

Guide for a Cultural Insights Interview

The purpose of the cultural insight interview is to align and incorporate language and programs used at the school with the work related to trauma-informed schools. This practice will help you consider the following key components of what it means to be a trauma-informed schools:

- General Impressions of School Community
- Behavior and Culture Management (Including Discipline Systems)
- Events/Celebrations/Traditions
- Social Emotional Learning
- Administrative Support

As you move through this process, you will explore the following key considerations:

Key Considerations	What is the current state of school culture in each area?	How would you like things to be?	What resources and capacity do you have to prioritize trauma-informed practices?
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Please complete the items based on your team’s understanding and experience of the school culture and context. We recommend conducting the interview in small groups at your school. As you build out your trauma-informed practices, we encourage you to incorporate the perspectives of as many members of your community as possible to ensure you have a comprehensive understanding of the school culture and context. Potential voices include:

- Leadership team members
- School-based mental health/behavioral health staff
- Special education director or equivalent role
- RTI or student support team lead
- Persons most responsible for the implementation of behavior management/discipline policies and procedures
- Teacher leaders
- Teachers & School staff

Additionally, we recommend gaining insight from youth and families in the cultural insight process. For the types of adaptations for these audiences, please review the focus group guides below.

[Parent/Family Cultural Insight Focus Group Questions](#)

[Youth Cultural Insight Focus Group Questions](#)

Cultural Insight Interview Questions

General Impressions of School Community

- How would you describe the overall atmosphere or climate? Where do staff and students enjoy working together, support one another and feel valued and included?
 - How do adults in the school talk to each other about the students in the school?
 - How does your school engage student and family voice, choice and leadership?
 - Please describe the diversity you see among adults and students in the school community?
 - Racial/ethnic and Gender
 - Regional
 - Age/years of experience in teaching and time at the school
 - Training background
 - Annual retention rate (Staff & Students)
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Behavior and Culture Management (including Discipline Systems)

- What behavior management systems are in place, such as PBIS/Conscience Discipline/Love and Logic?
 - How is it managed? By who?
 - How is the school discipline policy communicated to students? Staff? Families?
 - What systems are in place for other progressive discipline practices (Restorative Practices,
 - Conflict resolution?
 - Peer mediation?
 - Restorative conversations?
 - What type of training and practice opportunities do staff and students receive?
 - Is there monitoring or evaluation in place?
 - Is data collected regularly? How? Shared?
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Events/Celebrations/Traditions

- What spaces of joy and cultural expression exist within your staff culture?
 - What sorts of rituals and routines are in place on a regular basis (e.g., daily, weekly, monthly, quarterly, annually) that generate and sustain a sense of community?
 - Are there specific events, celebrations or traditions that are important to your school community?
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Social Emotional Learning

- What type of SEL (social-emotional learning) programming is in place at the school?
 - Are there specific curricula or programs for bullying, Suicide prevention, or grief and loss?
 - What type of training and support do people receive?
 - Who is responsible for the implementation?
 - Is there monitoring or evaluation in place?
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Administrative Support

- Is teacher self-care considered an integral part of the work of the school? What signs of burnout do you see in your school?
- What systems are in place to provide feedback and coaching to teachers?
- What processes and procedures are in place to:
 - Support individual or grade-level planning time for teachers?
 - Build community among adults in the school?
 - Encourage teacher and staff professional development and/or leadership skills?
 - Support teachers in other ways?
- What practices are in place to address historical racism, collective trauma, and ensure equity in:
 - Recruitment, hiring, and retention?
 - Roles and responsibilities?
 - Accountability and Support?