



**Seymour Middle School
23-24 Safe School Climate Plan**

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A safe school climate ensures that students feel secure and supported, which is essential for their academic and personal growth. It also promotes positive behavior and reduces the likelihood of bullying and violence. A safe school climate is not only beneficial for students but also for teachers and staff, who can work in a healthy and productive environment. Therefore, it is imperative to prioritize the creation and maintenance of a safe school climate plan.

The Seymour Middle School Climate Committee's membership includes administration, teachers, support services staff, office staff, student representatives, and parent representatives. The Safe School Climate Committee's members meet monthly to consider school-wide efforts to promote, enhance, and sustain a positive climate. In forming the school climate program for Seymour Middle School, elements of PBIS, restorative practices, SEL, character education, etc. have been implemented.

At the start of every school year, the Seymour Middle School administration takes the time to address parents (electronically) and staff members (professional development) to review policies related to safe school climate. Additionally, they periodically review climate expectations with stakeholder groups to ensure that everyone is on the same page. The administration and teachers at the middle school are committed to encouraging and reinforcing the message that students should always strive to do the right thing, be a part of the bigger picture, and serve as an upstanding member within the school community and beyond. By instilling these values in their students, they hope to create a positive and safe learning environment for all. Monthly PBIS Celebrations are also planned for our students, to recognize academic success and reinforce behaviors and efforts which lead to having a positive school climate.

Periodic surveys are conducted within the school community to gather feedback on the school's climate and needs. The Seymour Middle School Improvement Plan includes two goals, one for social emotional learning (SEL) to support the well-being of staff and students, and the other for family/community engagement with a focus on implementing strategies for ongoing communication and engagement with families. This year, the school climate emphasis is on strengthening positive

relationships between students and teachers, as well as among students themselves, to ensure a school atmosphere of fair treatment and respect.

To support family engagement and communication, Seymour Middle School has created a new school newsletter and an action plan to host at least one monthly community building and family event in which parents and families can participate. The School Climate Committee and the School-Based Data Team analyze progress towards the goal and keep staff and students informed of successes and challenges at monthly faculty meetings and displays in the school.

Seymour Middle School continues to implement the Positive Behavioral Interventions and Supports (PBIS) program. Team and school rules/expectations are closely aligned with this proactive philosophy. The PBIS rules/expectations can be found in each classroom, throughout the building and in the student handbook located on the Seymour Middle School district website. Parents/guardians/students are instructed to read the handbook, especially the code of conduct section. Students and parents/guardians sign the SMS Student and Parent Acknowledgment Form which states that they have read and discussed the publication. The acknowledgment form is then returned to the school.

The SMS school counselors, the health curriculum, and outside sources review important issues related to school climate. These issues include bullying, cyber-bullying, healthy relationships, harassment, and drug use. Additionally, there are grade-level based and whole school assemblies where rules and expectations are reviewed and explained. Our Guidance team and classroom teachers will continue to implement lessons from Suite 360, a researched-based SEL program. The specific, hand-selected lessons are mapped to the grade-specific learning objectives allowing each grade level, or team, to focus their efforts on needs specific to that student population. Further efforts to identify student strengths and needs regarding SEL will include utilizing the DESSA assessment tool in Aperture, a Fall Student SEL survey, and the annual Spring School Climate Surveys. Feedback provided by these tools and resources will prompt action plans to address students and building needs. Homeroom time is utilized to build relationships, discuss school based issues, and support SEL initiatives.

All students receive PBIS interventions using a continuum of procedures encouraging expected behavior and discussing the failure to meet expected behavior. As patterns of inappropriate behaviors are documented students may be recommended for more intensive or targeted interventions. Open communication between staff and parents is essential for the success of the school climate. In order to ensure safety, staff monitor students at all times and a school resource officer is present in the building. Seymour Middle School students are expected to do the right thing and are encouraged to report unacceptable behavior to an adult in school.

This plan is under constant review, and will be amended/modified as needed.