

# **An Evaluation of the Trauma and Learning Policy Initiative's (TLPI) Inquiry-Based Process: Year Three**

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## **Abstract**

This evaluation investigated the impact of the Trauma and Learning Policy Initiative's (TLPI) Inquiry-Based Process on three participating public schools. TLPI's Inquiry-Based Process is a whole school effort to create trauma-sensitive school environments. We aimed to (1) analyze participant educators' reported cultural and organizational change at the school and teacher levels from Year 3 of schools' implementation of TLPI's Process, and (2) to use these results to complement understandings generated from Year 1 and 2 outcomes which were set forth in an earlier report by the American Institutes for Research. TLPI's theory of change is that a deepening understanding of the impact of trauma on learning, and participation in an Inquiry-Based Process of educator empowerment to address school-based priorities, will lead to shifts in thinking and shifts in practice that can become embedded and part of the way the school is run; that is, part of the culture of the school. Thus, the research aim was to glean from participant reports whether and how changes became embedded in the schools' cultures.

Using an adapted Situational Analysis qualitative research design, we found that leadership and staff reported cultural and organizational shifts in their schools that clustered into four emergent themes: (1) facilitating empowerment and collaboration; (2) integrating whole-child approaches; (3) affirming cultural identity and promoting a sense of belonging; and (4) re-envisioning discipline toward relational accountability. Within each of these themes there were numerous outcomes that leadership and staff attributed to implementation of the Inquiry-Based Process. For example, safe and supportive expectations, policies, and vocabulary became consistent across the school as all faculty and staff worked together towards trauma-sensitivity. Additionally, faculty and staff reported increased leadership as they took initiative of safe and supportive practices. Through increased collaboration and changed disciplinary techniques, faculty and staff helped students form social-emotional skills which led to healthy relationships developing between adults and students and students feeling a sense of belonging in the school. Additionally, faculty and staff shifted towards restorative justice mindsets, which led to student issues being resolved in the classroom and fewer disciplinary referrals. Moreover, students were able to understand how to make decisions with favorable consequences and their connections with adults strengthened. School leadership, faculty, and

staff felt they were doing important work and experienced healthy support systems with each other. As faculty and staff worked to improve relationships in the building, students felt they could safely make mistakes and felt more connected to the school overall. Lastly, school efforts to cross language barriers, host cross-cultural discussions, and meet parents' needs resulted in increased familial inclusion.

Overall, this evaluation provides evidence for profound impacts that schools' engagement with TLPI's Inquiry-Based Process, with the requisite level of commitment and focused effort, can have for leadership, staff, students, and families. Lasting changes reported by educators were multi-leveled, and included shifts in both thinking and practice. Educators' reports evidence a critical transformation where they no longer approached instruction of their students as primarily an intellectual endeavor, but rather saw their students as whole beings and aimed to transform how school community members related to one another. Within educator reports we observed the emergence of a rehumanizing relationality, which could be akin to building new social capital in school communities. This study suggests that, while this transformation may take time and effort to cultivate, the outcomes it generates may be more sustainable than other education reform approaches.

## Introduction

### Goals and Research Aims of this Evaluation

This evaluation research project analyzed existing data to investigate the impact of the Trauma and Learning Policy Initiative (TLPI)'s Inquiry-Based Process on three participating public schools located in the region of eastern Massachusetts. TLPI's Inquiry-Based Process is a whole school effort to create trauma-sensitive school environments as defined in TLPI's book: *Helping Traumatized Children Learn, Volume 2, Chapter 2*. Our evaluation research aims were to investigate reported cultural and organizational change at the school and teacher levels, and to use these results to complement understandings that have already been generated from Year 1 and 2 outcomes which were set forth in the "Trauma and Learning Policy Initiative (TLPI): Trauma-Sensitive Schools Descriptive Study Final Report" by the American Institutes for Research (AIR; Jones, Berg, & Osher, 2018). TLPI's theory of change is that a deepening understanding of the impact of trauma on learning and participation in an Inquiry-Based Process of educator empowerment to address school-based priorities will lead to shifts in thinking and shifts in practice that can become embedded and part of the way the school is run; that is, part of the culture of the school. Thus, the research aim was to glean from participant reports whether and how changes became embedded in the culture.

The current evaluation research project was a secondary data analysis, completed with data previously collected by TLPI and AIR. We used innovative qualitative methods (Situational Analysis, see Clarke, Friese, & Washburn, 2018) capable of evaluating multi-levelled transformations and cultural shifts within the three participating schools towards increased trauma sensitivity. The key questions that were addressed in our evaluation research included:

1. What are the ways that teachers and other school staff have reported becoming more aware of the impact of trauma on learning for students in their schools?

2. What shifts in *thinking* (toward trauma sensitivity) were observed among leadership and staff and did they attribute these reported shifts to implementation of the Inquiry-Based Process?
3. What shifts in *practice* (toward trauma sensitivity) were observed among leadership and staff and did they attribute these reported shifts to implementation of the Inquiry-Based Process?
4. What expected and unexpected outcomes were attributed by leadership and staff to implementation of the Inquiry-Based Process? What benefits were reported for students, staff, and families?
5. How did shifts in thinking and practice affect the cultures at these schools? What emergent behaviors were reported by leadership and staff to indicate evidence of trauma-sensitive culture change?
6. Did shifts in thinking and practice and other indicators of culture change from years 1 and 2, as reported by AIR, continue into year 3? Did leadership and staff describe trauma-sensitive shifts in thinking becoming generalized to new situations beyond the schools' formal action plans? Is there evidence in leadership and staff reports that shifts in thinking and practice are continuing to drive decision-making in the schools?

## **Executive Summary**

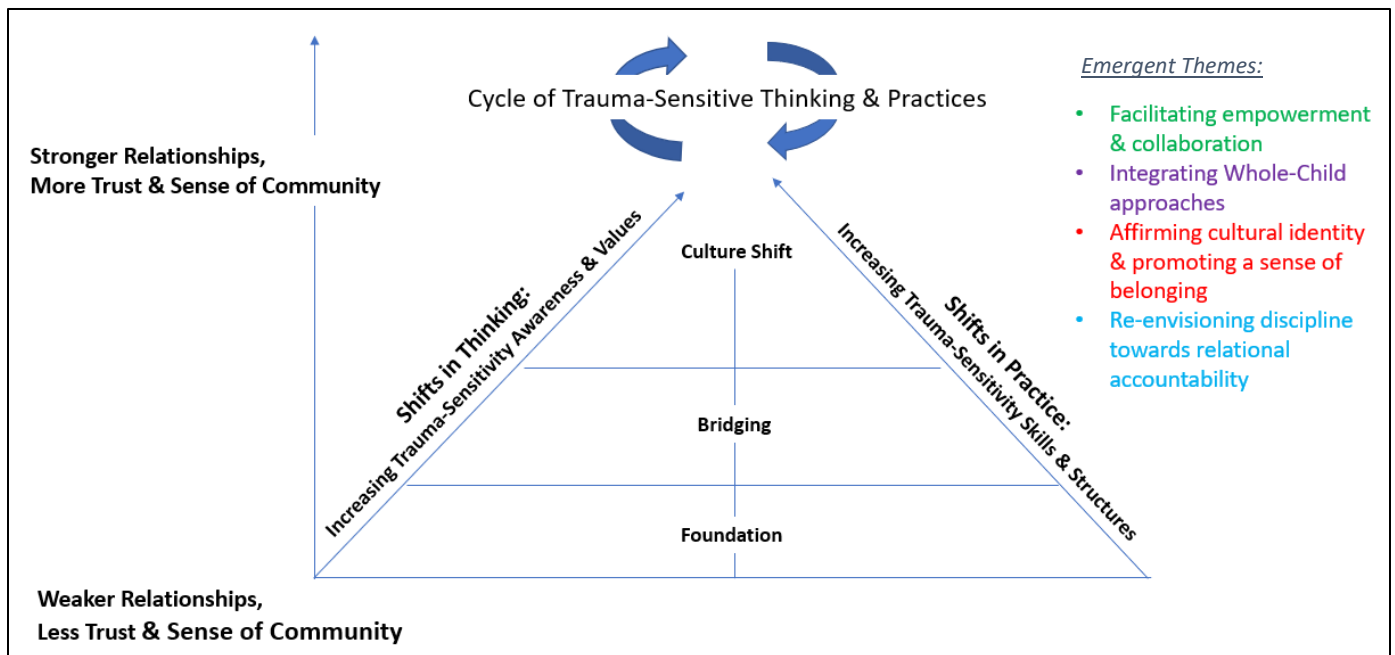
This report describes findings from an evaluation of the Trauma and Learning Policy Initiative (TLPI)'s Inquiry-Based Process. Findings are derived from data previously collected from three schools (with pseudonyms School A, School B, and School C) by TLPI staff members and American Institutes for Research (AIR) investigators. These data included in-depth interview and focus group transcripts from audio-recorded conversations with school staff collected at the beginning and end of the third year of implementation of TLPI's Inquiry-Based Process.

The current evaluation was completed by PI Dr. Devin Atallah and Co-PI Dr. Michelle Porche (faculty at BU Wheelock College of Education and Human Development), who together organized and led a Data Analysis Team (DAT) with three BU students: Jessica Koslouski, doctoral student of Applied Human Development; Keshia Perkins, undergraduate psychology student; and Christine Marsico, doctoral student of Counseling Psychology. This five-member DAT completed the current evaluation, which is a secondary data analysis project using innovative qualitative methods (Situational Analysis) capable of evaluating complex and contextually-embedded processes, such as shifts in thinking and shifts in practices towards increased trauma-sensitivity within the three participating schools. Situational analysis is a method that provides substantial advantages over existing approaches to qualitative analysis. A key component of this method is the development of a diagram that synthesizes a series of maps reflecting data coding, to show relations between themes. This is in contrast to the typical list of codes organized into themes. This is important for the evaluation of TLPI to address the research questions and reflects how we interpret the change process based on the data.

To illustrate the empirically-based findings from our analysis we describe the multi-leveled transformations and cultural shifts within the three participating schools through the figure below. We hope that this illustration of our interpretation of our findings also deepens understandings of TLPI's Inquiry-Based Process more broadly. Similar to figures, or models, that represent statistical results, we are depicting the relationships between themes from the qualitative coding of the data. We will discuss how this illustration summarizes the qualitative

findings, reflecting how TLPI’s Inquiry-Based Process became embedded in schools leading to changes in their cultures (see Figure 1 below). The figure illustrates complex and multileveled processes of cultural changes in School A, School B, and School C, as found in the data, using TLPI’s Inquiry-Based Process. The figure conveys three levels of change that were facilitated by *Shifts in Thinking* and *Shifts in Practice* among educators. Additionally, the data suggests that the shifts in thinking and practice were dependent on, reciprocally supported, and reinforced by strengthened relationships, trust, and sense of community. The salience of the emergence of this strong relationality in schools on the process of promoting trauma-sensitivity is represented by a vertical arrow on the left-hand side of the figure. We use this figure to illustrate how we interpreted the process of change, as supported by interview and focus group data. We are limited, in that the data is comprised of self-report of participants’ actions and recall of process, rather than prospective observation and testing of specific strategies for change.

**Figure 1. Synthesis of Transformations and Cultural Shifts Reported by Educators**





In the current report, the three levels of the figure above describe a deepening progression that emerged from educators' reports about their work to build a trauma-sensitive school using TLPI's Inquiry-Based Process. In our analysis of the qualitative data, our findings take the shape of a triangle, which best represents how we interpret both the frequency of types of codes and structure of change. We find greater reports of foundational actions, and fewer of specified examples of culture shift, with what we identify as bridging actions in-between that act as mechanisms of change.

1. **Foundation:** When critical initial groundwork was being laid out, often including more formalized and surface-level processes and practices, and where steering committees and sounding boards played a stronger role in supporting action planning and initiating inquiry-based roadmaps;
2. **Bridging:** When mindsets and practices were being "tried on", and deeper-level work was beginning to unfold in a school, with continual critical conversations, strengthening of collective reflection among faculty and staff, and ongoing support from steering committee and sounding boards;
3. **Culture Shift:** When more nuanced and holistic approaches were embodied in the mindsets and activities of school faculty, staff, and students, which depended less on formal structures, and instead, were embedded in strong relational bonds and systems internalized within the school.

Additional key characteristics of change revealed in our results include the *Shifts in Thinking* and *Shifts in Practice* dimensions. These two dimensions, as identified from the data, are represented as the two vertical sides of the triangle, which illustrate the schools' progression toward an ever-deepening cycle of trauma-sensitive thinking and practice, as follows:

**Shifts in Thinking:** The development of mindsets, awareness, knowledge, and values with ongoing reflection that guided culture changes in schools towards trauma-sensitivity. These shifts in thinking were catalyzed by staff's deepening, shared understanding of trauma's impact on learning, behavior and relationships and the need for whole-school approaches.

**Shifts in Practice:** The continual conversations, critical reflections, and creative implementations of actions, structures, and supportive systems in schools that facilitated culture changes towards trauma-sensitivity.

Furthermore, the figure above describes cultural and organizational changes within the schools as they occurred across the three levels (Foundation, Bridging, and Culture Shift) and across the two dimensions (Shifts in Thinking and Shifts in Practice). Yet also importantly, results are organized along four categories (that are all interrelated constructs), which describe the **Emergent Themes** of trauma-sensitivity, and are grounded on our study team's interpretations of the statements and detailed accounts of research participants:

- (1) **Facilitating Empowerment and Collaboration:** This theme is grounded on the intersection of the development of quality relationships in schools and trauma-sensitive collaboration. First, the data reveals that some school faculty and staff recognized the benefits of safe and supportive environments and were willing to stimulate motivation within those who were not yet onboard. These evolving mindsets were accompanied by the work of the Steering Committee, dialogues about teaching mindsets and practices, and brainstorming of action plans. As the schools executed these action plans, faculty and staff readily validated each other's knowledge-sets and collaborated on trauma-sensitive practices throughout the building. Educators gradually became empowered trauma-sensitive leaders and drivers of ongoing change, as they initiated Whole Child practices and community and family engagement.

- (2) **Integrating Whole-Child Approaches:** In this theme, school faculty and staff began to acknowledge how student social-emotional needs and academic success go hand in hand. Thus, schools allocated time for trauma-focused professional development, where they learned and had discussions with one another about the effects of direct and vicarious trauma on both students and adults across the school community. With this developing knowledge, faculty and staff were enabled to respond to students with evolving empathy and the intent to listen/think first, before acting. As these relationships developed, adults recognized the need to reflect on not only their own practices and mindsets, but also students' complex environments and experiences. Therefore, schools brainstormed solutions for student success based on Whole Child principles and aimed towards keeping students in classrooms and making their school communities more inclusive.
- (3) **Affirming Cultural Identity and Promoting a Sense of Belonging:** Culturally-affirming and trauma-sensitive practices intersected within this theme to produce supportive school environments. Educators may have been aware of the need to build cultural awareness and humility, yet using professional development time for building knowledge and skillsets of these topics was essential. Schools worked to transform these insights into practices that embrace diversity and inspire difficult dialogues across cultural differences. During this process, educators consistently reflected on their perspectives, actions, curricula, and environments to work towards affirming the identities of students by the school community. Educators began to comprehend and develop practices that reflected their understanding that one of the key meanings of trauma-sensitivity is: deeply understanding their students' contexts. Finally, schools began to comprehend that to understand their students' contexts, connections with students' families and broader community partnerships needed to be strengthened. Therefore, schools began to promote familial and community dialogues and interactions to attempt to foster relationships where meaningful conversations and connectivity could be cultivated.

**(4) Re-envisioning Discipline towards Relational Accountability:** The concluding theme presents the transformation of disciplinary practices within the school buildings. In this theme, educators questioned the purpose of retributive techniques and disciplinary mindsets that focus on punishing and separating students in response to infractions and disruptions. Furthermore, schools collectively explored how these mainstream educational disciplinary mindsets and practices affect student well-being and success. As a result, schools sought alternative disciplinary solutions that respond to students' social-emotional needs, allowed for self-reflection, and that focused on restoring relationships. Faculty and staff worked towards holding themselves more accountable to their students and worked to keep them in the classroom. Faculty also aimed to help students develop more accountable relationships with each other and the school community as a whole. Furthermore, adults thought about circumstances behind student behavior and offered supports to manage this. As schools moved from punitive measures towards more restorative practices, students' behavioral missteps were reframed as opportunities for learning.

## Methods

### Study Participants

The current study analyzed data that were previously collected from participants in three schools with pseudonyms School A, School B, and School C. Five schools participated in the Trauma and Learning Policy Initiative's (TLPI)'s Trauma-Sensitive Schools Descriptive Study in the 2015-2016 and 2016-2017 school years, but only these three (School A, School B, and School C) are part of the current study on sustainability in in the 2017-2018 school year. Of the two schools not included in this data analysis of Year 3, one school was delayed in implementing the Inquiry-Based Process so no Year 3 data was available, and the other school declined the option of continuing in the study after Year 2 due to external circumstances unrelated to the study. The five schools were chosen from a pool of 35 applicants (see the AIR report (Jones, Berg & Osher, 2018) for full details on recruitment).

- **School A:** School A offers K-5 classes and serves over 1,000 students in the community. The student population is diverse, including a majority of African American and Latinx students (85%); just under 15% of students are of White, Asian, or Multi-Racial descent. Over 60% of students are economically disadvantaged, almost half (43%) of the students are English Language Learners (ELL), and between 10 and 15% of students are identified as having a disability. At School A, the following staff participated in interviews and focus groups: School Principal, four classroom teachers, English as a Second Language (ESL) Specialist, Speech and Language Specialist, School Adjustment Counselor, Occupational Therapist, and Health Specialist.
- **School B:** School B serves over 350 students in grades K-5. Over 80% of the student population is White, between 5% and 10% are African American or Latinx, and less than 5% are Multi-Racial or Asian. Three in 10 students are economically disadvantaged and two in 10 are identified as having a disability. School B does not have an ELL population of students. At School B, the following staff participated in interviews and focus groups: School Principal, Assistant Principal, three classroom teachers, and two School Adjustment Counselors.

- **School C:** School C is a charter school with a lower (grades 6-8) and upper school (grades 9-12) that serves over 450 students. The student population features a majority of White and Latinx identified youth (approximately 40% each) and 9% African American, 6% Asian, and almost 2% Multi-Racial. A third of the students are economically disadvantaged, between 10% and 15% are identified with a disability, and almost 5% of students are ELLs. At School C, the following staff participated in interviews and focus groups: The Head of School/Lower School Principal, Dean of Students, Upper School Principal, Special Education Director, Assistant Dean of Students and four classroom teachers.

### **Data Sources**

Dr. Atallah and Dr. Porche, and their Data Analysis Team (DAT) as a whole, obtained approval from BU IRB for this secondary analysis project. To ensure that this study complied with ethical standards, all the transcribed interviews that TLPI shared with our BU team were de-identified to protect privacy of the participants. TLPI shared multiple data sources with our DAT at BU. First, TLPI shared transcripts of interviews and focus groups it conducted with the school leaders (i.e., Principal, Head of School) and Steering Committees of School A, B, and C. In addition, a leader from each school was interviewed during the summer prior to Year 3 (i.e., June-August 2017) and in the spring of Year 3 (i.e., June 2018). The Steering Committee of each school was interviewed in the spring of Year 3 (June 2018). De-identified transcripts were provided to the research team for analysis. Each school was interviewed separately. Additionally, de-identified interview transcripts of an in-person meeting and a series of three telephonic meetings with school leaders from School A, B, and C were included in this analysis. Also, video and a transcript of a Massachusetts Department of Elementary and Secondary Education conference, where administrators and staff from Schools A, B, and C presented on a panel about their experiences becoming a trauma-sensitive school, were included in the

analysis. All interviews and focus groups were designed to increase understanding of the participants' use of the Inquiry-Based Process for becoming trauma-sensitive schools.<sup>1</sup>

### **Data Analysis Methodology**

The authors analyzed the data set provided by the Trauma and Learning Policy Initiative (TLPI) following key elements and analytic exercises of Situational Analysis (Clarke, Friese, & Washburn, 2018), which is a form of Grounded Theory (e.g., Charmaz, 2006; Strauss & Corbin, 1990). Situational Analysis places an emphasis on linking complex micro-level and relationally-mediated phenomena with macro-level structures to better attend to contextually-embedded processes and the complexity of how human behaviors, relationships, and institutions interconnect and impact situations of interest. In this case, we were interested in evaluating and illuminating the situational elements, conditions, and processes which facilitated and sustained change in schools towards trauma-sensitivity based primarily on interview data previously gathered with three academic institutions described briefly above (School A, School B, and School C). Our research was also inspired by Irwin's (2013) emphasis on using methodologies for qualitative secondary data analysis that increase the situatedness and contextually-embedded nature of the critical inquiry and analysis. We would like to highlight that while a more comprehensive Situational Analysis (Clarke et al., 2018) study was not possible (i.e., further interviewing, ethnographic observation, and extensive visual and conceptual map-making, which were not part of the original study's design and data collection procedures), our adapted methodology enabled a rigorous analysis of the available data. It is also important to keep in mind that we are able to provide empirical evidence for the ways that TPLI's Inquiry-Based Process helped to transform school culture. However, we cannot compare the schools to each to say how far each improved, because data from focus groups reflects the open-ended conversations, rather than systematic inquiry using the same protocol for each interview. Thus, we do not want to erroneously assume that any particular practice was not

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<sup>1</sup> Meeting notes and agendas were available for School A, so they were consulted as a secondary check to confirm the themes that emerged from that school's interviews. Notes and agendas were not available for the other schools but that does not diminish the strength of findings from their interviews.

happening if it might be the case that it was simply not discussed in a time-limited interview setting,

As we completed this secondary data analysis project, we engaged in a total of six steps (see Table 1 below for the step-by-step description of our data analysis process). First, we formalized our Data Analysis Team (DAT), and began our coding of the contents of the transcripts iteratively, whereby relevant key words, phrases, facts, and data were extracted. During this process, the responses of participants were fully coded and then compared for similarities and differences, using NVivo software. During this initial stage, which overlaps with *open coding* from Grounded Theory (e.g., Strauss & Corbin, 1990), and consistent with Clarke et al.'s (2018) situational map-making exercises, descriptive and reflective memos were written and illustrated by all DAT members. In total, over 200 open codes were created and constantly adapted, erased, combined, and changed (see Appendix A for example list of open codes). Next, various cycles of coding, including *pattern coding*, were completed to generate initial categories (Saldaña, 2009).

**Table 1. Data Analysis Team\* (DAT)'s step-by-step analytic process**

<b>DAT's Steps</b>	<b>Name of Type of Analytic Activity</b>	<b>Description of Analytic Activity</b>		<b>Dates</b>
1	<b>Open Coding</b> (Charmaz, 2006; Strauss & Corbin, 1990)	DAT team evaluated textual content and created initial codes, which began to describe the properties and dimensions of each emergent code.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Consistent analytic and reflexive memoing by individual DAT members (Saldaña, 2009).</li> </ul>	Dec. 2018 – March 2019
2	<b>Pattern Coding</b> (Saldaña, 2009)	DAT team identified emergent themes collectively and explored patterns in the open codes while dropping redundant or marginal codes, and consolidating broader categories towards being able to explain and pull together material and make more meaningful units of analysis.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Regular/weekly DAT meetings and dialogues considering emergent themes and broader categories.</li> <li>DAT members engaging in consistent individual and group diagramming of visually-based and reflexive analyses, or 'situational mapping' (Clarke, Friese, &amp;</li> </ul>	February – March 2019
3	<b>Axial Coding</b> (Charmaz, 2006; Morrow, 2005; Saldaña, 2009; Strauss & Corbin, 1990)	DAT team described the properties and dimensions of the boarder units of analysis, themes or categories, and worked		March – April 2019



		collectively to fit these categories in with each other by exploring and illuminating the relations between categories. Furthermore, DAT met with TLPI leaders for initial feedback on progress of data analysis to improve validity and trustworthiness of the study.	Washburn, 2018), drawing attention to the 'social ecology' of relations between codes, and later, amongst categories most relevant to TLPI's Inquiry-based Process.	
4	DAT engage in <b>Theoretical Coding</b> and final situational mapping that led to the generation of a comprehensive visually-based representation, model, or Project Map (Clarke, Friese, & Washburn, 2018) entitled "TLPI's Trauma-Sensitive Triangle", which attempts to tell DAT's full analytic story of TLPI's Inquiry-based Process			April – May 2019
5	<b>Writing up of Initial Results</b> and sharing the visually-based representation, model, or Project Map with TLPI for feedback to improve validity and trustworthiness of analysis.			May 2019
6	<b>Writing up of Final Report</b> , with quotes from participants substantiating emergent themes outlined in tables and a Project Map, entitled "TLPI's Trauma-Sensitive Triangle"			June 2019

*\*DAT includes: PI Dr. Devin Atallah; Co-PI Dr. Michelle Porche; doctoral students Ms. Jessica Koslouski & Ms. Christine Marsico; & undergraduate student Ms. Keshia Perkins*

During pattern coding, again, consistent with Clarke et al.'s (2018) situational map-making exercises, DAT members further generated reflective memos (including the visual analytic exercises of messy situational maps, relational analysis, social world/arenas maps, and positional maps) focusing on our attempting to explain key contextual elements that emerged in participants' descriptions of processes of supporting and sustaining cultural changes within their schools towards trauma-sensitivity (see Appendix B for examples of our situational maps). Reflective memos and diagrams also documented our ongoing insights and questions and were shared during weekly research team meetings. These memos were integrated into our DAT's conceptual development of the overarching themes and allowed for the identification of broader categories in the data (Saldaña, 2009).

In total, our research team held twenty-two data analysis meetings (at approximately two hours in length for each meeting) from December 2018 through May of 2019. When developing the categories, specific focus was placed on how the participant educators themselves viewed the problems, challenges, and strengths that they reported experiencing while developing, practicing, discussing, and facilitating trauma-sensitive changes in their

schools. Furthermore, at one occasion in March, and then once again in May, our research team met with TLPI staff for two-hour periods to share our progress in the data analysis process, and we were able to learn of their feedback and perspectives. TLPI staff served as key supports for the three participating schools (School A, School B, and School C) and conducted many of the interviews with the participants. Therefore, TLPI staff held experience-near knowledge of the change processes in schools. Thus, our learning of their reflections on our analyses improved the validity and trustworthiness of our findings (Marrow, 2005). Ultimately, the outcome of this analysis resulted in the organization of the data through a conceptual model, or Project Map (Clarke et al., 2018). Each version of the Project Map is derived from coding of empirical data as it emerged grounded on participants' terminologies and descriptions of their own perspectives, expertise, and diverse experiences in schools. Please revisit Figure 1 below, which is our Project Map – the visual representation of the reported process by which schools incorporated trauma-sensitive practices. Also, please refer to Table 2 for a description of key situational elements of these Project Maps, which are further explicated in the Findings and Interpretations section below.

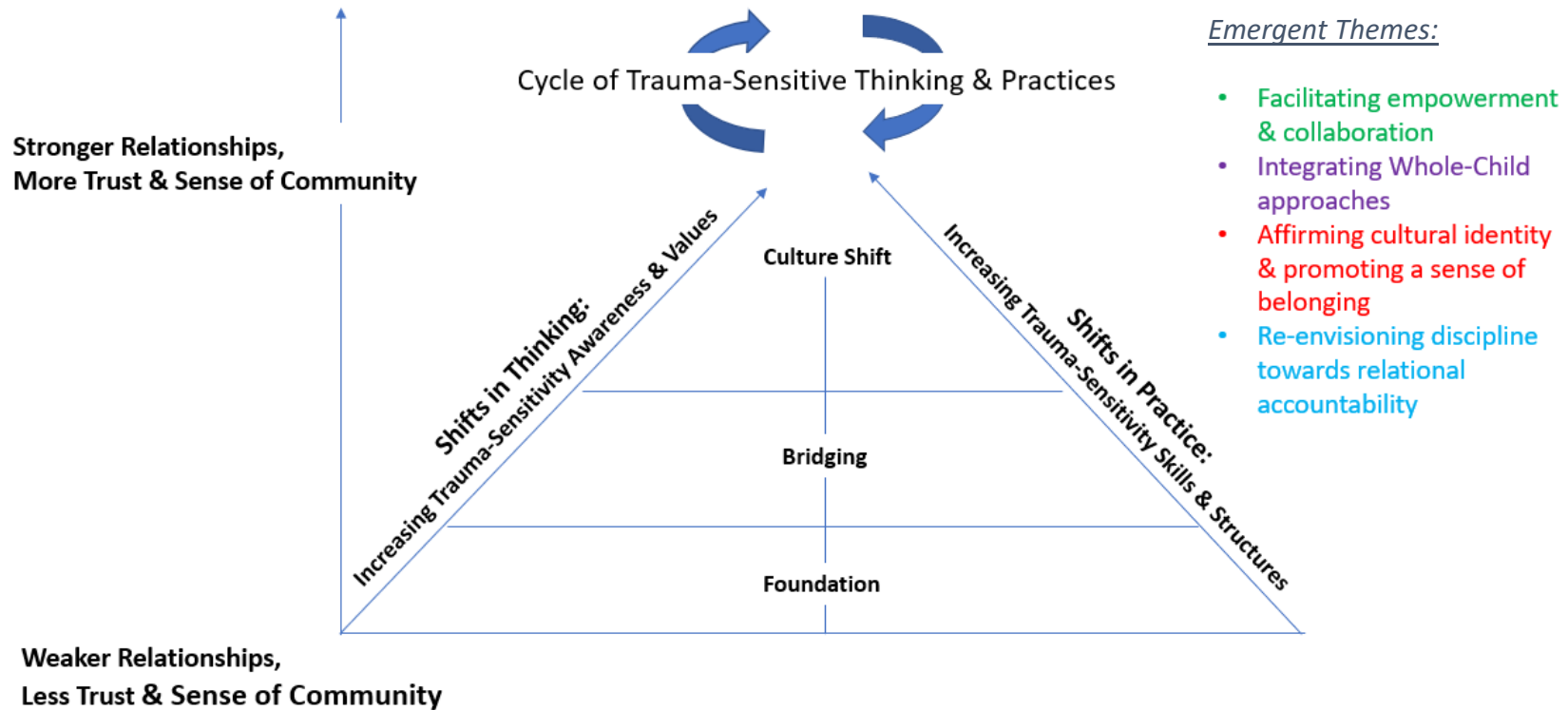
## **Findings and Interpretations**

The following analysis emerged from our research team's deep immersion in the transcripts of participants from School A, School B, and School C, and their narratives of their journeys of school-wide transformations towards increased trauma-sensitivity using the Trauma and Learning Policy Initiative (TLPI)'s Inquiry-Based Process. Ultimately, through our adapted Situational Analysis methodology (see detailed description of data analysis above) a visual-based "Project Map" emerged. See Figure 1 below for this illustration of the data, in addition to Table 2 for a verbal description of key elements.

First, within our Project Map, you will notice four, color-coded overarching categories that emerged in our analysis as the emergent themes, including: (1) Facilitating Empowerment and Collaboration; (2) Integrating Whole-Child Approaches; (3) Affirming Cultural Identity and Promoting a Sense of Belonging; and (4) Re-envisioning Discipline towards Relational Accountability. These four themes, and respective subthemes (twenty-four in total), emerged as interrelated, with two key dimensions impacting school-wide transformations: Shifts in Thinking and Shifts in Practice. These two dimensions are represented in the figure as arrows leading upwards towards more trauma-sensitive school cultures. Moreover, these dimensions are conceptualized as two vertical sides of the triangle metaphor, with an image of a cyclic process at the top representing how shifts in thinking and in practice constantly impact each other as "praxis." Praxis, as defined by Freire (1970), connotes cycles of reflection and action that lead to sustained changes in social structures and realities.

Furthermore, the four overarching themes (and corresponding twenty-four subthemes) emerged not only as unfolding along these dimensions of shifting thinking and shifting practice, but also as organized within three levels moving up, reflecting increased trauma sensitivity. Each level corresponds with the degree of school-wide transformation: the Foundation level; the Bridging level; and Culture Shift level. Finally, schools' upward movement emerged in our Situational Analysis as also impacted by a continuum, which represents increasing quality of relationships, including: more trust, greater sense of community, and increased capacities for difficult conversations with nuanced reflection and relational skillfulness as educators address challenging situations within schools.

Figure 1. Synthesis of Transformations and Cultural Shifts Reported by Educators.



**This is our Project Map: Empirical Results Show Interrelation of Relationships, Reflection, and Practice in Building a Trauma-Sensitive School Culture**

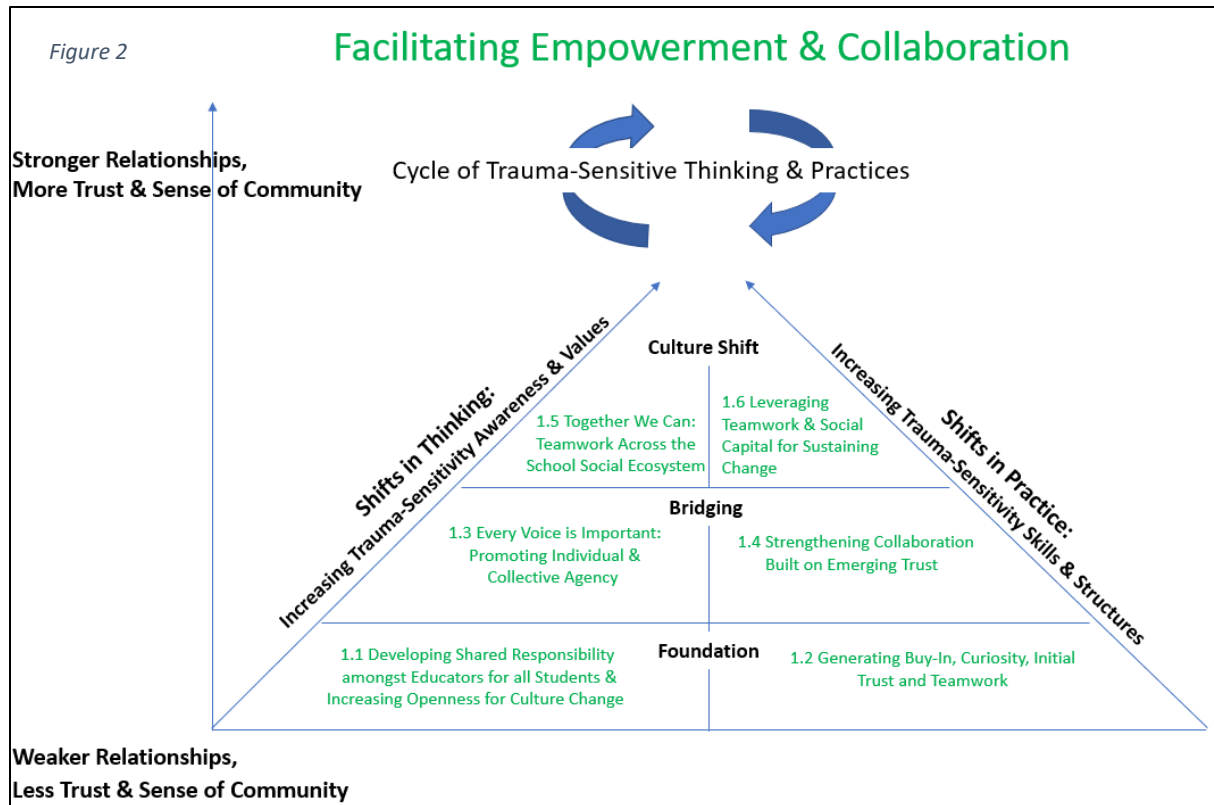
**Table 2. Description of the Key Empirical Elements of the Project Map**

<b>The Overarching, Emergent Categories: Four Emergent Themes</b>	Facilitating empowerment & collaboration	Integrating Whole-Child approaches	Affirming cultural identity & promoting a sense of belonging	Re-envisioning discipline towards relational accountability
<b>Dimensions of Change</b>	<b>Shifts in Thinking:</b> The development of mindsets, awareness, knowledge, and values with ongoing reflection that guide culture changes in schools towards trauma-sensitivity		<b>Shifts in Practices:</b> The continual conversations, critical reflections, and creative implementations of actions, structures, and supportive systems in schools that facilitate culture changes towards trauma-sensitivity	
<b>Levels of Change</b>	<b>Foundation</b> When critical initial groundwork is being laid out, often including more formalized and surface-level processes and practices, and where steering committees and sounding boards may play a stronger role in supporting action planning and initiating inquiry-based roadmaps	<b>Bridging</b> When mindsets and practices are being "tried on", and deeper-level work is beginning to unfold in a school, with continual critical conversations, strengthening of reflective practices of faculty and staff, and ongoing support from steering committee and sounding boards	<b>Culture Shift</b> When more nuanced and holistic approaches are embodied in the mindsets and activities of school faculty, staff, and students, which depend less on formal structures, and instead, are embedded in strong relational bonds and systems internalized within the school	
<b>Relational Continuum</b>	<b>Relationships, Trust, Relational Skills, &amp; Sense of Community:</b> The <i>Themes</i> , <i>Dimensions</i> , and <i>Levels</i> above are all impacted by the quality of relations within the schools, where the types of awareness and values that can be developed, and the types of conversations, actions, and systems that are effectively created and engaged in, depend (in part) on the level of relational skills of school faculty and staff, and the strength of the relationships and trust cultivated within and across all school community members. Furthermore, as schools undergo transformations towards trauma-sensitivity, relationships in the building are strengthened. Therefore, this <b>Relational Continuum</b> represents a <i>reciprocal process</i> , where the trauma-sensitive actions and structures schools can implement with greater likelihood of success, depend on the relational skillfulness and quality of relationships in the school, and yet at the same time, the relations and skillfulness present in educators in a school can strengthen as school community members engage in trauma-sensitive actions and work together to foster supportive systems and structures.			

Next, each aspect within the Project Map will be described in greater detail below. In doing so, the current report is organized by the four overarching themes that emerged in the analysis: (1) Facilitating Empowerment and Collaboration; (2) Integrating Whole-Child Approaches; (3) Affirming Cultural Identity and Promoting a Sense of Belonging; and (4) Re-envisioning Discipline towards Relational Accountability. These four overarching categories have been color-coded to aid in the distinction of the themes in our project maps and tables. Furthermore, these four themes are broken up into subthemes and move up from the Foundation, Bridging, and Culture Shift levels, divided between the two dimensions of change as either Shifts in Thinking or Shifts in Practice. APPENDIX C organizes the four overarching themes and twenty-four subthemes while providing illustrative quotes from the study participants for each one. In the following sections of the subthemes we include the respective subset of the APPENDIX C table for illustration.

## Theme 1. Facilitating Empowerment & Collaboration

This theme aims to capture the salience of school-wide collaboration and empowerment, which according to our analysis, appeared to grow as the participating schools put TLPI's Inquiry-Based Process into action. This growth included the formation of bonds across schools, and their surrounding communities, with validation and support of each other's dedication to trauma-sensitivity. Therefore, the *Facilitating Empowerment & Collaboration* theme (see Figure 2) includes six subthemes (see Table 3) that describe different aspects of this process, broken up by level (Foundation, Bridging, and Culture Shift) and by dimensions of change (Shifts in Thinking, and Shifts in Practice). Although we did not systematically collect data that would test for comparative difference, we would like to highlight that data analyzed from Year 3 suggests that discussion at participating schools may reflect different stages within this theory of change as they implemented TLPI's Inquiry-Based Process.



### Subtheme 1.1. Developing Shared Responsibility amongst Educators for all Students & Increasing Openness for Culture Change

This subtheme, which is located at the *Shifts in Thinking* Dimension and at the *Foundation Level*, represents the critical part of TLPI’s Inquiry-Based Process where school faculty, staff, and leadership began developing their understandings of the importance of facilitating transformations in their schools. For example, School C felt the need for a safe and supportive environment when frequent teacher and student transitions hindered healthy relationship development within the school. Additionally, conversations with the Steering Committee focused on fostering an environment in which all the educators begin to feel more responsible for all the students in the school, and that the building would benefit from TLPI’s Inquiry-Based Process to become trauma sensitive. However, this process required school faculty and staff to balance conflicting priorities, manage low buy-in, and begin to take ownership over the process for themselves.

### **Subtheme 1.2. Generating Buy-In, Curiosity, Initial Trust & Teamwork**

This subtheme, which is located at the *Shifts in Practice* Dimension and still at the *Foundation Level*, describes how using the Inquiry-Based Process created opportunities for trust-building and collaboration amongst staff and administrators. This process designates space for school-wide interactions resulting in efficient usage of existing resources and difficult dialogues about educator mindsets and practices. For instance, School A leaders and Steering Committee members measured staff buy-in on action plans by conducting a survey and engaging them in brainstorming solutions so the whole school could move together towards trauma-sensitivity. Activities in this subtheme generated buy-in amongst staff and began to improve the quality of relationships in the school, which laid the foundation for the next subthemes in the *Bridging* level.

### **Subtheme 1.3. Every Voice is Important: Promoting Individual & Collective Agency**

This subtheme, which is located at the *Shifts in Thinking* Dimension at the *Bridging Level*, describes how school faculty and staff continued working together, having difficult conversations, and engaging in reflection and co-construction of understandings with other teachers and staff in a school, leading to deeper relationships amongst staff. This was especially true if all voices and knowledge-sets were validated within the building, regardless of the opinion or job title. Specifically, two of the schools provided examples of how staff were eager to learn new approaches from their colleagues: School A's faculty taught each other self-regulation techniques and School B developed a resource binder for sharing trauma-sensitive practices within the building. The shifts in thinking at this level included an increased value on educators functioning as encouragers and support systems for one another. Moreover, an important understanding that emerged at this level was the willingness of faculty and staff to not only share responsibility for all students in times of calm, but also during times of crisis.

### **Subtheme 1.4. Strengthening Collaboration Built on Emerging Trust**

In this subtheme, located at the *Shifts in Practice* Dimension at the *Bridging Level*, new approaches were applied, and educators built practices to have regular and reflective conversations with one another. Throughout this process, the Steering Committees supported and provided feedback on emergent strategies. Administration, faculty, and staff worked towards using a common language about trauma when communicating about students. Additionally, staff confidence in the work increased as they rethought practices used inside and outside of the classroom and suggested/initiated trauma-sensitive alternatives. Furthermore, collaboration extended across hallways as staff discussed and



created productive methodologies. As an example of **Strengthening Collaboration Built on Emerging Trust**, School B set aside professional development time for staff to visit each other's classrooms and discuss how they incorporated safe and supportive techniques.

**Subtheme 1.5. Together We Can: Teamwork Across the School Social Ecosystem**

In this subtheme, which is located at the *Shifts in Thinking* Dimension at the *Culture Shift Level*, school administrators, faculty, and staff began to more deeply internalize participatory, democratic values and bottom-up approaches that viewed everyone as bringing something to the table. These values made change not only viable, but also enduring. At this level, educators recognized the importance of fostering collaboration across the whole-school social ecosystem, which included strong family, caregiver, and community stakeholder engagement. School A illustrated this commitment by connecting parents to community summer programs and sharing referral information about community resources with families.

**Subtheme 1.6. Leveraging Teamwork and Social Capital for Sustaining Change**

In this final subtheme of **Facilitating Empowerment & Collaboration**, located at the *Shifts in Practice* Dimension at the *Culture Shift Level*, trauma-sensitive practices and school structures began to become less formalized and were more grounded on relationally-embedded systems built on trust and shared accountability to the learning community. Educators took initiative, felt empowered to implement safe and supportive practices, and continually and actively brainstormed and engaged in action planning to expand trauma-sensitive practices. For instance, School C videotaped their staff applying trauma-sensitive practices around the school so that new hires would be able to see the work happening within the building. Within this subtheme, family and community voices were included and amplified. Additionally, shared learning opportunities with other schools and districts were created to broaden professional networks of support.

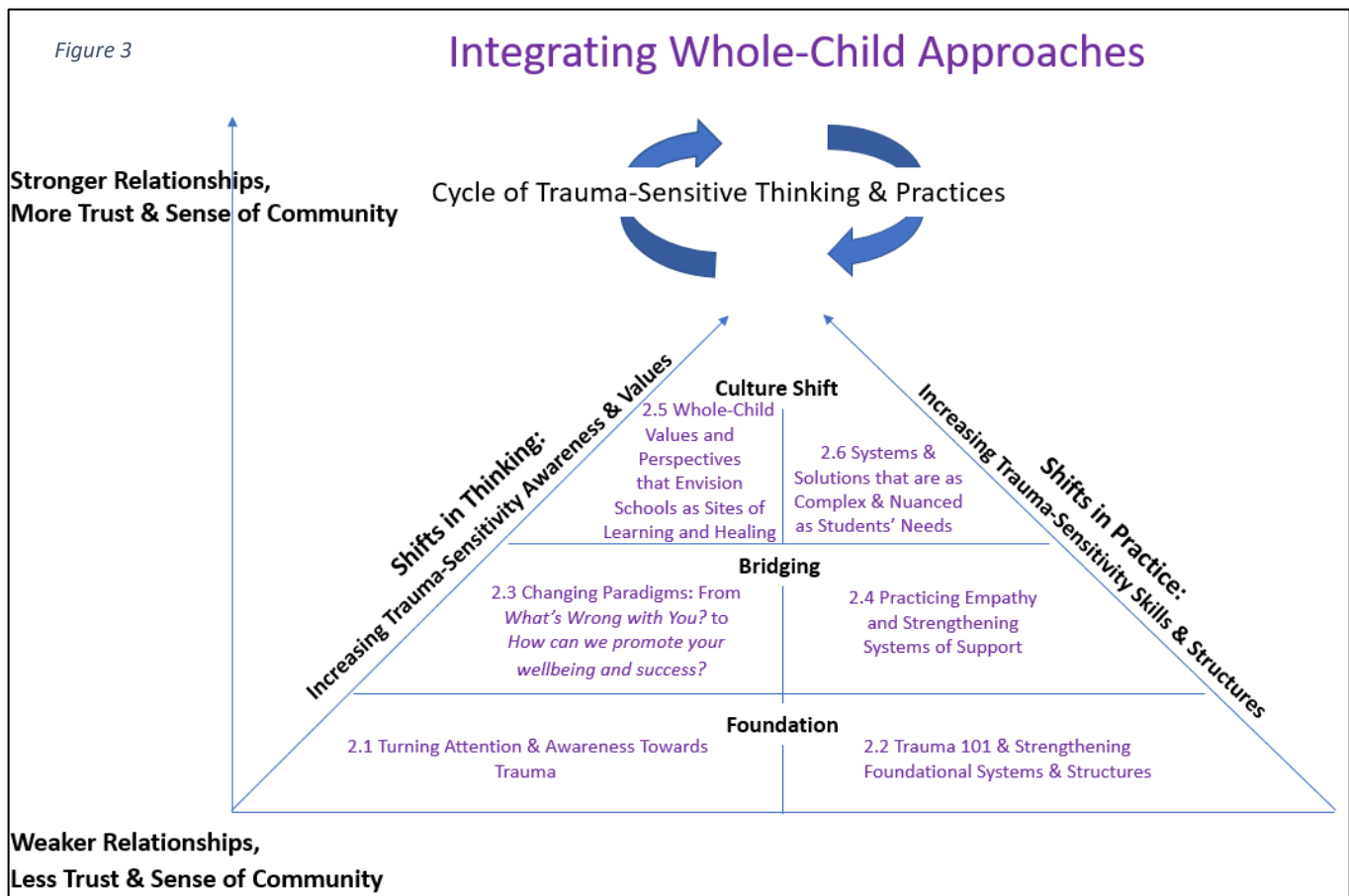
**Table 3. Emergent Theme: Facilitating Empowerment & Collaboration**

<i>Subthemes</i>	<i>Illustrative Quotes</i>
<p><b>1.1. Shifts in Thinking Dimension – Foundation Level: <b>Developing Shared Responsibility amongst Educators for all Students &amp;</b></b></p>	<p>"I feel like, number one, staff definitely recognize that these are our kids, these are challenges that our children are facing, that we have to approach things in a different way, of having more of an openness and willingness to think about students in different ways, and those challenging behaviors that once would maybe have kind of shut down an educator."  <p style="text-align: right;">- Principal</p> </p>

<p>Increasing Openness for Culture Change</p>	
<p><b>1.2. Shifts in Practices Dimension – Foundation Level: Generating Buy-In, Curiosity, Initial Trust &amp; Teamwork</b></p>	<p>“Um, you want to begin with a steering committee. Definitely include your teaching staff on that because you need buy-in. Small is the new big. You do not have to do everything at once. What works for us and them and you over here may not work for you. So, do something that’s really urgent and is a priority for your school. Take time getting to know and asking everyone’s opinion and everyone’s—let everyone’s voice be heard about what the priorities are. We refer, often, back to our teal and purple books, Helping Traumatized Children Learn, and in there, we have visioning questions. Each action that we take—that we’ve taken and continue to take, we refer back to those visioning questions and run every single part of the action through that. How is that making us feel—the kids feel safer? Um, build in how you want to evaluate your action at the beginning so that you’re not trying to figure out how you’re gonna collect data afterward. One thing that we learned is that we have a ton of actions going, and if you don’t choose a point person on staff, it may fall on a couple of people in the school. If it’s something that’s gonna continue to be part of your program, then collect data, review, reflect, adjust and repeat the whole process because our work is never done, um, and there’s always, um—we can always do better.”</p> <p style="text-align: right;">- Assistant Principal</p>
<p><b>1.3. Shifts in Thinking Dimension – Bridging Level: Every Voice is Important: Promoting Individual &amp; Collective Agency</b></p>	<p>“We sent them [some staff] again in December. We sent a group of people, different people than we sent last year, to the Behavioral Health Workshop, and they came back and they sent their own emails out saying, ‘We just went to the most amazing workshop. These are some of the things we learned about. We hope that if you have an interest that you’ll come talk to us.’ So, those things never happened before...People weren’t sharing like, ‘I have some expertise in this area. I learned this.’... It was sort of like, ‘I’m the minority, so I’m not going to be vocal about the expertise that I may have gained, or the experiences I had.’”</p> <p style="text-align: right;">- Principal</p>
<p><b>1.4. Shifts in Practices Dimension – Bridging Level: Strengthening Collaboration Built on Emerging Trust</b></p>	<p>“We have a system for expressing gratitude to one another. We call it Thankful Thoughts, uh, and then, recently, we’ve developed Breakfast Buddies—so, developing that connectedness between our classrooms. So, we have breakfast in the classroom, and now we’re asking teachers to partner up with another class that they don’t normally get to interact with and have breakfast together.”</p> <p style="text-align: right;">-Principal</p>
<p><b>1.5. Shifts in Thinking Dimension – Culture Shift Level: Together We Can: Teamwork Across the School Social Ecosystem</b></p>	<p>“Um, we had some higher class sizes, not building-wide, but in pockets, like our grade five gen ed or grade three. Um, so, we had to really kind of, um, think about how we were going to use the staff that we did have, and where we would- you know, where was the greatest need?... We looked for, um, some more partnerships, um, with, um, you know, with- with other, um, resources in the community. So we, this year was the first year we brought in [the local university]... the early, uh, education students came in to do some pre-practicum work with our kindergarten team, um, so that was great, because we didn’t have as many paras in kindergarten,”</p> <p style="text-align: right;">-Principal</p>
<p><b>1.6. Shifts in Practices Dimension – Culture Shift Level: Leveraging Teamwork &amp; Social Capital for Sustaining Change</b></p>	<p>“Then, you know, also developing the teacher leadership. So not just bringing on the new people but that, as those new people come on board, taking the people who are a little more experienced with safe and supportive and really elevating them to teacher leaders. Having them present for our staff, present for conferences and other staff, that gives them the confidence to continue doing what they’re doing and also serve as building-based leaders.”</p> <p style="text-align: right;">- Principal</p>

## Theme 2. Integrating Whole-Child Approaches

The second overarching theme focuses on how schools worked to promote resilience by attempting to meet students' manifold needs. This consists of educators learning about trauma and practicing techniques of reflection and thoughtful responses with an understanding that achievement includes student social emotional learning and physical/emotional well-being. Therefore, the *Integrating Whole-Child Approaches* theme (see Figure 3) includes six subthemes (see Table 4) that describe different aspects of this process, broken up by level (Foundation, Bridging, and Culture Shift) and by dimensions of change (Shifts in Thinking, and Shifts in Practice). Again, it is important to highlight that participating schools were at different stages within this theory of change as they implemented TLPi's Inquiry-Based Process.



### **Subtheme 2.1. Turning Attention & Awareness Towards Trauma**

In this subtheme, which is located at the *Shifts in Thinking* Dimension and at the *Foundation Level*, schools began to turn attention towards the importance of broadening their awareness of trauma's impact on learning with the support of TLPI's Inquiry-Based Process. Educators began to recognize trauma's impacts on students' relationships, self-regulation, academic competencies, and physical and mental health. Furthermore, school faculty and staff not only learned about trauma's impacts on student and family experiences, but also on themselves through secondary trauma. Training recognized that teachers are part of social ecosystems marked by trauma. Thus, complex, long-term, and interrelated understandings and approaches are required to foster more resilient schools. As an example of this subtheme, School B staff discussed vicarious trauma and created a running group as a way to take care of themselves. Additionally, School A faculty had the opportunity to practice trauma-sensitive yoga during professional development.

### **Subtheme 2.2. Trauma 101 & Strengthening Tiered Student Support Systems & Structures**

In this subtheme, which is located at the *Shifts in Practice* Dimension, still at the *Foundation Level*, faculty and staff were provided with professional development on trauma's impacts at school. Additionally, schools focused on the creation and implementation of formalized systems and structures (e.g., Steering Committees), which were critical at this stage. School C modeled this process when the Steering Committee helped staff write mission statements that aligned with the trauma-sensitive priorities the school staff had collectively established. Furthermore, within this subtheme, schools began integrating existing social emotional learning practices and self-regulation approaches with trauma-sensitive action planning and goals.

### **Subtheme 2.3. Changing Paradigms: From *What's Wrong with You?* to *How can we promote your wellbeing and success?***

In this subtheme, which is located at the *Shifts in Thinking* Dimension and at the *Bridging Level*, there was evidence of school faculty and staff collectively rethinking how they approached and addressed students' needs. School culture change began to transform as mindsets changed – where the previous focus on viewing students' challenges as individual-level problems, changed towards becoming more aware about how students' lived experiences shape academic, behavioral, and relational engagements in complex ways. For example, School A staff not only recognized that students bring their

challenges to school with them but were also willing to work on solutions that supported students instead of punishing their behavior or giving up. These changing mindsets included integration of Whole Child perspectives that center trauma's impacts on relationships, self-regulation, competencies, and physical and mental health. Furthermore, faculty and staff began to ground their interpretations of and responses to student problems on strength-based approaches and practices that valued positive redirection, and which welcomed students to bring more of their full selves to school.

#### **Subtheme 2.4. Practicing Empathy and Strengthening Systems of Support**

In this subtheme, which is located at the *Shifts in Practice* Dimension and at the *Bridging Level*, school faculty and staff began to communicate with more of a common language around trauma, and to develop and implement social support systems across Tiers I, II, and III. These practices allowed schools to better address the ranges of students' distinct needs. Students who required higher levels of support were connected to additional resources. For instance, School B created a space for students to develop and practice self-regulation skills while continuing their academic work outside of the classroom for a brief time; there was also a system in place for students to connect with a teacher of their choosing for emotional support. At this level, educators expanded their listening and empathy skills, created more spaces in the learning process to honor students' dignity, and attended to students' problems with greater emotional insight and care.

#### **Subtheme 2.5. Whole-Child Values and Perspectives that Envision Schools as Sites of Learning and Healing**

In this subtheme, which is located at the *Shifts in Thinking* Dimension and at the *Culture Shift Level*, there was evidence of faculty and staff thinking about students not only as intellects, but also as emotional, physical, and social beings. Within this subtheme, educators more comprehensively reflected on learning processes from Whole-Child values and perspectives – including considerations of students' trajectories towards academic competencies in ways that also prioritized students' improvements in their quality of relationships, self-regulation, and physical and mental health. Based on these Whole-Child values articulated in *Helping Traumatized Children Learn, Volume 2*, School B created an assessment tool for student social-emotional learning to inform staff's planning and instruction. Within this subtheme, educators thought outside the box and with high-levels of nuance and reflection. Faculty and staff recognized that changes in student behaviors and school infrastructures require time, flexibility, and perseverance. They demonstrated courage, a strong sense of community, and collective

support to push through setbacks and continual alterations. School leaders internalized awareness of how complex problems require complex solutions and prepared for multi-systemic resilience.

**Subtheme 2.6. Systems & Solutions that are as Complex & Nuanced as Students’ Needs**

This subtheme, which is located at the *Shifts in Practice* Dimension and at the *Culture Shift Level*, was characterized by strong relationships and high levels of faculty and staff buy-in. School leaders, faculty and staff were able to enact priorities that streamlined social emotional learning and wraparound support systems across initiatives and classrooms. For example, School B created a binder with trauma-sensitive approaches and practices as a reference for staff looking to improve relationship skills and classroom practices. Additionally, faculty and staff are more in-tune with students’ emotional, physical, familial, and social worlds. Complex problems could be held and worked through and difficult dialogues were welcomed. Educators developed more nuanced and creative practices that were rehumanizing and inclusive, consistently putting students’ diverse and evolving needs first. Furthermore, increased prevention and resilience practices were implemented and adapted in schools to better address crises and difficult days, and to identify areas of concern or continual growth.

**Table 4. Emergent Theme: Integrating Whole-Child Approaches**

<i>Subthemes</i>	<i>Illustrative Quotes</i>
<p><b>2.1. Shifts in Thinking Dimension – Foundation Level: Turning Attention &amp; Awareness Towards Trauma</b></p>	<p>“I figured out that the social emotional piece is a real key to learning in all areas, and if students don't feel safe, they cannot learn.”</p> <p style="text-align: right;">- Principal</p>
<p><b>2.2. Shifts in Practices Dimension – Foundation Level: Trauma 101 &amp; Strengthening Tiered Student Support Systems &amp; Structures</b></p>	<p>“Maybe 10 to 12 years, um, that we have had graduate level courses that we offer to our staff, um, and the wait list is unbelievable, and we've trained—hundreds and hundreds of certified staff members in the city ... who have taken these graduate courses to help, um, them to understand a little bit more about how trauma impacts learning and what they can do as teachers and as professionals to support the kids.”</p> <p style="text-align: right;">- Principal</p>
<p><b>2.3. Shifts in Thinking Dimension – Bridging Level: Changing Paradigms: From <i>What’s Wrong with You? To How can we promote your wellbeing and success?</i></b></p>	<p>“I think in terms of, uh, I’ve noticed a big change in specific teachers. Um, the way they have totally embraced the idea, you know, like not just, oh, going along with things, but some people have actually experienced that aha moment, and for some, it was kind of painful, but like ooh kind of thing. Um, and their whole practice changed. And they relate to the children differently, and those children are totally benefitting from, um, being able to just be and make mistakes safely, you know. Things don’t become a federal case, you know, when they don’t have to be.”</p> <p style="text-align: right;">- School Adjustment Counselor</p>
<p><b>2.4. Shifts in Practices Dimension – Bridging Level: Practicing Empathy and Strengthening Systems of Support</b></p>	<p>"...And I’ve noticed a change, even in like the way I’ve done it, you know. In the way I approach kids. Um, I tend to- my go to is ‘what are you doing?’ You know, and I just remember one kid- one little munchkin stomped out of the boys room, and- and instead of calling him on it, I just said, ‘wow, you look really unhappy. Is there anything I can help you with?’ And he just</p>

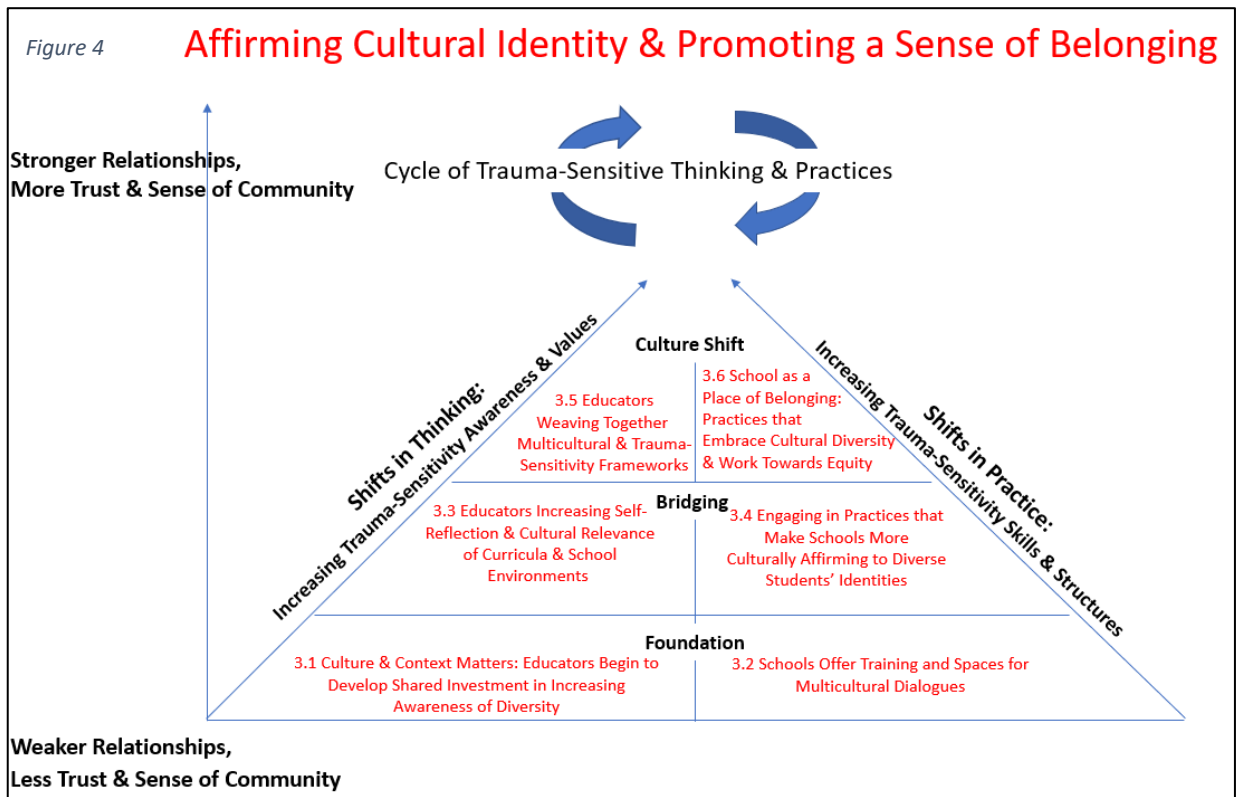
	<p>kinda opened up, and he's like 'I fell on my way to school, and I hurt my knee.' And I'm like, 'I'm so sorry that happened.' That's just- you know, that's not a great way to start the day. And he went skipping off to class. And like I normally wouldn't have - my first instinct wouldn't have been to do that. And it just changed the- his day and mine, you know."</p> <p style="text-align: right;"><i>-Speech and Language Specialist</i></p>
<p><b>2.5. Shifts in Thinking Dimension – Culture Shift Level: Whole-Child Values and Perspectives that Envision Schools as Sites of Learning and Healing</b></p>	<p>"....our teachers need to develop that resilience. How do they do that? Well, they have to dwell in it. We need to make sure that we are not just rushing to, 'Here's our social and emotional curriculum. Here's what you're going to be doing. Here's what you're going to be doing. Here is what we all want to start.' So, I view it as a long process, and that it's perfectly okay for it to be a long process because we're really trying to develop a completely different culture."</p> <p style="text-align: right;"><i>-Principal</i></p>
<p><b>2.6. Shifts in Practices Dimension – Culture Shift Level: Systems &amp; Solutions that are as Complex &amp; Nuanced as Students' Needs</b></p>	<p>"...the really powerful thing is that there is a value and a consistent practice now around just being completely aware of,' Who are our students who are not connected with things?' So, we're constantly talking about it. We're surveying them [students] once or twice a year on, "What are you involved in? If you're not involved with something, like, why are you not involved?" And then not a big, whole Activities Fair, to try to get kids to sign up, but just smaller grade level teams saying, "Hey, um, so and so is super dramatic and maybe should be auditioning for play, but she was an English Language Learner." So, how are we gonna connect that? And then the teacher—the English—the ELL teacher is selling that to the kids, practicing that with the kid. And then, I saw the evolution of it. It was absolutely amazing."</p> <p style="text-align: right;"><i>-Principal</i></p>

### Theme 3. Affirming Cultural Identity & Promoting a Sense of Belonging

This theme aims to articulate the importance of educators working to foster environments within schools that account for the ways in which complex sociopolitical contexts shape learning trajectories for all students, and particularly for culturally and linguistically diverse students. Affirming the multiplicity of identities that students have, and develop, within their socialization journeys in their families and communities, and in their schools, is necessary for addressing trauma. This is particularly critical because of the ways that systemic oppressions and sociopolitical marginalizations are forms of trauma themselves. Daily micro-aggressions that students may face, and of course, the much deeper and structural disadvantages (such as oppressive arrangements of power around issues of race, class, sexuality, gender and gender orientations, immigration, etc.) that impact educational outcomes across communities, can work to deeply alienate, humiliate, and marginalize students – manifesting as forms of trauma. For example, these can include students’ experiencing devaluation of their cultural backgrounds, chronic economic hardships or food insecurity, incarceration of a family member, physical trauma during border crossings for students who may have more recently immigrated, and/or loss of identity due to pressures to assimilate, legacies of racism, and/or the internalization of oppression.



Findings within this overarching theme highlight how educators can become not only an apolitical supportive force in their students' educational journeys, but also an ally across difference, towards equity, and transform their school into a space of belonging. To do this, educators worked hard to understand the complex contexts of their students' lives, histories, and constantly developing identities. This *Affirming Cultural Identity & Promoting a Sense of Belonging* theme (see Figure 4) includes six subthemes (see Table 5) that describe different aspects of this process, broken up by level (Foundation, Bridging, and Culture Shift) and by dimensions of change (Shifts in Thinking, and Shifts in Practice). It is important to highlight that participating schools were at different stages with respect to this theme as they implemented TLPI's Inquiry-Based Process.



**Subtheme 3.1. Culture & Context Matters: Educators Begin to Develop Shared Investment in Increasing Awareness of Diversity**

This subtheme, which is located at the *Shifts in Thinking* Dimension and at the *Foundation Level*, represents elements of the TLPI's Inquiry-Based Process where schools began to turn attention towards the importance of broadening their awareness of the importance of cultural diversity, the sociopolitical



contexts, and daily struggles that mark their students' learning trajectories. In some circumstances, schools sought to develop this understanding among all teachers and staff. For instance, when School C wanted to develop cultural competency within their building, they looked for a rubric as a guide to engage in the work with dignity. Across schools, findings suggest that there were educators who demonstrated the desire to learn more about how their schools could embrace cultural diversity in order to provide a safe and supportive learning environment for students from all backgrounds, with nuanced understandings of how students from socially marginalized backgrounds face different sets of challenges and alienations in schools.

### **Subtheme 3.2. Schools offer Trainings & Spaces for Multicultural Dialogues & Learning**

In this subtheme, which is located at the *Shifts in Practice* Dimension and at the *Foundation Level*, educators began to implement practices that embraced cultural diversity. Schools recognized the value of providing cultural awareness and competency trainings for teachers and began conversations around implementation. For example, School A recognized the need for staff to participate in a cultural awareness professional development session.

### **Subtheme 3.3. Educators Increasing Self-Reflection & Cultural Relevance of Curricula & School Environments**

In this subtheme, which is located at the *Shifts in Thinking* Dimension and at the *Bridging Level*, educators moved towards a deepening awareness of the critical role multiculturalism plays in establishing safe and supportive learning spaces. Furthermore, an important element of this development was how educators began to show understanding and value ongoing reflection about their pedagogical approaches, curricula, and school environments. This reflection allowed educators and schools to move towards practices and structures that sought to embrace and represent students' and families' cultures and identities. For instance, School A held a meeting with families in Spanish to understand parental concerns; while the English-speaking school leader could only understand some of the conversation, she recognized the importance of establishing comfortable and validating spaces for families within the school.

### **Subtheme 3.4. Engaging in Practices that Make Schools More Culturally Affirming to Diverse Students' Identities**

In this subtheme, which is located at the *Shifts in Practice* Dimension and at the *Bridging Level*, educators moved with deeper understanding and reflective practices to actively make the physical environments of their schools welcoming to students' diverse identities. In doing so, students could begin to feel that their cultural backgrounds were valued and respected at school. Within this subtheme, educators also employed practices that celebrated cultural diversity and promoted connections and conversations across students and families from different cultural backgrounds. For example, School A initiated positive cultural conversations between staff and families by presenting country flags in the school entryway to showcase the school's diverse population and welcome the community into the building.

### **Subtheme 3.5. Educators Weaving Together Multicultural & Trauma-Sensitivity Focus**

This subtheme, which is located at the *Shifts in Thinking* Dimension and at the *Culture Shift Level*, demonstrates how schools worked towards a deeper recognition of how students' cultural and contextual experiences intersect with trauma and are inseparable components to fostering a safe and supportive schools. In this way, when adapting and developing their own trauma-sensitive practices, with deep reflection, educators considered cultural differences and sociopolitical concerns and how they intersect with their students' trajectories of trauma and learning. For instance, School A learned about its community's crime rates and foster care prevalence to better understand the different environments and experiences that shaped students' lives outside of school.

### **Subtheme 3.6. School as a Place of Belonging: Practices that Embrace Cultural Diversity & Work Towards Equity**

This subtheme, which is located at the *Shifts in Practice* Dimension and at the *Culture Shift Level*, includes the ways in which educators worked to ensure that individuals' multi-faceted and intersecting identities were seen and supported in school. For example, School C expressed its commitment to inclusive family engagement by providing translators for families at quarterly parent education forums. In this subtheme, practices explicitly promoted equity and enhanced belonging, and were therefore more supportive of the unique stories, experiences, and identities students brought with them to school each day. Affirmative practices acknowledged how students' diverse cultural experiences could be marginalized or even denied by dominant cultures and mainstream educational structures. Schools

learned to recognize, validate, and then dismantle barriers that privilege and support one group of students over another. At this level, schools promoted equity as a key dimension of trauma-sensitivity.

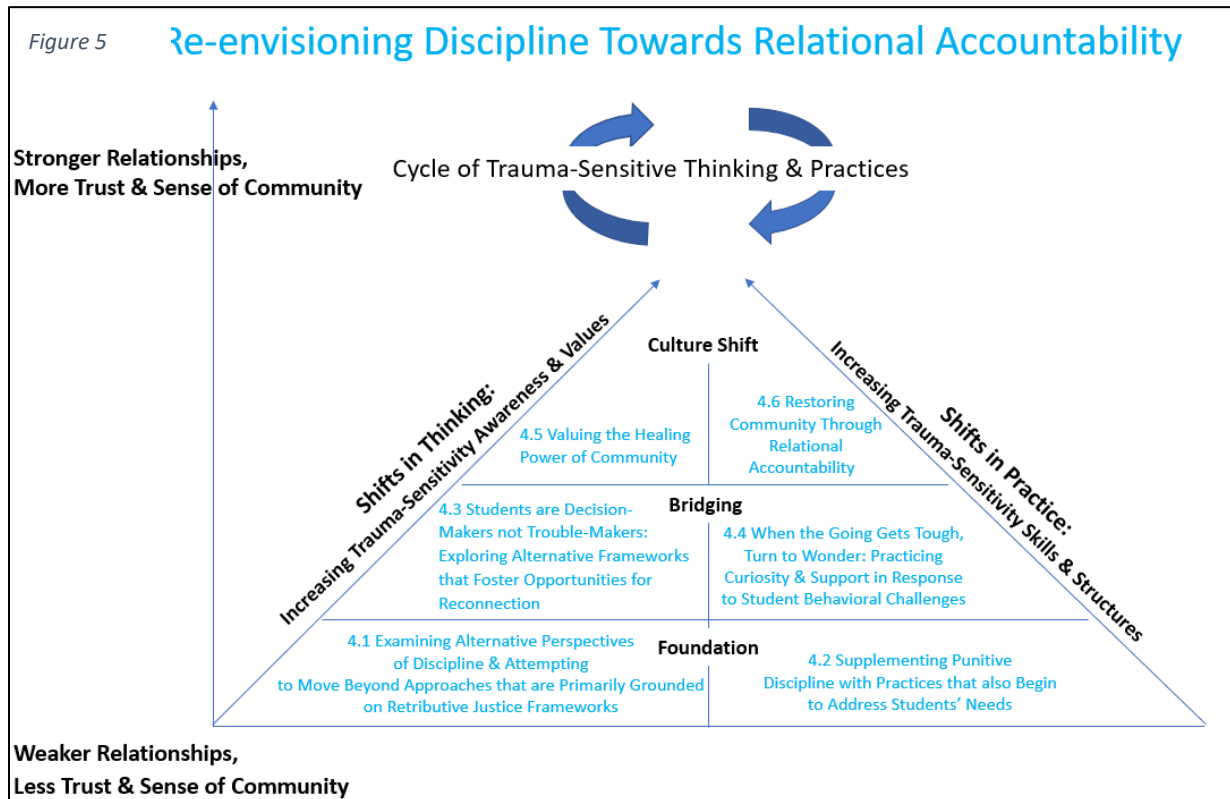
**Table 5. Emergent Theme: Affirming Cultural Identity & Promoting a Sense of Belonging**

<i>Subthemes</i>	<i>Illustrative Quotes</i>
<p><b>3.1. Shifts in Thinking Dimension – Foundation Level: Culture &amp; Context Matters: Educators Begin to Develop Shared Investment in Increasing Awareness of Diversity</b></p>	<p>“When we started our work around, you know, our cultural competency work, it’s like yeah, that’s what we wanted, because we wanted to rate ourselves on a rubric to know if we were like anywhere near what we were supposed to be. It’s like- or find a school that’s doing this so we can go and see what we’re doing or not doing, because there are just some times when you’re feeling like yeah, our school feels like a pretty good place, but I have no idea if we’re like close to great on this particular thing, because everybody else doesn’t know about it either, and we’re all learning together. Or like other people have been doing this for 20 years and are doing really amazing work on it, and we’re like not even anywhere near that place, so I can understand that like, you know, schools and teams want something, and that’s why, you know, we all start with that assessment anyway, right? Because you’re looking at what are you already doing, what are you not doing yet? You know, whereas it’s just not an accountability tool, but it is a self-assessment tool to kind of figure out where you want to start.”</p> <p style="text-align: right;"><i>-Principal</i></p>
<p><b>3.2. Shifts in Practices Dimension – Foundation Level: Schools offer Trainings &amp; Spaces for Multicultural Dialogues &amp; Learning</b></p>	<p>Oh, yes, “All are welcome here.” That, again, started with a couple of teachers were wearing a button, and I think it was from [another district], and it was with that logo [‘All Are Welcome Here’ in different languages]...I loved that and I know it’s such a great message, we should have that in our building, and I’m like, “We should have that in our building,” and then we’re just coming up with a design [for a banner in the front lobby], and we’ve put it out for staff. Staff emailed back and said, “Oh, can we include Swahili? Can we include Korean?” because we’ve got a couple staff members who speak both of those languages, and I’m like, “Sure.” So, we added those two languages in, in addition to French and Portuguese and Spanish.</p> <p style="text-align: right;"><i>-Principal</i></p>
<p><b>3.3. Shifts in Thinking Dimension – Bridging Level: Educators Increasing Self-Reflection &amp; Cultural Relevance of Curricula &amp; School Environments</b></p>	<p>“We have a high immigrant population, while we also have students who are descendants of [early settlers]. So, we have this real diversity, and we’re trying to come together to support— a school culture, where people who are homeless and people whose parents are the presidents of local universities are coming together and sharing something common and celebrating it. So, there’s just so much different, um—different things that students are bringing to the table. And we’re trying to create a culture that is really unified and supports all of those things and gets all of those students college ready.”</p> <p style="text-align: right;"><i>-Principal</i></p>
<p><b>3.4. Shifts in Practices Dimension – Bridging Level: Engaging in Practices that Make Schools More Culturally Affirming to Diverse Students’ Identities</b></p>	<p>"And it [the bulletin board with flags from all of the countries represented in the school] starts a conversation between families, and also strangers. You know, one lady’s looking. She goes 'my daughter, you know, this is my family’s - this is Puerto Rico. This flag’s mine, but the other side [of my daughter’s family] is this flag from the Dominican,' and then I was like 'that’s really cool.' I said 'yeah, [our] Principal added this one, the Korean one.' I said 'I’m a little partial to that one, because of my niece and nephew,' and so it just starts getting a talk going, and then we started talking about like the third grade international presentations, and it just kinda gives an entry point for kids and parents and - to talk about. And really valuing each other’s cultures."</p> <p style="text-align: right;"><i>-Speech and Language Specialist</i></p>

<p><b>3.5. Shifts in Thinking Dimension –</b>  <b>Culture Shift Level: Educators</b>  <b>Weaving Together</b>  <b>Multicultural &amp; Trauma-</b>  <b>Sensitivity Focus</b></p>	<p>One of the things that came up after one of our parent-teacher conferences... “Is there a way that we could bring [immigrant] families together?” At first, it was this whole conversation around the kind of the information that we could impart to families, but then it really shifted to finding out what the families need from us, and how could we structure this meeting?... So, that was kind of exciting because these women were now coming to me, identifying a problem in our school and thinking about, “Well, if we’re safe and supportive, this is what we should be doing.” Then, from that, we were able to kind of pull together another little team ... and we met several times to kind of plan a series of meetings, and we called it Conversaciones. It was just a gathering of parents; we wanted it very informal. It was nine o’clock in the morning; so, as parents are dropping-off, they could stay and bring their little ones.... So, anyways, this meeting was just hopping in conversation, and the little ones had a play group... Everything was delivered in Spanish, so it was in their native language, which was uncomfortable for me because I have so many people who can speak Spanish within my building. Again, I was in this position of kind of helping the group. I was organizing the meetings, and getting things together, and making sure it’s going to happen; but as far as when the meetings took place, I’m just kind of smiling because I had some idea of what they were talking about, but not really. [laughs] I don’t understand Spanish... The AP [assistant principal] would kind of whisper to me what was being talked about, and I kind of thought to take a parent role in some of our meetings that are English only and how they experience it, so it was eye-opening for me; but they felt so comfortable that these meetings were in Spanish, that they could talk about their concerns, and each group kind of debriefed....Then, we met again afterwards. So, they [the parents] wanted information about homework; they wanted information about report cards; they wanted information about resources in the community, summer programming. That was actually our last meeting. We had the summer resource guide, and in small groups we were able to kind of walk parents through the different programs that are offered in the city, and how they could enroll.... I’m already thinking next year maybe we could partner and maybe help them with the actual enrolling of their children in these programs...</p> <p style="text-align: right;"><i>- Principal</i></p>
<p><b>3.6. Shifts in Practices Dimension –</b>  <b>Culture Shift Level: School as a</b>  <b>Place of Belonging: Practices</b>  <b>that Embrace Cultural Diversity</b>  <b>&amp; Work Towards Equity</b></p>	<p>“I think of one big impact is that all of our students feel important, and they feel like they’re seen and they are welcomed. You know, I have all of these thank-you letters around here that kids have written, and some of our neediest kids have written, “I know you love us. I know these things,” and to hear that and to read that is really important.”</p> <p style="text-align: right;"><i>-Principal</i></p>

## Theme 4. Re-envisioning discipline towards relational accountability

This theme describes the integral process of schools working to address how trauma, relationships, and accountability are interconnected and shape students' experiences in schools. This includes schools beginning to recognize how punitive approaches to addressing students' externalizing behaviors can have a compounding and negative impact, especially for students facing ongoing trauma and toxic stressors in their everyday lives. Mainstream school discipline approaches are often based on retributive justice mindsets, which highlight that adults' voices are the ones that count and that students who 'act out' require punishment and correction. In contrast, restorative approaches focus on creating the conditions of community in classrooms and across the school more broadly, so that all persons impacted by infractions in a school setting (students, teachers, paraprofessionals, guidance counselors, school leaders, families, etc.) are involved in repairing relational harm associated with 'acting out' behaviors. Findings within this overarching theme, *Re-envisioning Discipline Towards Relational Accountability* (see Figure 5), highlight how educators who aimed to work towards creating trauma-sensitive schools reported rethinking traditional discipline practices to focus on disrupting cycles of harm within their schools, which intersect with experiences of trauma, and can exacerbate harm in students' lives.



In this light, a key element of trauma-sensitivity describes how educators worked to create opportunities and systems in their schools to effectively repair harm that unfolds in relationships between students, faculty, staff, and all community members in schools. This overarching theme includes six subthemes (see Table 6) that describe different aspects of this process, broken up by level (Foundation, Bridging, and Culture Shift) and by dimensions of change (Shifts in Thinking and Shifts in Practice). It is important to highlight that participating schools were at different stages with respect to this theme as they implemented TLPI's Inquiry-Based Process.

**Subtheme 4.1. Examining Alternative Perspectives of Discipline & Attempting to Move Beyond Approaches that are Primarily Grounded on Retributive Justice Mindsets**

In this subtheme, which is located at the *Shifts in Thinking* Dimension and at the *Foundation Level*, educators began to consider the purpose of discipline and reconsider the traditional emphasis on punitive practices (e.g., sending students to office, detention, and suspension). For instance, School C staff were eager to discuss different disciplinary methods after noticing regular student detentions were ingrained in the school culture. Moreover, educators began thinking about the functions of behavior and embracing positive redirection. Educators started to recognize that not everything is punishable and students that engage in disruptive behaviors are not 'naughty.' Instead, mistakes are part of learning. Educators also recognized that stress and trauma can cause students to have difficulties with relationships and 'act out.'

**Subtheme 4.2. Supplementing Punitive Discipline with Practices that Begin to Address Students' Needs**

In this subtheme, which is located at the *Shifts in Practice* Dimension and at the *Foundation Level*, educators began to focus on keeping their students in the classroom and implementing strategies and supports to do so. Educators partnered with students to find the best supports for students and viewed acceptable/appropriate behavior more broadly (e.g., flexible seating). For example, School A faculty and students worked together to proactively choose a seating arrangement they felt would promote student success and allowed opportunities for revision, which eliminated the need for reactive or punitive seating assignments.

#### **Subtheme 4.3. Students are Decision-Makers not Trouble-Makers: Exploring Alternative Approaches that Foster Opportunities for Reconnection**

In this subtheme, which is located at the *Shifts in Thinking* Dimension and at the *Bridging Level*, educators began to shift how they were thinking about discipline and its connection to learning. Here, educators conceptualized challenges with students as learning opportunities, for the students and for themselves. When thinking about their students' challenging behaviors, educators wondered about supports that could be put in place for the student rather than what punishments could be enacted. Educators at School C demonstrated this by taking the time to question student behavior and brainstorm supportive solutions instead of immediately assigning detentions or other punishments.

#### **Subtheme 4.4. When the Going Gets Tough, Turn to Wonder: Practicing Curiosity & Support in Response to Student Behavioral Challenges**

In this subtheme, which is located at the *Shifts in Practice* Dimension and also at the *Bridging Level*, educators built off the awareness of trauma and began to approach challenging behaviors with curiosity. Teachers practiced more complex relational skills themselves, pausing before responding to challenging behaviors and then engaging students in a conversation about what was going on, rather than scolding the student. Educators partnered with students to get them back on track and enlisted colleagues' support and expertise to provide additional resources. This curiosity and focus on support kept more students in the classroom and reduced office referrals. For instance, School Leader A described the new mindset with an example of a student who had "stolen" a snack. Now, instead of immediately punishing the student, staff wondered if the student might be hungry and experiencing food insecurity and enlisted the guidance counselor to reach out to the family to explore the concern.

#### **Subtheme 4.5. Valuing the Healing Power of Community**

In this subtheme, which is located at the *Shifts in Thinking* Dimension and at the *Culture Shift Level*, educators related to students in qualitatively different ways. For example, the School B Principal recognized how educators took multiple factors into account before suggesting that a student needed Tier 3 supports. Additionally, the School B Principal remarked that the overall number of students needing such supports had decreased. Furthermore, faculty and staff valued that students make mistakes as part of the learning process, and that 'making mistakes safely' is part of trauma-sensitive practice. Rather than being excluded because of mistakes, faculty considered ways to include students, restore trust and sense of community, after a mistake occurred.

**Subtheme 4.6. Restoring Community through Relational Accountability**

In this subtheme, which is located at the *Shifts in Practice* Dimension and *Culture Shift Level*, schools implemented restorative practices and repaired relationships. Students were provided with support when dysregulated and then given opportunities to restore relationships with those impacted by their behavioral challenges. Those most impacted and involved with behaviors were directly engaged in conversations and worked collectively to decide steps towards restoration. For instance, a staff member at School B wanted to have conversations with a student who was having a difficult time in her classroom to hear the student’s perspective and repair relationships. Student voices were critical in this process. These types of conversations were humanizing and supportive. Members of the school community became more accountable to one another and the school as a whole.

**Table 6. Emergent Theme: Re-envisioning Discipline towards Relational Accountability**

<i>Subthemes</i>	<i>Illustrative Quotes</i>
<p><b>4.1. Shifts in Thinking Dimension – Foundation Level: Examining Alternative Perspectives of Discipline &amp; Attempting to Move Beyond Approaches that are Primarily Grounded on Retributive Justice Mindsets</b></p>	<p>“So, being able to shift away from some of these traditional consequences, um, shifting away from some of the punitive, shifting towards the idea that—what is the function of that behavior? It's stuff that we've always been talking about, um, with our student services team, our special ed director, our counselors, um, when we're doing FBAs but not necessarily something that was really sticking with the whole staff, over time.</p> <p style="text-align: right;"><i>-Principal</i></p>
<p><b>4.2. Shifts in Practices Dimension – Foundation Level: Supplementing Punitive Discipline with Practices that also Begin to Address Students’ Needs</b></p>	<p>“There was definitely a mindset of kind of just get- getting them out of their room. Um, you know, with this- you know, if it rose to a certain level, it was somebody else’s problem, somebody else has got to step in and deal with this. Um, and I definitely feel like teachers are more, um, able to address things within their classroom, um, and they’re using some of the tools”</p> <p style="text-align: right;"><i>-Principal</i></p>
<p><b>4.3. Shifts in Thinking Dimension – Bridging Level: Students are Decision-Makers not Trouble-Makers: Exploring Alternative Approaches that Foster Opportunities for Reconnection</b></p>	<p>“I’ve noticed, um, usually when I used to walk into classrooms, that we had kids sitting like way over there or something, and you know it was the kid in trouble or- you know, and it was- it always felt horrible. It felt like oh, my god. Um, and everyone knew that the kid was in trouble, or the troublemaker, or whatever, and now you still see kids everywhere, and it’s very different... They don’t feel ostracized. You know? And, uh, today, in the classroom that I was in, it was very like okay, the kid was way over there because that was a better spot for her... Here is better, because if I sit next to my friend, well, you know, I’m gonna get in trouble because I’m talking. You know. So, they are also starting to be self-aware and using the strategies that they use, realizing that those strategies are to help them, and not everything is a punishment, and it’s a learning experience, and it feels so much more humane...”</p> <p style="text-align: right;"><i>-School Adjustment Counselor</i></p>
<p><b>4.4. Shifts in Practices Dimension – Bridging Level: When the Going Gets Tough, Turn to Wonder: Practicing Curiosity &amp; Support</b></p>	<p>“One little munchkin stomped out of the boys room, and instead of calling him on it, I just said, ‘Wow, you look really unhappy. Is there anything I can help you with?’ And he just kinda opened up, and he’s like ‘I fell on my way to school, and I hurt my knee.’ And I’m like, ‘I’m so sorry that happened. That’s just- you know, that’s not a great way to start the day.’ And he</p>



<p><b>in Response to Student Behavioral Challenges</b></p>	<p>went skipping off to class. And like I normally wouldn't have - my first instinct wouldn't have been to do that. And it just changed the- his day and mine, you know.  <i>-Speech and Language Specialist</i></p>
<p><b>4.5. Shifts in Thinking Dimension – Culture Shift Level: Valuing the Healing Power of Community</b></p>	<p>"Why were they sent [to the Transitional Learning Center]? Was it a peer conflict? Was it noncompliance, repeated noncompliance, or not doing anything? Was it refusing to do the work? And then, related to that, what do they have to do to return [to the classroom]? So, looking at restorative pieces, do they have to complete a task? Do they have to restore with the staff member who they were having a hard time with?"  <i>- Principal</i></p>
<p><b>4.6. Shifts in Practices Dimension – Culture Shift Level: Restoring Community through Relational Accountability</b></p>	<p>"We had a tantruming kindergartener coming through the door and the approach was get him into the classroom. Not get him out of the classroom, but get him into the classroom and get him to the quiet, safe, calming corner where he can release....Then once he was ready for that therapeutic rapport building, he was in his classroom. He was able to build that rapport back with the adults who he was struggling with and quickly get back, get into the classroom activities for the day."  <i>- Principal</i></p>

## Discussion

This evaluation study was completed based on our research team's deep immersion in the transcripts of participants and the narratives of their journeys of school-wide transformations towards increased trauma-sensitivity by implementing the Trauma and Learning Policy Initiative (TLPI)'s Inquiry-Based Process. Grounded on our adapted Situational Analysis methodology (see detailed description of data analysis above), a visual-based Project Map emerged to illustrate the coding of the empirical data. See Figure 1 above for the visual-based Project Map, in addition to Table 2 on page 21 for a description of the key elements. Overall, our findings showed different stages of the four emergent themes, as we describe below, and they reflect range in change in school culture as a result of each school's unique engagements with TLPI's Inquiry-Based Process, as described by key stakeholders. In the absence of a research design that would include a rubric or measurement tool to compare schools to each other, we coded interview data for the speaker(s)' description of the topic being discussed and how that conveyed thinking and action as foundational, bridging, or cultural shift. Rather than emphasizing comparison between schools, we prioritize a deeper understanding of the process of change. Across each school, key processes that overlapped were founded on the integration of psychoeducational knowledge regarding trauma, the development of stakeholder self-reflection practices, and the strengthening of relationships. The Discussion section that follows is organized in response to the central questions that guided our evaluation (which are listed in the Introduction section above).

### ***Question 1: What are the ways that teachers and other school staff have reported becoming more aware of the impact of trauma on learning for students in their schools?***

TLPI training for teachers, administrators, and staff provided foundational knowledge of trauma and how these experiences affect children in school. As identified in Theme 2 of the Project Map: Integrating Whole-Child Approaches, this knowledge expansion was necessary to increase awareness and understanding of children's learning, behavior and relationships in schools, and more importantly, opened the door for conversations and self-reflection that

eventually led to changes in practice. The degree to which change occurred appeared to be dependent on trust building and relationship strengthening among all staff members at the school and between those staff members and students.

**Question 2: *What shifts in thinking (toward trauma sensitivity) were observed among leadership and staff and did they attribute these reported shifts to implementation of the Inquiry-Based Process?***

As the three participation schools implemented the Inquiry-Based Process and moved towards trauma-sensitivity, changes in thinking occurred, as outlined in our dimension of change on the Project Map model entitled: *Shifts in Thinking*. For example, leadership, faculty, and staff moved towards attempting to hold themselves more accountable for all students' successes after learning about trauma and examining its impacts at school. School leaders, including principals and specialists reported on their observations of educators' response to the Inquiry-Based Process, reporting on educators' recognition of the importance of student social emotional learning and affirming students' cultural identities and contexts. Leaders also reported ways that educators delved into deeper conversations about how to execute Whole Child approaches and foster relationships between students and staff, because of participation in TLPI. Even more, faculty and staff realized they had to become trauma-sensitive examples for students to model these relational skills as well. Moreover, school participants exhibited their dedication to trauma-sensitivity, as fostered by the Inquiry-Based Process, when they asked themselves if school techniques aligned with the attributes of a trauma-sensitive school and then altered those that did not meet these standards. These examples of shifts in thinking toward trauma-sensitivity, attributed to participation in TLPI, were indicators of the schools' commitment to student success and well-being. The Findings and Interpretation section above provides in-depth and more detailed explanations and examples of shifts in thinking towards trauma-sensitivity across all of the four emergent themes and levels.

**Question 3: What shifts in practice (toward trauma sensitivity) were observed among leadership and staff and did they attribute these reported shifts to implementation of the Inquiry-Based Process?**

As the schools underwent shifts in trauma-sensitive thinking and awareness, they adjusted and/or added practices towards sustainable school culture changes (practice modifications are outlined in our dimension of change on the Project Map entitled: *Shifts in Practice*). Educators described how they took action steps in response to trainings and facilitated discussions, and pointed out that these changes would not have happened otherwise. For example, following the initial TLPI professional development on the impacts of trauma, the schools held annual professional development trainings for all faculty and staff. Likewise, schools developed individual goals and action plans that fit the needs and urgencies of their schools. For example, one school spoke of consistently referencing the TLPI vision questions in their meetings to ensure they were doing the work with dignity and accuracy; another created trauma-sensitive tool-kits with access to TLPI materials. Furthermore, some faculty spoke of classroom practices that were based on the Whole-Child approach described in TLPI's books (<https://traumasensitiveschools.org/tlpi-publications>).

Besides using the TLPI resources, school faculty, staff, and administrators looked to each other and the community for strategies to develop safe and supportive adjustments. For instance, teachers would say to each other that if the school was really trauma-sensitive, then they should be doing "x" with students, parents, and the community. Moreover, schools not only learned about their communities to better understand students and meet them where they were, but they also invited various community members into the building for conversations and collaborative efforts. These altered techniques were based on an increased commitment to restorative justice, social emotional learning, and improved relationships, that were introduced through the Inquiry-Based Process. Once again, the Findings and Interpretation section above provides in-depth and detailed explanations and examples of ways schools changed their practices within the coded dimension of change entitled: *Shifts in Practice*.

**Question 4: *What expected and unexpected outcomes were attributed by leadership and staff to implementation of the Inquiry-Based Process? What benefits were reported for students, staff, and families?***

There were numerous expected outcomes that the leadership and staff attributed to implementation of the Inquiry-Based Process. Several revolved around the continuation of trauma-sensitive practices; for example, safe and supportive expectations and policies were consistent across the school as all faculty and staff worked towards trauma-sensitivity. Additionally, faculty and staff leadership increased as they took initiative of safe and supportive practices. Furthermore, leadership began to hire candidates who exhibited a desire and/or experience of working with trauma-sensitive approaches. Ultimately, students understood the common trauma-sensitive language being used by adults and became more patient with one another in these safe and supportive environments.

Increased collaboration and changed disciplinary techniques also produced expected outcomes. School-wide synergy amongst leadership, faculty and staff helped students form social-emotional skills and provided extra support for Tiers I-III. For instance, teachers sought the help of student support staff for help with hallway policies and student welfare. As a result, healthy relationships between adults and students developed and students felt a sense of belonging in the school. Additionally, faculty and staff had reconsidered retributive justice and shifted towards restorative justice. Not only were student issues resolved in the classroom, but administration also received fewer disciplinary referrals. Moreover, students were able to understand how to make decisions with favorable consequences and their connections with adults strengthened.

The schools' communities benefited from these favorable outcomes in several ways. School leadership, faculty, and staff felt they were doing important work and experienced healthy support systems with each other. As faculty and staff worked to improve relationships in the building, students felt they could safely make mistakes and felt more connected to the school overall. Lastly, school efforts to cross language barriers, host cross-cultural discussions, and meet parent needs resulted in increased familial inclusion.

**Question 5: *How did shifts in thinking and practice affect the cultures at these schools? What emergent behaviors were reported by leadership and staff that indicate evidence of trauma-sensitive culture change?***

The Findings and Interpretation section above provides in-depth and detailed explanations and examples of cultural transformations within the participating schools towards trauma-sensitivity. More specifically, the *Culture Shift* level within the Project Map articulates diverse ways that shifts in thinking and practices effected more lasting cultural changes. Overall, we did notice that during the third year of implementation, participating schools observed emerging behaviors that indicated evidence of trauma-sensitive culture change in how faculty and staff began to communicate with a common language about trauma sensitivity, and in some cases, students even began to use aspects of this language with each other, reflecting shifts in thinking in parallel with the building of stronger relationships. In addition, a collaborative-based school culture developed with faculty and staff looking toward each other for ideas, guidance, and validation, reflecting shifts in practice as educators build more trusting relationships with each other. Furthermore, faculty and staff actions were student-centered: teachers paused to think about student behaviors before reacting and worked to support these students instead of immediately punishing or passing them off to administration. This is reflective of the culture shift in the schools as educators and students are integrating understanding of trauma-sensitivity and acting in ways that align with this increased understanding. Teachers talked with students about their actions and helped them reflect on solutions instead of directing them without explanations. Moreover, schools began to become more involved in their communities with increased parent engagement and cross-institutional partnerships, which we theorize, could also drive cultural changes in schools.

**Question 6: *Did shifts in thinking and practice and other indicators of culture change from Years 1 and 2, as reported by AIR, continue into Year 3? Did leadership and staff describe trauma-sensitive shifts in thinking becoming generalized to new situations beyond the schools' formal action plans? Is there evidence in leadership and staff reports that shifts in thinking and practice are continuing to drive decision-making in the schools?***

TLPI is one of a handful of comprehensive programs designed to build capacity for schools to enact trauma-sensitive practices. As more becomes known about the impact of trauma for young children, and in the wake of the passage of the *Every Student Succeeds Act* (ESSA), many interested school leaders rely on guidelines (National Association of School Psychologists, n.d.) in attempts to create responsive environments for students. In addition, there are numerous, and less documented, efforts to provide one-time professional development (PD) trainings in basic psychoeducation regarding the impact of trauma on children's well-being and academic outcomes. However, abstract guidelines, and one-time PDs, are unlikely to foster opportunities for sustained changes in schools.

Findings from the current evaluation research demonstrate: (1) that considerable commitment and focused effort is needed to begin to move from awareness of the need for change to actual behavioral and cultural changes; and (2) that the school culture change journey itself is an iterative process that requires continual refreshing of learning as schools navigate through uncertainties and undergo frequent changes in leadership and student demographics. Thus, the effectiveness of TLPI's Inquiry-Based Process in facilitating culture change is, in part, dependent on the building over time of strong and trusting relationships among school staff and between staff and students.

Evidence of sustainability was determined by a post hoc assessment of the connections between the identified Year 3 emerging themes and findings from Years 1 and 2 of the AIR Report. For Theme #1, Facilitating Empowerment and Collaboration, sounding boards were a critical facilitator of change for the bottom-up approach initiated in first two years, which continued into Year 3. This process of empowerment and shared ownership through staff collaboration was identified across the coding of the qualitative interviews. Theme #2, Integrating Whole Child Approaches, was a continuation of Year 1 and 2 strategies of specific programming and staff skill-building in this area. Year 3 data from staff show a continuation in addressing relational, behavioral, and academic impacts of trauma by considering the whole child. In the first two years, educators discussed "fairness, equity, and academic excellence for all" (AIR, p. 62), and in Year 3, teachers are continuing to talk about this goal, and beginning to take some actions towards it. For Theme #4 Re-Envisioning Discipline Towards Relational

Accountability, teachers in Year 3 continued the self-reflection, discussion, and change in actions, that were began in the first two years as teachers described behavior challenges as “learning opportunities” when discussing student behavior and subsequent decisions about discipline.

### **Limitations**

This evaluation included three schools that engaged in TLPI’s Inquiry-Based Process over the course of three years. Two additional schools engaged in the process for two years but did not participate in the Year 3 study. We lack comprehensive data about what happened after the schools stopped the process, eliminating an opportunity for a natural comparison group. More information about Schools D and E can be found in AIR’s Descriptive Study.

As a secondary data analysis that leveraged the use of data meant to document implementation of TLPI’s Inquiry-Based Process, we are limited to the posthoc identification of interview data that included attention to the evaluation questions investigated here. It is encouraging that much of the available data includes relevant teacher, administrator, and staff reflection, despite the fact that interview questions were not specifically tailored to address key questions of the evaluation. Furthermore, interview data gathered with students, parents and caregivers, lunch monitors, hallway protectors, and other differently-positioned actors in the schools could be helpful for future evaluations to include the voices of key stakeholders. The available data illuminates the processes as experienced and reported by participant school staff, but is limited in its ability to systematically measure specific amounts of any one activity included in this process.

### **Recommendations**

TLPI is one of the few programs seeking to promote trauma-sensitivity in schools to undergo evaluation, and this underscores the need for expanded research efforts that include comparison groups for effectiveness studies. With that said, the emergent themes found in this evaluation are well supported by existing literature, yet they should be further explored in future research.



In a review of the impact of school climate on student outcomes, Wang and Degol (2016) found that schools with strong communication, collaboration, and interpersonal relationships (student-student, student-staff, and staff-staff) are better able to support student mental health and academic achievement. The current evaluation found that School A, B, and C's work to facilitate empowerment and collaboration and integrate Whole Child approaches align with this literature and suggests positive implications for student mental health and academic achievement.

Additionally, students who report stronger cultural awareness, diversity, and racial equity in their schools have stronger grades and fewer detentions or suspensions (Mattison & Aber, 2007). School A, B, and C's work to affirm cultural identities and promote a sense of belonging are critical steps towards promoting cultural awareness, appreciation for diversity, and even towards strengthening capabilities to be able to work towards racial justice in the future. A key connection here with justice-oriented pedagogies in education (e.g. Freire, 1970) is that trauma-sensitivity means educators work deeply to better understand their students' contexts and the multiplicity of ways that systems of oppression and privilege shape their students' educational trajectories – where oppression itself is understood as a form of trauma (Ginwright, 2016). Future research and practices would benefit from better understanding ways to disrupt multi-leveled oppressions that prevent students from racialized and marginalized communities from reaching their full potentials in public education systems across the country. This could involve more “upstream” research that examines how racialized institutional-level oppressions in education systems (and even within individual schools) perpetuate academic inequities and how they are linked to the roots of other intersecting, structural social problems that marginalized communities face. Development of programs of research and educational interventions that could address these issues are desperately needed, and difficult to complete. These studies and interventions could involve generating practices, policies, attitudes, and actions in schools, and related systems, that produce equitable power, access, opportunities, and educational outcomes for all, across racial and ethnic groups grounded on multiplicity of knowledges (including various Indigenous, Latinx, Asian, and Afrocentric knowledges) and voices of racialized communities to be able to consistently reimagine what resilience and justice

together can look like in the present for our communities, and for future generations (Atallah, Bacigalupe, & Repetto, 2018).

Finally, consistent with the narratives of school administrators in this study, the literature reports that stronger student-student and student-staff relationships are associated with reduced behavioral problems in schools (Wang & Degol, 2016). Students attending schools with greater social support and more consistent and humane discipline practices report less victimization and infractions (Shirley & Cornell, 2012). Educators' working to re-envision discipline towards relational accountability furthers opportunities for students' success in school (Thorsborne & Blood, 2013). Literature suggests that the work being done in Schools A, B, and C towards trauma-sensitivity will support more positive and cohesive school climates, as well as improved student mental health and academic success. Finally, a reasonable assertion for promoting capacity-building of trauma-sensitive practices in schools is not only the positive impact on student well-being and school climate, but for the potential of increased academic achievement of students who feel safe and secure in their schools. Future research efforts should include documentation of academic outcomes over time and causal tests of association with this capacity-building.

Overall, this evaluation report provides evidence for profound impacts that schools' engagement with TLPI's Inquiry-Based Process can have for students, with the requisite level of commitment and focused effort. Lasting changes are multi-leveled, and include shifts in dimensions of change (thinking and practices). Shifts include the critical transformation where educators no longer approach instruction of their students as primarily an intellectual endeavor. Academic institutions, serious about accounting for the impacts of trauma, aim to transform how school community members relate to one another. This includes relating to each other as not only intellectual beings, but as social, cultural, and physical beings as well. This necessitates that schools not only focus on test scores, but on the emergence of a rehumanizing relationality. This is akin to building new social capital in school communities, and may take time and effort to cultivate, yet if done well, could also take years to terminate.

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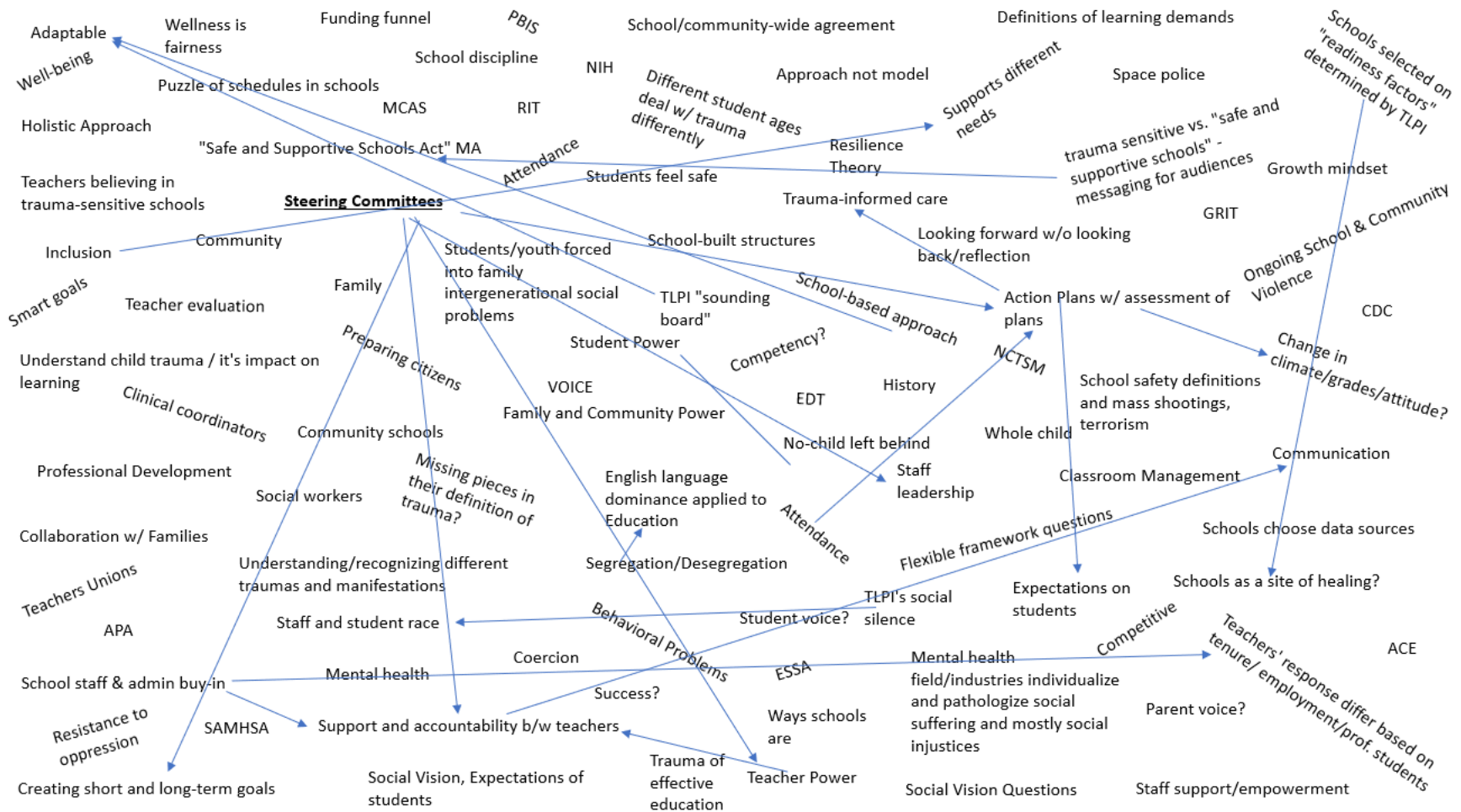
## **APPENDIX A: Sample List of Open Codes**

- Addressing issues within classroom – Discipline
- All in this together
- Being Patient with the Change Process
- Bottom-up Approach Creating Ownership
- Building trust between staff and admin
- Calm vs Crisis social environment impacting student skills
- Change as Painful, Growth requires vulnerability from teachers
- Combining initiatives
- Communicating with Common Language around Trauma
- Creating an entry point for Humanizing and Multicultural dialogues
- Creating space to honor students' dignity
- Cultural sensitivity
- Cultural Sensitivity & Trauma Sensitivity Intersection
- Developing Self-Agency, Gaining Self-confidence, Taking Initiative
- Different Staff Motivation and Views
- Difficult Dialogues about need and urgency for change
- Effective Communication across school faculty and staff about students
- Empowered by Collective School Effort and District Support
- Every Day Language, talking about resilience strategies as Ordinary
- Family and Community Voices
- Feeling Urgency for these Practices
- Fostering conversations across difference and across families
- From Trouble Maker to Decision Maker
- Flexibility Eases Implementation
- Frontliners: Identifying and Understanding Unique Experience-Near Knowledges, Vulnerabilities, and Strengths
- Generating Buy-in
- Having Reason and Purpose;
- Hiring Teachers Who have a Trauma Sensitive Mindset
- Holistic, humane communication – having a 'whole different conversation'
- Intentionally Staffing the Steering Committee
- Joyful, Safe Space (reflection, resilience)
- Learning About the Community to Serve All Students
- Linguistic justice
- Low Priority
- Motivation to change school climate
- Multiculturalism and Cultural Relevance – Students and Families Seeing Themselves and their Cultural Identities within the School
- Negotiating existing open wounds in school environ and culture
- Not everything is punishable, Students are not naughty
- Parent Engagement
- PDs (on trauma)
- Peer Support, Teacher-Teacher Guidance
- Praxis – Shifting thinking and Shifting Practice
- Prevention – supporting students before crises
- Problem-Solving and Solution-Focused Orientation as Transformative
- Putting student support first
- Restorative practices, circles, RJ
- Rethinking Discipline
- Safe space for staff and students
- School is enmeshed, not siloed - Community Engagement & Partnerships
- School-wide strategies or WrapAround changes to hold students' diverse needs
- SEL and academic integration

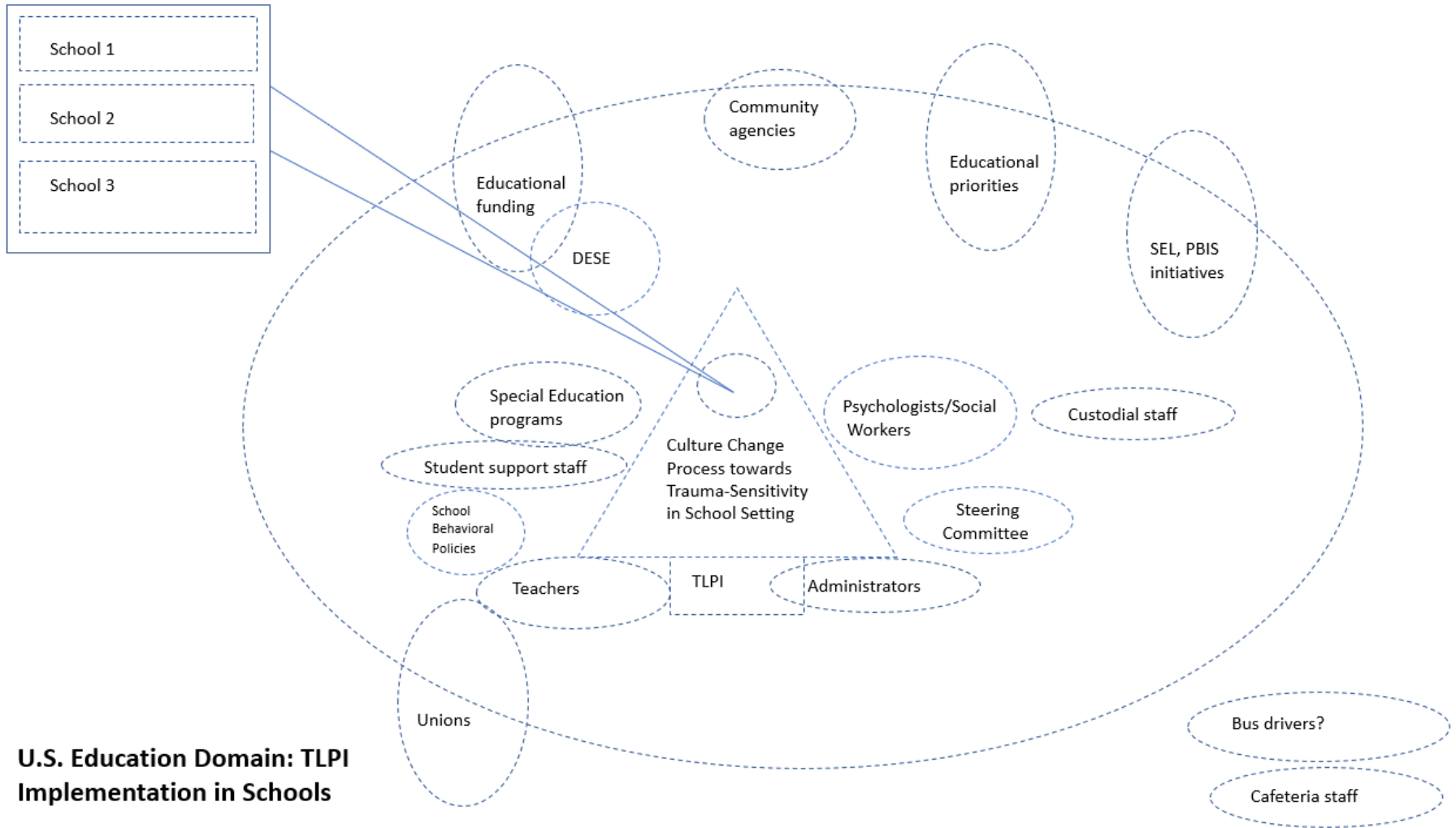
- Soliciting Student Voice
- Sounding Board Leads/Supports
- Staff Accountable to Each Other and the Work
- Staff Collaboration
- Staff Confidence in doing this work
- Staff Recognize Importance Of This Work
- Staff Recognize Inaccessibility
- Staff Share Trauma-Sensitive Practices
- Staff support, self-care/us-care
- Staff Valuing and Investing in the Work
- Steering committee
- Steering Committee Guides and Encourages
- Student-Centered approach – Everything is based on children
- Students become accountable to how they relate to each other, & schoolwide
- Students can ‘just be’ and ‘make mistakes safely’
- Students realizing strategies are to help them, not to punish
- Teachers broadening their range of the emotionality that they ATTEND to in their students
- Teachers Changing at Different Paces and Levels
- Teachers need to build cultural awareness
- Teachers Really ‘Embracing the Idea’
- Teachers stopping to think before responding: addressing previous pattern of reactivity
- Teacher-Teacher Support and Guidance
- Teamwork/Power of Collaboration
- Trauma-Sensitivity Supports Students and Prevents Crises
- Utilizing Existing Resources
- Utilizing Existing Resources
- Valuing Difference and each other’s cultures
- Valuing positive redirection
- Voice and Empowerment
- Welcoming new students and families
- Zones of regulation

## APPENDIX B: Examples of Situational Mapping

### Example of Situational Analysis Messy Map:



**Example of Situational Analysis Social Arenas Map**





## APPENDIX C. Subthemes of the Empirical Data Reflected in the Project

### Map

<i>Four Emergent Themes w/ Twenty-Four Subthemes</i>	<i>Illustrative Quotes</i>
<b>(1) Facilitating Empowerment &amp; Collaboration</b>	
<b>1.1 Shifts in Thinking Dimension – Foundation Level: <i>Developing Shared Responsibility amongst Educators for all Students &amp; Increasing Openness for Culture Change</i></b>	<p>"I feel like, number one, staff definitely recognize that these are our kids, these are challenges that our children are facing, that we have to approach things in a different way, of having more of an openness and willingness to think about students in different ways, and those challenging behaviors that once would maybe have kind of shut down an educator."</p> <p style="text-align: right;"><i>- Principal</i></p>
<b>1.2. Shifts in Practices Dimension – Foundation Level: <i>Generating Buy-In, Curiosity, Initial Trust &amp; Teamwork</i></b>	<p>"Um, you want to begin with a steering committee. Definitely include your teaching staff on that because you need buy-in. Small is the new big. You do not have to do everything at once. What works for us and them and you over here may not work for you. So, do something that's really urgent and is a priority for your school. Take time getting to know and asking everyone's opinion and everyone's—let everyone's voice be heard about what the priorities are. We refer, often, back to our teal and purple books, <i>Helping Traumatized Children Learn</i>, and in there, we have visioning questions. Each action that we take—that we've taken and continue to take, we refer back to those visioning questions and run every single part of the action through that. How is that making us feel—the kids feel safer? Um, build in how you want to evaluate your action at the beginning so that you're not trying to figure out how you're gonna collect data afterward. One thing that we learned is that we have a ton of actions going, and if you don't choose a point person on staff, it may fall on a couple of people in the school. If it's something that's gonna continue to be part of your program, then collect data, review, reflect, adjust and repeat the whole process because our work is never done, um, and there's always, um—we can always do better."</p> <p style="text-align: right;"><i>- Assistant Principal</i></p>
<b>1.3. Shifts in Thinking Dimension – Bridging Level: <i>Every Voice is Important: Promoting Individual &amp; Collective Agency</i></b>	<p>"We sent them [some staff] again in December. We sent a group of people, different people than we sent last year, to the Behavioral Health Workshop, and they came back and they sent their own emails out saying, 'We just went to the most amazing workshop. These are some of the things we learned about. We hope that if you have an interest that you'll come talk to us.' So, those things never happened before...People weren't sharing like, 'I have some expertise in this area. I learned this.'... It was sort of like, 'I'm the minority, so I'm not going to be vocal about the expertise that I may have gained, or the experiences I had.'"</p> <p style="text-align: right;"><i>- Principal</i></p>
<b>1.4. Shifts in Practices Dimension – Bridging Level: <i>Strengthening Collaboration Built on Emerging Trust</i></b>	<p>"We have a system for expressing gratitude to one another. We call it Thankful Thoughts, uh, and then, recently, we've developed Breakfast Buddies—so, developing that connectedness between our classrooms. So, we have breakfast in the classroom, and now we're asking teachers to partner up with another class that they don't normally get to interact with and have breakfast together."</p> <p style="text-align: right;"><i>-Principal</i></p>
<b>1.5. Shifts in Thinking Dimension – Culture Shift Level: <i>Together</i></b>	<p>"Um, we had some higher class sizes, not building-wide, but in pockets, like our grade five gen ed or grade three. Um, so, we had to really kind of, um, think about how we were going to use</p>

<p><b>We Can: Teamwork Across the School Social Ecosystem</b></p>	<p>the staff that we did have, and where we would- you know, where was the greatest need?... We looked for, um, some more partnerships, um, with, um, you know, with- with other, um, resources in the community. So we, this year was the first year we brought in [the local university]... the early, uh, education students came in to do some pre-practicum work with our kindergarten team, um, so that was great, because we didn't have as many paras in kindergarten,"</p> <p style="text-align: right;">-Principal</p>
<p><b>1.6. Shifts in Practices Dimension – Culture Shift Level: Leveraging Teamwork &amp; Social Capital for Sustaining Change</b></p>	<p>"Then, you know, also developing the teacher leadership. So not just bringing on the new people but that, as those new people come on board, taking the people who are a little more experienced with safe and supportive and really elevating them to teacher leaders. Having them present for our staff, present for conferences and other staff, that gives them the confidence to continue doing what they're doing and also serve as building-based leaders."</p> <p style="text-align: right;">- Principal</p>
<p><b>(2) Integrating Whole-Child Approaches</b></p>	
<p><b>2.1 Shifts in Thinking Dimension – Foundation Level: Developing Shared Responsibility amongst Educators for all Students &amp; Increasing Openness for Culture Change</b></p>	<p>"I figured out that the social emotional piece is a real key to learning in all areas, and if students don't feel safe, they cannot learn."</p> <p style="text-align: right;">- Principal</p>
<p><b>2.2. Shifts in Practices Dimension – Foundation Level: Trauma 101 &amp; Strengthening Tiered Student Support Systems &amp; Structures</b></p>	<p>"Maybe 10 to 12 years, um, that we have had graduate level courses that we offer to our staff, um, and the wait list is unbelievable, and we've trained—hundreds and hundreds of certified staff members in the city ... who have taken these graduate courses to help, um, them to understand a little bit more about how trauma impacts learning and what they can do as teachers and as professionals to support the kids."</p> <p style="text-align: right;">- Principal</p>
<p><b>2.3. Shifts in Thinking Dimension – Bridging Level: Changing Paradigms: From What's Wrong with You? To How can we promote your wellbeing and success?</b></p>	<p>"I think in terms of, uh, I've noticed a big change in specific teachers. Um, the way they have totally embraced the idea, you know, like not just, oh, going along with things, but some people have actually experienced that aha moment, and for some, it was kind of painful, but like ooh kind of thing. Um, and their whole practice changed. And they relate to the children differently, and those children are totally benefitting from, um, being able to just be and make mistakes safely, you know. Things don't become a federal case, you know, when they don't have to be."</p> <p style="text-align: right;">- School Adjustment Counselor</p>
<p><b>2.4. Shifts in Practices Dimension – Bridging Level: Practicing Empathy and Strengthening Systems of Support</b></p>	<p>"...And I've noticed a change, even in like the way I've done it, you know. In the way I approach kids. Um, I tend to- my go to is 'what are you doing?' You know, and I just remember one kid- one little munchkin stomped out of the boys room, and- and instead of calling him on it, I just said, 'wow, you look really unhappy. Is there anything I can help you with?' And he just kinda opened up, and he's like 'I fell on my way to school, and I hurt my knee.' And I'm like, 'I'm so sorry that happened.' That's just- you know, that's not a great way to start the day. And he went skipping off to class. And like I normally wouldn't have - my first instinct wouldn't have been to do that. And it just changed the- his day and mine, you know."</p> <p style="text-align: right;">-Speech and Language Specialist</p>
<p><b>2.5. Shifts in Thinking Dimension – Culture Shift Level: Whole-Child Values and Perspectives that Envision Schools as Sites of Learning and Healing</b></p>	<p>"...our teachers need to develop that resilience. How do they do that? Well, they have to dwell in it. We need to make sure that we are not just rushing to, 'Here's our social and emotional curriculum. Here's what you're going to be doing. Here's what you're going to be doing. Here is what we all want to start.' So, I view it as a long process, and that it's perfectly</p>

	<p>okay for it to be a long process because we're really trying to develop a completely different culture."</p> <p style="text-align: right;">-Principal</p>
<p><b>2.6. Shifts in Practices Dimension – Culture Shift</b>  <b>Level: Systems &amp; Solutions that are as Complex &amp; Nuanced as Students' Needs</b></p>	<p>"...the really powerful thing is that there is a value and a consistent practice now around just being completely aware of, 'Who are our students who are not connected with things?' So, we're constantly talking about it. We're surveying them [students] once or twice a year on, "What are you involved in? If you're not involved with something, like, why are you not involved?" And then not a big, whole Activities Fair, to try to get kids to sign up, but just smaller grade level teams saying, "Hey, um, so and so is super dramatic and maybe should be auditioning for play, but she was an English Language Learner." So, how are we gonna connect that? And then the teacher—the English—the ELL teacher is selling that to the kids, practicing that with the kid. And then, I saw the evolution of it. It was absolutely amazing."</p> <p style="text-align: right;">-Principal</p>
<p><b>(3) Affirming Cultural Identity &amp; Promoting a Sense of Belonging</b></p>	
<p><b>3.1. Shifts in Thinking Dimension – Foundation Level: Culture &amp; Context Matters: Educators Begin to Develop Shared Investment in Increasing Awareness of Diversity</b></p>	<p>"When we started our work around, you know, our cultural competency work, it's like yeah, that's what we wanted, because we wanted to rate ourselves on a rubric to know if we were like anywhere near what we were supposed to be. It's like- or find a school that's doing this so we can go and see what we're doing or not doing, because there are just some times when you're feeling like yeah, our school feels like a pretty good place, but I have no idea if we're like close to great on this particular thing, because everybody else doesn't know about it either, and we're all learning together. Or like other people have been doing this for 20 years and are doing really amazing work on it, and we're like not even anywhere near that place, so I can understand that like, you know, schools and teams want something, and that's why, you know, we all start with that assessment anyway, right? Because you're looking at what are you already doing, what are you not doing yet? You know, whereas it's just not an accountability tool, but it is a self-assessment tool to kind of figure out where you want to start."</p> <p style="text-align: right;">-Principal</p>
<p><b>3.2. Shifts in Practices Dimension – Foundation Level: Schools offer Trainings &amp; Spaces for Multicultural Dialogues &amp; Learning</b></p>	<p>Oh, yes, "All are welcome here." That, again, started with a couple of teachers were wearing a button, and I think it was from [another district], and it was with that logo ['All Are Welcome Here' in different languages]...I loved that and I know it's such a great message, we should have that in our building, and I'm like, "We should have that in our building," and then we're just coming up with a design [for a banner in the front lobby], and we've put it out for staff. Staff emailed back and said, "Oh, can we include Swahili? Can we include Korean?" because we've got a couple staff members who speak both of those languages, and I'm like, "Sure." So, we added those two languages in, in addition to French and Portuguese and Spanish.</p> <p style="text-align: right;">-Principal</p>
<p><b>3.3. Shifts in Thinking Dimension – Bridging Level: Educators Increasing Self-Reflection &amp; Cultural Relevance of Curricula &amp; School Environments</b></p>	<p>"We have a high immigrant population, while we also have students who are descendants of [early settlers]. So, we have this real diversity, and we're trying to come together to support—a school culture, where people who are homeless and people whose parents are the presidents of local universities are coming together and sharing something common and celebrating it. So, there's just so much different, um—different things that students are bringing to the table. And we're trying to create a culture that is really unified and supports all of those things and gets all of those students college ready."</p> <p style="text-align: right;">-Principal</p>
<p><b>3.4. Shifts in Practices Dimension – Bridging Level: Engaging in Practices that Make Schools</b></p>	<p>"And it [the bulletin board with flags from all of the countries represented in the school] starts a conversation between families, and also strangers. You know, one lady's looking. She goes 'my daughter, you know, this is my family's - this is Puerto Rico. This flag's mine, but the other side [of my daughter's family] is this flag from the Dominican,' and then I was like 'that's really</p>

<p><b>More Culturally Affirming to Diverse Students' Identities</b></p>	<p>cool.' I said 'yeah, [our] Principal added this one, the Korean one.' I said 'I'm a little partial to that one, because of my niece and nephew,' and so it just starts getting a talk going, and then we started talking about like the third grade international presentations, and it just kinda gives an entry point for kids and parents and - to talk about. And really valuing each other's cultures."</p> <p style="text-align: right;"><i>-Speech and Language Specialist</i></p>
<p><b>3.5. Shifts in Thinking Dimension – Culture Shift Level: Educators Weaving Together Multicultural &amp; Trauma-Sensitivity Focus</b></p>	<p>One of the things that came up after one of our parent-teacher conferences... “Is there a way that we could bring [immigrant] families together?” At first, it was this whole conversation around the kind of the information that we could impart to families, but then it really shifted to finding out what the families need from us, and how could we structure this meeting?... So, that was kind of exciting because these women were now coming to me, identifying a problem in our school and thinking about, “Well, if we’re safe and supportive, this is what we should be doing.” Then, from that, we were able to kind of pull together another little team ... and we met several times to kind of plan a series of meetings, and we called it Conversaciones. It was just a gathering of parents; we wanted it very informal. It was nine o’clock in the morning; so, as parents are dropping-off, they could stay and bring their little ones.... So, anyways, this meeting was just hopping in conversation, and the little ones had a play group... Everything was delivered in Spanish, so it was in their native language, which was uncomfortable for me because I have so many people who can speak Spanish within my building. Again, I was in this position of kind of helping the group. I was organizing the meetings, and getting things together, and making sure it’s going to happen; but as far as when the meetings took place, I’m just kind of smiling because I had some idea of what they were talking about, but not really. [laughs] I don’t understand Spanish... The AP [assistant principal] would kind of whisper to me what was being talked about, and I kind of thought to take a parent role in some of our meetings that are English only and how they experience it, so it was eye-opening for me; but they felt so comfortable that these meetings were in Spanish, that they could talk about their concerns, and each group kind of debriefed....Then, we met again afterwards. So, they [the parents] wanted information about homework; they wanted information about report cards; they wanted information about resources in the community, summer programming. That was actually our last meeting. We had the summer resource guide, and in small groups we were able to kind of walk parents through the different programs that are offered in the city, and how they could enroll.... I’m already thinking next year maybe we could partner and maybe help them with the actual enrolling of their children in these programs...</p> <p style="text-align: right;"><i>-Principal</i></p>
<p><b>3.6. Shifts in Practices Dimension – Culture Shift Level: School as a Place of Belonging: Practices that Embrace Cultural Diversity &amp; Work Towards Equity</b></p>	<p>“I think of one big impact is that all of our students feel important, and they feel like they’re seen and they are welcomed. You know, I have all of these thank-you letters around here that kids have written, and some of our neediest kids have written, “I know you love us. I know these things,” and to hear that and to read that is really important.”</p> <p style="text-align: right;"><i>-Principal</i></p>
<p><b>(4) Re-envisioning Discipline towards Relational Accountability</b></p>	
<p><b>4.1. Shifts in Thinking Dimension – Foundation Level: Examining Alternative Perspectives of Discipline &amp; Attempting to Move Beyond Approaches that are Primarily Grounded on Retributive Justice Mindsets</b></p>	<p>“So, being able to shift away from some of these traditional consequences, um, shifting away from some of the punitive, shifting towards the idea that—what is the function of that behavior? It's stuff that we've always been talking about, um, with our student services team, our special ed director, our counselors, um, when we're doing FBAs but not necessarily something that was really sticking with the whole staff, over time.</p> <p style="text-align: right;"><i>-Principal</i></p>

<p><b>4.2. Shifts in Practices Dimension – Foundation Level:</b>  <b>Supplementing Punitive Discipline with Practices that also Begin to Address Students' Needs</b></p>	<p>"There was definitely a mindset of kind of just get- getting them out of their room. Um, you know, with this- you know, if it rose to a certain level, it was somebody else's problem, somebody else has got to step in and deal with this. Um, and I definitely feel like teachers are more, um, able to address things within their classroom, um, and they're using some of the tools"</p> <p style="text-align: right;"><i>-Principal</i></p>
<p><b>4.3. Shifts in Thinking Dimension – Bridging Level: Students are Decision-Makers not Trouble-Makers: Exploring Alternative Approaches that Foster Opportunities for Reconnection</b></p>	<p>"I've noticed, um, usually when I used to walk into classrooms, that we had kids sitting like way over there or something, and you know it was the kid in trouble or- you know, and it was- it always felt horrible. It felt like oh, my god. Um, and everyone knew that the kid was in trouble, or the troublemaker, or whatever, and now you still see kids everywhere, and it's very different... They don't feel ostracized. You know? And, uh, today, in the classroom that I was in, it was very like okay, the kid was way over there because that was a better spot for her... Here is better, because if I sit next to my friend, well, you know, I'm gonna get in trouble because I'm talking. You know. So, they are also starting to be self-aware and using the strategies that they use, realizing that those strategies are to help them, and not everything is a punishment, and it's a learning experience, and it feels so much more humane..."</p> <p style="text-align: right;"><i>-School Adjustment Counselor</i></p>
<p><b>4.4. Shifts in Practices Dimension – Bridging Level: When the Going Gets Tough, Turn to Wonder: Practicing Curiosity &amp; Support in Response to Student Behavioral Challenges</b></p>	<p>"One little munchkin stomped out of the boys room, and instead of calling him on it, I just said, 'Wow, you look really unhappy. Is there anything I can help you with?' And he just kinda opened up, and he's like 'I fell on my way to school, and I hurt my knee.' And I'm like, 'I'm so sorry that happened. That's just- you know, that's not a great way to start the day.' And he went skipping off to class. And like I normally wouldn't have - my first instinct wouldn't have been to do that. And it just changed the- his day and mine, you know."</p> <p style="text-align: right;"><i>-Speech and Language Specialist</i></p>
<p><b>4.5. Shifts in Thinking Dimension – Culture Shift Level: Valuing the Healing Power of Community</b></p>	<p>"Why were they sent [to the Transitional Learning Center]? Was it a peer conflict? Was it noncompliance, repeated noncompliance, or not doing anything? Was it refusing to do the work? And then, related to that, what do they have to do to return [to the classroom]? So, looking at restorative pieces, do they have to complete a task? Do they have to restore with the staff member who they were having a hard time with?"</p> <p style="text-align: right;"><i>- Principal</i></p>
<p><b>4.6. Shifts in Practices Dimension – Culture Shift Level: Restoring Community through Relational Accountability</b></p>	<p>"We had a tantruming kindergartener coming through the door and the approach was get him into the classroom. Not get him out of the classroom, but get him into the classroom and get him to the quiet, safe, calming corner where he can release....Then once he was ready for that therapeutic rapport building, he was in his classroom. He was able to build that rapport back with the adults who he was struggling with and quickly get back, get into the classroom activities for the day."</p> <p style="text-align: right;"><i>- Principal</i></p>