☐	• Leadership (including principal and/or superintendent) develops and implements a trauma-sensitive action plan, identifies barriers to progress, and evaluates success.
☐	☐	☐	☐	• General and special educators consider the role that trauma may be playing in learning difficulties at school.
☐	☐	☐	☐	• Discipline policies balance accountability with an understanding of trauma.
☐	☐	☐	☐	• Support for staff is available on a regular basis, including supervision and/or consultation with a trauma expert, classroom observations, and opportunities for team work.
☐	☐	☐	☐	• Opportunities exist for confidential discussion about students.
☐	☐	☐	☐	• School participates in safety planning, including enforcement of court orders, transferring records safely, restricting access to student-record information, and sensitive handling of reports of suspected incidents of abuse or neglect.
☐	☐	☐	☐	• On-going professional development opportunities occur as determined by staff needs assessments.

Classroom Strategies and Techniques

| 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 |

- Expectations are communicated in clear, concise, and positive ways, and goals for achievement of students affected by traumatic experiences are consistent with the rest of the class.

| 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 |

- Students' strengths and interests are encouraged and incorporated.

| 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 |

- Activities are structured in predictable and emotionally safe ways.

| 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 |

- Opportunities exist for students to learn and practice regulation of emotions and modulation of behaviors.

| 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 |

- Classrooms employ positive supports for behavior.

| 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 |

- Information is presented and learning is assessed using multiple modes.

| 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 |

- Opportunities exist for learning how to interact effectively with others.

| 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 |

- Opportunities exist for learning how to plan and follow through on assignments.

Collaborations and Linkages with Mental Health

| 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 |

- Policies describe how, when, and where to refer families for mental health supports; and staff actively facilitate and follow through in supporting families' access to trauma-competent mental health services.

| 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 |

- Access exists to trauma-competent services for prevention, early intervention, treatment, and crisis intervention.

| 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 |

- Protocols exist for helping students transition back to school from other placements.

| 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 |

- Mental health services are linguistically appropriate and culturally competent.

| 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 |

- Staff has regular opportunities for assistance from mental health providers in responding appropriately and confidentially to families.

Family Partnerships

| 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 |

- Staff uses a repertoire of skills to actively engage and build positive relationships with families.

| 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 |

- Strategies to involve parents are tailored to meet individual family needs, and include flexibility in selecting times and places for meetings, availability of interpreters, and translated materials.

| 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 |

- All communications with and regarding families respect the bounds of confidentiality.

Community Linkages

| 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 |

- School develops and maintains ongoing partnerships with state human service agencies and with community-based agencies to facilitate access to resources.

| 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 |

- When possible, school and community agencies leverage funding to increase the array of supports available.