THE OPEN PRIORITY LEARNING OUTCOMES FOR
TRAUMA INFORMED SOCIAL AND EMOTIONAL LEARNING

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THE RATIONALE

For educators, students, parents and caregivers the final 4 months of the 2019-2020 school year will widely be recognized as a period of extended trauma. The number of Adverse Childhood Experiences (ACEs) will almost certainly show significant increases though the months of extended school closings, and the broader range of traumatic events that all people have been exposed to cannot be ignored.

As schools and educators make back-to-school plans for the 2020-21 school year, we must work to create trauma-informed school districts, schools, and classrooms. This work must include a focus on the social and emotional health of students, staff, and administration. The foundation of this work lies in the ability to establish, cultivate, and sustain trusting relationships.

What is trauma? A threatening episode/event which a person is involved in or witnesses and as a result feels intensely unsafe.

What are ACEs? Adverse Childhood Experiences, which come in many forms including physical and mental abuse, neglect, and household dysfunction (among others). These experiences have shown to have a direct correlation to future health complications. ACEs impact health through prolonged toxic stress.

What is trauma-informed teaching? Pedagogy that purposefully plans for and actively establishes a culture of safety, empowerment, and healing.

From March through June of 2020, millions of our children have been involved in or have witnessed multiple forms of trauma including (but certainly not limited to) medical trauma, traumatic grief, disasters related to extreme weather, systemic injustice, community violence and destruction. In addition to these defined trauma categories, students must also deal with the negative mental and emotional health

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impacts of extended periods of isolation and loneliness. This recent trauma is also set within the larger national context in which our communities (and therefore our children) are struggling with how to resolve long-term systemic injustices which directly impact the wellbeing of students of color, women and girls, and low-income children.

Prioritizing more "academic" educational outcomes over the collective and individual healing of our students, schools and communities would ignore educational research that firmly points to the importance of emotional well-being to overall academic success.

The foundation of this important work is the development of trust in the form of student-adult trust, student-student trust, and adult-adult trust. As we backward-design school-based experiences that establish a baseline of trust, we work to establish cultures of safety, empowerment, and healing. Therefore, a key ingredient for effective trauma-informed teaching is human relationships. Students and teachers must be given the space and the time to relate to one another, build connection, and establish trust. **The establishment of this essential space and time must be prioritized.**

This document defines 15 social and emotional learning outcomes that align with CASEL's 5 core competencies. Each competency is unpacked into 3 trauma-informed content strands with an elementary and secondary outcome for each strand.

This work is research-based and evidence-informed and is meant to guide the backward design of OPEN's social and emotional learning resources focused on K-12 instruction and staff wellness. The author acknowledges the need for this document to be peer-reviewed, debated, and evolved over time. Due to the incredible need and urgency of the work ahead, these important conversations will have to be done while this document is being used to guide the development of trauma informed SEL curriculum and teaching tools.

SELF-AWARENESS

o   Students will be able to accurately recognize one's own emotions, thoughts, and values and how they influence behavior.

o   Students will be able to accurately assess one's strengths and limitations, with a well-grounded sense of confidence, optimism, and a growth mindset.

SELF-AWARENESS LEARNING OUTCOMES

SAFETY

- **Elementary:** Defines emotions and discusses both their causes and impacts on personal behaviors and health.

- **Secondary:** Recognizes the role of emotions in personal behavior and applies that understanding to establish positive and optimistic patterns of behavior.

EMPOWERMENT

- **Elementary:** Identifies personal thoughts and values that contribute to confidence and optimism.

- **Secondary:** Recognizes the role of emotion within the context of past experiences and applies that learning to create a path toward self-improvement and personal achievement.

HEALING

- **Elementary:** Defines and discusses emotions that are related to personal and community healing.

- **Secondary:** Discusses and applies strategies that promote the recovery of optimism and growth mindset.

SELF-MANAGEMENT

o Students will be able to successfully regulate their emotions, thoughts, and behaviors in different situations.

o Students will be able to effectively manage stress, control impulses, and motivate themselves.

o Students will be able to set and work toward personal and academic goals.

SELF-MANAGEMENT LEARNING OUTCOMES

SAFETY

- **Elementary:** Defines and applies strategies for impulse control as well as emotional and behavioral regulation with consideration for self and others.

- **Secondary:** Defines and routinely applies strategies for emotional regulation as a part of a social and emotional health practice and overall wellness-based lifestyle.

EMPOWERMENT

- **Elementary:** Defines personal motivation and discusses how motivation can impact personal and academic goals.

- **Secondary:** Applies stress management and impulse control techniques toward the pursuit of defined personal and academic goals.

HEALING

- **Elementary:** Identifies and practices stress management strategies related to personal and community healing.

- **Secondary:** Identifies and routinely applies strategies for stress management as a part of a social and emotional health practice and overall wellness-based lifestyle.

SOCIAL AWARENESS

o   Students will be able to take the perspective of and empathize with others, including those from diverse backgrounds and cultures.

o   Students will be able to understand social and ethical norms for behavior and to recognize family, school, and community resources and supports.

SOCIAL AWARENESS LEARNING OUTCOMES

SAFETY

- **Elementary:** Recognizes and demonstrates respect for social and ethical norms with consideration of self and others.

- **Secondary:** Discusses and defends social and ethical norms in order to promote a safe and encouraging learning environment.

EMPOWERMENT

- **Elementary:** Identifies and discusses the value of specific family, school, and community resources and supports.

- **Secondary:** Identifies and utilizes family, school, and community resources and supports in the pursuit of defined personal and collective community goals.

HEALING

- **Elementary:** Identifies and discusses family, school, and community resources and supports provided to promote and facilitate personal and community healing.

- **Secondary:** Identifies and utilizes family, school, and community resources and supports to actively work toward personal and community healing.

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RELATIONSHIP SKILLS

o   Students will be able to establish and maintain healthy and rewarding relationships with diverse individuals and groups.

o   Students will be able to communicate clearly, listen well, cooperate with others, resist inappropriate social pressure, negotiate conflict constructively, and seek and offer help when needed.

RELATIONSHIP SKILLS LEARNING OUTCOMES

SAFETY

*   **Elementary:** Identifies, discusses and applies communication skills that help establish a positive learning environment for self and others, and enables constructive conflict resolution.

*   **Secondary:** Applies positive communication skills to seek and offer help and to resist inappropriate social pressure.

EMPOWERMENT

*   **Elementary:** Applies constructive language to encourage self and others.

*   **Secondary:** Applies constructive language to encourage self and others in the active pursuit of personal and collective goals.

HEALING

*   **Elementary:** Establishes trusting relationships with adults and peers. Demonstrates respect and cooperation with others of diverse backgrounds and abilities.

*   **Secondary:** Establishes trusting relationships with adults and peers of diverse backgrounds and abilities. Seeks and offers help from an established social network that includes diverse individuals.

RESPONSIBLE DECISION-MAKING

o   Students will be able to make constructive choices about personal behavior and social interactions based on ethical standards, safety considerations, and social norms.

o   Students will demonstrate the realistic evaluation of consequences of various actions, and a consideration of the well-being of oneself and others.

RESPONSIBLE DECISION-MAKING LEARNING OUTCOMES

SAFETY

- **Elementary:** Identifies and discusses the ethical standards, safety considerations, and social norms that influence decision making.

- **Secondary:** Evaluates the positive and negative consequences of personal behavior options and makes decisions in the best interest of self and others.

EMPOWERMENT

- **Elementary:** Makes constructive choices about personal behavior in the active pursuit of individual goals.

- **Secondary:** Makes constructive choices about personal behavior and social interactions in the active pursuit of individual and collective goals.

HEALING

- **Elementary:** Defines and discusses how personal decision making affects the trust of others.

- **Secondary:** Makes decisions in an effort to establish and maintain the trust of others.

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