

## Key School Indicators: Being Safe

When we think about being safe in the school setting, we want students with visual impairments to feel secure and supported regarding their mental and physical needs. The table below provides space for teams to consider each of the key school indicators for being safe from Ohio's Whole Child Framework with a focus on considerations from the Supporting Learners Series.

**Instructions:** While specifically keeping students with visual impairment in mind, review each indicator listed using the access consideration questions along the top. Respond to questions using: Always, Sometimes, or Unsure. This can help teams identify access concerns for planning and follow up. Sample activities are provided beneath the table to help guide discussion.

| Key School Indicators                          | Are students' needs understood by those in the environment? | Students access information at the same time as their peers? | Accommodations allow for participation? |
|--|---|--|---|
| Social Justice and Equity                      |   |  |   |
| Trauma-informed                                |   |  |   |
| School Climate                                 |   |  |   |
| Positive Behavioral Interventions and Supports |   |  |   |
| Secure   |   |  |   |
| Developmentally Appropriate Interventions      |   |  |   |
| Student Centered and Connected                 |   |  |   |
| Social-Emotional Learning                      |   |  |   |
| Supporting High Expectations                   |   |  |   |
| Empowering Students                            |   |  |   |

**Social Justice and Equity** Our school upholds and models social justice and equity concepts and practices mutual respect for individual differences at all levels of school interactions: adult to adult, adult to student, student to adult and student to student.

Example considerations: awareness training for students and staff to reduce social exclusion, representation of persons who are blind or visually impaired in curricula, on committees and among staff

**Trauma-informed** Our school is trauma-informed, where the impact of trauma on the student is addressed at the center of the educational mission. To create nurturing environments, our school creates school policies, practices and cultures that are sensitive to the needs of students who have experienced trauma.

Example considerations: crisis protocols and drills include accommodations for support, verbal descriptions of materials and environments as a standard practice

**School Climate** Our physical, emotional, academic and social school climate is student-centered and safe and friendly for all.

Example considerations: after-school events are accessible for students and families; lunchroom environments promote access and support to encourage student interactions

**Positive Behavioral Interventions and Supports** Our school staff, students and family members use the Positive Behavioral Interventions and Supports (PBIS) framework to establish and maintain school and classroom behavioral expectations, create rules and routines that teach students appropriate behavior and help students improve challenging behavior.

Example considerations: use behavior-specific praise as a form of visual description, PBIS in common spaces are adapted to support student needs

**Secure** Our school building, grounds, playground equipment and vehicles are secure and meet all established safety and environmental standards. School buildings are attractive, free of defects and structurally sound, with good internal (hallways) and external (pedestrian, bicycle, and motor vehicle) traffic flow, including for those with special needs.

Example considerations: hallways are free of clutter for safer travel, staff and students are trained by an Orientation and Mobility Specialist to recognize safety concerns and provide sighted guide assistance when needed

**Developmentally Appropriate Interventions** Our teachers and staff develop and implement behavioral interventions based on an understanding of child and adolescent development and learning theories.

Example considerations: use of Functional Vision and Learning Media Assessment results to promote student independence using age-appropriate language and activities, literacy-rich environments are accessible

**Student Centered and Connected** Our students feel valued, respected, and cared for and are motivated to learn.

Example considerations: offer opportunities for student voice when creating community standards, integrate assistive technology into libraries and auditoriums

**Social-emotional Learning** Our school teaches, models, and provides opportunities to practice social-emotional learning.

Example considerations: students explain their visual impairment and needs to others, small and large group activities have communication rules established for identifying participants and turn-taking

**Supporting High Expectations** Our school climate, curriculum and instruction reflect both high expectations and an understanding of child and adolescent growth and development. Teachers scaffold new and challenging academic and social-emotional content and skills and create an environment where students feel supported during the learning process.

Example considerations: ask if assistance is needed before giving it, offer families ideas for the home environment for students to take responsibility for chores and homework

**Empowering Students** Our school empowers its students to ensure a physically and emotionally safe environment, and students are encouraged to share concerns with a trusted adult

Example considerations: opportunities to practice self-determination skills in the community, prior notice to access materials and videos prior to school events

**Additional resources to support the Whole Child can be obtained from:**

[Ohio Department of Education and Workforce Whole Child Resources](#)

[Association of Curriculum and Supervision Development Whole Child Approach to Education](#)