A CHECKLIST FOR A WELCOMING AND INCLUSIVE SCHOOL ENVIRONMENT

INCLUSIVE LANGUAGE

☐ Often a family's and student's first contact with a school is through forms, whether completed online or in the school office. Are these forms friendly to different family structures? Do they use language such as 'parent/ parent' or 'parent/guardian?'

☐ Do your forms ask for the names people want to be called and the pronouns that families use – she/her/hers; he/him/his and they/them/theirs.

☐ Check through student forms, handbooks and school/home communications to ensure inclusivity.

☐ Do you model inclusive language for students, for other staff and educators, and for parents and caregivers when talking about families?

MIRRORS FOR THEIR LIVES, WINDOWS TO THE WORLD — DIVERSE BOOKS AND IMAGES

☐ Do the books in your school reflect your students' lives? Do your books offer perspectives on families not found in your school? Do your books feature single parent families, adoptive or foster families, two-mom or two-dad families, grandparent-headed families, and multiracial or multiethnic families?

☐ Do classroom and hallway images show diverse family structures, people of different races, gender expressions, ethnicities and abilities? Do the displays encourage respect for all people?

☐ Are your students exposed to diverse, positive role models in literature?

SPEAKING UP TO STOP MEAN WORDS AND ACTIONS

☐ Do teachers and staff interrupt mean teasing or put-downs about a child's identity or their family? Speak up! Ensure that concern for saying the wrong thing doesn't keep you and others silent. Interrupt hurtful name-calling including the derogatory use of the word "gay" and race- or gender-based slurs.

☐ Are you ready for teachable moments? Practice how to respond when you hear students say things like "That's gay!" "You act like a girl!" or "You're not a real family because you don't have a dad!"

☐ Does your professional development on bullying and harassment include the opportunity to practice interrupting and stopping bias-based name-calling or bullying and ways to respond to students' questions on diverse families?

SCHOOL AND CLASSROOM CLIMATE — SETTING A POSITIVE, INCLUSIVE TONE FOR ALL

☐ When someone walks into your school, can they tell that all students and their families are welcome? Is there student work featured in the hallways highlighting both diversity and commonalities?

☐ Have you held events recognizing and celebrating family diversity that welcome all children and their families to your school community?

☐ Do staff and educators treat all families with respect and avoid stereotyping or judgment when communicating with two-mom and two-dad, single-parent, racially diverse and/or multi-linguistic families?

☐ Do all students have an adult in the school they can connect with? Do families know their children are respected and able to achieve to the best of their abilities? Connections with families are crucial to children's lives.

☐ Have you created and implemented clear classroom and schoolwide agreements with your students regarding respect, caring for classmates and not hurting each other with words or actions? Do students know that this means no put-downs or harassment about who someone is or who their family is?

☐ Do your written anti-bullying policies specifically name groups that are historically bullied or harassed more frequently?