Pennsylvania Equity and Inclusion Toolkit

COMMONWEALTH OF PENNSYLVANIA
DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION
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www.education.pa.gov

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March 2, 2017

Since taking office my administration has been dedicated to improving education in Pennsylvania and ensuring that every student has access to a first-class education regardless of zip code. Great educators, well-resourced classrooms, and access to high-quality programs are essential for preparing our students to be Pennsylvania's next generation of business leaders, innovators, and public servants. The commonwealth's students are our most valuable resource, and they deserve every opportunity for success.

However, to perform their best, students must also feel safe in school. A healthy and safe environment can help our students thrive, and every student regardless of race, ethnicity, sexual orientation, or gender identity or expression should be provided the opportunity to learn free from discrimination, fear, or harassment.

As our schools and communities work hard to promote a climate of inclusion, I'm reminded of the principles our commonwealth was founded on: tolerance, religious freedom, and justice. These are the values Pennsylvanians continue to embrace today. My administration is committed to creating a culture of inclusiveness at all schools, where students are made to feel welcome and valued, and we'll continue to work with schools and communities to help them create these supportive settings that celebrate diversity and teach the importance of respect for self and others.

Together we can provide a safe, supportive learning environment for our students, no matter which district they call home.

Sincerely,

TOM WOLF
Governor

March 2017

Dear Colleague,

The Pennsylvania Department of Education (PDE) is committed to helping schools across the commonwealth meet our shared goal of ensuring that every learner has access to a world-class education system that helps prepare them for success in the classroom and beyond. Critical to that mission is creating a culture of inclusiveness at all schools across the commonwealth, where students feel safe, respected, and welcomed.

The *Equity and Inclusion Toolkit* published by PDE was developed to help advance efforts at the state and local levels to create and maintain supportive settings that celebrate diversity and teach students the importance of respect for self and others. This resource was developed in collaboration with other state agencies, organizations, and partners, and focuses on strategies and actions that schools can take to address bias and discrimination in a proactive and effective manner. The *Toolkit* is part of a series of educational programs and practices the Department is providing to give schools the tools to move toward equity and inclusion.

When racially charged incidents occurred in some of our schools earlier this school year, the Education Department joined Gov. Tom Wolf in condemning acts of bigotry and intolerance in Pennsylvania and around the country. We shared the message that "PA Has Your Back," reaffirming that every Pennsylvanian – regardless of their race, color, religion, ancestry, gender, sexual orientation, gender expression or identity, national origin or ability – has a right to feel safe in their communities.

The Department is committed to helping districts and schools in our shared work of improving school climate and combatting bias and discrimination. PDE's Office of Safe Schools works every day to support schools in meeting the important mission of keeping students safe by providing schools and families with resources on issues ranging from combating dating violence and preventing suicide, to a toll-free bullying prevention consultation line, which is available to students, parents/guardians, and educators across the state for guidance and assistance in resolving bullying in our schools.

Pennsylvania's diversity is among its greatest strengths, and it should be embraced. As our schools work to educate our students and prepare them for future success, the Education Department is committed to supporting districts throughout the commonwealth in their efforts to ensure that all students feel safe, valued and respected.

Sincerely,

Pedro A. Rivera
Secretary of Education

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Acknowledgments

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Also, thanks to the Colorado Department of Education for allowing PDE to use excerpts from [Equity Toolkit for Administrators](#) (2010).

Finally, we'd like to thank the Pennsylvania Emergency Management Agency (PEMA) for inclusion of portions of the [All-Hazards School Safety Planning Toolkit](#) within this document.

> "Our schools must be safe and open spaces where all children can learn and grow free of concerns for their physical, mental, and emotional safety."
> *Governor Tom Wolf*

Introduction

Societal issues that impact our communities also impact our schools. Our success in addressing these issues is directly related to our ability to collaborate and work together as a community.

The reality of bias, harassment, prejudice and discrimination in our communities and schools challenges us all to take effective measures to create and sustain a safe and supportive learning environment for our students.

Numerous research studies have been conducted to better understand the relationship between discrimination, academic performance, and psychological and physical well-being.[1] Previous work has shown the negative consequences of stereotypical views in the classroom between teacher and student, as well as between student and student.[2]

Pennsylvania's schools should be safe havens where all students – regardless of their race, color, religion, ancestry, gender, sexual orientation, gender expression or identity, national origin, or ability – feel safe, respected, and welcomed.

Throughout the country and within the commonwealth, community members, school entities' staff, administration and board members, youth, and other key stakeholders are coming together to combat the issues arising in the schools and communities. They are working to build an environment of equity and inclusion for all students.

This commitment and the resources included in this *Toolkit* are integrally linked to PDE's mission to ensure that every learner has access to a world-class education system that academically prepares children and adults to succeed as productive citizens. A safe, secure, and supportive environment for each school and every child is essential for realizing that mission.

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[1] Emily Corrine Carter, "The Consequences of Discrimination in the Classroom," *Applied Social Psychology*, March 20, 2013.
[2] Brown, Alabi, Huynh, & Masten, 2011; Frontline, 1985; Richman & Leary, 2009; Schneider, Gruman, & Coutts, 2012.
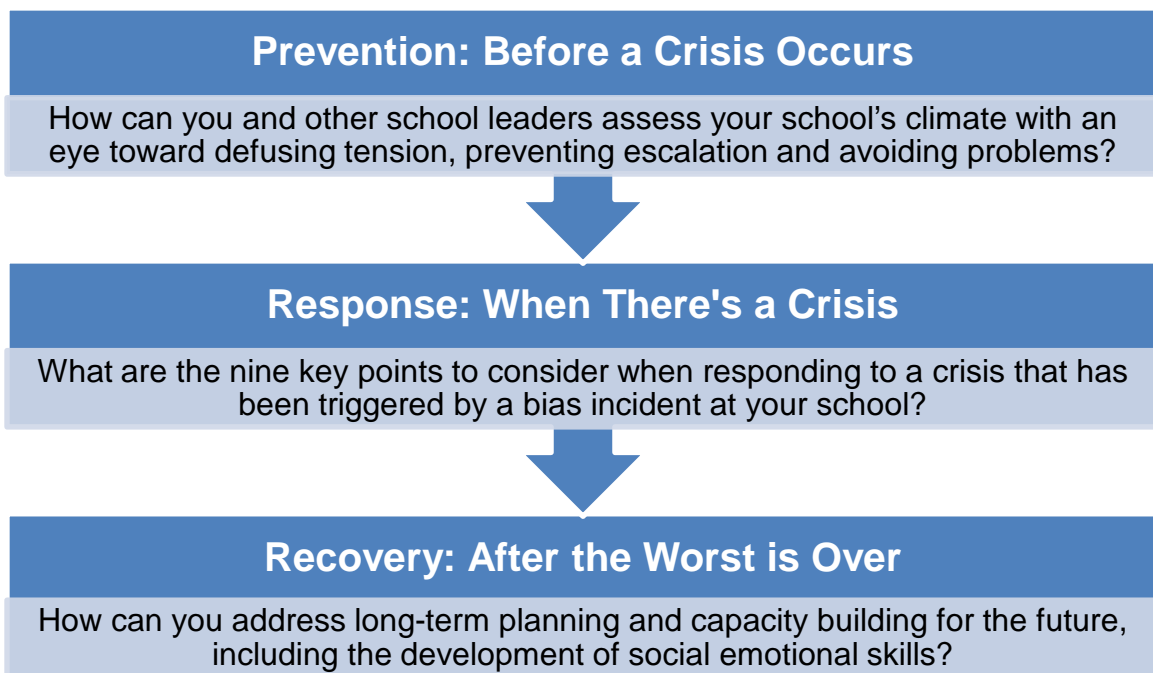
PDE and partnering agencies have developed an *Equity and Inclusion Toolkit* to support you in creating a plan and action steps for prevention, response and recovery, building blocks for a more accepting culture. This is the first in a series of educational resources and programs that will be available to you as part of a continuing process to provide you with current trend tools and information that lead toward equity and inclusion. While there is no true panacea to eliminate bias and discrimination, we can – and must – work together by putting constructs in place to prevent their occurrence and minimize their effect.

Purpose

The *Pennsylvania Equity and Inclusion Toolkit* is designed to assist all school entities in their efforts to prevent and address bias and discrimination. Everyone from the state level of government to all school entities and the community at large has a moral and legal obligation to ensure the safety of all children placed under their care.

The *Toolkit* was designed to provide relevant, evidence-based resources and information for school leaders and administrators to ensure that all students feel safe, respected, and welcomed in classrooms across the commonwealth. This *Toolkit* has three focus areas – prevention, response, and recovery – aimed at helping educators address and eliminate bias, discrimination, and harassment and promote equity and inclusion in schools.

Table 1. Framework for Promoting Inclusion and Equity (Teaching Tolerance)[3]

Prevention: Before a Crisis Occurs

How can you and other school leaders assess your school's climate with an eye toward defusing tension, preventing escalation and avoiding problems?

Response: When There's a Crisis

What are the nine key points to consider when responding to a crisis that has been triggered by a bias incident at your school?

Recovery: After the Worst is Over

How can you address long-term planning and capacity building for the future, including the development of social emotional skills?

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[3] Responding to Hate and Bias at School: A Guide for Administrators, Counselors, and Teachers, Teaching Tolerance.

What's in the *Toolkit*?

Each section of the *Toolkit* includes information, resources, and links to help you identify and implement best practices – whether you're trying to proactively evaluate your school or district's climate or policies, or respond to a bias-related incident.

Table 2. *Equity and Inclusion Toolkit* Structure

Prevention

- Conducting a Needs Assessment/Environmental Scan
- Improving School Climate and Culture
- Proactive Services and Support
- Prevention Resources

Response

- Putting Safety First
- Denounce the Act(s)
- Investigate
- Involve Others
- Communications
- Support Targeted Students
- Seek Justice, Avoid Blame
- Promote Healing
- Response Resources

Recovery

- Lessons Learned
- Planning for the Long Term
- Capacity Building
- Recovery Resources

Definitions and Terminology

Cultural Competency:[4] Cultural competence refers to an ability to interact effectively with people of different cultures and is comprised of four components:

1. Awareness of your own cultural worldview;
2. Attitude towards cultural differences;
3. Knowledge of different cultural practices and worldviews; and
4. Cross-cultural skills.

The word *culture* implies the integrated patterns of human behavior that includes thoughts, communications, actions, customs, beliefs, values, and institutions of racial, ethnic, religious, or social groups. The word *competence* implies having the capacity to function in a particular way: the capacity to function within the context of culturally integrated patterns of human behavior defined by a group.

Cultural competence is a developmental process that evolves over an extended period. Both individuals and organizations are at various levels of awareness, knowledge and skills along the cultural competence continuum.

Cultural Proficiency:[5] Cultural proficiency in education is the level of knowledge-based skills and understanding that are required to successfully teach and interact with students and to work effectively with colleagues from a variety of cultures by holding all forms of cultural difference in high esteem; a continuing self-assessment of one's values, beliefs and biases grounded in cultural humility; an ongoing vigilance toward the dynamics of diversity, difference and power; and the expansion of knowledge of cultural practices that recognize cultural bridges as going both ways. Culturally proficient services require that both the individual and the institution be culturally proficient. The following five essential elements contribute to an institution's ability to become more culturally proficient:

1. *Value Diversity:* Claim your differences; incorporate differences into the curriculum; and acknowledge the contribution of various cultural and ethnic groups through teaching and lessons.

2. *Assess Culture:* Name the differences; recognize how your culture affects the culture of others; describe your own culture and the cultural norms of your organization; and understand how the culture of your organization affects those with different cultures.

3. *Manage the Dynamics of Difference:* Develop a process for cross cultural communication and create a cross cultural conflict mediation plan.

4. *Institutionalize Cultural Knowledge:* Incorporate cultural knowledge into teacher induction plan; weave into professional development plan; and structure opportunities to engage parents and communities.

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[4] Colorado Department of Education, "Equity Toolkit for Administrators," 2010.
[5] Colorado Department of Education, "Equity Toolkit for Administrators," 2010.

5. ***Adapt to Diversity:*** Realize that change is challenging and healthy; and revisit community needs and values to align school policies and resources.

Explicit Bias:[6] Explicit bias refers to the attitudes and beliefs we have about a person or group on a conscious level. Much of the time, these biases and their expression arise as the direct result of a perceived threat. When people feel threatened, they are more likely to draw group boundaries to distinguish themselves from others.

People are more likely to express explicit biases when they perceive an individual or group to be a threat to their well-being. Research has shown that white people are more likely to express anti-Muslim prejudice when they perceive national security to be at risk and express more negative attitudes towards Asian Americans when they perceive an economic threat. When people perceive their biases to be valid, they are more likely to justify unfair treatment or even violence. This unfair treatment can have long-term negative impacts on its victims' physical and mental health.

Equity: In short, equity is best defined to mean "more for those who need it." There is a common misunderstanding that the terms *equity* and *equality* can be used interchangeably to describe a scenario that "levels the playing field" to provide opportunity and resources for all. Where *equality allows equal access* to resources and opportunities and is important for educational success, *equity accounts for the fact that some need more resources* to catch up and succeed on that same playing field.[7]

Equity Literacy:[8] Equity Literacy's central tenet is that any meaningful approach to diversity or multiculturalism relies more on teachers' understandings of equity and inequity and of justice and injustice than on their understanding of this or that culture. It relies, as well, on teachers' abilities to cultivate in students a robust understanding about how people are treated by one another and by institutions, in addition to a general appreciation of diversity. The idea is to place equity, rather than culture, at the center of the diversity conversation, embracing a framework for both multi-cultural curriculum development and bigger efforts to create equitable classrooms and schools.

Hostile Environment:[9] Conduct that is sufficiently serious to deny or limit a student's ability to participate in or benefit from education programs or activities.

Implicit Bias:[10] Implicit bias refers to the attitudes or stereotypes that affect our understanding, actions, and decisions in an unconscious manner. These biases, which encompass both favorable and unfavorable assessments, are activated involuntarily and without an individual's awareness or intentional control. Residing deep in the subconscious, these biases are different

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[6] U.S. Department of Justice, "Understanding Bias: A Resource Guide," 2017.
[7] See Blair Mann, "Equity and Equality Are Not Equal," The Education Trust, March 12, 2014.
[8] Gorski, P. and Swalwell K., (March 2013). "Equity Literacy for All"
[9] U.S. Department of Education, Office for Civil Rights.
[10] The Kirwan Institute for the Study of Race and Ethnicity (2015). The Ohio State University. Columbus, OH.

from known biases that individuals may choose to conceal for the purposes of social and/or political correctness. Rather, implicit biases are not accessible through introspection.

The implicit associations we harbor in our subconscious cause us to have feelings and attitudes about other people based on characteristics such as race, ethnicity, age, and appearance. These associations develop over the course of a lifetime beginning at a very early age through exposure to direct and indirect messages. In addition to early life experiences, the media and news programming are often-cited origins of implicit associations.

- Implicit biases are pervasive. Everyone possesses them, even people with avowed commitments to impartiality such as judges.
- Implicit and explicit biases are related but distinct mental constructs. They are not mutually exclusive and may even reinforce each other.
- The implicit associations we hold do not necessarily align with our declared beliefs or even reflect stances we would explicitly endorse.
- We generally tend to hold implicit biases that favor our own in-group, though research has shown that we can still hold implicit biases against our in-group.
- Implicit biases are malleable. Our brains are incredibly complex, and the implicit associations that we have formed can be gradually unlearned.

Inclusion/Inclusive Schools:[11] This definition moves beyond the traditional notion of inclusion as a term synonymous with special education and physically allowing students to be included in regular education classes and opportunities. Inclusion embodies a broader context that accounts for the social nature of school culture and climate and extends to all students and staff within the school community.

Through authentically engaging all students as co-creators for inclusive communities, the benefits are both physically perceived through equitable access and socially felt, by feeling a valued member of the community. Focusing on the worth of diversity and ways to celebrate the talents each person contributes, capitalizes on the norm that everyone has a place in the community to learn, grow, and share.

Prevention:[12] Prevention initiatives are proactive efforts that lay the groundwork for diminishing the frequency and impact of incidents. Prevention helps to alter the culture so that students feel good about who they are and what they can achieve in life. You and other school/classroom leaders assess your school's climate with an eye toward promoting a bias-free educational environment. What can be done to defuse tension, prevent escalation and minimize problem behaviors?

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[11] C.Coulston and K. Smith, School Climate and Inclusion, National School Climate Center, February 2013.
[12] Responding to Hate and Bias at School: A Guide for Administrators, Counselors, and Teachers, Teaching Tolerance.

Response:[13] There are key points to consider when responding to an incident or crisis that has been triggered by bias, hate or discrimination. Action steps are designed to resolve the issue, minimize the effect on the community and restore it to a stable environment.

Recovery:[14] Moving to recovery from an incident is dependent upon the systems in place, the speed and accuracy of the investigation and movement to resolution. Work in this phase requires a supportive base and a strength-based[1] approach[15] in helping the community learn from the incident and move on from that point-in-time.

Structural or Institutional Bias:[16] Established laws, customs, practices, and systems that systematically reflect and produce group-based inequities. These structures and institutions may be biased regardless of whether individuals within those spaces who maintain those practices have biased intentions.

PREVENTION: Before a Crisis Occurs

Before You Get Started: Things to Consider

- How knowledgeable are you and your colleagues regarding issues like implicit and structural bias, cultural competency, and educational equity? What resources (i.e., professional development, curricula, etc.) are currently available for students, educators, staff, and community members?

- What are the most common issues that your school deals with on a regular basis? How do you know these are issues?

- What do you feel completely prepared to handle? What do you feel unprepared to handle? (ex., school climate, professional development plan, etc.)

- Who needs to be at the table as you think about these issues and develop a plan? Are these individuals engaged and ready to contribute? Who's missing from these conversations?

- Do you know what services and supports are available in your community if an incident were to occur? Do you have existing relationships with these partners? If not, who do you need to connect with to build those relationships?

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[13] Ibid.
[14] Ibid.
[15] Resiliency Initiatives, (2011). Citing Embracing a Strength-Based Perspective and Practice in Education. Retrieved from http://www.mentalhealth4kids.ca/healthlibrary_docs/Strengths-BasedSchoolCultureAndPractice.pdf
[16] P.J. Henry, "Institutional Bias," in *The Sage Handbook of Prejudice, Stereotyping, and Discrimination*, ed. J.F. Dovidio, M. Hewstone, P.Glick, and V.M. Esses, Sage (Newburg Park, CA), 2010.

Prevention: Key Issues and Areas of Focus

Any good relationship needs to begin with trust. In a crisis, we often draw on trusted partners to help provide support and assistance, and they are willing to come to the table because of that longstanding relationship and a shared desire to help the community. When those relationships don't exist, it can be challenging to efficiently, effectively, and credibly respond when a crisis does occur.

It is important to identify and provide community-specific solutions, and to remember that "community" isn't a monolithic term: there are communities within communities, and educators need to build trust and relationships that ensure all students and families feel valued, recognized, and respected.

As such, prevention efforts should account for varying levels of incidents that incorporate situations occurring within specific school buildings, at-large within a school district, community-wide, and via social media platforms. Table 3 provides a snapshot overview of these incident levels (additional information regarding how to specifically prepare for each level can be found in the Teaching Tolerance Guide to Responding to Hate and Bias at School).

Table 3. Varying Levels of Incidents

Building Level Incidents

Incidents in which the scope is limited to school settings and school-based personnel. No outside assistance is needed. (e.g., a student directs a racial slur toward another student, teacher responds and notifies administrator who implements school-level anti-bias policy/plan).

School District Level Incidents

These are incidents where support and involvement is required from school district personnel or members of the School District/School Incident Command Team. Bias incidents involve groups of students or a possible hate crime. (Ex., four students arrive at school wearing t-shirts depicting swastikas, chanting, "White Power" as they pass students of color.) While these incidents may require help from community liaisons, they do not reach the scope and gravity of a community-level incident.

Community-Wide Level Incidents

These include incidents during which coordination of services from school building, district and municipal community response agencies is warranted. Such incidents include confirmed hate crimes and other bias incidents that have prompted community concern. (Ex., during a varsity football game, several students call spectators from the other school by a variety of racial slurs, throw food wrappers and empty cups at them.)

These include incidents occurring via cell phone or online platforms such as Facebook, Instagram, Snapchat, Twitter, and others. (Ex., posting photoshopped pictures of a targeted student on a snapchat "burn page", a negative texting campaign targeting a marginalized population such as LBGTQ or refugees.) Although it is impossible to know every online platform used by youth, it is in the purview of school leadership to stay apprised of new social media avenues to ensure they are not being used for bias, bigotry, or discrimination.

Needs Assessment

To best determine where to focus prevention efforts for each of these varying incident levels before they occur, schools and districts should conduct a needs assessment and/or environmental scan to determine strengths and gaps at each level. Based on the results of that needs assessment, schools, districts, and community partners should then identify and implement targeted work to build a positive school climate and culture, including developing training opportunities to enhance skills and knowledge. In Pennsylvania, schools have the option of using the Pennsylvania School Climate Survey as an additional tool to conduct a school specific environmental scan. The Pennsylvania School Climate Survey is available for free on PDE's website, and includes surveys for different targeted audiences (students, teachers, parents/families, etc.). Additional resources and tools to support these efforts are listed below.

KEY RESOURCES: Needs Assessment

- **Pennsylvania School Climate Survey**
  Use the Pennsylvania School Climate Survey to determine school climate and identify next steps. All schools vary in need and demographics. This survey can be adapted to meet the needs of your community.

- **Colorado Department of Education Equity Toolkit for Administrators**
  Pages 22-31 provide a sample self-assessment to be administered to students and staff to complete an environmental scan of current equity and inclusion needs and gaps along with guiding questions and action steps.

- **Available School and LEA Data**
  Use data to inform decision making around curriculum choices and policies. The data that is already being collected can be used to support the identification of strengths and weaknesses within the school community. Examples of data include the standardized test scores, discipline reports, Office of Safe Schools' annual report, Student Assistance Program reports, programs for English learners, advanced coursework (Advanced Placement, International Baccalaureate, dual enrollment), remedial classes, parent and student perception surveys, etc.

School Culture and Climate

School climate refers to the quality and character of school life. School climate is based on patterns of students', parents/families', and school personnel's experiences of school life, and reflects norms, goals, values, interpersonal relationships, teaching and learning practices, and organizational structures.[17] Research suggests that a positive school climate is associated with students' academic achievement, engagement, and social skills development.[18]

KEY RESOURCES: School Culture and Climate

- **Pennsylvania School Climate Survey**
  Use the Pennsylvania School Climate Survey to determine school climate and identify next steps. All schools vary in need and demographics. This survey can be adapted to meet the needs of your community.

- **National Center on Safe Supportive Learning Environments, U.S. Department of Education**
  This website provides information on a variety of topics related to improving engagement, safety, and school climate, including cultural and linguistic competence, school climate measurement, and safety and environmental considerations for preK-12 schools and higher education.

- **Youth Involvement in School Climate Efforts**
  Educators should deliberately support students to be engaged as co-leaders of school climate improvement efforts for those efforts to be successful.[19] Suggested practices include:

  - Frame your work with youth at the center of all decisions;
  - Start with an assets-based approach;
  - Prepare youth for meaningful roles;
  - Value the perspective of youth and allow them to contribute in the decision-making process;
  - Work to create the leaders of today, not as a preparation for the future; and
  - Engage youth in addressing equity issues and celebrating diversity.

- **School- and District-Level Planning Discussions**
  Consider exploring the following topics as part of prevention and planning efforts:

  - Does the school:
    - Display a mission statement committing the work of the school to students, families and the community it serves?
    - Reflect an orderly and safe environment conducive to effective learning by student and productive work by staff?

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[17] Teri Dary and Terry Pickeral. (2013). Citing School Climate Practices for Implementation and Sustainability. School climate practice briefs, no. 1. Retrieved from School Climate Practice Briefs.
[18] A. Thapa, et al., School Climate Research Summary, National School Climate Center, August 2012.
[19] R. Cardillo, School Climate and Youth Development, National School Climate Center, February 2013.

- Display internal and external signs welcoming visitors to the school?
- Use friendly language to describe what visitors should do when entering the school?
- Engage youth in addressing equity issues and celebrating diversity?
- Employs office staff who are friendly to all who enter, provide needed information easily, and answer the phone in a way that make the caller glad they have called, make all feel welcome?[6]

Training and Development

Maintaining practices that effectively engage students from diverse backgrounds can be challenging for many administrators and staff given time constraints, limited resources to engage content experts, and general uneasiness with some topics. Training and development is critical to ensuring staff and students are equipped with knowledge and skills on relevant topics specific to equity, diversity, and fostering a supportive school culture.

Engaging youth who are impacted by specific topics, when appropriate, can serve as a tremendous empowerment strategy and provides great opportunity for authentic dialogue and relationship building amongst staff and fellow peers.

A summary of "Key Resources" for student and staff training and professional development is available below. Additional information can also be found for population/content specific topics on PDE's website:

- Disabilities
- Gender and Gender Identity
- Immigration Status
- Racial, Ethnic, and Cultural Diversity
- Religious Diversity
- Sexual Orientation

KEY RESOURCES: Training and Development

- **Colorado Department of Education Equity Toolkit for Educators**
  Pages 32-35 provide guiding principles to support a plan for training participants in the areas of bias and communication as well as discrimination and harassment.

- **Teacher Training: Micro-messaging**
  National Alliances for Partnerships in Equity: evidence based program on micro-messaging and how to address it in the classroom.

- **U.S. Department of Justice's Community Relations Service: SPIRIT (Student Problem Identification and Resolution of Issues Together)**
  Provides a free leadership training for students to identify and address racial and intergroup tension.

Prevention: Other Resources and Tools

Articles, Data & Reports

- **[Classroom Resources](#), Teaching Tolerance**
- **[Youth Suicide Prevention Program](#)**
- **[Responding to Hate and Bias at School: A Guide for Administrators, Counselors and Teachers](#), Teaching Tolerance**
- **[Supporting Marginalized Students in Stressful Times: Tips for Educators](#), National Association of School Psychologists (NASP)**
- **[Post-Election Support for Difficult Conversations](#), Facing History and Ourselves**
- **["Protecting Students from Harassment and Hate Crime,"](#) U.S. Department of Education, Office of Civil Rights**
- **[StopBullying.gov](#)**

Templates, Sample Documents & Lesson Plans

- **[Safe Supportive Learning – Products and Tools](#), National Center on Safe Supportive Learning Environments, U.S. Department of Education**
  This section of the Center's Safe Supportive Learning website provides links to guides, training products, learning briefs, and other tools that schools and educators can use to measure and improve school climate. The Center also includes a list of archived materials from conferences and learning events, as well as links to upcoming webinars and in-person professional development opportunities.

- **[Colorado Department of Education Equity Toolkit for Educators](#)**
  Pages 41-43 provides an action planning checklist for creating an Equity Plan grounded in cultural competence and proficiency in an effort to promote educational equity.

Technical Assistance & Support

- **[U.S. Department of Justice's Community Relations Service: SPIRIT (Student Problem Identification and Resolution of Issues Together)](#)**

- **[Center for Safe Schools](#)**
  Pennsylvania-based organization provides training on a variety of school safety and youth violence prevention topics, including training for staff to prevent, recognize and respond to identity-based bullying and harassment.

Community Engagement

- **[Colorado Department of Education Equity Toolkit for Educators](#)**
  Pages 36-40 provide guiding principles regarding rational, guiding questions, and actions steps specific to community and parent engagement as a means to prevent and respond to issues related to equity and inclusion.

💡 KEY TAKEAWAYS: Prevention

Creating a positive school climate – one that encourages inclusion and promotes respect – is vital for proactively preventing and disrupting bias, discrimination, hate, and intolerance, and for effectively addressing incidents if and when they occur. *Relationships and trusted partners will play a key role* in identifying areas for improvement (through a *needs assessment* or similar tool), and for developing strategies and resources to address community-specific issues.

Schools and districts should consider establishing *Quick Response Teams (QRTs)* that build on these partnerships and resources. Potential members could include administrator(s), school counselor(s) and/or school psychologists, school nurse, teachers that have rapport with students, SAP team members, athletic coaches, civil rights coordinators, and social workers or home-school visitors. Your QRT should *reflect the unique needs of your school and community*, and should *include diverse individuals with relevant expertise and perspectives*.

- Evaluate school climate through a *needs assessment* or school climate survey.
- *Explore data* to ensure equity in academic programs and discipline practices.
- Engage in *community resource mapping* to determine which resources may serve as liaisons in supporting students and families.
- Build frameworks to establish and enhance *multi-tiered systems of support (MTSS)* to address academic and behavioral needs.
- *Identify action steps* – based on priorities identified through a needs assessment – to initiate a systemic approach to creating a positive school climate.
- Develop *formal grievance procedures* and promote the process widely to students, parents/families, and staff. Be sure to take steps to evaluate whether the procedures are working well, and to identify areas for improvement.
- Provide students and staff with *training and support programs* to empower individuals in your school community to take effective steps to prevent and disrupt bias, discrimination, harassment, and violence. These trainings and supports should provide evidence- and reality-based strategies for recognizing and addressing hate, harassment, and violence in multiple contexts, such as verbal, written, or online (social media).

RESPONSE: When there's a Crisis

Before You Get Started: Things to Consider

- If a bias-related incident were to occur, do you have a process and/or team in place to respond effectively?
- Do you know what policies and protocols are in place regarding responding to bias-related incidents? Who serves as the primary coordinator or contact when these incidences occur? Who can provide support (including external resources)?
- How would you ensure your response is relevant and meaningful to impacted school and community and members (targeted individuals, students, staff, community, and media)?
- Do you have a good working relationship with the local media? Do you have protocols and capacity for organizing a press conference and/or community forum?

Response: Key Issues and Areas of Focus

The way a school entity responds is critical in containing, controlling, and bringing resolution for all concerned, and is a litmus test of your relationships and credibility with your community. Without knowledge of current and historical challenges, or without engaging in a dialogue or planning before something happens, it is extremely difficult to respond to an incident effectively and in a way that maintains credibility and authenticity, which are vital to long-term progress.

Response activities should include reducing the probability of harm to youth and school entities and response actions should be performed in a way that moves into recovery operations and maintenance. The level of the incident will guide you in determining the people who need to be involved; this may include external assistance to individuals affected by the situation or event. While it is not expected that every step will be perfect, you should make every effort to be collaborative, respectful, and transparent.

Beyond the moral imperative to respond to incidents of bias, harassment, and discrimination, schools also have a legal responsibility to immediately and effectively respond, investigate, and prevent the recurrence of these actions. Listed below is a snapshot of state and federal response obligations as well as suggested key areas to focus your response activities including establishing a "safety first" mindset, followed by essential components of a messaging and media campaign for any level of incident, and a final step of ensuring targeting students feel and experience support throughout the response process.

Responsibilities for School Response under Federal & State Laws

Under both federal and state laws, school entities have obligations to address, respond to, and prevent the recurrence of incidents of harassment and violence, including those that are motivated by bias and discrimination, regardless of whether those incidents meet the level of a hate crime.[20] Specifically, schools have a responsibility to address incidents of discriminatory harassment that it knows about – or reasonably should have known about – and must take prompt and effective steps to stop the harassment, eliminate any hostile environment, and prevent the harassment from recurring. Schools should keep in mind that regardless of the type of incident (i.e., bullying, hazing, teasing), any harassment that is on the basis of race, color, national origin, sex, or disability that creates a hostile environment mandates a response in accordance with federal civil rights laws. School entities are also responsible for designating individuals responsible for coordinating compliance with Title IX,[21] Section 504, and Title II,[22] including the investigation of any complaints of discriminatory harassment.

KEY RESOURCES: Responsibilities for School Response under Federal & State Laws

- **U.S. Department of Education, Office for Civil Rights (OCR) – Reading Room**
  This webpage includes links to relevant laws and regulations; policy; case resolutions; correspondence; OCR manuals, pamphlets, publications, and reports; Title IX exemptions; testimony; and additional resources.
    - Dear Colleague Letter on Harassment and Bullying (October 26, 2010)
    - Resources for Addressing Racial Harassment
    - Sexual Harassment Resources

- **Other Federal Civil Rights Offices**
    - U.S. Equal Employment Opportunities Commission
    - Americans With Disabilities Act (ADA) Home Page
    - U.S. Department of Justice, Office of the Attorney General, Civil Rights Division
    - U.S. Commission on Civil Rights
    - U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, Office for Civil Rights
    - U.S. Department of Agriculture, Civil Rights Office
    - Federal Aviation Administration, Civil Rights Office
    - U.S. Department of Transportation, Civil Rights Office
    - U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development, Fair Housing Civil Rights
    - U.S. Department of Labor, Civil Rights Enforcement for Department of Labor Grant Recipients

- **Fed Law: Civil Rights**

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[20] Dear Colleague Letter: Harassment and Bullying, U.S. Department of Education, Office for Civil Rights, October 26, 2010.
[21] Dear Colleague Letter on Title IX Coordinators, U.S. Department of Education, Office for Civil Rights, April 24, 2015.
[22] Disability Discrimination, U.S. Department of Education, Office for Civil Rights.

This online resource provides a list of federal civil rights laws with links to relevant information and texts.

- **Protecting Students from Harassment and Hate Crime: A Guide for Schools**
Published by the U.S. Department of Education in January 1999, this resource provides a summary of legal requirements for schools to consider when responding to incidents of harassment and hate crimes, as well as best practices for supporting students. (Schools should refer to the OCR Reading Room for the most recent guidance and documents from the U.S. Department of Education regarding interpretation of requirements under federal civil rights laws.)

Safety First

Establishing safety (physical and emotional) is the most important first step in any incident response. Based on the variety of ways in which an incident of bias or discrimination can occur, each response will need to be individualized for the situation. After following local entity policies and procedures, including notification of proper authorities and accounting for those involved and impacted, you should determine if, and when, parents and caregivers will be contacted.

Restoring order is a key step to reestablishing any sense of safety. Consider developing a Quick Response Team (QRT) and engage them in providing support for establishing and ensuring safety throughout the incident. This can include making physical adjustments to a location and could also include establishing safe places for staff and youth to process and debrief. Ideally, members of an incident response team need to project a sense of calm as well as earnest concern.

KEY RESOURCES: Safety First

- **Responding to Hate and Bias at School,** **Teaching Tolerance**
Includes recommendations, best practices, and relevant resources for schools to guide responses to bias, discrimination, harassment, and violence. The guide also includes information on establishing a Quick Response Team (QRT) and ensuring student safety when responding to incidents.

- **Protecting Students from Harassment and Hate Crime: A Guide for Schools**
Published by the U.S. Department of Education in January 1999, this resource provides a summary of legal requirements for schools to consider when responding to incidents of harassment and hate crimes, as well as best practices for supporting students. (Schools should refer to the OCR Reading Room for the most recent guidance and documents from the U.S. Department of Education regarding interpretation of requirements under federal civil rights laws.)

Messaging and Media

The type and frequency of communication and messaging in response to an incident is critical in containing rumors, ensuring safety, and establishing trust to begin the recovery phase. It is often the most critical element of a response plan and should be timely, accurate, and provide details on when updates will occur. Several resources are available to support the development of messaging and media response plans that can be developed and saved for future use when an incident occurs.

Consider developing templates and sample communications for a variety of situations you may encounter as identified through a needs assessment or environmental scan. As an additional step, you should also consider creating opportunities to develop relationships with your local news and media outlets, and provide them with information regarding how you will handle communication when incidents of bias and discrimination (or other critical response events) occur.

Examples may include posting information on the school entity website, Facebook posts, robocalls, and/or text alerts. It is also helpful to provide similar information to staff, parents and caregivers; consider regularly scheduled reminders at the end of marking periods or other natural time blocks.

KEY RESOURCES: Messaging and Media

- **Responding to Hate and Bias at School,** **Teaching Tolerance**
  Includes recommendations, best practices, and relevant resources for schools to guide responses to bias, discrimination, harassment, and violence. The guide also includes detailed plans, sample templates, and other useful messaging and media tools.

Supporting Targeted Students

Incidents of bias and discrimination can often cause targeted victims and those associated with them to feel a sense of isolation and vulnerability. As a school administrator, it is important to take primary steps that ensure both physical and emotional safety, as well as privacy, for the victim and others who may have connections with the victim. It is important to speak with the victim and family to determine what needs they have in order to establish a sense of safety and support. This can include ensuring victims have access to supportive staff with whom they have a close relationship, allowing access to safe and confidential space when needed, and assurance that all steps will be taken to preserve privacy and discourage additional harassment.

Ensuing harassment can happen both overtly and covertly, sometimes through peer groups, parent and caregiver groups, and even among staff. As a preventive response measure, administrators can both apologize on behalf of the school community and denounce any efforts that could do additional harm to the victim. This communication and subsequent follow through of consequences for any level of additional harassment sends a clear message that these types of behaviors and acts will not be tolerated as part of the school community.

KEY RESOURCES: Supporting Targeted Students

- **Dear Colleague Letter on Harassment and Bullying**, **U.S. Department of Education, Office for Civil Rights (October 26, 2010)**
  This guidance document provides information on schools' legal obligations to address harassment based on race, color, national origin, sex, or disability. The letter includes hypothetical examples and case studies of how schools should respond to incidents of bias-related harassment, assault, bullying, hazing, and teasing.

- **Responding to Hate and Bias at School,** **Teaching Tolerance**
  Pages 14-22 provide detailed information on messaging, specific suggestions for supporting staff and students, as well as suggested messaging for denouncing incidents and promoting healing. The guide also includes suggestions, tools, and a detailed checklist.

Response: Other Resources and Tools

Articles, Data & Reports

- **Bullying, Harassment & Civil Rights: An Overview of School Districts' Federal Obligation to Respond to Harassment**, **StopBullying.gov (August 2014)**
  This 12-minute video provides an overview of schools' obligations under federal civil rights laws to promptly and effectively respond to incidents of discriminatory harassment, and to prevent their recurrence.

- **Checklist for a Comprehensive Approach to Addressing Harassment**, U.S. Department of Education (January 1999)
  This online summary provides a list of key actions and steps for school personnel, school leaders, district administrators, superintendents, and board members to take when addressing harassment in schools.

Templates, Sample Documents & Lesson Plans

- **Safe Supportive Learning – Implementation**, **National Center on Safe Supportive Learning Environments, U.S. Department of Education**
  Online clearinghouse of implementation resources, including evidence-based programmatic interventions to address a variety of school climate and student safety issues, including harassment.

Technical Assistance & Support

- **Pennsylvania Training and Technical Assistance Network (PaTTAN)**
  The Pennsylvania Training and Technical Assistance Network has developed a broad array of web-based publications, materials, and streaming media resources addressing the topic of cultural responsiveness. These materials span an array of educational topics and can be accessed via the following links:
    - Streaming Media/Videos: PaTTAN: Streaming Media Videos
    - Handouts: PaTTAN: Handouts
    - Materials: PaTTAN: Materials
    - Publications: PaTTAN: Publications

- **Positive Behavior Support Network**
  Through training and technical assistance, the Pennsylvania Positive Behavior Support Network (PAPBS Network) supports schools and their family and community partners to create and sustain comprehensive, school-based behavioral health support systems in order to promote the academic, social and emotional well-being of all Pennsylvania's students.

- **Pennsylvania Human Relations Commission**
  The Pennsylvania Human Relations Commission (PHRC) enforces the Commonwealth's anti-discrimination laws, the Pennsylvania Human Relations Act (PHRA), and the Pennsylvania Fair Education Opportunities Act (PFEOA). The PHRC's also provides free trainings and assistance to a wide variety of institutions, including schools and LEAs. These resources can be accessed at www.phrc.pa.gov.

- **Center for Schools and Communities**
  The Center for Schools and Communities is committed to improving outcomes for children and families through prevention and intervention initiatives. Staff possesses diverse backgrounds in education, human services, community development and the law, as well as specialized skills and experience in program development and design, evaluation, training and resource development. Please see Training and Consulting for more information about technical assistance resources provided by the Center.

Parents, Families & Caregivers

- **Look Through Their Eyes**
  Information on how to prevent, identify and overcome trauma for your child.

- **Child Mind Institute**
  What to do if you are worried about your child and suicide.

- **Huffington Post: What do we tell the children?**
  Tips for talking to your children about the election.

KEY TAKEAWAYS: Response

How a school district or school responds is critical in containing, controlling, and resolving the situation or event. When an incident of bias, hate, discrimination, harassment, or violence occurs, schools and districts should take the following key steps to address and repair the harm created by the act(s):

- *Denounce the act(s)* and *apologize* on behalf of the school community;
- *Designate a lead individual* to oversee the logistics and needs during response, and identify and outreach with allies and partners who can help in the response effort (student leaders, staff in the building with established rapport with students, community partners and organizations, etc.);
- Initiate an *immediate and thorough investigation* of the issue, mindful of requirements for investigation and resolution expected under federal and state laws,[23] including necessary steps to *document and report* to outside authorities;
- Take prompt steps to *address and remediate the offense*, keeping in mind age-appropriate response strategies;
- *Support targeted and affected students*, including providing interim protective actions and accommodations;
- Provide *emotional and psychological support*, as needed;
- Develop and disseminate *communications* to the school, community, and media as soon as possible, and follow strategies for ensuring ongoing communications to dispel misinformation and provide accurate information (consider developing or modifying a template or other document to help prepare for these communications);
- *Involve others in the response process*, including highlighting voices of internal and external allies in these communications to demonstrate support and share relevant resources for students, staff, parents, families, and other community members; and
- Regularly *evaluate the effectiveness* of anti-bias and anti-violence efforts.

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[23] Protecting Students from Harassment and Hate Crime, U.S. Department of Education, January 1999.

Before You Get Started: Things to Consider

- Do you have a mechanism to evaluate, from the perspective of multiple and diverse stakeholders, what worked and what needs improvement in a future response?
- What partners can you collaborate with to sustain progress and support prevention efforts moving forward?
- How will you support educators and staff in transitioning to new practices, policies, procedures, and principles as part of the recovery process?
- Do you have a plan for accommodating ongoing supports (financial, space, referrals, etc.) to ensure recovery?
- How will you keep your community engaged and in the loop regarding ongoing recovery efforts?

Ultimately, the goal of recovery is to promote long-term prevention so that issues of bias, discrimination, and hate are identified and addressed before they create harm. In this section, we will identify resources that can aid schools and districts in developing systems of support that empower students, educators, staff, and communities to take the lead in identifying issues of bias and hate, and proactively preventing harassment, discrimination, and violence from occurring.

It's important that educators and school leaders continue to have conversations, no matter how difficult, with students, parents, families, staff, and community members long after an incident has left the headlines. Engaging in the change process is a two-way street; it is important for educators and school leaders to keep the dialogue going around where improvements can be made and how to address concerns open even when the spotlight on an incident fades away.

In thinking with the end in mind, the list that follows includes elements that you should be prepared to tackle and address throughout the recovery phase, and to consider as you move into long-term prevention.

Table 4. Considerations for Recovery Phase and Long-term Prevention[24]

The Power of Policy

- Understandably, victims and their families may judge some disciplinary measures to be ineffective or too lenient. This is less likely to happen if schools have addressed harassment and bias-motivated incidents in their policies, particularly policies that have been well-publicized and reviewed by the school and the community at large. Be open to the need for change; use this incident as an opportunity to review and improve policy.

Fair Enforcement

- When incidents do occur, it is crucial that schools enforce the consequences fairly and without regard to the offender's status. If some offenders seem to be treated more leniently than others, the victims and the school community will have little sense of justice and closure. Offenders also will be less likely to change their behavior and victims may feel more vulnerable and be less likely to report future abuses. This dynamic can contribute to a divisive and unsafe school environment.

A Community Approach

- Alliances with parents and caregivers, community or service organizations and advocacy groups can help school officials develop more creative consequences that will require offenders to face the destructive nature of what they did and perhaps even help them take steps to repair the damage they have done. Dialogue groups and peer mediation programs are particularly helpful for incidents involving large groups of students. Some communities also have restorative-justice programs in place, which can help.

Promote Healing

- Your community has been wounded. That wound might have come from a source outside the school, such as vandals spraying hateful graffiti on school walls. On the other hand, it may have come from inside the school, identifying a deep division among students. Either way, opportunities for healing need to be part of your crisis response. As the crisis decreases, it is helpful to find a way to gather together and share messages of healing and unity. This becomes an initial step into the post-crisis phase, a bridge between crisis management and longer term strategic planning around improving school climate.
- One option is to plan a schoolwide or community-wide show of unity. Orchestrating a demonstration of school unity after a hate crime or high-profile bias incident can be a way to begin repairing the sense of community within a school. Distributing ribbons or wearing certain colors can become symbols of determination to recover from the incident and show unity in opposing hate and prejudice at school. Involve the neighborhood and wider community, as appropriate. This type of gathering can have a galvanizing effect, especially if it includes a pledge to work together to address issues raised by the incident.
- Consider creating posters or buttons, promoting school values. "Our school stands for…" Paint that slogan on a banner along the hallway, and invite students to add their thoughts (*Inclusion. Fairness. Kindness.*). Do not frame this as the end of your efforts, but rather as a beginning of further work toward improving school climate and culture.

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[24] Willoughby, B., (2010). Citing Responding to Hate and Bias at School: A Guide for Administrators, Counselors, and Teachers, Teaching Tolerance.

Administrative

There are administrative details that must be put into place to ease the transition from response to recovery and restore daily operations that support the educational process.

- Keep documentation of all actions, meetings, and decisions.
- Implement the Succession Plan if top administrators and other staff are not able to return to work for an extended length of time.
- Review Incident after Action Report and discuss possible changes to the School Entity 'All Hazards" School Safety Plan (if applicable; see appendix for sample document).
- If records have been destroyed in the incident, contact off-site storage area to get back-up copies.

KEY RESOURCES: Administrative

- **[All-Hazards School Safety Planning Toolkit](), Pennsylvania Emergency Management Agency (PEMA)**
  This toolkit provides guidelines and information for schools, LEAs, and communities to address a variety of crises and emergency situations that might impact their campuses. The toolkit provides a framework for effective planning and response.

Ensuring Mental Well-Being of Staff, Students, and Community

Traumatic events can cause psychological and emotional turmoil, cognitive problems and behavioral changes for students, staff, and community members. Work with school counselors, Student Assistance Team, Employee Assistance Programs, local Disaster Crisis Response Teams (DCORT), mental health providers, and other ancillary organizations to help restore emotional stability and learning. The county mental/behavioral health office in your community can direct you to available resources and providers specific to your geographic region.

As part of this process, you and your colleagues should pay special attention to planning for the first day back to school after an incident including how staff, students, and community members will receive information and instructions for obtaining the necessary supports, when supports will be available, and the location in which they will be provided. It may also be necessary to partner with other local school districts that can assist in situations when the school and/or district level staff may not be emotionally able to provide services or support to others. Typically, local Intermediate Units (IU) can provide support in mobilizing additional supports within the IU area.

- **Emotional Safety, National Center on Safe Supportive Learning Environments**
  This webpage provides information and links to research, best practices, case studies, and technical assistance related to creating emotionally safe learning environments.

- **Responding to Hate and Bias at School, Teaching Tolerance**
  Refer to the appendix section for tools specific to organizing community partners.

- **Pennsylvania Education Directory/Maps, Pennsylvania Department of Education**
  This webpage provides links to maps and directories for Pennsylvania's school districts, IUs, career and technical centers, and postsecondary institutions.

Debrief and Action Planning for Future Prevention Efforts

Every response effort, whether large or small, has lessons to be learned from and areas for improvement. It is important to engage multiple stakeholders in the debriefing process as each group will experience the response from a different lens. It can also be helpful to have a neutral person (not directly involved in the response) facilitate this process.

Highlights of the discussion should include what went well, where there was breakdown, and what additional resources (training, goods, people, etc.) may be needed in preparation for a future response. A key element of the debrief should be promoting equal ownership for both successes and areas of growth, as well as establishing next steps and action planning to ensure necessary changes don't fall to the wayside.

A sample debrief form to assist in execution of the debrief process is attached as part of the *Toolkit* appendix. Additional information and processes can be modified from other in-house school safety incident management plans and activities that may already been in place.

KEY RESOURCES: Debrief and Action Planning for Future Prevention Efforts

- **Responding to Hate and Bias at School, Teaching Tolerance**
  See "What Comes Next?" on p. 24 for an overview of how to debrief following an incident. The section includes suggested discussion and reflection questions, as well as recommendations for long-term planning and capacity building activities to ensure continued progress and improvement.

- **All-Hazards School Safety Planning Toolkit, Pennsylvania Emergency Management Agency**
  This toolkit provides guidelines and information for schools, LEAs, and communities to address a variety of crises and emergency situations that might impact their campuses. The toolkit provides a framework for effective planning and response.

Recovery: Other Resources and Tools

Articles, Data & Reports

- **[Responding to Hate and Bias at School: A Guide for Administrators, Counselors and Teachers](#), Teaching Tolerance**

- **Appendix C – Other Resources**
    - Important Steps Adults Can Take To Support Youth of Marginalized Groups (1 pager)
    - Key Ways Adults Should Comfort Children (1 pager)

Templates, Sample Documents & Lesson Plans

- **Appendix C – Other Resources**
    - o Sample Debrief Form

💡 KEY TAKEAWAYS: Recovery

Decisions and actions taken after an incident with a view to restoring or improving the pre-incident conditions of the stricken school entity and community, while encouraging and facilitating necessary adjustments to reduce risk in and diminish frequency of future incidents.

- Strive to restore the learning environment as quickly as possible.
- Meet initially with faculty to review schedules and procedures. Note any changes, if necessary.
- Provide for the emotional well-being of staff, students and school community (i.e. psychological first aid).
- Enlist the support of student service personnel (counselors, psychologists, social workers, SAP team members) and community mental health agencies for ongoing care in the recovery process.
- Consider the developmental age of the students when providing recovery efforts. Student responses to stress or trauma may vary in type and intensity.
- Debrief with faculty as well as district/building crisis response teams to determine staff reactions and any needed recovery support for adults.
- Keep documentation of all actions, meetings, and decisions. Consider "Lessons Learned" and discuss what worked well, where there are areas to improve in prevention and response, etc.
- Maintain constant communication with parents and families (i.e. website updates, face-to-face meetings, and letters).
- Assist in the restoration of the school community.
- Engage in ongoing meetings and action with community groups that serve as "brokers" in open dialogue in the family-school-community partnership.
- Continue to manage the media, if needed.
- Promote accurate information, and dispel rumor.

Demonstrate unity among the school community and the community at-large. Consider creating promotional items (buttons, posters) that promote school values (i.e. "Our school stands for...kindness").

Overview of Relevant Federal and State Requirements for Schools

Acts of bias and discrimination may be illegal, interfere with learning, and contribute to an unsafe learning environment. School leaders and educators should be aware of their responsibilities under relevant administrative, civil, and criminal laws, including:

- 22 Pa. Chapter 14; Pennsylvania Human Relations Act (43 P.S. §§ 951 *et seq.*);
- Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964 (federal law prohibits discrimination based on race, color, and national origin in programs and activities receiving federal financial assistance);
- Title IX of the Education Amendments of 1972 (federal law protects against discrimination based on sex in education programs or activities that receive federal financial assistance);
- Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA), Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, and Title II of the Americans with Disabilities Act (federal laws prohibiting discrimination based on disability); and Pennsylvania Crimes Code.
- The Equal Educational Opportunities Act of 1974 (EEOA), which prohibits the denial of equal educational opportunity based on race, color, sex and national origin.

The Pennsylvania Crimes Code defines ethnic intimidation (Pennsylvania's legal term for a hate crime) as an event when a person commits an underlying crime with malicious intention towards the person's race, color, religion or national origin. For the purposes of collecting statistics, the FBI has defined a hate crime as a "criminal offense against a person or property motivated in whole or in part by an offender's bias against a race, religion, disability, sexual orientation, ethnicity, gender, or gender identity."[25] To be a hate crime, the act must be criminal. The use of a racial slur or the expression of an intolerant opinion does not typically rise to the level of a criminal act. Certain offenses become hate crimes because of what motivated the criminal act.

> ***18 Pa. C.S. § 2710. Ethnic intimidation.***
> ***(a) Offense defined. --*** *A person commits the offense of ethnic intimidation if, with malicious intention toward the race, color, religion or national origin of another individual or group of individuals, he commits an offense under any other provision of this article or under Chapter 33 (relating to arson, criminal mischief and other property destruction) exclusive of section 3307 (relating to institutional vandalism) or under section 3503 (relating to criminal trespass) with respect to such individual or his or her property or with respect to one or more members of such group or to their property.*

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[25] Federal Bureau of Investigation. (2017). What We Investigate, Civil Rights. Washington, DC. Retrieved from https://www.fbi.gov/investigate/civil-rights/hate-crimes.

*(b) **Grading.** --* *An offense under this section shall be classified as a misdemeanor of the third degree if the other offense is classified as a summary offense. Otherwise, an offense under this section shall be classified one degree higher in the classification specified in section 106 (relating to classes of offenses) than the classification of the other offense.*

*(c) **Definition.** --* *As used in this section "malicious intention" means the intention to commit any act, the commission of which is a necessary element of any offense referred to in subsection (a) motivated by hatred toward the race, color, religion or national origin of another individual or group of individuals.*

Resource	Website
American Academy of Child and Adolescent Psychiatry:	www.aacap.org
American Academy of Pediatrics:	www.aap.org
American Psychiatric Association:	www.psych.org
American Psychological Association:	www.apa.org
American Red Cross:	www.redcross.org
Center for Mental Health in Schools:	http://smhp.psych.ucla.edu
Center for Safe Schools:	www.safeschools.info
Centers for Disease Control and Prevention:	www.cdc.gov
Crisis Management Institute:	www.cmionline.org
Federal Emergency Management Agency:	www.fema.gov
International Critical Incident Stress Foundation:	www.icisf.org
National Association of School Nurses (NASN): National	www.nasn.org
Association of School Psychologists:	http://www.nasponline.org
National Center for Trauma-Informed Care:	www.samhsa.gov/nctic
National Education Association:	www.nea.org
National Institute of Mental Health:	www.nimh.nih.gov
National Organization for Victim Assistance:	www.try-nova.org/
PDE - Office for Safe Schools:	www.education.pa.gov/safeschools
Pennsylvania Department of Education:	www.education.pa.gov
Pennsylvania Department of Health:	www.health.pa.gov
Pennsylvania Department of Human Services:	www.dhs.pa.gov
Pennsylvania Emergency Management Agency:	www.pema.pa.gov
Pennsylvania Human Relations Commission:	www.phrc.pa.gov
Pennsylvania Training and Technical Assistance Network:	
	www.pattan.net
Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration:	www.samhsa.gov
The National Child Traumatic Stress Network:	www.nctsnet.org
U.S. Department of Education:	www.ed.gov
U.S. Department of Homeland Security:	www.dhs.gov
U.S. Department of Mental Health:	www.mentalhealth.gov

Appendix C includes the following sample documents and other resources to assist schools, LEAs, and communities as they plan, respond, and recover:

- Important Steps Adults Can Take to Support Youth of Marginalized Groups;
- Signs & Symptoms of Trauma & Stress Reactions;
- Key Ways Adults Should Comfort Children;
- Sample Assessment for LEA Administrators;
- Sample Template for Initial Press Release;
- Sample Helpful Tips for School Entity Staff & Parents/Families;
- Sample Debrief Form; and
- Sample School & LEA Response Groups.