

**Suffield Middle School  
25-26 School Climate Improvement Plan**

In accordance with Board of Education Policy 5131.911 and the Connecticut School Climate Policy (Public Act 23-167), each school must develop an annual School Climate Improvement Plan that fosters a safe, supportive, and inclusive environment.

This School Climate Improvement Plan is informed by multiple data sources, aligned with the Connecticut School Climate Standards, and is intended to advance the goals of the District Advancement Plan.

School Climate Specialists are responsible for preventing, identifying, and responding to cases of challenging behavior in the schools. At Suffield Middle School, the School Climate Specialist is Mrs. Dianna Kolodziej. The school district has protocols, tiered responses, and supports in place to enhance classroom safety and address challenging behavior. A challenging behavior form is posted on the district website, which is used to assess the facts, severity, and intentionality of reported incidents. Our goal is to support all students in improving social, emotional, and behavioral skills and to increase the use of de-escalation techniques. To do this, we implement SEL instruction for students and provide professional learning opportunities for staff. Students have access to alternative, designated locations in the school building to help support de-escalation and emotional regulation with trained school employees.

Status Level	Definition
<b>Initiated</b>	Early-stage work has begun
<b>In progress</b>	Work is underway
<b>Fully implemented</b>	Complete; ongoing refinement continues

Standard	Current Status: (Artifacts & Data)	Areas Identified for Improvement	Action Step(s)	Indicators for Success (with Timelines)
<b>Standard 1: Shared Vision</b>				
<b>Standard 1:</b> <i>The school community has a shared vision and plan for promoting, enhancing, and</i>	<input type="checkbox"/> Initiated <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> In progress <input type="checkbox"/> Fully implemented	<i>Clear communication of district / school vision for a positive school climate.</i>  <i>Need to improve</i>	<input type="checkbox"/> Establish SMS School Climate Committee.  <input type="checkbox"/> Adopt and	<input type="checkbox"/> SMS School Climate Committee is established by October 2025 --

<p><b>sustaining positive and restorative school climates in each of its schools.</b></p>		<p><i>community engagement in school-based climate survey.</i></p>	<p>communicate district-wide “Kindness Statement”.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Develop a more comprehensive school climate survey.</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Update the school-based website to include SEL (Social and Emotional Learning) resources.</li> </ul>	<p>comprised of faculty, students, and parents.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><input type="checkbox"/> SMS Climate Committee develops and publishes a yearlong school climate improvement plan.</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> District Kindness Statement communicated via School website, SMS Student Handbook, and other publications.</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> SMS Website and periodic communications detail school-based SEL programs and approaches to learning at SMS.</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Revised school climate survey (to be distributed to families in early Spring of 2026).</li> </ul>
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**Standard 2: Practices that Support Development and Re-engagement**

<p><b>Standard 2:</b> <b>The school district sets policies specifically promoting (a) the development and</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Initiated</li> <li><input checked="" type="checkbox"/> In progress</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Fully implemented</li> </ul>	<p><i>Continue to address student attendance -- emphasizing the importance of regular attendance and the</i></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Reintroduce SMS Student Support “Mystery Days” initiative (rewarding</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Development of a calendar for SMS “Mystery Days” for the school year.</li> </ul>
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<p><b>sustainability of social, emotional, ethical, civic and intellectual skills, knowledge, dispositions and engagement, and (b) works comprehensively to address barriers to teaching and learning, to reengage students, teachers and/or parents/guardians who have become disengaged.</b></p>		<p><i>positive impact it has on student learning.</i></p> <p><i>Strengthen tiered supports (MTSS) to better support student academic, social, and emotional growth.</i></p> <p><i>Cultivate ongoing collaboration with families to enhance engagement and connection with the middle school.</i></p>	<p>students for being in attendance).</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Review student attendance records and develop and communicate support plans with students (and their families) to improve attendance.</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Develop with staff a school and district-wide definition of effective Tier I instructional practices.</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Further develop the SMS MTSS (Multi-Tiered Systems of Support) process to support student needs (academic, social, emotional).</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Facilitate the SMS Homework Club for the 2025-26 school year.</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Strengthen school–family connections by coordinating event nights and</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Review of student attendance shows an increase in the percentage of students “in attendance” (as compared to the same months during the past two school years).</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Students who reach chronic absenteeism thresholds show improved attendance rates as a result of developed support plans by June 2026.</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Staff collectively develop a Tier I instructional practice definition by the end of the first semester.</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Focused professional development sessions provided to teachers during the year aligned to established Tier I expectations.</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Instructional “drop-in” data shows increased fidelity with</li> </ul>
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			expanding opportunities for families to experience student learning.	<p>identified Tier I practices by June 2026.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><input type="checkbox"/> MTSS flowchart, referral process, and documentation tools established/enhanced throughout the school year.</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> The establishment of at least 4-6 new family engagement opportunities during the school year.</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> School Climate survey (Spring 2026) feedback indicates improved satisfaction and engagement of families with event scheduling.</li> </ul>
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**Standard 3: School Practices that Promote Positive Climate**

<p><b>Standard 3:</b>  <i>Each school community's practices are identified, prioritized and supported to (a) promote academic learning and positive social, emotional, ethical and civic development</i></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Initiated</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> In progress</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Fully implemented</li> </ul>	<p><i>Identifying and engaging in a SEL program at the secondary (6-12) level.</i></p> <p><i>Promoting school-wide expectations for student behavior.</i></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Engage SMS certified staff in a year-long professional development opportunity with the RULER program (Yale University).</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><input type="checkbox"/> SMS certified staff complete initial professional development training on the major components of the RULER program (Charter, Mood-Meter, Meta</li> </ul>
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<p><b><i>of students, (b) enhance engagement in teaching, learning and school-wide activities; (c) address barriers to teaching and learning and reengage those who have become disengaged; and (d) develop and sustain an appropriate restorative infrastructure to build capacity for meeting this standard.</i></b></p>			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Establish practice of “8th-grade Privilege” with staff and students.</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Pilot “Better Choices” SEL platform -- encouraging student reflection during consequences.</li> </ul>	<p>Moment, Blueprint) by the end of the 2025-26 school year.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Assessment of staff shows an increased understanding and confidence in supporting students with emotional awareness, regulation, and sense of belonging by June 2026.</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> 8th-grade privilege criteria and expectations developed and communicated to students by October 2025.</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Periodic student data review demonstrates improved behavior, attendance and academic standing (in the 8th-grade cohort) during the 2025-26 school year.</li> </ul>
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				<input type="checkbox"/> Establish the practices involved with the “Better Choices” program by the end of the first semester.  <input type="checkbox"/> Students involved in the pilot demonstrate a reduced rate of infractions over the second half of the school year.
<b>Standard 4: Safe, Welcoming, Inclusive Environment</b>				
<b>Standard 4:</b> <i>Each school community creates an environment where all members are welcomed, supported, and feel safe in school: socially, emotionally, culturally, racially, ethnically, intellectually, and physically.</i>	<input type="checkbox"/> Initiated <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> In progress <input type="checkbox"/> Fully implemented	<i>Identify the means to better support new (to the building) students to help them connect to the school community.</i>  <i>Help students to identify their “go-to” person at Suffield Middle School.</i>  <i>Increase opportunities for students to understand and appreciate each others' differences.</i>	<input type="checkbox"/> Explore the development of a “new student welcome” protocol with SMS Student Support Staff.  <input type="checkbox"/> Develop and conduct a “Trusted Adult” identification activity for students.  <input type="checkbox"/> Continue to facilitate the SMS “International Night” and “SMS Cultural Awareness Series” events for the school community.	<input type="checkbox"/> A draft of a “new student welcome protocol” by the end of the school year with components identified for implementation the following year.  <input type="checkbox"/> The percentage of students who report having a trusted adult at SMS increases compared to last year’s school climate survey results.  <input type="checkbox"/> Annual cultural awareness events or activities are implemented

			<input type="checkbox"/> Partner with student groups (including Student Council) to design and lead events that promote inclusiveness, respect, and belonging in the school.  <input type="checkbox"/> Continue delivery of SOS (Signs of Suicide) lessons in health classes (grades 7&8).  <input type="checkbox"/> Maintain regular practice of district-based safety drills.	<p>schoolwide during the school year.</p> <input type="checkbox"/> Student groups (including Student Council) plan and implement at least two climate or inclusiveness initiatives over the course of the school year.  <input type="checkbox"/> SOS curriculum is delivered to 100% of grade 7 and 8 students, and counselor follow-up occurs for all identified students, with documentation of parent/guardian contact.
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**Standard 5: Restorative Practices**

<p><b>Standard 5:</b>  <i>Each school community develops meaningful and engaging practices, activities, and norms that promote ethical, social/emotional, and civic awareness and accountability, and a commitment to restorative justice.</i></p>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Initiated <input type="checkbox"/> In progress <input type="checkbox"/> Fully implemented	<p><i>Use clear and consistent restorative practices to support better conflict resolution schoolwide.</i></p>	<input type="checkbox"/> Engage SMS staff in professional development on the RULER “Blueprint” tool to strengthen restorative conversations and emotional problem-solving.  <input type="checkbox"/> Pilot “Better Choices” SEL platform -- encouraging	<input type="checkbox"/> RULER “Blueprint” professional development sessions are created and delivered (by June 2026), supporting staff in building confidence and skill in facilitating restorative conversations with students in the following year.
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			<p>student reflection during consequences.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li><input type="checkbox"/> Provide school community with an annual notice regarding Challenging Behavior and the associated forms.</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li><input type="checkbox"/> The “Better Choices” platform is used consistently during disciplinary consequences for the selected pilot group or grade level.</li><li><input type="checkbox"/> Students involved in the pilot demonstrate a reduced rate of infractions over the second half of the school year.</li><li><input type="checkbox"/> Posting the annual notice regarding Challenging Behavior (and associated forms) on the school website.</li></ul>
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