



Safe School Culture Grades 3-5

CURRICULUM

Board Approved: 03/19/2026

Course Information

Elementary
Ongoing Throughout Grades 3-5

Course Description:

In this course, students will explore their identities and how they connect with others. They will reflect on the influence of family and friends while learning to communicate their thoughts and feelings. Students will build healthy relationships with classmates from diverse backgrounds by practicing empathy, active listening, and respect for differing opinions. The course will also address interpersonal safety, teaching students to recognize risks, understand bullying and harassment, and support themselves and others. This curriculum is rooted in state standards and focuses on age-appropriate social development. The goal is to help kids build empathy, manage emotions, and stay safe. The emphasis is on kindness, community, and personal safety. Helping students understand themselves and others prepares them for respectful and responsible citizenship. By the end of the course, students will have practical tools for ensuring their safety and fostering a respectful community.

Transfer Goals:

Students will be able to independently use their learning to...

1. communicate effectively to express their thoughts, feelings, and perspectives.
2. build positive relationships with others from diverse backgrounds.
3. recognize and address safety issues in their environment.
4. practice empathy and understanding towards others with different perspectives and cultures.
5. advocate for themselves and others.

Curriculum Standards:

[K-12 Missouri Learning Standards: School Counseling](#)
[Missouri Department of Elementary and Secondary Education Health Education GLE's](#)

priority standards indicated in **bold*

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Family Notification Procedures

Grades 3-5

Whole Class Books

- Titles for books that will be assigned to a whole class will be available on Canvas and on course overviews/syllabi. If this changes during the class term, families will be notified.
- If a teacher plans to offer a choice from a small set of pre-identified books, those titles will be available on Canvas and on course overviews/syllabi. If this changes during the class term, families will be notified.

Library Books

- Families may contact their school's library media specialists to sign up for email notices in Destiny to be made aware of books checked out from district libraries.
- [How Parents/Guardians Can Monitor Student Book Selections](#)

Open Choice Books

- When a class begins a unit involving the selection of open-choice books, teachers notify families and prompt them to ask their students.
- For classes where students can select choice books at a faster pace, teachers will send quarterly emails to families reminding them to regularly ask their students.

priority standards indicated in **bold*

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Unit 1: Understanding Self

Timeframe: Varies By Building

Unit Description: In this unit, students will explore the cultures of people within their classroom and school. Students will focus on understanding their identities and how their personal characteristics, backgrounds, and abilities shape who they are. They will reflect on their unique traits and recognize how they contribute to their overall sense of self and community. Students will investigate how their family and friends influence their choices and perspectives, gaining insight into how these relationships help form their viewpoints. The unit will encourage them to consider the role of their culture in decision-making and self-care, fostering a deeper understanding of their backgrounds. Through discussions and activities, students will also examine how their actions can impact themselves and others, emphasizing the importance of kindness and respect in their interactions. They will develop communication skills to express their thoughts and feelings effectively, enhancing their self-awareness.

Enduring Understandings:

- Understanding and appreciating the different personal characteristics, backgrounds, and abilities of each individual enriches our classroom and strengthens our school community.
- Recognizing and using unique personal characteristics allows students to contribute positively to and strengthen the school community.
- The impacts of family and friends, including those from different backgrounds, play a significant role in shaping students' choices and how they see the world.
- Cultural beliefs and practices influence how we care for ourselves and make decisions.
- A person's actions can impact others, including those who think and act differently.
- Being kind and respectful fosters an environment where everyone feels welcomed and valued.
- Helping others in the community, regardless of their background or abilities, is essential to building a supportive and connected environment.
- Understanding how to communicate effectively with individuals from different backgrounds enhances connection and fosters mutual respect.

Essential Questions:

- How do my characteristics and background contribute to my classroom environment?
- What are my unique characteristics within my school community?
- How can I use my unique characteristics to help others?
- How do my family and friends influence the decisions I make?
- How does my cultural background affect my personal choices?
- How can my actions both positively and negatively impact those who think and act differently from me?
- How do my actions create a more inclusive environment for everyone?
- What are some effective ways I can communicate with people from different backgrounds?

Unit 1: Standards

STANDARD CODE	STUDENTS WILL KNOW, BE ABLE TO, AND UNDERSTAND:

priority standards indicated in **bold*

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3-5.IID.5C	● I can identify the strengths and traits I have that help make my classroom a better place to learn. ● I can describe how my unique personality and actions help my whole school community. ● I can show that I am a helpful member of my school by being responsible, kind, and supportive of others. ● I can recognize the traditions and habits that make my family's culture special. ● I can identify and show respect for the ways other people's cultures and traditions are different from mine.
FS2A5	● I can explain how my family and friends, including those from different backgrounds, influence my choices and how I see the world. ● I can describe how my culture and the cultures of others shape the way we take care of ourselves and make decisions.
FS2B3	● I can talk about how my actions affect others, including those who think and act differently than I do. ● I can understand how being kind and respectful can help everyone feel included. ● I can share what it means to help people in my community, no matter their background or abilities. ● I can list ways I can support my classmates and neighbors so everyone feels valued and included.
FS2B4	● I can understand how personal actions can affect others from different backgrounds. ● I can identify ways to effectively communicate with others from different backgrounds.

priority standards indicated in **bold*

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Unit 2: Interacting With Others

Timeframe: Varies By Building

Unit Description: In this unit, students will explore the essential skills needed to build quality relationships with individuals from different backgrounds and with different abilities. Through activities focused on empathy, active listening, and respect for differing opinions, they will learn the importance of mutual respect and compromise in fostering collaboration and understanding. Students will also recognize and appreciate cultures and connections within the community. Students will learn the importance of acknowledging and respecting different groups to create an inclusive environment. By applying problem-solving steps and compromise skills, they will enhance their ability to resolve conflicts and improve relationships. The unit emphasizes the significance of respectful communication and understanding the impact of their words and actions on others, ultimately guiding students toward developing healthier interactions with their peers.

Enduring Understandings:

- Building quality relationships with individuals from different backgrounds and abilities requires empathy and active listening.
- Respecting others' opinions and ideas is essential for fostering positive relationships.
- Initiating and establishing mutual respect and compromise in relationships promotes collaboration and understanding among individuals.
- Recognizing and respecting cultures enriches our interactions and connections within the community.
- Acknowledging and respecting different groups within the school and community helps create an inclusive environment and fosters a sense of belonging and acceptance.
- Effectively applying problem-solving steps and compromise skills is essential for resolving conflicts and improving relationships, leading to healthier interactions.
- Using strategies like active listening, staying calm, and finding collaborative ways to work together fosters respect for everyone's ideas and feelings, regardless of their background or abilities.
- Understanding how our actions affect people from different backgrounds and communicating respectfully are keys to building healthy relationships.

Essential Questions:

- What skills are necessary to build quality relationships with individuals from diverse backgrounds and abilities?
- Why is it important for me to respect others' personal opinions and ideas?
- Why is it important to initiate mutual respect and compromise in relationships?
- In what ways does learning about cultures enrich my interactions and connections within the community?
- How does acknowledging and respecting different groups impact my school and community?
- What problem-solving steps and compromise skills can I use to resolve conflicts and improve relationships?
- What strategies promote respect for everyone's ideas and feelings, regardless of backgrounds or abilities?
- How can my actions impact individuals from different backgrounds?
- Why is respectful communication essential for me to build healthy relationships?

Unit 2: Standards

STANDARD CODE

STUDENTS WILL KNOW, BE ABLE TO, AND UNDERSTAND:

priority standards indicated in **bold*

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3-5.IID.3A	• I can explain how I choose my friends by looking for qualities like kindness, honesty, and trustworthiness. • I can use good social skills—like listening, sharing, and encouraging others—to keep my friendships strong. • I can listen to and respect my classmates' ideas and opinions, even when I don't agree with them. • I can show mutual respect in my relationships by treating others the way I want to be treated and respecting their "no."
3-5.IID.4A	• I can identify the things that make my culture and beliefs unique. • I can find things I have in common with people from different backgrounds and also notice the cool ways we are different. • I can explain how people can have different beliefs but still share the same values, like kindness or family. • I can show respect to everyone I meet, whether we have a lot in common or are very different. • I can be a kind and welcoming friend to people who have different traditions, languages, or backgrounds than my own.
3-5.IID.3B	• I can list the steps to solve a disagreement, like calming down, listening to the other person, and finding a fair solution. • I can use my problem-solving steps to fix a conflict with a friend or classmate in a peaceful way. • I can identify different ways to solve a problem—like compromising, taking turns, or asking for help—depending on the situation. • I can practice keeping my mind and body calm and using communication skills so I'm ready to handle tough situations before they get too big.
ME4A5	• I can use different strategies to solve or prevent problems, like listening carefully to others and staying calm. • I can find ways to work together and reach a compromise that respects everyone's ideas and feelings, no matter their backgrounds or abilities.
FS2B4	• I can explain how our actions can affect people from different backgrounds and show ways to communicate respectfully with everyone.
FS2B5	• I can recognize when someone has a different point of view and understand that their feelings and experiences are also important.
FS2C3	• I can show how listening to my classmates' ideas and feelings, including those different from mine, leads to stronger relationships.

Unit 3: Interpersonal Safety

Timeframe: Varies By Building

Unit Description: In this unit, students will learn about interpersonal safety and how to protect themselves and others. They will identify issues that can affect personal safety and recognize potential risks. Students will explore different types of violence and harassment, learning effective ways to intervene and support those in need. They will understand what bullying and harassment are, recognize examples of these behaviors, and discuss their impact on individuals and the community. The unit will equip students with personal safety strategies to create a secure environment. Additionally, students will identify trusted adults to whom they can report any bullying and harassment, ensuring they know where to seek help. They will understand how to use the school plan for protection and recognize unsafe situations, developing strategies to avoid them and maintain their safety and well-being.

Enduring Understandings:

- Identifying issues that impact personal safety helps individuals recognize potential risks and take proactive measures to protect themselves.
- Understanding different types of violence and harassment, along with effective intervention strategies, empowers individuals to respond appropriately and support others in need.
- Applying personal safety strategies related to violence and harassment is essential for fostering a secure environment for oneself and others.
- Defining bullying and harassment and providing examples of each clarifies the impact of these behaviors on individuals and communities.
- Understanding the definition of violence is crucial for promoting prevention.
- Describing strategies to prevent bullying and harassment equips individuals with the tools to create a safer and more respectful environment.
- Knowing how to support classmates who may be bullied or harassed fosters a culture of kindness and solidarity within the school community.
- Identifying a trusted adult to report bullying and harassment is vital for ensuring that individuals receive the help and support they need.
- Understanding when and how to use the school plan for protection against bullying and harassment empowers individuals to advocate for themselves and their peers.

Essential Questions:

- What are the issues that impact personal safety, and how can recognizing these help us protect ourselves?
- What are bullying, harassment, and violence?
- What are the different types of violence and harassment, and how can understanding them empower me to intervene effectively?
- How can applying personal safety strategies contribute to a safer environment for everyone?
- How do bullying and harassment affect individuals and communities?
- What strategies can I use to prevent bullying and harassment?
- How can I effectively support classmates who may be bullied or harassed?
- Who is a trusted adult I can report bullying and harassment to?
- Why is it important for me to report bullying, harassment, and violence when they occur?
- When and how should I use the school plan to protect myself and others from bullying and harassment?
- What are some examples of unsafe situations, and what strategies can I use to avoid them and maintain my safety?

priority standards indicated in **bold*

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Recognizing unsafe situations and employing strategies to avoid them is key to maintaining personal safety and well-being.	
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Unit 3: Standards	
STANDARD CODE	STUDENTS WILL KNOW, BE ABLE TO, AND UNDERSTAND:
3-5.IID.2A	- I can practice the steps for staying safe, like stopping to think, looking for danger, and choosing the smartest path. - I can use my problem-solving and "refusal skills" (saying "no" clearly) to make choices that keep my body and mind healthy. - I can make a plan for what to do in a situation that feels unsafe or uncomfortable. - I can identify when my friends or classmates are influencing my choices, for better or for worse. - I can recognize the difference between a friend encouraging me to be my best and "peer pressure" to do something I know is wrong or unsafe.
ME4E3-5	- I can define bullying and harassment and give examples of each. - I can define and describe what violence means and how to respond. - I can describe strategies to prevent bullying and harassment. - I can explain ways to support classmates who may be bullied or harassed. - I can identify a trusted adult to whom I can report bullying and harassment. - I can identify when and how to use the school plan to protect myself and others from bullying and harassment. - I can identify unsafe situations and strategies to avoid them.