

IDENTITY SAFE SIGNATURE STRATEGIES

The document is organized per four Identity Safety domains:

- Child-Centered Teaching
- Cultivating Diversity as a Resource
- Classroom Relationships
- Caring Classrooms

Each strategy is also linked to a "component" within the domain.

Identity safe teaching is an approach and a way of creating an equitable classroom. It is not a program, nor is it a checklist of strategies. These strategies are provided to offer ideas for implementation. There are many additional effective strategies that address these components. The strategies are listed and described, explaining the connection with identity safe practices. In the online version, curricular resources and articles are added to assist with

Child-Centered Teaching

Component	Strategy	Description of Strategy/Activity	Connection to Identity Safety
Listening for Student Voices	Use varied discussion strategies	<p style="text-align: center;"><u>LISTENING FOR STUDENT VOICES</u></p> <p>Use varied discussion strategies on a regular basis with varied groupings and processes in all curricular areas. Through small and large groups, jig-saws, and frequent partner chats, students are given opportunities to exercise a voice.</p>	Frequent and varied discussion opportunities allow students to feel safe expressing ideas. It also helps them build self-expression skills and confidence.
Listening for Student Voices	Support English Learners	<p>Give EL students a variety of opportunities to participate, depending on their level of English proficiency. Examples of strategies follow:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Student use white boards, draw, or answer with thumbs up - Students write and read their ideas to the class. - EL students buddy with a fluent student. - Teachers use discussion prompts. - Teachers engage EL students with frequent visual aids and realia. 	EL students need scaffolded participation opportunities to feel a sense of belonging and competence during class while they are learning English.
Listening for Student Voices	Incorporate student involvement in decisions	Use innovative ways with every opportunity to allow all students to express their opinions, share their ideas, and solve academic and daily classroom problems. Teachers can engage students in frequent and informal voting practice such as with hand signals. They can solicit student ideas, record them and allow students to choose best options. Students can discuss these ideas with partners and share the team decision.	Students can feel their ideas matter both in school and, by extension, in their lives.
Listening for Student Voices	Offer multiple entry points for students to share ideas	<p>Use varied strategies to allow students to express feelings and opinions:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Use white boards. Student write ideas and hold them up. - Use stickie notes to share ideas and read them aloud or graph them. - Write and articulate their ideas with more detail in a journal . - Talk the ideas over with a partner and share them. 	Varying strategies allows every student the opportunity to participate with entry points that best suit their individual needs.
Listening for Student Voices	Display or highlight every student's writing	Find an area of the classroom and post a piece of each student's' writing. Add a new piece by the student on top of their last one each month. In that way the student, teacher, and parent can flip through each page to see growth. Allow time for Author's Chair where each student may read his or her story or work to the class.	Students need to see their work reflected in the classroom environment to help them feel that it matters, which promotes a sense of value and belonging.
Listening for Student Voices	Teach skills for hearing multiple points of view	Develop skills for students to hear multiple perspectives with opportunities to agree or disagree. Be explicit that the teacher values different perspectives. Provide structures for safe sharing: debates and activities where students need to defend opposing opinions, celebrate when students can agree to disagree, provide sentence prompts, and engage students with hand motions to show agreement or disagreement.	Students feel safe to express their ideas when they understand that all respectful ideas are welcome and belong in classroom discourse.

Child-Centered Teaching

Component	Strategy	Description of Strategy/Activity	Connection to Identity Safety
Listening for Student Voices	Value home language and teach code-switching	<p>Demonstrate value to students for code-switching and different forms of understanding: Show recognition that students come from different contexts and backgrounds, and allow them different ways of interpreting and understanding content. Teach students how to use standard English while also valuing their voices, ways of speaking, and home languages. Explain code-switching in developmentally appropriate ways. Recognize the vernacular patterns in writing and use this to teach the differences between the “Standard English” version and the home language. Use a chart to show the differences. Model acceptance for all forms of vernacular.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Initiate conversations about how people speak differently, dress differently, and act differently in diverse settings. Give examples. -Demonstrate how to self-correct written work for a formal purpose, and when students feel more comfortable, encourage them to read their work aloud. -Try to be more accepting of the fact that everyone code-switches. Remember the way we respond to a friend’s question might be completely different than how we would answer the principal or superintendent’s queries. - Use culturally rich literature that is available at every grade level. 	Valuing students' home language and ways of speaking helps to validate and affirm their identities. Learning about code-switching and Standard English prepares them to function effectively in the world without losing their core language identity.
EDUCATOR EQUITY LENS: Listening for Student Voices	Equity Lens Classroom culture promotes listening and student voice	Treat each student as an individual with unique identities. Draw frequently from their backgrounds and cultures. Help them find and express themselves using their unique voices. Listen to them and hear their concerns.	Feeling heard is a big part of feeling valued.
<u>TEACHING FOR UNDERSTANDING</u>			
Teaching for Understanding	Offer active participation every 10 minutes	Ensure that every student is participating in the lesson at the same time at least once every ten minutes. This will ensure engagement and assist with retention of content. These strategies include: using white boards, writing, hand signals, think-pair-share, and asking them to think for a minute about an open-ended question. Even when their participation is confined to their thoughts, engagement still occurs.	Students need to be engaged and understand what they are learning in class to feel belonging as competent learners.
Teaching for Understanding	Include an anticipatory set with active participation	Use active participation as part of the anticipatory set. Activate prior knowledge by engaging each student in the content of the lesson. The anticipatory set needs to match the content.	Providing the link to prior knowledge creates value for what students already know, which motivates them and engages whole mind activity in learning new content.

Child-Centered Teaching

Component	Strategy	Description of Strategy/Activity	Connection to Identity Safety
Teaching for Understanding	Close lessons with active participation	To create closure, use active participation and engage each student in briefly summarizing the lesson and strengthening retention. This can be done with a simple think-pair-share, a written summary, or white boards. Summaries can be written on exit tickets.	Students gain competence, confidence and building blocks for the next lesson when they are able to summarize what they have learned.
Teaching for Understanding	Use Socratic Practice	Use Socratic questioning, a highly disciplined process that develops critical thinking abilities. All thoughts are treated carefully and equitably. By following answers with further questions, and by selecting questions which advance the discussion, the Socratic questioner helps the class to think in a disciplined, intellectually responsible manner, while continually aiding the students by posing and facilitating questions. A Socratic questioner should: a) keep the discussion focused b) keep the discussion intellectually responsible c) stimulate the discussion with probing questions d) periodically summarize what has and what has not been dealt with and/or resolved. e) draw as many students as possible into the discussion. Paul, R. and Elder, L. Foundation For Critical Thinking (April,1997).	Socratic practices allow students to learn to think critically and build both competence and confidence as learners.
Teaching for Understanding	Use critical thinking strategies	Teach critical thinking and use higher-level thinking questions for all students: Ask students to evaluate, synthesize, analyze, summarize, compare and contrast in every content area on a regular basis. Teach students how to find and cite evidence from a text.	Students who use higher level thinking skills beginning in Kindergarten, develop an academic identity and a sense of themselves as competent and a valued members of the class.
Teaching for Understanding	Have students say it in their own words	Ask students to define academic words, summarize learnings, and express ideas in their own words in all curricular areas.	By saying things in their own words, students are more likely to feel relaxed, retain knowledge and engage with the content. It also provides a window that allows educators to monitor student understanding, which increases student competence.
Teaching for Understanding	Have students explain their thinking	Have students explain how they solved problems in all curricular areas. In addition, ask them to explain their thinking when they are asked for an opinion.	Students build agency, gaining confidence in their thinking and value within classroom dialogue.

Child-Centered Teaching

Component	Strategy	Description of Strategy/Activity	Connection to Identity Safety
Teaching for Understanding	Value and model various strategies to solve problems	Have students explain the strategies they used to solve problems. Post different strategies on the walls of the classroom. Explain how there are many different approaches to find solutions in school and in life.	Using a range of strategies to solve problems helps students learn there is no one answer. Students learn to think for themselves.
EDUCATOR EQUITY LENS Teaching for Understanding	Equity Lens Engage hearts and minds	Engage each student's heart and mind in all activities and demonstrate that what they think and who they are matters.	An environment that weaves social and emotional learning with academic learning engages a student's identity in everything they do.
Focus on Cooperation	Teach cooperative lessons with social and academic goals	<u>FOCUS ON COOPERATION</u> Before every cooperative activity, establish two goals with students: 1) an academic goal; and 2) a social goal that fits with the kind of work they are doing. At the end of the activity, have the students reflect on the academic goal by discussing what they learned. They can address the social goal by discussing how they worked together to meet it. Periodically, reflect on how they are improving their ability to work together.	Reflecting on social skills has value in several ways: students learn how to reflect on their own behavior and they also learn to regularly seek to improve their social interactions. Finally, this reflection also ensures all students fully participate with equitable status.
Focus on Cooperation	Use anchor charts to support cooperative group behaviors	Have students work in their cooperative groups. After they finish, they discuss what went well. Then select from the positive examples and make class chart with tips for cooperation that can be used at the beginning of the next cooperative group activity. Students can add more tips in subsequent lessons.	Students identify and practice strategies for working together. This builds their cooperation skills.
Focus on Cooperation	Teach students to ask for help	Teach, model, and encourage students to practice ways for seeking assistance throughout the curriculum. Students learn how to both ask for and give help to their peers and adults.	Asking for and giving help are valuable social skills that create empathy and show students that they are all learners. It builds relationships and strengthens their sense of self-esteem and improves competence. They also come to realize that needing help is neither shameful nor does it mean that they are not smart.
Focus on Cooperation	Draw from family cooperative relationships	Invite students to get information from their family to share with the class, such as how their parents approach multiplication, engage in family history interviews, family stories around a topic, or ways their family celebrates a holiday.	Students feel their family background is valued and learn to draw from their home cultures in ways that enhance their success at school.

Child-Centered Teaching

Component	Strategy	Description of Strategy/Activity	Connection to Identity Safety
Focus on Cooperation	Value ways of helping at home and school	Enlist students to share ways they help their families at home such as helping a sibling with homework, translating for parents at a doctor's appointment, or preparing meals. Allow them to brainstorm opportunities to help one another at school with different roles. Engage in role play, such as giving directions, greeting guests, or student-teacher activities. Vary student roles.	Students feel connected by sharing ways they help at home and support one another at school.
EDUCATOR EQUITY LENS: Focus on coopertaion	Teach and practice cooperation throughout the day	Assure cooperative activities draw from home values of cooperation and community. Incorporate cooperative activities that promote equal status. Cooperation does not just occur during "cooperative lessons", but throughout the day.	Many students come from backgrounds that are very focused on community. Providing opportunities to draw from that community focus will create familiarity and safety for students whose backgrounds are community oriented. Cooperative groups with equal status serve to raise student status and help students develop agency in academic interactions.
Autonomy	Offer choices to students	<p style="text-align: center;"><u>AUTONOMY</u></p> <p>Offer a wide range of choices daily, such as the choice of a topic to research, choice of a product, choice of which strategy to use, or what to read and write about. Generate and allow class votes to select from a menu of events, lesson topics, or solutions to problems. Integrate opportunities for making choices with suggestions to draw in students who might be more relationship-oriented. "I was thinking of you and selected this book. Why don't you try it or choose a different one?"</p>	Providing choices builds autonomy and agency. It validates students' decision making abilities. Providing alternative suggestions based on relationships provides an entry point that honors the experience of students from a more collectivist background.
Autonomy	Develop student interests	Create student-centered inquiry and problem-based learning activities that allow students to identify and research areas of interest.	Students develop their interests and social identities when the subject has inherent meaning for them.
Autonomy	Help each child develop unique expertise	Find unique ways for each child to identify and strengthen areas of expertise. Have students write and discuss their areas of expertise. Value different types of expertise through celebration and recognition. When demonstrated, call attention to artistic abilities, physical activities, acts of helpfulness and kindness, students explaining directions including difficult concepts using in simple terms, and students sharing willingly.	Finding areas of expertise for each student creates opportunities for every student to shine. Helping others by employing expertise equalizes status and strengthens a student's sense of identity safety.

Child-Centered Teaching

Component	Strategy	Description of Strategy/Activity	Connection to Identity Safety
Autonomy	Practice goal-setting	Set individual and class goals by helping students learn to set personal goals in each subject. Monitor and adjust on a regular basis. These goals are related to longer-term goals - like what they need to know in their lives and what they need to do to gain their future dreams. Students meet regularly with their teacher or another adult to track progress and discuss the data. Data is public and students are encouraged to ask for and offer help to each other.	Goal-setting is a valuable skill that leads to agency and autonomy. Students feel a sense of competence when they can manage their own learning, by setting goals and meeting them.
Autonomy	Scaffold instruction	Provide appropriate use of scaffolding with supports that assist students in accessing higher levels of content and thinking.	Scaffolding assists students in achieving success and advancing into higher level content areas. This is aligned with a goal to move them into more independent work in those areas. Lacking these supports, some students can experience difficulty working solo.
Autonomy	Incorporate the gradual release of responsibility	As students gain mastery during instructional scaffolding, gradually release support and allow them to work independently.	Gradually releasing assistance allows for increasing levels of autonomy and builds students' competence and confidence.
Autonomy	Promote identity safe productive struggle	Encourage students to try to solve problems on their own and learn the value of struggling toward a productive outcome. Identity safe productive struggle includes creating situations where students who struggle more than others are encouraged and not humiliated publicly. They also should be allowed to struggle without being helped too quickly. Explain the value of productive struggle and remove taboos from it. Model and practice it. This will allow students to feel more comfortable engaging in productive struggle on their own and in front of others.	Productive struggle allows students to realize that not all problems are easily solved. They learn to apply effort and feel competent as they persist in working hard to solve problems.

Child-Centered Teaching

Component	Strategy	Description of Strategy/Activity	Connection to Identity Safety
EDUCATOR EQUITY LENS: Autonomy	EQUITY LENS Holistic approach to promoting student autonomy	Recognize how autonomy is valued differently in different cultures and families: frequently acknowledge from several points of view. Express the value of self-determination as well as recognize a more cooperative model of interacting that is evident in many cultures. Openly discuss the value of autonomy in age appropriate ways. Ask students to describe how they experience autonomy in their families. Also, discuss the risks of autonomy in that it can cause people to be very individualistic (e.g., when students are in competition).	In some cultures, autonomy is expressed differently. Some cultures promote autonomy in the context of a more authoritarian relationship with parents and teachers. Other cultures are focused on the community. Levels of autonomy are a natural part of growing up and students either experience equal status as they experience autonomy in similar ways. Conversely, when some students are given more autonomy than others who are hovered over and helped constantly, the status of those who need a lot of help is lowered.

Cultivating Diversity as a Resource

Component	Strategy	Description of Strategy/Activity	Connection to Identity Safety
<u>DIVERSITY AS A RESOURCE</u>			
Diversity as a Resource	Use activities that explore and share culture	Regularly incorporate age appropriate activities to foster cultural identity development. Ideas can include culture boxes and writing activities where they share about their lives and families; hosting a Grandparents Tea; creating Heritage Dolls or puppets that are linked to each student's culture; inviting students' relatives to the classroom to share cultural stories; organizing a pot luck event where families bring dishes from their individual heritage. Engage cultural sensitivities and avoid stereotyping other people's heritage. Be sure to let students know that everyone has a different and valuable culture with something to share. Culture includes the characteristics and knowledge of a particular group of people, defined by everything from language, religion, cuisine, social habits, music and arts.	Students feel their backgrounds are viewed as an asset to others; they feel that their cultural identities are valuable and interesting to others when they are shared continually throughout their school experience.
Diversity as a Resource	Share family activities	Invite family members to school and interview them, write family stories, and engage in family tree activities. Be sure to acknowledge the different kinds of diverse family configurations and affirm that all are valid. Pay attention to any children who may be adopted or do not have a biological mother or father as a primary caregiver when celebrating or creating activities.	Acknowledging a student's family creates belonging and strengthens identity safety.
Diversity as a Resource	Reflect the cultures of all students on the walls of the classroom, in literature and across the curriculum	Incorporate pictures of students and families, quotes, role models, posters, artifacts, and use of students' home languages into the classroom environment. Stick pins into a wall map displaying the origin(s) of each student's heritage with strings leading off the map to their photos; engage students in writing "I am from" poems, illustrate them with photos and post on the walls; allow students to trace their hands on paper, color and cut - handprints are displayed in a circle or other design on the wall with words to celebrate their diversity; and read stories that share cross cultural themes and map similarities and differences.	Students feel valued when they see themselves and people like them reflected as part of their school experience. Conversely, when they do not see themselves reflected, they feel invisible.
Diversity as a Resource	Incorporate critical multiculturalism	Teach critical multiculturalism which includes the knowledge and skills to help analyze and address the negative and stereotyped messages about race and ethnicity in school and the world at large. The ability for teachers and students to accurately identify, analyze and address these messages appropriately is crucial as they encounter prejudice and stereotyping. These skills can begin in developmentally appropriate ways for children at very young ages. When teaching about non-dominant groups, especially if a teacher is not a member of that group, it is important to consider how the other persons might feel and assure that biases and stereotyping are not demonstrated without realizing it.	Students need tools to be able to feel identity safety even when the world around them continues to emit negative stereotypes. Critical multiculturalism offers a way to make sense of the unfairness of the world in a way that lessens the negative impact of prejudice and discrimination.

Cultivating Diversity as a Resource

Component	Strategy	Description of Strategy/Activity	Connection to Identity Safety
Diversity as a Resource	Say names correctly	State and use student names correctly.	Students feel respected, valued, and included when their teacher acknowledges them by pronouncing their names correctly.
Diversity as a Resource	Learn about names	Have students research and discover the background of their names and can write about it. Research can include interviews with family members to learn how they got their name, what it means, etc.	Names are a big part of our identities. Knowing and sharing their background creates a positive sense of identity safety.
Diversity as a Resource	Use students' home languages in class	Use students' home languages in class. Strategies can include students sharing and the teacher writing important words or phrases from their primary language on the walls, writing about their language in that language, giving opportunities for students to teach others in their primary language, reading a bilingual book, showing a bilingual film, celebrating languages in games with translations, and making a poem or story and translating it in many languages.	Students can feel the connection between home, their community, and school when their primary language is celebrated and used in the classroom. This also can increase identity safety for students' families and communities when members understand that their language means something in the student's school.
Diversity as a Resource	Refute and counter stereotypes	Be sure that students at all ages are stopped and addressed when they are stereotyping others. For younger students, it might simply involve recognizing that it is both a hurtful and untruthful thing to say. Beginning in fourth grade, students can be taught the meaning of a stereotype, and learn to both identify and counter them. Activities can include students learning the meaning of a stereotype, and writing and sharing about a negative stereotype that has hurt them. It is also important to counter positive stereotypes, such as "Jews are smart" or even "girls are nice". These, too, can cause harm to students who feel they cannot live up to the stereotype, and to other students who may feel left out.	Breaking down and refuting both positive and negative stereotypes will help students counteract the impact of stereotype threat and will promote empathy and create identity safety for all students.

Cultivating Diversity as a Resource

Component	Strategy	Description of Strategy/Activity	Connection to Identity Safety
Diversity as a Resource	Notice and address micro-agressions	Address micro-agressions. A micro-aggression is defined as a statement, action, or incident regarded as an instance of indirect, subtle, or unintentional discrimination against members of a marginalized group or a culturally and linguistically diverse group. Students at a young age can learn about the negative impact of micro-agressions. Immediately address micro-agressions without stigmatizing either the person who is the micro-aggressor or the target of the micro-aggression.	Identity safety is undermined if micro-agressions are allowed to occur without being addressed.
Diversity as a Resource	Incorporate diverse histories	Incorporate the history of all groups of people from all backgrounds, especially those in underrepresented groups that are missing from the textbooks. Engage students in Internet research to find and fill in the blanks for missing information or groups. Integrate folk tales, literature, and historical stories from many backgrounds into the curriculum.	Students feel invisible when historical accounts do not include their family culture, or when those accounts depict a version that characterizes them as victims or promotes assimilation. Sharing history from the point of view of non-dominant groups helps students of those backgrounds feel a sense of inclusion when their identities and cultures are recognized and valued.
Diversity as a Resource	Celebrate heritage in authentic ways	Frequent incorporate culturally-centered literature, interviews, primary sources in history lessons, artists, scientists, as well as students' family members, will help students feel that the information is both realistic and genuine. When addressed infrequently, or only on certain holidays such as Martin Luther King day, students may experience the information as a token gesture or as an insincere effort.	It is important to create continuous and authentic cultural activities with inclusivity for students of all backgrounds in the classroom in order to create identity safety and promote belonging. Students feel valued when they can share from their personal lives and experiences. They also feel their backgrounds are viewed as an asset.

Cultivating Diversity as a Resource

Component	Strategy	Description of Strategy/Activity	Connection to Identity Safety
Diversity as a Resource	Use multicultural literature	Teach literacy using multicultural literature, bilingual stories, poetry and other literary sources representing all student backgrounds.	Deep explorations of culture and diversity through literature helps students learn about and see the value of their cultural identities and those of their peers.
EDUCATOR EQUITY LENS Diversity as a Resource	Cultivate diversity as a resource by using an holistic approach	Be aware that students from varied backgrounds have a range of experiences that can vary from the highly individualistic and competitive to collectivist and collaborative. Provide an environment with varied experiences that create both independence and interdependence. Attend to the ways students are interacting with their teacher and with one another in ways that validate and do not undermine their identities. Be aware of students who experience their difference in a way that creates a feeling of separateness for them. Also, be aware of any trauma experienced by students.	A sense of belonging can be fostered by cultivating diversity as a resource. Identity safety is enhanced when students do not experience a colorblind environment, but rather when their background and diversity is acknowledged and appreciated.
<u>HIGH EXPECTATIONS AND ACADEMIC RIGOR</u>			
High Expectations/ Academic Rigor	Praise effort instead of intelligence	Use praise cautiously to develop a growth mindset. Do not praise intelligence, such as saying, "You're so smart," but rather for effort, such as saying, "You tried really hard. Awesome!"	Research has shown that praising effort offers impetus for students to try harder, while praising intelligence can lead to a fixed mindset as students may worry more about failure and avoid risk. The growth mindset is a characteristic of an identity safe classroom because students gain confidence in their capacity to grow and learn.
High Expectations/ Academic Rigor	Give wise feedback	Communicate the following to students when giving feedback: 1) use your highest standards, 2) know that you can meet them, 3) recognize that mistakes are not failures but learning opportunities, and 4) give specific actionable feedback (from Claude Steele)	Students feel either valued or invalidated by the way that feedback is given. Wise feedback creates identity safety and acknowledges that we all can grow and learn from mistakes.

Cultivating Diversity as a Resource

Component	Strategy	Description of Strategy/Activity	Connection to Identity Safety
High Expectations/ Academic Rigor	Scaffolding as a pathway to rigor	Provide scaffolding and differentiated pathways to achieve. Curricular experiences that offer support can promote rigor for students at all academic levels and empower their efforts. Scaffolding allows students to take manageable steps toward proficiency. Teachers become aware of student growth and increase proficiency by monitoring and acknowledging progress.	Scaffolding helps students enter proximal zones of development and achieve at increasingly higher levels of proficiency.
High Expectations/ Academic Rigor	Promote college and career readiness starting in Kindergarten	Provide college and career readiness for all students by addressing these options as early as Kindergarten. Engaging K-12 students in activities that promote awareness and the importance of higher education will prepare them for lifelong learning and a meaningful career.	Identity safety is enhanced when students are shown the value of preparing for a positive future career. Pathways are made visible and achievable for all students.
High Expectations/ Academic Rigor	Incorporate growth mindset	Use growth mindset messaging in our speech, written word, and on the walls. By definition, in a growth mindset, people believe that their most basic abilities can be developed through dedication and hard work—brains and talent are just the starting point. This view creates a love of learning and a resilience that is essential for great accomplishment. The messages given to students both verbally and with quotes on the wall can enhance this growth mindset in students.	When students feel competent and understand that with effort, their intelligence grows, their identity safety grows with it.
High Expectations/ Academic Rigor	Enhance students' academic identity	Encourage students with positive academic attitudes, such as, "I am curious and want to learn, I am motivated, I like to think and question, I care about being a good student." This can be accomplished through specific lessons on academic identity and by comments to individual students and the whole group on a regular basis. For example, positive labeling such as addressing students as readers and writers can promote confidence and favorable self-concepts.	Developing an academic identity is an important part of creating identity safety and belonging at school.

Cultivating Diversity as a Resource

Component	Strategy	Description of Strategy/Activity	Connection to Identity Safety
High Expectations/ Academic Rigor	Promote an academic mindset	Encourage academic mindsets through attitudinal scaffolding, such as, "I belong here. I can succeed. My work has value." Encouragement can be offered on a daily basis when students are set up with incremental micro-goals that promote success and demonstrate long-range progress.	Identity safety is enhanced for teachers, students and their families alike when they feel competent and capable. An academic mindset is highly valued and will help them throughout their lives in both school and career.
High Expectations/ Academic Rigor	Communicate high expectations	Communicate high expectations to individual students and to the class with comments such as, "I believe in you and will support you to learn and achieve at high levels."	Teacher expectations reflect parallel expectations in the students. Communicating high expectations motivates students to make an effort to succeed and promotes their achievement, which becomes part of their academic identity.
EDUCATOR EQUITY LENS High Expectations/ Academic Rigor	Leverage trust and respect to communicate high expectations in all classroom interactions	Express high expectations in the context of a trusting relationships with students. Regularly express and model a belief in students' capacities. Acknowledge the value of hard work and demonstrate faith in their abilities to succeed. For example, expressing "you may not know this yet, but you will soon," can promote a growth mindset and build the confidence necessary for addressing and completing the tasks ahead.	Students will only believe you have high expectations for them if they trust you and feel your concern for them is authentic. High expectations communicate that a teacher believes in students capabilities.
		<u>CHALLENGING CURRICULUM</u>	
Challenging Curriculum	Help students identify and develop interests	Incorporate activities to help students identify and develop their interests through inquiry and project-based learning. Integrate their interests and cultures throughout the curriculum.	Helping students identify and develop their own interests, especially when drawing from their individual backgrounds and cultures, helps form a positive identity and motivates students to engage in school.

Cultivating Diversity as a Resource

Component	Strategy	Description of Strategy/Activity	Connection to Identity Safety
Challenging Curriculum	Incorporate inquiry methods	<p>Use inquiry-based science and social studies activities. "Inquiry" is defined as an approach for "seeking for truth, information, or knowledge -- seeking information by questioning." Individuals carry on the process of inquiry from the time they are born until they die. The process of inquiring begins with gathering information and data through applying the human senses -- seeing, hearing, touching, tasting, and smelling. Aspects of inquiry include some or all of the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> -The inquiry study emanates from a question, problem, or exploration that has meaning to the students. -The inquiry study originates with an issue, problem, question, exploration or topic that provides opportunities to create or produce something that contributes to the world's knowledge. -The task/s require/s a variety of roles or perspectives--The study requires students to spend time doing their own research, field work, design work, labs, interviews, studio work, construction, etc. -The study requires students to engage in real, authentic investigations using a variety of media, methods and sources. Inquiry is not a linear process or a specific set of activities, rather a student-centered approach to learning. -Draw from a variety of sources including oral traditions and ancient wisdom as well as science and technology. 	Students are supported to be in charge of their own learning, which increases motivation and their willingness to accept challenge. Drawing from a variety of sources values different ways to learning and know that match some of the deep cultural norms of students.
Challenging Curriculum	Use personalized learning strategies	Use personalized learning strategies by tailoring learning to each child's strengths, needs, and interests. This enables student voice and choice to ensure mastery of the highest standards possible.	Personalized learning opens student pathways, optimizes instruction, and encourages student voice and choice in their education. This type of student-centered instruction enhances a sense of identity and student competence.
Challenging Curriculum	Hold academic discussions in all content areas	Hold a range of academic discussions, science talks, math talks, (e.g., Lucy Calkins "beyond and about the text" discussions, and Visual Thinking Strategies). Use these and a variety of writing activities with higher level thinking activities.	Deeping academic discussions in all content areas helps students engage with the content and make meaning of it for their lives.

Cultivating Diversity as a Resource

Component	Strategy	Description of Strategy/Activity	Connection to Identity Safety
Challenging Curriculum	Differentiate instruction	Differentiate instruction by content. Students are offered the opportunity to identify the content they want to study within a unit. Students can choose their product, such as a piece of writing, an audio-visual project, or a performance piece etc. Students can also choose the process with which to deliver the product, such as working alone, with a partner, or in a small group.	Offering differentiated pathways acknowledges that each student is unique and challenged by different experiences.
EDUCATOR EQUITY LENS Challenging Curriculum	Make every day interesting and rigorous	Assure that challenging curriculum is available for students at all academic levels. Provide assurance that the classroom is safe for thinking - nobody is belittled for errors or ideas.	By offering a challenging curriculum, students' identities are valued. Their social identities expand when they feel connected to their school experience.

Classroom Relationships

Component	Strategy	Description of Strategy/Activity	Connection to Identity Safety
<u>TEACHER WARMTH AND AVAILABILITY FOR LEARNING</u>			
Teacher Warmth and Availability for Learning	Greet each student daily	Welcome them at the door with a warm greeting when they arrive. Use their name.	Greetings help students feel visible and valued.
Teacher Warmth and Availability for Learning	Connect with each student's life	Connect personally with students. Converse with them, and get to know the student's unique family situations, lives, and interests.	This can be the one of the best ways to create identity safety. Students can feel like they matter to their teacher.
Teacher Warmth and Availability for Learning	Get to know students' families	Engage with families outside of school through home visits, attending a sports event, birthday party or talent show, or other events.	Getting to know kids in the home environment helps teachers understand them and build stronger relationships.
Teacher Warmth and Availability for Learning	Celebrate student effort and progress	Recognize students when they are making progress and achieving in authentic ways.	Students feel their teacher will stand up for them and support them.
Teacher Warmth and Availability for Learning	Communicate your care and support	Use statements such as "I have your back" to demonstrate to students that their teacher cares. Communicate it and model it for individuals and the whole class.	Students feel their teacher will stand up for them and support them.
Teacher Warmth and Availability for Learning	Address problems quickly	Handle issues and resolve problems quickly. Sometimes, if time does not permit, handle the incident briefly and then return later for a longer response. Respond privately when possible and in ways that do not humiliate students. Pay attention to fairness and ensure implicit bias is not operating.	Student identity safety is enhanced when the students trust their teachers. Handling issues fairly and without bias is crucial for building trust.
Teacher Warmth and Availability for Learning	Build personal trust	Promote trust-building behaviors and attitudes by sharing appropriately and openly about your life, including challenges, interests, successes and even the failures. Also express care and concern for all students, and handle private issues quietly and alone with the student or students involved.	Trust is built for students when teachers model that they, too, are involved in the ups and downs of life, and that it's okay. Appropriate sharing greatly heralds in the magic touch of humanity and connection into the classroom.

Classroom Relationships

Component	Strategy	Description of Strategy/Activity	Connection to Identity Safety
Teacher Warmth and Availability for Learning	Conduct regular consultations and check-ins	Use regular academic check-ins with students to support their learning. The private, carefully orchestrated monitoring of progress helps students learn to appreciate their own growth and improvement. Bearing witness to their progress can encourage them to adopt a growth mindset. Non-academic check-ins, also, serve a vital role. They can contribute greatly to positive relationships with you, their teacher. With traumatized students, attention to their moods and non-verbal cues is essential. Checking in for these students, especially, is very important.	Checking in allows the teacher to understand students at a deeper level, which in turn develops and builds trust as the teacher is able to consider and integrate student progress in classroom interactions. It also helps teachers know when additional support is needed.
Teacher Warmth and Availability for Learning	Communicate positive messages to families with positive calls home	Make positive calls or notes sent home with positive messages to heighten the home/school connection.	Positive relationships with family members validate the student's identity and background. These messages have a double value. They reveal a teacher's care and value for the student, and they help parents see and treat their child in an affirming way.
Teacher Warmth and Availability for Learning	Communicate that all students and teachers are "equal but different"	Communicate the message that everyone is equal although we are all different. Help students understand what it means. This can be taught, but also it must be demonstrated by treating students fairly, and also by posters on the wall, specific activities, and actions.	Students come to see the different aspects of their social identity in a positive light. They feel positive about their differences and appreciate the differences in others.
Teacher Warmth and Availability for Learning	Show sensitivity when trust feels threatened	Students know and respond when trust is threatened or lacking. Give special attention to building trust in difficult situations. This allows you to show care in unique ways that do not lower expectations, but take into account different student needs. A kind word, an adjusted assignment, taking special times with a student are several examples.	Trust can be built with students who are resistant for any reason. This can be one of the most important bridges to identity safety for traumatized students.

Classroom Relationships

Component	Strategy	Description of Strategy/Activity	Connection to Identity Safety
Teacher Warmth and Availability for Learning	Undo the damage of low expectations	Demonstrate conscious efforts through authentic comments, scaffolded lessons, and activities where success can build upon success. When students experience success, they begin to shift their expectations and gain confidence. Also, point out their progress to students.	Success creates more success and works to undo the damage of low expectations. Together with teacher encouragement and authentic validation, students can shift perceptions and instill high expectations for themselves. Students can also sense when encouragement or praise is not authentic or exaggerated. The importance of genuine encouragement and assessment of student performance is critical for building trust, which in turn strengthens identity safety.
EDUCATOR EQUITY LENS Teacher Warmth and Availability for Learning	Fostering rapport and positive relationships with your students is one of the best ways to support a student academically and socially.	Place a high value on developing a warm and supportive relationship with each student. Recognize and honor students who value interdependence and reflects on ways to create entry points to social and academic learning through relationships. Reflect and consider possible implicit biases that may impact your fair treatment of students.	Monitoring one's own implicit bias is an ongoing effort that begins with awareness and requires regular reflection. Without this effort, an educator may undermine all positive relationship-building efforts.
POSITIVE STUDENT RELATIONSHIPS			
Positive Student Relationships	Practice and Use I-Messages	For interpersonal communication, teach students about I-messages. These are assertions about the feelings, beliefs, or values etc. of the person speaking, generally expressed as a sentence beginning with the word "I," which may be contrasted with a "you-message" or "you-statement," which often begins with the word "you" and focuses on and often blames the person who is being addressed. I-messages are often used with the intent to be assertive without putting the listener on the defensive. They are also used to take ownership for one's feelings rather than imply that another person caused them. A frame you can teach students is "I feel ____ when____ happens. So, please, in the future _____." Teach students to avoid blaming others while expressing what is bothering them. Also, teach them to make a request without demanding. Give them time to role-play and practice.	I-messages are tools for positive communication. Ensuring that no student is put on the defensive is important in an creating an identity safe environment, and serves as well as an important life skill.

Classroom Relationships

Component	Strategy	Description of Strategy/Activity	Connection to Identity Safety
Positive Student Relationships	Use Restorative Justice practices and circles	<p>Use Restorative Justice (RJ) strategies. These consist of a set of principles and practices used to build community, respond to harm and conflict, and provide a welcoming reentry for students who are returning to school after a sustained absence. By building, maintaining and restoring relationships between members of the entire school community, you can help to create an environment where all students can thrive. RJ activities can include building community through an RJ Circle or using RJ circles to to repair harm.</p> <p>For repairing harm by the initiators, use these RJ Questions: What happened? What were you thinking of at the time? What have you thought of since? Who has been affected by what you have done? In what way? What do you think you need to do to make things right?</p> <p>To help those affected: What did you think when you realized what had happened? What impact has this incident had on you and others? What has been the hardest thing for you? What do you think needs to happen to make things right?</p>	Restorative Practices help create an identity safe environment for students of all backgrounds. They serve a student who may have initiated a problem by giving them the chance to repair harm. They help everyone find positive solutions to problems. They also give students tools to use outside the classroom.
Positive Student Relationships	Teach and practice upstander skills	Teach upstander skills. An upstander is a person who chooses to take positive action in the face of injustice in society or in situations where individuals need assistance. Bullying, hate crimes, and intolerance can be actively prevented in many cases simply by standing up for the victim and using your voice or your actions to stand against injustice. Model and teach upstander skills to students.	Identity safety is enhanced when students know that someone will speak up to stop them from being bullied or harmed. Upstanding is also an important life skill that increases a sense of identity safety in the world.

Classroom Relationships

Component	Strategy	Description of Strategy/Activity	Connection to Identity Safety
Positive Student Relationships	Vary groupings to promote student relationships	Mix groupings so students can get to know each other. Use different types of groupings such as partners, trios, and small groups for functions including cooperative groups, peer tutoring, investigations, teams and games, jigsaws, etc . Pay close attention to the makeup of the groups to ensure they can work together fairly and experience equal status. Teach specific skills for working with others in groups. As students gain proficiency in accepting and working with others, groupings may be varied to include more challenging combinations so that all students can experience working together over the year.	Students feel more identity safety when they are comfortable working with others. Empathy and cooperation is strengthened.
Positive Student Relationships	Build a caring community in the classroom	Build classroom identity by communicating the positive qualities of whole-class teamwork. Validate the class when they work well together, such as when the teacher gets a positive report from a substitute, when they give a school performance, or when they buddy with another class or do a form of service for others in the school.	Valuing the way students work together helps develop empathy and support for and from their peers, enhancing their sense of identity safety.
Positive Student Relationships	Pay attention to what is happening to students outside the classroom	Carefully observe what happens outside the classroom, including during lunch, recess, breaks, in hallways, and after school, as well as going to and from school.	If students feel safe in class, but are bullied or excluded outside the classroom, identity safety is undermined.
Positive Student Relationships	Create a sense of belonging	Create a sense belonging for every student and preserve and strengthen their identities. Provide opportunities for students to share or express their unique social identities in ways that do not single them out or treat them as an exotic "other" person. Invite family members to class, create student of the week activities where each student is highlighted over the year, generate writing activities, graphs, and other projects that validate their language, country of origin, or other unique cultural traditions.	Authentically sharing their ethnic, racial, religious, or other traditions shows students they are valued and appreciated. Doing this in a positive way that does not single out a student, but is a regular part of the curriculum enhances identity development and safety.
EDUCATOR EQUITY LENS Positive Student Relationships	Relationships are at the heart of an identity safe classroom	Monitor student relationships to ensure that no students are being bullied or excluded or subjected to micro-aggressions from fellow students or adults. Positive peer relationships are crucial for students to feel identity safety and belonging. Also, intentionally work towards creating an environment of equal status among peers.	Positive relationships with student and teacher and among students are central to an identity safe environment where each student feels a sense of belonging.

Caring Classrooms

Component	Strategy	Description of Strategy/Activity	Connections to Identity Safety
		<u>TEACHER SKILL</u>	
Teacher Skill	Attention to Prosocial Development	<p>Monitor and support student behavior with simple problem-solving questions when students misbehave:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Did the students know they were breaking the rule? If so, teach the expectations or procedures that were lacking. -Do they lack impulse control? If so, help them become aware of and learn to monitor their behavior. Practice techniques such as ways to control their reactions. It may take lots of practice! - Is there a social skill they need to learn that will help them avoid the problem in the future? If so, teach the skill, and be sure to explain why it is important. Model and practice it. - Are they experiencing frustration from repeated academic failures? If so, consider how you can turn failures around by setting them up to succeed and easing the frustration. -Are they seeking attention? If so, guide them toward positive ways to get attention. <p>Check your own assumptions about a student's motives and consider alternative explanations, including external factors that might have influenced their behavior.</p>	Identity safety is strengthened when students are held to expectations while simultaneously supporting their needs.
Teacher Skill	Set rules and norms for classroom behavior	Work with students to co-create classroom rules/norms. Have students sign norms and refer back to them throughout the year. Post them and be sure students know the consequences. Use logical consequences that are tied to the student behavioral infraction. For example, if homework is not done, complete during free time/recess.	Students feel safer when they hold themselves and one another accountable while learning about acceptable norms for interacting with others.
Teacher Skill	Set clear expectations	Give clear expectations and implement them fairly. Reduce stress by being explicit about routines.	Students feel identity safe in an environment where they are not threatened, where they are treated fairly and feel expectations and rules are fair.
Teacher Skill	Develop procedures	Present procedures for partnering and engaging in cooperative activities. Teach specific skills for effective group work. Use a sociogram to intentionally group students with others of different social skills. Monitor group interaction and try to give students an opportunity to work with everyone in the class over the year.	Student status is equalized when all students get to know each of their peers, understand how to work together, learn effective collaboration skills, and respect the procedures and each other.

Caring Classrooms

Component	Strategy	Description of Strategy/Activity	Connections to Identity Safety
<p>EDUCATOR EQUITY LENS Teacher Skill</p>	<p>Incorporate identity safety into your efficacy as a teacher</p>	<p>Your educational career has given you a toolkit of skills for creating a classroom environment. By incorporating a lens for identity safety, you can bring to bear all those skills while constantly checking yourself to be sure your management methods, relationships, and messaging to students align with the values of fostering each student's social identity and countering stereotypes and other threats.</p>	<p>All the strategies of identity safety will not create identity safety for students if a teacher attempts to be colorblind and renders student identities invisible- or if the teacher allows microaggressions to go unchecked or if the classroom is chaotic. Rather, attention to teacher skill assures you will create a safe and welcoming space that honors each student's backgrounds and potential for growth.</p>
<u>EMOTIONAL AND PHYSICAL COMFORT</u>			
<p>Emotional and Physical Comfort</p>	<p>Hold regular class meetings</p>	<p>Hold community circles/class meetings daily, twice or thrice weekly to help students develop respect for each other and take ownership for their learning and behavior. Meetings are used to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Learn new pro-social skills - Build relationships among students - Address problematic playground behaviors - Set classroom norms, and reflect on their individual and group behaviors 	<p>Class meetings and community circles allow students to learn the valuable skills and rewards that come with expressing themselves and listening to others. Their identities grow and mature as they develop empathy and understanding for both themselves and their peers. The meetings also help create an ongoing dialogue for promoting an identity safe environment.</p>
<p>Emotional and Physical Comfort</p>	<p>Arrange the room to create emotional comfort</p>	<p>Set up furniture to foster dialogue, cooperation, and autonomy with comfortable areas for learning and meeting in either small or large groups.</p>	<p>A comfortable physical environment can reduce stress, help students relax, and enhance their feelings of belonging and safety in the classroom.</p>
<p>Emotional and Physical Comfort</p>	<p>Provide personal space for each student</p>	<p>Identify a personal space for each student to sit and keep materials. For students who have impulse control issues and sometimes need to be away from the group, consider having two spaces, one with and one away from the group. Take care not to create stigma for the student in either space.</p>	<p>When students have a comfortable space to work and places to keep their things, they feel a sense of agency over their possessions, which boosts confidence and identity.</p>
<p>Emotional and Physical Comfort</p>	<p>Provide self-affirmation activities</p>	<p>Use self-affirmation activities where students write, speak, or create art, music or otherwise to express ideas about personal values and things that matter to them.</p>	<p>Research on self-affirmation activities have shown that students can improve their sense of belonging and identity safety by acknowledging what most matters to them and awarding a value to it.</p>

Caring Classrooms

Component	Strategy	Description of Strategy/Activity	Connections to Identity Safety
Emotional and Physical Comfort	Addressing Student Mistakes	Celebrate mistakes as learning opportunities, encouraging students to lose their fear of giving the wrong answer and tackle the problem with interest and motivation. If students are afraid of making mistakes, they will avoid trying something new, thinking outside the box or being creative. In this atmosphere, if they don't know the answer or if the problem seems difficult, they will not raise their hands. Teachers sometimes inadvertently reinforce these beliefs when they tell students that their answers are wrong. Students can be set up to succeed when given specific insight regarding how and where their thinking has led them. Model interest and enthusiasm as you reflect on your own mistakes and when students make errors, guide them back to the problem to reassess.	When students feel they can make mistakes and accept it as an interesting and valid part of their learning process, the level of threat is lowered and identity safety in the classroom is greatly elevated.
EDUCATOR EQUITY LENS Emotional and Physical Comfort	Emotional and physical comfort as a classroom norm	Consider threats that undermine a student's sense of safety in the classroom. These threats could include: 1. fear of being excluded or treated like an outsider or ostracized for being different. 2. fear of being treated unfairly or of others getting an unfair advantage. 3. fear of embarrassing oneself by not knowing what is expected behavior in a given situation. Give attention to reducing these threats and creating emotional and physical comfort in a classroom at all times. This allows you to make your classroom a space where interest and focused attention will thrive.	Emotional and physical comfort reduces threats and allows a student to relax, feel integrated, accepted, and safe.
Attention to Prosocial Development	Teach and practice positive relational skills	Help students learn and practice positive relational skills. The following practices reinforce these skills: - assign a student to greet visitors - assign a student as a buddy to a new student - assign students to provide translation support for ELs in their classroom - teach students how to respectfully interrupt a conversation	Relational skills increase the capacity for students to relate positively in and outside of the school environment.
Attention to Prosocial Development	Practice forgiveness	Students learn and practice forgiveness tools and strategies. They are supported with specific ways to ask for forgiveness, forgive themselves, and others.	Forgiveness opens opportunities for building empathy and understanding, creating identity safety not only for those directly involved in the process, but all witnesses as well.

Caring Classrooms

Component	Strategy	Description of Strategy/Activity	Connections to Identity Safety
<u>ATTENTION TO PROSOCIAL DEVELOPMENT</u>			
Attention to Prosocial Development	Incorporate empathy and compassion building activities	<p>Help students learn about self-compassion, and receiving and extending care for others. They can build bridges of understanding with students who are different from themselves. Activities can include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - live interviews and other face to face opportunities that promote understandings about students who are different from themselves - writing and role-playing activities where a student assumes the identity of another, such as a character, a famous person, etc. - activities that include caretaking for a plant, pet, or younger student 	Empathy is an important part of identity safety. Breaking down stereotypes and building an appreciation for themselves and others is at the heart of identity safe environments.
Attention to Prosocial Development	Teach meta-emotional vocabulary	Learn and practice a shared vocabulary for meta-emotional learning. Students are taught words to express a range of feelings and given opportunities to practice expressing them. Through these understandings, they can learn to de-escalate anger and emotional reactions.	When students can analyze and manage their own feelings, they can develop and enjoy a greater connection with their inner selves and feel a strong sense of agency in their lives.
Attention to Prosocial Development	Incorporate mindfulness activities	Teach and practice mindfulness activities that include breathing, quiet moments, and periods of focused attention on their breath or on sounds or music. Also, lead guided meditations that include gratitude or forgiveness. Students can also be guided to set behavioral goals and intentions.	Mindfulness activities calm students down and help them feel more centered and safe in the classroom, Practicing gratitude and forgiveness helps them also learn to accept their own identities.
Attention to Prosocial Development	Use pro-social language development in the arts and social studies activities	<p>Integrate pro-social development into student activities in the following ways:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - model and encourage pro-social language in literature activities, including reading and writing - use prompts that promote pro-social development - discuss pro-social topics 	Incorporating SEL and prosocial skills across all curricular areas promotes an identity safe environment. It also communicates values that enhance identity safety.

Caring Classrooms

Component	Strategy	Description of Strategy/Activity	Connections to Identity Safety
Attention to Prosocial Development	Value different cultural expressions	Create opportunities for different cultural expressions and values. Explain the value of different cultural behaviors and attitudes and give examples, such as cultures that expect a more formal treatment of adults through the use of a title; while in other cultures, informality is the norm as students call teachers by their first names. Students are made aware that neither is right or wrong, simply different and worthy of respect. Other examples include cultures where women cover their heads and others do not; enduring silence in conversations is perceived as comfortable in some and awkward in others; and arriving late for a dinner invitation is acceptable in some cultures but not in others. Use	Offering students an understanding of different cultural expressions and traditions promotes inclusion. Students from diverse backgrounds can value their cultural differences, and feel more accepted and identity safe.
EDUCATOR EQUITY LENS Attention to Prosocial Development	Weave pro-social skill-building throughout the curriculum	Express the value of pro-social skills and help students recognize that pro-social skills can be learned and practiced to create belonging and inclusion for themselves and others. These skills are not taught separately, but expressed throughout the curriculum. Check any assumptions about a student's' cultural expressions. Listen, watch, and learn from your students and their families.	Being explicit about pro-social skill development creates learning for all students as they experience belonging and inclusion.