



Seymour Middle School 24-25 Safe School Climate Plan

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Introduction

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 benefits students and fosters a healthy, productive environment for teachers and staff. Therefore, it is imperative to prioritize the creation and maintenance of a safe school climate plan.

Overview

This year, Seymour Middle School has implemented its own homegrown program, referred to as Cougar PRIDE. This program emphasizes the values of **Perseverance, Respect, Integrity, Dependability, and Empathy**, which serve as the foundation for fostering a positive school culture. Seymour Middle School is committed to enhancing the spirit of our students by teaching them to uphold high standards when making academic and personal choices.

To assist students in this process, SMS employs a combination of programs grounded in Social Emotional Learning (SEL), including Positive Behavior Interventions and Supports (PBIS) and Restorative Practices.

Core Frameworks

Social Emotional Learning (SEL)

SEL is an educational approach that focuses on teaching students the skills to:

- Understand and manage their emotions.
- Set and achieve positive goals.
- Feel and show empathy for others.
- Establish and maintain positive relationships.
- Make responsible decisions.

Positive Behavior Interventions and Supports (PBIS)

PBIS is an approach to teaching and supporting positive behaviors to meet the needs of all students. This school-wide discipline strategy builds a safe and positive environment where all students can learn and thrive.

Restorative Practices

Restorative Practices aim to build community and manage conflict by repairing harm and restoring relationships. This approach empowers students and staff to resolve conflicts peacefully and respectfully through circles, conversations, and other restorative techniques. Restorative Practices foster a sense of accountability and understanding among students while promoting a positive school climate.

Restorative Practices Training: Throughout the school year, staff will participate in professional development sessions focused on Restorative Practices. These sessions aim to support the integration of restorative strategies into the school culture, empowering staff to guide students in resolving conflicts respectfully and collaboratively.

Implementation of Cougar PRIDE

The Cougar PRIDE Program integrates these principles into daily school life through homegrown lessons developed specifically for our students. These lessons (aka, Cougar PRIDE lessons) are designed to:

- Support Social Emotional Learning (SEL) objectives.
- Reinforce the core values of Cougar PRIDE.
- Address the unique needs of our student population.

Cougar PRIDE Expectations: Specific expectations for locations such as the cafeteria, classrooms, hallways, bathrooms, and buses are explicitly outlined to ensure students understand what Cougar PRIDE looks like in practice. These expectations are also embedded in Cougar PRIDE lessons.

Cougar PRIDE Time is utilized to build relationships, discuss school-based issues, and support Cougar PRIDE initiatives. Monthly PBIS celebrations are also planned to recognize academic success and reinforce behaviors that contribute to a positive school climate.

Integration into Lessons: Cougar PRIDE lessons incorporate these expectations, aligning classroom instruction with the core values to create consistent reinforcement across various school settings. These expectations are prominently displayed in classrooms, hallways, and other shared spaces.

Data-Driven Strategies

Seymour Middle School employs the following climate-based surveys throughout the school year:

- DESSA assessment tool in Aperture (Fall, Winter, Spring).
- Fall Student SEL Surveys.
- Annual Spring School Climate Surveys (Student, Staff, Parent).

Public Sharing of Survey Results: End-of-year survey results will be publicly posted and shared in the school newsletter, *The Paw Print*. This ensures transparency and invites collaboration from all stakeholders in maintaining a positive school climate.

Feedback gathered from these tools informs action plans and helps address both student and building needs.

Communication and Engagement

To strengthen family engagement and communication, SMS has created a school newsletter and developed an action plan to host at least one monthly community-building and family event. The School Climate Committee and School-Based Data Team analyze progress toward these goals and share updates during monthly faculty meetings and through visual displays within the school.

School Climate Committee

The School Climate Committee includes members from administration, teachers, support staff, office staff, student representatives, and parent representatives. The committee meets monthly to promote and sustain a positive climate through:

- Policy reviews;
- School-wide initiatives;
- Feedback analysis from surveys and data tools.

Student and Staff Responsibilities

All students are encouraged to demonstrate Cougar PRIDE values daily. Staff members monitor students at all times to ensure safety and address any issues proactively. A school resource officer is present in the building to further support safety efforts.

Students are expected to report unacceptable behavior to an adult in the school. Open communication between staff, students, and parents is essential to maintaining a positive school climate.

Conclusion

This Safe School Climate Plan is a living document, subject to review and amendments as necessary. By prioritizing Cougar PRIDE and employing a combination of SEL, PBIS, and Restorative Practices, Seymour Middle School aims to create a safe, supportive, and empowering environment for all members of our community.

	<i>Cougar PRIDE Expectations</i>	<i>What does Cougar PRIDE look like?</i>
<i>Cafeteria</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Clean up after yourself. ● Use appropriate manners. ● Stay seated/ask permission to get up. ● Keep conversations/volume in check. 	<p>Perseverance: Waiting patiently in line for food, even if the wait is long.</p> <p>Respect: Using appropriate manners and cleaning up after oneself.</p> <p>Integrity: Following rules even when no one is watching, such as staying seated without being reminded.</p> <p>Dependability: Being reliable in helping keep the cafeteria clean and orderly.</p> <p>Empathy: Considering others' needs by keeping conversations and volume in check, allowing everyone to enjoy their meal.</p>
<i>Classroom/ Media Center</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Be prepared/ready to learn. ● Put forth your best effort. ● Accept the learning process. ● Be respectful of people/the environment. 	<p>Perseverance: Putting forth continuous effort in learning and not giving up when faced with challenges.</p> <p>Respect: Being attentive, listening to the teacher, and respecting classmates' ideas.</p> <p>Integrity: Doing one's own work and not cheating or plagiarizing.</p> <p>Dependability: Consistently being prepared and ready to learn, bringing necessary materials to class.</p> <p>Empathy: Supporting classmates who are struggling and working collaboratively.</p>
<i>Hallway/ Lockers</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Walk on the right side. ● Take the expected route. ● Respect others and their personal space. ● Be mindful of displays. 	<p>Perseverance: Moving efficiently and purposefully to get to class on time.</p> <p>Respect: Respecting personal space and the belongings of others.</p> <p>Integrity: Taking the expected route without diverting to unauthorized areas.</p> <p>Dependability: Always walking on the right side to ensure smooth traffic flow.</p> <p>Empathy: Helping peers who may have difficulty with their lockers or finding their way.</p>
<i>Bathroom</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Use only when necessary. ● Respect others' privacy. ● Use facilities timely/appropriately. ● Wash your hands. 	<p>Perseverance: Using the facilities quickly and returning to class promptly.</p> <p>Respect: Respecting others' privacy and keeping the bathroom clean.</p> <p>Integrity: Using the bathroom appropriately and not for socializing or other activities.</p> <p>Dependability: Reporting any issues like spills or vandalism to an adult.</p> <p>Empathy: Understanding and respecting that others need to use the facilities too.</p>
<i>Bus</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Stay seated while the bus is in motion. ● Keep conversations/volume in check. ● Be respectful of your words and of others. ● Keep food in your backpack. 	<p>Perseverance: Remaining seated and calm, even if the ride is long or uncomfortable.</p> <p>Respect: Being courteous to the bus driver and fellow passengers.</p> <p>Integrity: Following bus rules, such as staying seated and keeping the volume down.</p> <p>Dependability: Consistently being on time for the bus and following bus protocols.</p> <p>Empathy: Considering the safety and comfort of others by keeping the noise level down and not distracting the driver.</p>
<i>Assembly</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Walk quickly where directed/sit appropriately. ● Be attentive/participate appropriately. ● Keep feet on the floor. ● Stay in your personal space. 	<p>Perseverance: Staying engaged and attentive throughout the entire assembly.</p> <p>Respect: Participating appropriately and showing respect to the speakers and performers.</p> <p>Integrity: Remaining in one's designated area and not causing disruptions.</p> <p>Dependability: Following instructions from teachers and staff without delay.</p> <p>Empathy: Encouraging and supporting peers who may be presenting or performing.</p>
<i>Safety/ Drills</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Listen for and follow adult directions. ● Be silent. ● Be aware of your surroundings. ● Follow expected procedures. 	<p>Perseverance: Taking drills seriously and practicing until procedures are well-known.</p> <p>Respect: Listening to and following adult directions promptly and quietly.</p> <p>Integrity: Acting honestly and responsibly, understanding the importance of safety rules.</p> <p>Dependability: Being reliable in following all safety procedures correctly.</p> <p>Empathy: Helping classmates who may be anxious or unsure during drills and ensuring everyone is accounted for.</p>