

## **Attachment 10: School Climate Index Interview Guide – School-Level Administrator Guide**

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## School Climate Index Interview Guide – School Level Administrator Guide

**DOMAINS TO BE COVERED:** The school administrator interview guides will be used to assess Domain 1b: School Level Policy; Domain 2: Practice; Domain 4a: School Level Professional Development; Domain 5: Place; and Domain 6: Pedagogy

### **INTERVIEW PARTICIPANTS:**

It is anticipated that two separate interviews with individual school administrators (principals, vice principals, etc.) will take place. The selected school administrators should be responsible for one or more of the following areas:

- Implementation of district level policy that is inclusive of or focused on LGBTQ youth or addressing student conduct, safety or diversity
- Implementation and oversight of school programming
- Approval and selection of school programs, student activities and the promotion of these programs and activities in the physical school environment
- Professional development opportunities for school staff
- Guidance to teachers in implementing curriculum.

In planning the interviews, the domains to be covered for each interview will be combined based on the areas for which the administrator is responsible, to create two unique interviews, so that each domain is only covered once between the two interviews. The interview questions for each domain will be covered only once during one of the two school administrator interviews. If one administrator is responsible for all of the domains, only one interview will be conducted.

### **INTERVIEW LENGTH:**

The length of the school administrator interviews will be determined by the number of domains to be covered in each interview. It is estimated that each interview will last up to one hour, and regardless of the way domains are combined or divided between interviews, no interview will exceed one hour.

### ***I. CONSENT STATEMENT***

Introduction: Thank you for agreeing to meet with us today. I am \_\_\_\_\_ and I work for a company called ICF International. We are working with the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention's (CDC) Division of Adolescent and School Health (DASH), Broward County Public Schools, and the Hetrick Martin Institute to help your district learn more about the school climate for lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, and questioning (or LGBTQ) students.

Before we begin, I would like to review a few points and confirm if you provide your permission to participate. These points are also reflected on the copy of the consent statement that I gave you:



## DOMAIN 1B: POLICY

### SUGGESTED INTERVIEW TIME: 15-30 minutes

*The questions for this interview are divided into two parts: **primary** and **secondary** questions. Ask the primary questions first and move into secondary questions only if the primary questions are covered during the first 15 minutes of the interview.*

In this part of the interview we'll ask about the extent to which your school is implementing policies adopted at the district level that support a safe and supportive school environment for LGBTQ students. We would like to hear about how you share policy information with school staff, parents and students, and how procedures are put in place to carry out the policies. We are not here to judge your school, but to understand how you work in this area and the challenges and successes that you have experienced. Please answer to the best of your ability, and feel free to ask questions at any time.

**Note to interviewer:** *At the beginning of the interview, share the list of policies provided by the district and confirm that the school administrators are aware of the policies. If no documents were provided begin the interview with the following:*

"To start with, please give me a short description of the policies your district has that support a safe and supportive school environment for LGBTQ students."

### PRIMARY QUESTIONS:

1. How does your school communicate information about these policies to:
  - School staff members (probe for specific staff: teachers, coaches, bus drivers, etc.)?
  - Students?
  - Parents?
2. What kinds of questions do school staff members, students or parents have about the policies? What about objections to the policies?
3. What is the process at your school for handling incidents or complaints related to these policies?  
(Probe for specific process and steps)
  - When any of the policies were implemented, was there an increase in reporting of bullying or harassment of LGBTQ students?
4. How do you feel that the policy contributes to safe and supportive environment for LGBTQ youth? Please give specific examples if you can think of any.

### SECONDARY QUESTIONS:

1. Are you ever asked to give feedback about whether the policies are helpful in maintaining a safe and supportive environment? If yes, please describe.

2. What are the biggest successes and challenges that you feel these policies have presented?

## **SCHOOL LEVEL ADMINISTRATOR INTERVIEW GUIDE FOR DOMAIN 2: PRACTICE**

*Interviewer instructions: If this is the first part of the interview, review the consent statement and ask for permission to record prior to proceeding. If there is one or more new interviewees, review the consent statement before proceeding.*

### **SUGGESTED INTERVIEW TIME: 30 MINUTES**

In this part of the interview, we'll ask about the extent to which your school has adopted and implemented practices supportive of LGBTQ students in order to shape a culture of inclusion and respect. For example, we are interested in any actions taken to welcome LGBTQ youth to school events such as dances, sports teams, and other activities that take place at the school. We realize that some of these questions may be about areas where specific actions are not being taken, or are in the planning phase. We are not here to judge your school on these things but rather, we are interested in your perspective on what is happening in this area and how your school handles issues that may arise. Please answer to the best of your ability, and feel free to ask questions at any time.

*Note to interviewer: The questions are divided into **primary** and **secondary** sections. Ask the primary questions for each area, and go back to ask the secondary questions if time permits after the primary questions have been covered for each area.*

## **AREA: TERMINOLOGY**

### **PRIMARY QUESTION:**

1. Are school staff members encouraged to practice gender-inclusive language? (i.e., using the term “significant other”, “person you are dating” rather than “husband/wife”, “girlfriend/boyfriend” etc.?) Do you think they use gender-inclusive language as a general practice?

### **SECONDARY QUESTION:**

1. If a student requests to be referred to as a different gender, or to be called a name that is not consistent with the sex they were assigned at birth, how does the school handle this request? How do you think teachers handle this request?

## **AREA: EVENTS AND PROGRAMS**

### **PRIMARY QUESTIONS**

1. Please describe any ways that your school tries to ensure that school events are inclusive and safe for LGBTQ students.

- Can same-sex couples attend school dances as a couple?
- If a group of students is planning an event or dance, can posters advertising the dance show same gender and opposite gender couples?

2. Does your school do anything special to ensure that physical education classes and sports programs are welcoming and safe for LGBTQ youth?

- If a student is not comfortable wearing the required uniform, can they wear clothing in which they are comfortable for physical education class or sports programs?

3. Does your school have a diversity and/or cultural education program? If so, please describe it;

- o How are LGBTQ people included in the program?

4. Does your school have a Safe Zone program, or another school-wide program, in which trained staff display posters or stickers indicating that their office or classroom is a safe and welcoming space for LGBTQ students?

- Are staff required to complete training in order to participate in the program? If yes, who provides the training?

### **SECONDARY QUESTIONS:**

1. Are there any events where staff who are in same sex couples are permitted to bring their partners or spouses?

2. Do you think that staff at your school are made to feel welcome in bringing their partners or spouses to school events, regardless of whether they are in a same sex or opposite sex relationship?

3. Is a variety of physical education activities offered and advertised as welcoming to all students?

- Are physical education activities offered that accommodate a variety of body types and levels of physical contact? (i.e., volleyball as well as football)
- To what extent are co-ed sports opportunities offered?

### **AREA: SCHOOL SERVICES**

#### **PRIMARY QUESTIONS:**

1. What efforts, if any, has your school made to include resources for LGBTQ youth in referral lists and resource guides for students and staff?

- If community agencies provide services on campus, are LGBTQ-serving agencies included?

2. Are there health resources—including mental health services—available that specifically address the needs of LGBTQ students?

#### **SECONDARY QUESTIONS:**

1. Does your school do anything special to ensure that health services and other student services are welcoming and inclusive for LGBTQ students?

- Do advertisements for services explicitly state that LGBTQ youth are included?

### **DOMAIN 4B: SCHOOL PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT**

*Interviewer instructions: If this is the first part of the interview, review the consent statement and ask for permission to record prior to proceeding. If there is one or more new interviewees, review the consent statement before proceeding.*

#### **SUGGESTED INTERVIEW TIME: 15 MINUTES**

In this section of the interview, we will ask about the extent to which your school provides or supports opportunities for ALL staff to participate in professional development activities focused on meeting the needs of LGBTQ students and promoting a safe and supportive school environment. Although the district may require or offer training in these areas, this section is focused on how your school may encourage staff to attend training specifically in this area, and provide additional on-site resources and in-service opportunities. For this discussion, professional development can include training sessions, in-service, webinars, online training modules, resources provided on a website, and other types of professional development that you may describe.

Please answer to the best of your ability, and feel free to ask questions at any time.

1. Please describe, to your knowledge, the level of participation of staff from your school in professional development opportunities related to working with LGBTQ students that have been offered through the district.

- What were the specific topics?
- What types of staff attended (teachers, mental health counselors, lunch room staff, etc.)

2. Does your school conduct any additional professional development activities related to working with LGBTQ students? Please describe them in terms of:

- Specific topic
- Format (in-service, online, bulletins, etc.)
- Frequency
- Provider
- Topic areas relevant to LGBTQ students or issues

## **SCHOOL LEVEL ADMINISTRATOR INTERVIEW GUIDE FOR DOMAIN 5: PLACE (BUILT-ENVIRONMENT)**

### **SUGGESTED INTERVIEW TIME: 15 MINUTES**

*Interviewer instructions: If this is the first part of the interview, review the consent statement and ask for permission to record prior to proceeding. If there is one or more new interviewees, review the consent statement before proceeding.*

*Note to interviewers: The questions for this interview are divided into two parts: **primary** and **secondary** questions. Ask the primary questions first and move into secondary questions only if time permits.*

In this section of the interview, we will ask about the extent to which schools have established a built-environment that reflects diversity and is inclusive of LGBTQ students and promotes a safe and supportive school environment. The built-environment is defined as physical space (including classrooms, displays, bathrooms, etc.). We realize that some of these questions may be about areas where specific actions are not being taken, or are in the planning phase. We are not here to judge your school on what is currently happening but rather, we are interested in your perspective on what is happening in this area and how your school handles issues that may arise.

Please answer to the best of your ability, and feel free to ask questions at any time.

1. What specific actions are being taken or planned that can be visually observed to let LGBTQ students know that they are welcome at the school?

*Interviewers: Allow respondent to answer and use probes only as needed.*

- o PROBE: Visual markers include posters, rainbow flags, bulletin boards, or other visual images and/or phrases that are affirming and inclusive of LGBTQ youth



- o PROBE: Posting of notices about LGBTQ activities (like GSA meetings) or school-based or community resources

2. Are there certain areas of the school where keeping students safe is more challenging than others? For example, are there areas where more fights or assaults take place? What areas are those?

- Are there any specific measures taken (or being planned) to increase safety in these or other areas?
  - o PROBE: Gender neutral bathroom options (meaning individual bathrooms)
  - o PROBE: School safety agents or cameras in areas of the building that could be target zones for bullying, physical attack, and other forms of assault.

## **SCHOOL LEVEL ADMINISTRATOR INTERVIEW GUIDE FOR DOMAIN 6: PEDAGOGY (TEACHING PHILOSOPHY)**

### **SUGGESTED INTERVIEW TIME: 15 MINUTES**

*Interviewer instructions: If this is the first part of the interview, review the consent statement and ask for permission to record prior to proceeding. If there is one or more new interviewees, review the consent statement before proceeding.*

*Note to interviewers: The questions for this interview are divided into two parts: **primary** and **secondary** questions. Ask the primary questions first and move into secondary questions if time permits.*

In this section of the interview we'll ask about the extent to which your school's curricula and teaching approaches are aimed at enhancing students' understanding of diversity, inclusion, and the life experiences of LGBTQ people. We are interested in how teachers are encouraged or given resources to assist them in addressing these issues in the classroom, either through incorporation of specific topics into their lesson plans, or simply in the language they use and how they handle questions that may come up. We realize that some of these questions may be about areas where specific actions are not being taken, or are in the planning phase. We are not here to judge your school on what is currently happening but rather, we are interested in your perspective on what is happening in this area and how your school handles issues that may arise.

Please answer to the best of your ability, and feel free to ask questions at any time.

### **PRIMARY QUESTIONS:**

1. What kind of guidance are teachers given for addressing diversity including sexual orientation, in the classroom?

- o Are teachers given any guidance for addressing stereotyping and exclusion?
- o How does the guidance given address using language that reflects diversity in sexual orientation, relationships and families?

### **SECONDARY QUESTIONS:**

1. How do teachers address homophobic or transphobic language used by students in the classroom?

2. Are teachers evaluated on their ability to create an inclusive classroom? By inclusive classroom, I mean a classroom that is welcoming to all students, including LGBTQ students, in terms of physical appearance (visual displays, etc.), language and teaching style that recognizes diversity.

- Please tell us how you gauge or evaluate teacher comfort, ability and success in creating an inclusive classroom.

### **V. CONCLUSION**

That was the last of my questions. Is there anything else you want to say about the ways in which your school creates a safe and supportive environment for LGBTQ students that was not already addressed during the interview?

Thank you for taking the time to talk with me today. You have provided a lot of valuable information that will help us get a fuller picture of the climate in your district/school.

The Hetrick Martin Institute has compiled a list of resources related to this topic that may be of interest. (Provide a copy if respondent desires it.)