



Expanded School Mental Health West Virginia

<https://livewell.marshall.edu/mutac>

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School Climate

Tool Kit #6

To create a safe, supportive and engaging environment that nurtures social, emotional, ethical, and academic learning in every child.

– West Virginia Expanded School Mental Health Steering Team, 2017

School climate refers to the quality and character of school life. School climate is based on patterns of students', parents' and school personnel's experience of school life and reflects norms, goals, values, interpersonal relationships, teaching and learning practices, and organizational structures.¹

A sustainable, positive school climate fosters youth development and learning necessary for a productive, contributing and satisfying life in a democratic society. This climate includes:

- Norms, values and expectations that support people feeling socially, emotionally and physically safe.
- People are engaged and respected.
- Students, families and educators work together to develop, live and contribute to a shared school vision.
- Educators model and nurture attitudes that emphasize the benefits and satisfaction gained from learning.
- Each person contributes to the operations of the school and the care of the physical environment.

References

¹ National School Climate Center:

<http://www.schoolclimate.org/climate/>

Expanded school mental health (ESMH) is a multi-tiered system of support where schools and strategic community partners work together to enhance student mental health in schools. It is a framework that:

- includes the full continuum of prevention; early intervention and treatment;
- serves all students;
- builds upon core programs/services being provided by schools
- emphasizes shared responsibility between schools, mental health providers and other community partners

What is the WV School Climate Survey?

In December 2011, the WV Board of Education enacted Expected Behaviors in Safe and Supportive Schools to provide a framework for developing optimal learning conditions for both students and school staff. Implementation of the policy calls on school districts and schools to establish a process to gain school-wide input from students, staff, parents and community, and to build a commitment to school climate/culture improvement. Although it is up to schools to decide how to gain the input, the West Virginia Department of Education (WVDE) offers the West Virginia School Climate Surveys for that purpose at no cost to districts or schools.

As part of the data-driven planning process, schools may conduct three interrelated surveys: 1) Student (separate versions for elementary students and middle/high students); 2) School Staff; and 3) Parent/Caregiver. These surveys are conducted online and provide critical information about the learning and teaching environment, the health and well-being of students, and supports for parents, school staff, and students. The WVDE offers two opportunities each school year for schools to participate in the surveys; the first in the fall semester followed by a second opportunity in the spring semester. The WVDE also makes every effort to provide schools reports of their survey results in as short a time as possible after the close of each survey window. Examples of selected survey products are available here.

To learn more about the WVDE School Climate Survey go to <http://wvde.state.wv.us/healthyschools/wvscs/>.

When can schools access and complete the WV School Climate Survey?

The WV School Climate Survey can be completed fall and spring semester.

Is there guidance provided for the Administration of the WV School Climate Survey?

Yes, at Guidance for the Administration of the West Virginia School Climate Surveys.

What questions and levels are included in the WV School Climate Survey?

Elementary, Middle and High School student questions, staff questions and parent questions can be located at <http://wvde.state.wv.us/healthyschools/wvscs/>.

West Virginia Policy Resources

- West Virginia Department of Education Resources and Policies:
Policy page: <https://wvde.state.wv.us/policies/>
- Expected Behavior in Safe and Supportive Schools: Policy 4373
<https://wvde.state.wv.us/policies/p4373-new.pdf>.

General Resources

- School Climate Implementation Road Map
<http://schoolclimate.org/climate/roadmap.php>
- School Climate Measurement:
<https://safesupportivelearning.ed.gov/topic-research/school-climate-measurement>
- School Climate Improvement:
<http://schoolclimate.org/climate/process.php>
<https://safesupportivelearning.ed.gov/scirp/quick-guide>
- School Climate Improvement Quick Guide:
https://safesupportivelearning.ed.gov/sites/default/files/NCSSLE_SCIRP_QuickGuide508.pdf

The purpose of the ESMH toolkits is to provide a common framework and recommendations to assist schools and community mental health providers to more effectively develop a comprehensive approach to school mental health that is consistent with current West Virginia Department of Education policies and best practices.

These recommendations and resources have been reviewed and approved by West Virginia's Expanded School Mental Health Steering Team.

For more information visit, <https://livewell.marshall.edu/mutac>

