



School-Wide Practices and Climate

DEFENDING
EDUCATION





I want students in my school to feel comfortable, joyful, loved, and positive vibes.

ALASKA HIGH SCHOOL STUDENT

What is this section about?



The National School Climate Center describes school climate as “the quality and character of school life, the foundation for learning and positive youth development.” Every school has a climate, and everyone in the school community contributes to it. Research consistently shows that positive student and staff perceptions of their school climate are linked to increased student academic achievement and graduation rates, increased staff job satisfaction, and decreased student risk behaviors.

Trauma violates physical, social, and emotional safety, and can result in feeling threatened and alert to risk. For students who have experienced trauma, having core safety needs met in a stable and predictable environment can minimize stress reactions. This frees students to focus on learning. Schoolwide practices make it clear that everyone in the school community has a role and responsibility in creating a safe and respectful learning environment. Schoolwide practices refer to routines, structures, and strategies that are agreed upon and used across the school throughout the school day.

In schools that are truly trauma-engaged, everyone in the school community – administrators, certified and classified staff, families, and students themselves – understand that they have a role in creating a positive school climate. Efforts are coordinated across classrooms and throughout all aspects of the school community (front office, cafeteria, classroom, gym, hallways, outdoor spaces) to create an environment where students feel safe and supported.

Community Adaptations

The content of this chapter is offered to district and school leaders, school staff, counselors, and community members with the understanding that that all have different roles and networks to help transform schools. These resources and tools may need to be adapted to make the practices culturally relevant and to align with each community’s strengths, norms, and expectations.

Trauma Engaged Schools Knowing to Doing Video Library

The [Trauma Engaged Video Library](#) offers over 50 peer-led and statewide experts short videos tied to the topics in the Framework. They are under 10

minutes and easily accessible for personal review or in a group setting to stimulate discussion. Below is the video series for this chapter.



Schoolwide Practices & Climate
from AASB

1 of 4 Restorative Practices ...

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to co-create a school climate and environment that is welcoming and feels emotionally, physically, academically, and culturally safe for students, staff, and families.

- ▶ B. Create shared behavior expectations that reflect the community values/culture and that develop positive relationships.
- ▶ C. Implement school-wide practices and routines that build relationships and foster skill development to support the behavior expectations.
- ▶ D. Embed resiliency, skill building, and restorative approaches in all systems and procedures, including positive behavior supports and multi tiered systems of support.
- ▶ E. Facilitate ongoing professional learning about school climate and provide collaboration opportunities so that all members of the school community feel a sense of belonging and are utilizing the school-wide practices.

What can staff do?

Click each section below for more info.

- ▶ A. Maintain a safe and welcoming environment in your work area (front office, cafeteria, classroom, gym, hallways, outdoor spaces) where students feel safe and supported. Reflect the community values and culture. Each person in the school community is instrumental in building a positive school climate.
 - ▶ B. Implement routines and procedures in your work area (front office, cafeteria, classroom, gym, hallways, outdoor spaces) that build student self regulation skills and align with and reflect the school-wide expectations and practices.
 - ▶ C. Teach and reinforce the social emotional skills that are necessary for students to be successful.
 - ▶ D. Create the conditions and promote skill development to empower youth as leaders in school climate and systems change.
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Milestone Guide

The Transforming Schools Guide offers some steps and a starting point to deepen personal growth, establish a common vision with colleagues and community, and remind each of us that this is a process of preparing, starting, applying, and refining our trauma engaged work. Individuals and teams move through the steps and cycle many times to continue to improve upon and deepen our trauma engaged approach. Seeing the path forward and celebrating successes are key components of effective implementation. These Milestone guides offer four levels of section to complete, broken out by role. Each of the 11 components within the framework and toolkit.

[Download School-Wide Practices and Climate Milestone Guide](#)

[Download all Milestone Guides](#)

Additional Resources for Leadership

- [Whole School, Whole Community, Whole Child](#)
The education, public health, and school health sectors have each called for greater alignment that includes integration and collaboration between education leaders and health sectors to improve each child's cognitive, physical, social, and emotional development. The Whole School Whole Community, Whole Child (WSCC) model focuses on the child to align the common goals of both sectors to put into action a whole child approach to education.
- [An Inside Look at Trauma-Informed Practices](#)
A Nashville elementary school takes a whole school comprehensive approach to trauma-informed practices, creating a space where students feel known and supported.
Source: Edutopia
- [Equity & Social and Emotional Learning: A Cultural Analysis](#)
Social and emotional learning (SEL) has the potential to help mitigate the interrelated legacies of racial and class oppression in the U.S. and globally.
Source: CASEL
Access to the free resource simply requires registering on the site to download.
- [SEL is Systemic Equity: Leadership Beliefs Inventory](#)
This worksheet is intended to promote reflection on beliefs and actions that shape how your district leverages SEL to advance educational equity.
Source: CASEL
Access to the free resource simply requires registering on the site to download.
- [Trauma Informed Interview Questions](#)
When interviewing candidates for employment at your organization, you may want to consider their knowledge of and experience with trauma-informed care. Below are sample interview questions that members of our listserv have used to understand how a potential employee may fit into your organization as you incorporate trauma-informed care.
- [Developing Schoolwide Norms](#)
This tool provides suggested approaches for developing schoolwide norms.
Source: CASEL
Access to the free resource simply requires registering on the site to download.
- [10 Steps for Developing Team Norms](#)
Method for developing working agreements to support effective

interactions between group members.

Source: Center for Creative Leadership

- [Looking at the Intersection of Student Agency and School Discipline Practices](#)

This webinar discusses how critical student agency is to student success in school. It also considers how a school's discipline practice can support and cultivate agency in students.

Source: Transforming Education

- [Marcus Garvey Elementary: Exemplary Supportive School](#)

Marcus Garvey Elementary is one of the schools that has earned the highest certification level in implementing systemic SEL. This video illustrates the ways SEL has been integrated into systems and practices. Access to the free resource simply requires registering on the site to download.

Source: CASEL, Chicago Public Schools

- [Metro Nashville Public Schools SEL Walkthrough Rubric](#)

Describes School-Wide Environment (school entry, main office, and common areas); Classroom Instruction, and Classroom Environment, Management, Discipline.

[Originally published](#) 2017 © Edutopia.org; George Lucas Educational Foundation

- [Strategies for Collaboration](#)

Trauma-sensitive schools foster collaboration with students and families by using strategies that support their control and empowerment, such as speaking respectfully, ensuring that families and students understand what is happening and can give their opinions, and involving families as partners in decision making related to student needs and plans.

Source: National Center on Safe Supportive Learning Environments

- [Show & Tell: A Video Column / Two Times Ten Conversations](#)

This article asks and answers the question, "How can we win the trust of a challenging student?"

Source: ASCD

- [Trauma-Informed Care Pilot Program at Hillsboro School District](#)

Video describing the wellness program and calm room in Hillsboro School District

Source: Hillsboro School District

- [School Climate Improvement Action Guide for District Leaders](#) (PDF)

This document outlines key action steps that district leaders—superintendents, assistant superintendents, directors of student support

services, or others—can take to contribute to improving the school climate.
National Center on Safe Supportive Learning Environments

- [School Climate Improvement Action Guide for Community Partners](#) (PDF)

This document outlines how community partners can support school climate improvements so they are more successful.

National Center on Safe Supportive Learning Environments

- [Center on Positive Behavioral Interventions and Supports](#)

Positive Behavioral Interventions and Supports (PBIS) is an evidence-based three-tiered framework for improving and integrating all of the data, systems, and practices affecting student outcomes every day. It is a way to support everyone to create the kinds of schools where all students are successful.

Source: Center on Positive Behavioral Interventions and Supports

- [School Climate Improvement Action Guide for Working with Families](#) (PDF)

This document outlines how family members, including guardians of students, can be engaged in the school climate improvements so that students are more successful.

Source: National Center on Safe Supportive Learning Environments

- [MTSS and PBIS Support Programs](#)

Some of the most common frameworks for organizing student supports are Multi-Tiered System of Supports (MTSS) and Positive Behavioral Interventions and Supports (PBIS). Schoolwide SEL offers an opportunity to enhance or refine existing systems of support.

Source: CASEL

Access to the free resource simply requires registering on the site to download.

- [Reflecting on School Discipline and SEL Alignment](#)

Reflect on your school's discipline policies, procedures, practices, and mindsets. Create alignment between your discipline approach and your SEL vision.

Source: CASEL

Access to the free resource simply requires registering on the site to download.

Additional Resources for Staff

- [Social Contracts Foster Community in the Classroom](#) (video)

When students and teachers collaborate to create shared behavior

expectations, the whole class is invested in the norms.

Source: Edutopia

- [Social Justice Standards: The Teaching Tolerance Anti-bias Framework](#)

The Social Justice Standards are a set of anchor standards and age-appropriate learning outcomes divided into four domains—identity, diversity, justice and action (IDJA). The standards provide a common language and organizational structure: Teachers can use them to guide curriculum development, and administrators can use them to make schools more just, equitable and safe.

Source: Teaching Tolerance

- [Guiding Questions for Educators: Promote Equity Using SEL](#)

Educators can use social and emotional learning (SEL) to promote the cultural assets that all students bring to their classrooms—if SEL instruction and assessments are implemented with a culturally responsive lens.

Source: CASEL

Access to the free resource simply requires registering on the site to download.

- [50 Brain Breaks for Kids](#)

Quick, easy activities to help kids re-energize, refocus and give their brains a boost.

Source: WeAreTeachers

- [Teaching Restorative Practices with Classroom Circles](#)

San Francisco's guide focused on the use of Circles as a proactive measure to build trust and community in a classroom. Includes sample activities and lesson plans for introducing students to restorative practices.

Sources: CASEL, San Francisco Unified School District

Access to the free resource simply requires registering on the site to download.

- [7 Heart-Mind Centered Youth Leadership Activities](#)

Created for youth by youth, the following activities were designed to develop Heart-Centered Leadership.

- [Frameworks for Meaningful Student Involvement](#)

The Frameworks for Meaningful Student Involvement are different tools designed to help schools take action with students as partners to transform schools. They do not tell you what to do; they do serve as guiding lights for change.

- [Strength in Voices Conference](#) 4th annual Washoe County School District Strength in Voices Conference: “Student Voice provides an incredible opportunity for students to be involved in their education and speak about issues they can help problem-solve in their schools. As students, we are honored to lead this conference”. – Kierra Capurro, WCSD Student Advisory Council

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