

Pleasantdale School District 107

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Pleasantdale takes a proactive and positive approach to Social Emotional Learning (SEL) at both Pleasantdale Elementary and Middle School. The SEL programs at our schools are unique in how they meet the developmental needs of our students. These programs are well established and ever evolving to meet the changing needs of our students. When a well established SEL program is implemented, there is a reduction in discipline instances. Over the course of the 2016-17 school year, we have had 75 behavior referrals at the elementary school with 3 being in school suspensions. There were 175 behavior referrals at the Middle School. The majority of the Middle School office referrals were minor level 1 instances ranging from tardies to relational issues. Ten of the discipline instances resulted in 4 out of school suspensions and 6 in school restrictions. Our goal is to teach students prosocial skills that will result in better future decisions and allow kids to take responsibility when a poor choice is made.

The district has been working to establish a common language amongst grade levels to support a smooth transition from one grade level to the next. This is supported through the use of the Second Step programming at the Elementary School. This program helps to develop students' social emotional skills including making friends, managing emotions, and solving problems. The Middle School has been examining programs similar to this for a developmentally appropriate match. Our elementary students understand that they are expected to follow the "Eagle Way," and at the middle school our students strive for the "I's of the Tiger." These recognition programs allow us to set clear guidelines for behavior and recognize students when they are exhibiting prosocial behaviors. At the beginning of each year, guidelines and expectations for these programs are presented in a clear and developmentally appropriate manner. This includes activities such as role playing, providing examples, and sharing written matrices.

At times, students need additional support to understand our expectations. For these students reteaching of expectations occurs on an as needed basis. At both schools, Positive Behavior Support Teams are in place to brainstorm and problem solve as new ideas are required to ensure the success of the staff and students as they work to implement SEL programming. When students and staff have a clear understanding of the behavior systems that have been put into place students make better decisions and teachers are able to support positive behavior. These systems are structured to provide various levels of support and individualized interventions to students on a case-by-case basis.

The goal is to promote positive behavior that demonstrates the *Eagle Way* (PES) and the *I's of the Tiger* (PMS).

At Pleasantdale Elementary School we focus on positive reinforcements. Students are recognized for following the Eagle Way. These students receive Eagle Feathers as an incentive and their feathers are added to a bulletin board found in the front of the school. Likewise, when a student makes a poor decision he/she may be sent to the Eagle's Nest at lunch time. In the Eagle's Nest the student will process the situation with an adult and identify alternative behaviors to ensure that the targeted behavior is not repeated.

At Pleasantdale Middle School, those demonstrating the I's of the Tiger receive Tiger Stripes. After receiving a Tiger Stripe the student receives an incentive to celebrate his or her positive behavior. These incentives may include pens and pencils or other small gifts. Additionally, students may be recognized at a P.A.W.S. (Positive Attitudes Within our School) award assemblies. Also, over the course of the past several years the Kindness Club has developed multiple activities and celebrates prosocial behavior during National Bullying Prevention Month and continues their positive work throughout the school year.

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Students are taught to consider multiple perspectives prior to making decisions in order to support an empathetic lifestyle. The social workers work with the grade level teams so instances can be proactively addressed prior to becoming a major concern. Lessons dealing with situations such as social media, positive relations, decision making, and organizational skill development occur in the classrooms. Additionally, the Middle School Health curriculum includes Social/Emotional Learning lessons. A few of these lessons include: decision making skills, effective communication skills, the development of strategies for dealing with bullying and/or teasing as a victim and/or as a bystander.

Data of minor incidents is discussed at the team level so instances can be proactively addressed prior to becoming a major concern. These discussions help to determine the direction of SEL programming in our district. As the analysis uncovers any trends, there are supports put into place. These supports could be the reteaching of expectations for a large group of students or the implementation of the Check In Check Out or Mentoring system for an individual. The Check In Check Out and Mentoring systems provide an individualized and supportive structure that promote goal setting and self awareness. These systems and a proactive approach allow for a structure that supports redirection in the classroom without the need to remove students.

Presentation takeaways:

- A focus on staying positive and proactive helps the district discipline instances remain low.
- Although the systems and structures of the Eagle Way and the I's of the Tiger are ever evolving, they are recognized and understood by staff and students.
- Differing tiers of supports are put into place and utilized on an as needed basis as a result of data analysis.
- Incentives promote keeping the focus on the positive aspect of the SEL programming.