

Vestal School Climate Handbook

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WHAT IS SCHOOL CLIMATE?

MULTI-TIERED SYSTEMS OF SUPPORT

School Climate is the most integral component of a Multi-Tiered System of Support (MTSS) framework. MTSS is focused on prevention and problem solving for all students using decision making based on data. MTSS uses evidence-based instruction, intervention and assessment practices to ensure that every student receives the appropriate level of support based on their level of need. Attention is focused on creating and sustaining Tier I support (universal), Tier II intervention (targeted group), and Tier III intervention (individual) systems to help eliminate barriers to learning and enable every student to successfully reach their full potential.

SCHOOL CLIMATE OVERVIEW

School Climate encompasses culturally relevant, restorative practices with a racial equity and social justice lens, as well as school wide social emotional learning opportunities for all students in their classrooms.



CULTURALLY RESPONSIVE POSITIVE BEHAVIOR INTERVENTIONS & SUPPORTS (CR-PBIS)

CR-PBIS (Culturally-Responsive Positive Behavioral Interventions & Supports) uses implementation science to help students to develop positive behaviors. At the most basic level, CR-PBIS can be described as a three-pronged approach:

1. Explicitly **teach** co-constructed expectations of the school and classroom community,
2. Actively **acknowledge** kids when they are following the expectations,
3. Instructionally **redirect** behavior using restorative practices.

Research shows that when school staff acknowledge positive behaviors at least three times more often than redirecting behavioral mistakes, positive behavior increases significantly. Research also shows that when school staff acknowledge positive behaviors at least three times more often than redirecting behavioral mistakes, positive behavior increases significantly.



RESTORATIVE PRACTICES

Restorative Justice is a philosophy grounded in the belief that positive, healthy relationships help us thrive. When we do things that impact others and create harm to those relationships, it is our individual and collective responsibility to make things right

SOCIAL EMOTIONAL LEARNING

Social and Emotional Learning (SEL) is an integral part of education and human development. SEL is the process through which all young people and adults acquire and apply the knowledge, skills, and attitudes to develop healthy identities, manage emotions, and achieve personal and collective goals, feel and show empathy for others, establish and maintain supportive relationships, and make responsible and caring decisions. (CASEL)

In PPS, we embrace Transformative SEL which is a form of SEL implementation that concentrates SEL practice on transforming inequitable settings and systems, and promoting justice-oriented civic engagement.

“Transformative SEL” is a process whereby young people and adults build strong, respectful, and lasting, relationships that facilitate co-learning to critically examine root causes of inequity, and to develop collaborative solutions that lead to personal, community, and societal well-being. This form of SEL is aimed at redistributing power to promote social justice through increased engagement in school and civic life. It emphasizes the development of identity, agency, belonging, curiosity, and collaborative problem solving within the CASEL framework. (CASEL)

[CASEL's 3 Signature Practices](#) intentionally and explicitly help build a habit of practices through which students enhance their SEL skills: self-awareness, social awareness, self-management, relationship skills, and responsible decision-making. They provide a framework for supporting teachers in fostering a supportive environment and promoting SEL. The 3 Signature Practices can be put into practice without extensive professional learning. They can be incorporated into any K-12 [lesson](#), [community meeting](#), or [staff meeting](#) through carefully choosing, effectively facilitating and thoughtfully debriefing a: [Warm Welcome](#), [Engaging Activity](#) & [Optimistic Closure](#).

To support current and future social and emotional needs, trauma-informed science reminds us of the need to:

- Elevate students' [social awareness](#), [self-management](#), [relationship skills](#), and [responsible decision-making](#), community, and sense of belonging and lived experiences
- Incorporate social and emotional skill building into [curriculum](#) and [instruction](#)
- Establish consistent and [clear expectations](#) with students and families through clear and transparent communication





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Water is for
drinking only
Be
community-minde
d

Use your water
bottle

Be quick

TEACHING EXPECTATIONS (14)

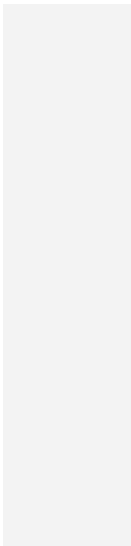
Lesson Plans/policies and



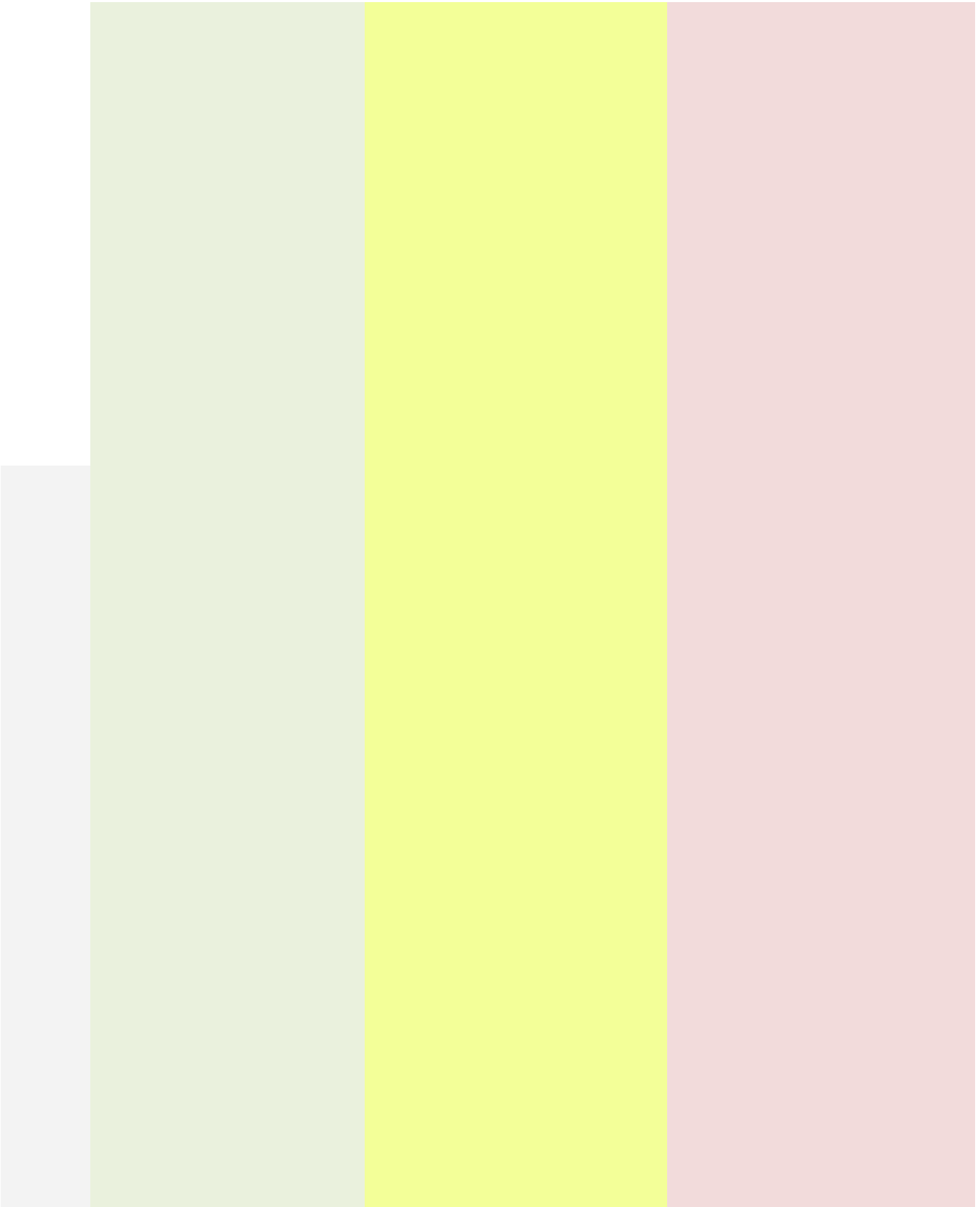


DISCIPLINE POLICIES (16)

When students violate school rules and expectations, we will assign interventions and consequences aligned with the severity of the behavior. Interventions and consequences will always be designed with the goal of re-teaching expected behaviors in mind and with Restorative Justice practices at the center of op



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	School climate orientation: Teaching school values & common area expectations schedule Teaching classroom routines & expectations Schoolwide and classroom acknowledgement systems Correcting fluently SIT flowchart Influence of race, culture and language on adult expectations and student behavior	
	Equity, Restorative Practices, Trauma Informed	
	Equity	
	Review of School Climate Plan/Staff Handbook	

CLASSROOM PROCEDURES (18)

Every teacher will have an Effective Classroom Practices Plan (E CPP). E CPPs will be shared with administration no later than the day before back to school night. Co-creating classroom practices reduces variability between classrooms and makes it more consistent for students. Some sample plans are provided below and PD time will be provided in the first two weeks of school to complete these documents.

The Classroom Practices Plan template, covers the essential features of effective classroom practices: Structure, teaching expectations, acknowledging positive behaviors, and supporting regulation & restorative practices.

[\[Click here for Effective Classroom Practices Plan & Guest Teacher Support System Resources\]](#)

FEEDBACK AND ACKNOWLEDGEMENT SYSTEMS (19)

Research shows that when staff “catches” a student exhibiting appropriate behaviors, those behaviors will increase and misbehaviors will decrease. Specific praise is extremely important



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in increasing the recurrence of appropriate behaviors. Some schools decide to give out acknowledgement "tickets", small slips of paper that are aligned with the school values. All staff hand out the acknowledgement tickets, along with specific praise, to students as they witness appropriate behaviors in the common areas, in classrooms, on buses, etc.

Description of our school-wide acknowledgement system:



Kids: Vestal Bucks	Classroom & Common areas	All Staff
Kids:		



Kids: Assemblies, Drawings/Wheel	Kids: Weekly drawings	Teachers, Cafeteria duty staff
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Kids: Adults: Insert Adult names}	Kids: Walking Field Trips, Intermittent free dress, end of the year field trip Adults: Insert Adult names}	Students apply for program
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FACULTY INVOLVEMENT (10)







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{Insert your school's TFI Action Plan plan here} [{Click here for TFI Action Plan Template}](#)



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{Insert full common area expectation lesson plans and teaching schedule here}

