

Ellington Middle School

School Climate Plan 2025-2026

The EMS School Climate Plan is a building-specific plan developed by our EMS School Climate Committee. The plan uses school data to develop systematic responses and interventions to address school climate concerns. The plan identifies current procedures and systems in place to promote a positive school climate and next step plans for improvement, which are aligned to district policies and the school improvement plan.

EMS School Climate Specialist: Michele Murray

EPS Climate Coordinator: Kristy LaPorte

EMS School Climate Team - *Team meets monthly to review school data and implement strategies.*

- Michele Murray - Co-Principal
- Michael Nash - Co-Principal
- Beth Shaw - Counselor & Choice Liaison
- Scott Raiola - Counselor
- Liz Ryan - School Psychologist
- Cindy Jones - Administrative Assistant
- Rachel Dio-Rand - 7th Grade Teacher
- Kelley Griffin - Art Teacher

EMS School Vision for a Safe and Positive School Environment:	At Ellington Middle School we believe in a positive and inclusive school culture where all students and staff feel respected, safe and excited to learn.
EMS Theory of Action	If EMS implements a system for learning and supporting students, we will develop highly engaging, academically rigorous, and supportive learning environments ensuring all students are academically successful and reach their full potential.

School Climate Policies and Practices

Below is a summary of EMS school policies and practices that support our vision. Additional information about school climate practices and policies can be found in the School Handbook.

Positive School Culture and Student Leadership Opportunities	Peer Leadership - EMS has a school based peer leadership program which supports building student leadership. Student leaders participate in peer leadership training and have opportunities across the school year to serve as peer role models and/or support school initiatives. Open Choice Partnership - Students who attend Ellington Middle School from Hartford are supported by the EMS Open Choice Liaison and integrated into the school culture. They regularly participate in after school activities and activities are planned that bridge community building between students who participate in the program and students who reside in Ellington. Academic Pep Rally - An end of the year academic pep rally involves all students and staff and serves as a way to recognize students and staff for their positive contributions in the school culture.
Seeds of Civility	The district has an adopted framework about how to engage in respectful communication called the Seeds of Civility . This statement of expectations is posted throughout the school and lessons are embedded within academic classes.
Student Code of Conduct	Our EMS Code of Conduct outlines student expectations for expectations and conduct which focuses on respect for others, respect for the learning environment, and respect for safety. Students are provided an opportunity to review the Code of Conduct at the beginning of the year with classroom teachers. The Code of Conduct is outlined in the student handbook and also in the student agenda planners. Click here for the full description of student expectations.
PRIDE	PRIDE is EMS' system for providing feedback on effort and behavior in the classroom and within the school community.

	<table><tr><th>Persistent</th><th>Respectful</th><th>Independent</th><th>Disciplined</th><th>Engaged</th></tr><tr><td><i>"I don't give up"</i></td><td><i>"I am kind"</i></td><td><i>"I take ownership"</i></td><td><i>"I make the right choice"</i></td><td><i>"I am an active learner"</i></td></tr><tr><td>I use feedback to make revisions and improvements to my work (redos, final drafts, etc). I complete my best work even when things get difficult.</td><td>I treat all members of the community with kindness and follow the <u>Ellington Seeds of Civility</u>. My words and actions have a positive impact on members of our community. I take actions to repair my mistakes.</td><td>I look to solve problems on my own by using my resources. I can advocate for help when I need it. I self start when given an assignment and complete my work on time.</td><td>I follow the EMS Code of Conduct for school and classroom rules and procedures. I am on time and prepared. I use technology (cell phones, watches, chromebooks, etc) appropriately and only during the designated times.</td><td>I am actively involved in class work or discussions. I use class time effectively and am on task. I manage my time out of the classroom effectively to maximize my learning.</td></tr></table>	Persistent	Respectful	Independent	Disciplined	Engaged	<i>"I don't give up"</i>	<i>"I am kind"</i>	<i>"I take ownership"</i>	<i>"I make the right choice"</i>	<i>"I am an active learner"</i>	I use feedback to make revisions and improvements to my work (redos, final drafts, etc). I complete my best work even when things get difficult.	I treat all members of the community with kindness and follow the <u>Ellington Seeds of Civility</u> . My words and actions have a positive impact on members of our community. I take actions to repair my mistakes.	I look to solve problems on my own by using my resources. I can advocate for help when I need it. I self start when given an assignment and complete my work on time.	I follow the EMS Code of Conduct for school and classroom rules and procedures. I am on time and prepared. I use technology (cell phones, watches, chromebooks, etc) appropriately and only during the designated times.	I am actively involved in class work or discussions. I use class time effectively and am on task. I manage my time out of the classroom effectively to maximize my learning.
Persistent	Respectful	Independent	Disciplined	Engaged												
<i>"I don't give up"</i>	<i>"I am kind"</i>	<i>"I take ownership"</i>	<i>"I make the right choice"</i>	<i>"I am an active learner"</i>												
I use feedback to make revisions and improvements to my work (redos, final drafts, etc). I complete my best work even when things get difficult.	I treat all members of the community with kindness and follow the <u>Ellington Seeds of Civility</u> . My words and actions have a positive impact on members of our community. I take actions to repair my mistakes.	I look to solve problems on my own by using my resources. I can advocate for help when I need it. I self start when given an assignment and complete my work on time.	I follow the EMS Code of Conduct for school and classroom rules and procedures. I am on time and prepared. I use technology (cell phones, watches, chromebooks, etc) appropriately and only during the designated times.	I am actively involved in class work or discussions. I use class time effectively and am on task. I manage my time out of the classroom effectively to maximize my learning.												
Positive PRIDE Rewards	Additionally, students are provided positive feedback from their teachers for meeting the expectations for PRIDE through PRIDE tickets and earning rewards.															
PRIDE Reminder System	Working with middle school aged children, we also understand that students will make mistakes and it is important that our school help students learn from mistakes as they become adults. We believe the best way to ensure students learn and grow from their mistakes is through “restorative practices” that allow students to build empathy and understanding of the situation and make changes to their behavior based on feedback from administration, counseling staff, and teachers. At times we combine restorative practices with more traditional consequences when the situation merits the use of both. Ultimately we want students to learn from their mistakes, take ownership of their behaviors, and make changes to their behaviors to avoid the same mistake again. Teachers and administration provide feedback to students when they are not following the Code of Conduct or meeting the expectations for PRIDE through the PRIDE reminder system. This is a tier system of notification regarding classroom behaviors that impact the learning environment. Teachers first provide students a verbal reminder of the expectation and then provide increasing interventions as follows: 1st reminder: Verbal reminder to student 2nd reminder: Parent contact 3rd reminder: PRIDE reminder, parent contact and lunch detention 4th reminder: PRIDE reminder, parent contact, and office referral Administration may place additional interventions and consequences for students earning more than 4 PRIDE reminders in a quarter. Interventions may include any or the following supports and consequences: Homework Club, detentions, tutoring, behavior plans, and loss of privileges. All students will track their PRIDE reminders in their student handbook.															

RULER & Guidance Lessons	Teachers have been trained in RULER to strategies for student emotional regulation. All students participate in counseling and Health class lessons that provide information and strategies for emotional regulation including RULER practices, stress management, and peer relationships. The school has a school charter for a safe school environment. This is reviewed with all students through the school based 101 series of lessons.
Restorative Practices	In July 2024, administration and counseling staff participated in restorative practice professional development and began developing strategies for restorative practices. Additionally, they provided professional learning to staff on restorative practices including the social discipline window and community circles. Teachers have embedded circle discussions in many lessons.
Tiered System for Behavioral Intervention	EMS responds to student behaviors with a variety of interventions and restorative practices including PRIDE reminders, counseling, peer mediations, restorative actions, admin & parent collaboration, and disciplinary consequences when appropriate including detention and suspensions. Tiered 1 strategies used by teachers include classroom management systems and PRIDE reminders for behaviors. Tiered 2 strategies used by staff include access to counseling, peer conflict mediation, admin discussions, parent collaboration, lunch detentions, and restorative actions. Tiered 3 strategies include tiered 2 strategies and developed behavioral plans, check in/check out plans, access to alternative locations, breaks, social groups, point sheets and disciplinary consequences. Additional information about school disciplinary practices can be found in the school handbook.
EPS Policy for Bullying and Harassment	EMS follows the EPS policies and procedures for bullying and harassment. Concerns and incidents are investigated by administration and appropriate actions are taken to respond to concerns. Actions may involve peer mediation, counseling and emotional support, safety plans, restorative practices and disciplinary interventions when needed. For more information: See Bullying and Peer Conflicts - EMS Student handbook Anonymous Bullying Complaint Form - click here

Addressing More Challenging Behavior	When a student presents more challenging behavior the school follows the procedures: • Teachers and staff can complete an office referral form to describe the behavioral incident. The form is used for both school infractions and removals from the classroom. • Administration reviews the referral, interviews the student(s), and assesses the severity and intentionality of an incident of challenging behavior. • Administration contacts parents to inform them of the behavioral referral. In many cases administration attempts to work collaboratively on interventions, supports and consequences with parents. • In situations where students are removed from class and sent to the office, administration makes their best effort to respond in a timely manner to the incident and works to minimize time out of the classroom. If the student is not able to return to the classroom they may be sent to guidance while the investigation occurs. • Students who incur an in school suspension are typically placed in the guidance office or guidance conference room for the suspension. This allows students to receive access to guidance support and interventions including support for restorative actions, therapeutic resources, and mental health support when needed. • Administration ensures that supports, services or interventions are in compliance with the special education laws, including the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA), Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, and a student's Individualized Education Program (IEP) or Section 504 Plan;
---	---

2025-2026 CT School Climate Standards and Areas for Improvement

The EMS School Climate Committee meets monthly to review school data, plan for promoting school culture and develop strategies to respond to areas of concern. Data from school feedback surveys and disciplinary data provides information on target areas. The committee identifies both short term and year long areas for improvement on a continuous basis. Year long areas of concern are addressed within the school improvement plan with identified strategies.

Standards	Areas Identified as Needing Improvement	Action Steps and Strategies	Timeline and Measurement
Standard 1: Vision, Values & Goals	The school climate team meets monthly to focus on school climate issues. The team identified	1. Climate team members to attend various levels of restorative practice training and	1. October - December 2025

	the team to ensure that all stakeholders in the school understand the school's climate plan, vision for supporting students, especially with restorative actions in the classroom and in school. Teachers were provided professional learning opportunities in 2024-2025 around supporting students in the "with" box (social framework) and use of circles in the classroom to support discussions. Additionally professional development in restorative practices and consistency in both understanding and use are identified next step areas for growth.	school climate training in Fall 2025 offered by CAS. 2. Climate team plan for professional development for staff around key areas of restorative practices.	2. Winter/Spring 2026
Standard 2: Shared Policies	The school and district needs to revise the school bullying policy and develop a Restorative Practices Response Policy. While EMS has made changes to their disciplinary practices to respond in more restorative ways there is not a clear district policy for incidents of challenging behaviors or student conflict	Align the school's bullying policy and practices with the district bullying policy when available.	To be completed by January 2026
Standard 3: Shared Practices	The climate team notes that while the school has begun using restorative practices as a first step in	Counseling staff will utilize the year to develop and create a plan for restorative practices as part of their	Completed by June 2026

	peer conflicts and most disciplinary referrals there is a need to develop a restorative practice shared plan with researched based strategies (ie a toolkit).	professional learning goals.	
Standard 4: Welcoming Environment	Data indicates that the majority of students feel safe in school and feel respected by their peers. However students also indicate that their peers are not respected by other peers. This continues to be an area that the school climate team focuses and works on.	1. School counseling lessons on peer to peer respect/relationships, or other SEL areas. 2. A series of advisory lessons in homeroom to develop shared language and understanding around respect 3. Development of activities that are led by school peer leaders. 4. Peer mediation for student conflicts	On going School climate data School discipline data Counseling peer to peer mediation data
Standard 5: Restorative Practices	Training for all staff in restorative practices.	Climate team members to attend various levels of restorative practice training and school climate training in Fall 2025 offered by CAS. Climate team plan for professional development for staff around key areas of restorative practices.	October - December 2025 Winter/Spring 2026