Procedure – Social Emotional Climate

Definitions

For purposes of social emotional climate, the following definitions will apply:

- **Classroom climate** refers to the prevailing mood, attitudes, standards, and tone that the educator and students feel when they are in the classroom. A positive classroom climate feels safe, respectful, welcoming, and supportive of student learning.
- **Community partners** include youth and family service organizations, afterschool and summer programs, youth leadership initiatives, youth employment and apprenticeships, mental and behavioral health organizations, and community sports and arts organizations.
- **Cultural Responsiveness** draws upon students; unique strengths and experiences while orienting learning in relation to individuals' cultural context.
- **Educators** refers to in-school and out-of-school staff providing instruction and support to students.
- **Equity** means that each child receives what he or she needs to develop his or her full academic and social potential.
- **Equity-focused** refers to strategies aimed at improving equity in experiences and outcomes for all students and adults, across race, gender identity, ethnicity, language, disability, sexual orientation, family background, family income, and other characteristics.
- **Multi-tiered System of Support** (MTSS) is a framework for enhancing the adoption and implementation of a continuum of evidence-based practices to achieve important outcomes for every student. MTSS involves team-based leadership; continuous data-based decision-making; student, family and community engagement; and the delivery of a continuum of evidence-based instruction and support.
- **Planning Team** This team will lead the process of planning, implementing and improving SEL and the school climate. This team should be made up of educational staff and varied stakeholders.
- **Positive School Climate** is safe, supportive, and an equitable learning environment that will call on adults to:
    - Engage in practices that affirm diverse social and cultural identities;
    - Cultivate a sense of belonging and community;
    - Provide structures for physical and emotional safety;
    - Use engaging, relevant, and culturally responsive instruction built on an understanding of how children and adolescents grow and develop socially, emotionally, and academically;
    - Create space for student voice and agency;
    - Offer frequent opportunities for students to discuss and practice anti-racism and develop collaborative solutions to address inequities;
    - Provide tiered supports that meet the needs of all students; and
    - Train adults to model and nurture attitudes that emphasize the benefits and satisfaction from learning.
- **Social and emotional learning** (SEL) is a process through which individuals build awareness and skills in managing emotions, setting goals, establishing relationships, and making responsible decisions that support success in school and in life.
- **School Climate Surveys** are scientific measures that evaluate a range of aspects of the educational environment to assess perceptions and identify specific strengths and weaknesses within a school. The goal of these measures is to gain an accurate, representative picture of the school in order to improve in various targeted areas.

- **School Community** refers to members of the broad school ecosystem including administrators, staff, students, families, community partners, and others who may be connected to the school's success.
- **School Leaders** is used broadly to encourage schools to consider distributive leadership models that include administrators, teaching and support staff, family and community partners, students, and those who have been historically left out of school decision-making.
- **Staff** refers to those who work within the school building, including teachers, administrators, paraprofessionals, custodial staff, school mental health professionals, cafeteria workers, and parent liaisons, among others.
- **Trauma-Informed Practices** recognizes the unique strengths and challenges of children and youth in light of the adversities they face.
- **Universal Design** provides a framework to improve and optimize teaching and learning for all people by removing barriers in the curriculum.

Framework of School and Classroom Climate Improvement Process

Guiding Principles and Essential Elements

The framework of the school and classroom improvement process begins with a commitment to the four guiding principles of equity, cultural responsiveness, trauma-informed practices, and universal design. Definitions of these guiding principles are included above.

The framework of the school and classroom climate improvement process includes three essential elements: creating conditions to support student' SEL, building adult capacity, and collaborating with the school community. Components from each of these three essential elements blend together to create the process for improving school and classroom climate.

District and School Climate Improvement Process

Develop a Planning Team

- With support of district and school leaders, form a planning team or teams to coordinate school climate improvement efforts.
- Team members should include members from the whole school community, including administrators, educational staff, students, families, community partners, and other stakeholders.
- Team members should reflect the diverse groups of the community.
- The district will prioritize building the capacity of the planning team by providing professional learning.

Analyze Data

- Working with members from the whole school community, including students, assess and analyze data assessment.
- Include stakeholder voice to ensure equity and honor cultural relevance.
- Use existing data, such as school climate surveys, attendance, engagement, evaluation of SEL implementation, and other feedback for initial assessment.
- Identify the most effective existing practices and the needs for improvement.
- Determine the additional types of data needed and how to collect it.
- Collect and analyze new data, including data regarding the adult SEL training and coaching.
- Plan for continuous improvement.

Develop a Strategic Communication Plan

- Determine how to disseminate information to members of the school community.
- Determine how to obtain input from school community.
- Use more than one method to communicate and collaborate.
- Use two-way communication strategies to inform, engage, and listen to members of the school community.

- Communicate that school and classroom climate and SEL are interconnected.
- Utilize a feedback loops with families and communities to ensure accountability.

Develop an Integrated Improvement Action Plan

- Use the Washington SEL standards, benchmarks, and indicators.
- Building adult and student SEL competencies school-wide.
- Integrate and align school climate and SEL improvement with other district and school improvement efforts to create safe, supportive, and academically effective schools.
- Determine how to include school climate improvement and SEL into other systems and routine practices, such as hiring, onboarding, monitoring, professional development, and student discipline as consistent with policy 3241.
- Embed use an MTSS framework with students, use SEL as a universal, tier 1 support with intensified supports at all tiers.
- Integrate restorative practices that build community, celebrate accomplishments, transform conflict, rebuild and strengthens relationships.
- Determine how to differentiate supports for different members of the school community.
- Build adult capacity in the whole school community, this might include providing resources, professional learning, time, and follow-up coaching.

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