



Sevier School District School Climate Initiatives 2025-2026

Anti-Bullying Efforts: As part of our PBIS/school climate efforts, and in partnership with the USOE and the Utah Anti-Bullying Coalition, all schools have implemented bullying prevention strategies and/or programs. The specific methods chosen were based on office disciplinary, SHARP, and student report data at each school. In addition to *Second Step* and *Prevention Dimensions*, other examples of these include:

- ❖ **Anti-Bullying Assemblies:** These are targeted for the whole student body and designed to increase awareness and motivation to make a difference. Josh Drean, Gabe Adams and Braxton Nielson are examples of these assemblies.
- ❖ **Me2We:** This is a middle-level whole-school peer curriculum program where students focus on developing a culture of kindness within the school. The program has lasting effects on the school as a whole promoting the ideas of kindness, acceptance, and tolerance of others. The positive and encouraging climate of the school is hugely due to the lessons, activities, and other reminders offered to students in regard to developing self-esteem, positive relationships with others, and working hard to find personal success and encouraging the success of others
- ❖ **Peer Programs:** At the secondary level, established groups such as Hope Squads and Student Government have taken on the Anti-Bullying cause and include it in what they are doing throughout the year. These students promote positive relationships and watch for students at risk or aggressors and report them to school officials. They also spearhead activities to increase unity and acceptance. Training for these students has been provided through the Utah Anti-Bullying Coalition.
- ❖ **Second Step Bullying Prevention Curriculum K-5:** Research-based bullying prevention taught as a supplement to the *Second Step* social-emotional learning program. The skills taught through this curriculum build on *Second Step* fundamentals with included training for all school staff and lessons for students.

Best Practices in School Mental Wellness Grant: Salina Elementary School was selected along with only one other school in a region of several western states to receive intensive technical assistance and training through the Mountain Plains Mental Health Technology Transfer. Administrators, Counselors and Teachers received hands-on best practices training on working with students with social-emotional issues.

Botvin LifeSkills Training: The Botvin LifeSkills Elementary, Middle and High School program is a groundbreaking substance abuse and violence prevention program based on more than 35 years of rigorous scientific research. Proven to be the most effective evidence-based program used in schools today. LifeSkills Training is comprehensive, dynamic, and developmentally designed to promote positive youth development. In addition to helping kids resist drug, alcohol, and tobacco use, the LifeSkills Training Middle School program also effectively supports the reduction of violence and other high-risk behaviors.

Check & Connect Mentor: Sevier School District has hired a Check & Connect Mentor to work directly with our Foster Care population of students to provide support and wrap-around services to all Foster Care students.

Community Meetings: Sevier School District attends a wide variety of community meetings to collaborate with other agencies and providers who have similar goals about student safety, mental health, substance abuse, and other concerns. Some meetings include- Prevention Coalition, Regional Mental Health Collaboration, Multi-agency meetings, Providers meetings, and more.

Early Warning System (EWS): SSD's early warning system can help predict if students are on track to high school graduation and postsecondary success. It helps identify students who are at risk of academic failure and/or drop out. An effective EWS consists of 3 main components:

- ❖ **The ABCs:** Research-based predictors of student engagement, Attendance, Behavior, and Course performance drive the process and focus attention on students who, without added help, would probably drop out.
- ❖ **Teacher Teams:** Grade-level and cross-curricular teacher teams share the same students and are empowered by the administration to act within and beyond their classrooms on behalf of those students.
- ❖ **Tiered Interventions:** A coordinated system of interventions to meet the needs of whole school (Tier 1), targeted groups of students with common needs (Tier 2), and individually case managed high needs students (Tier 3).

Educator's Handbook: State-of-the-art reporting and incident management system that provides schools with the information that they need to make informed decisions including: identify students in need of services, pinpoint where and when challenging behavior is most likely to occur, select and measure response to targeted intervention, and communicate effectively with parents and others.

- ❖ **The Behavior Game:** Positive behavior classroom management tool available for all teachers.

Emergency Response Team: Sevier School District has a Crisis Response Team which include District administration, principals, school counselors, community leaders and members of the community.

Escape the Vape- CATCH My Breath: All 5th grade, 8th grade, and 10th grade students will be taught the CATCH My Breath program. This program focuses on e-cigarette and nicotine prevention.

Functional Behavioral Assessment (FBA): Every school has a mental health specialist trained in FBA. FBA is a process for gathering information about behaviors of concern, whether the behaviors are academic, social, or emotional.

HOPE Squads: These are students in secondary schools that are trained in suicide awareness to assist and help peers who are suffering from depression or may be suicidal. It incorporates training modules that take an active approach in teaching/learning the warning signs of suicide, reporting potential suicidal behavior, and supporting students who have already received help. Hope Squads are the eyes and ears of the school's student body that have been identified by their peers as someone that is a good listener. Teams are led by teachers and counselors who have also been trained. The goal is to refer the students to the counseling office or another adult who can assist them in getting the support they need.

Juvenile Justice Intervention Programs: The School-based Outreach Program provides evidence-based services to youths to improve attendance and academic performance, teach problem solving, decision making, goal setting and resiliency skills in the school and in the community, tutor participating youth, establish collaborative relationships with allied agencies, and mentor youth in homes, where skills are taught to the family. Juvenile Justice Service representatives work with secondary students one on one and in small groups weekly.

Mental Health, Bullying, and Safety Parent Nights: Each attendance area in Sevier School District offers a seminar for parents of students that covers, suicide prevention, substance abuse, bullying, mental health, safety, and crisis line.

Mental Health Services: Through School Climate and Counseling Grants, our students can access mental health services for situations that are affecting their social/emotional wellbeing, school behavior and/or academics. A partnership in association with Central Utah Counseling provides cost-free opportunities for qualifying

students to get the support needed during school time. This can be accessed through administrators and/or counselors. A partnership grant with the Children's Justice Center is also available for those who may not qualify for the other programs. SCTG awarded money for Community Mental Health Services through September 2024.

Multiple Assemblies and Presentations: We are always looking at investing in assemblies and presentations to deliver proactive, positive information to help our students and parents deal with bullying, suicide, prevention, etc. to help our community prevent and cope with the tough issues that face our students, i.e; Dr. Christy Kane - Social Media, Greg Hudnal - Suicide Prevention, Shailee Syddall - Kindness, Braxten Nielson - Resiliency, Ryan Stream-Suicide Prevention, Tina Stokes- Resiliency, Shakespear Festival- Suicide Prevention, etc.

National Bereavement Guidelines: In the event of a school crisis, Sevier School District Emergency Response Team uses the National School Crisis and Bereavement guidelines. These guidelines are designed to help school administrators, teachers, and crisis team members respond to the needs of students and staff after a suicide has impacted the school environment as well as when an individual student's life may be impacted by a suicide within the family.

Nearpod: Interactive lessons application that includes social-emotional learning (SEL) lessons in different SEL domains for grades K-12.

NOVA: The N.O.V.A (Nurturing Opportunities, Values and Accountability) Principles program teaches powerful, comprehensive principles-based decision making that goes far beyond other prevention and education programs. The curriculum includes lessons that help youth and parents deal with drugs, accountability and healthy choices, anger management, internet safety, self-esteem, bullying and media.

Peekapak: Peekapak is an approved research curriculum for K-3 classrooms in the Utah State Board of Education (USBE) for the 2023-2024 school year! Peekapak is the next generation SEL curriculum that goes beyond software to empower educators to support both online and offline learning to unlock students' full potential. It's easy-to-use, educator-led curriculum features leveled readers and fully-planned lessons to help students develop self-regulation, empathy and more while also developing core academic skills, including reading, writing, listening, speaking, representing and problem-solving.

Positive Behavioral Interventions & Supports (PBIS): District-wide implementation by adhering to research-based principles and frameworks that include:

- establishing school-side positive behavior expectations
- systematically rewarding expected behaviors
- identifying students in need of additional supports
- providing targeted interventions to students who are struggling behaviorally and/or academically
- providing opportunities for parent and community involvement
- collecting and analyzing data to drive school improvement decisions

Tools that assist in this process are: Educator's Handbook, School Information System (SIS), PBIS.org, PBIS World, etc.

- ❖ **Tier 1 Ticket/Postcard programs:** Schools are recognizing students for positive behaviors daily. If their behavior reflects school expectations consistently, faculty and staff members are handing out a ticket/postcard to that student. This postcard states what positive act the student was demonstrating. Then the ticket/postcard is sent home to parents.
- ❖ **Tier 2:** Teacher teams meet monthly to discuss which intervention for students who may need extra support academically, socially, emotionally, mentally, and behaviorally.
- ❖ **Tier 3:** A Student Success team meets weekly to determine additional school and community supports/resources for students who may need this support.

PBIS Facilitators

All Sevier School District schools have PBIS Facilitators to lead PBIS implementation.

Positive Behavior Plans: All schools have been given extra funding through the E-Cigarette and Nicotine Prevention Grant and the Suicide Prevention Grant per House Bill 58. All schools submitted a positive behavior plan that outlines the intention of how this extra funding will be spent at each school. The funding must be spent on promoting positive behavior and/or pre-intervention, intervention, or post-intervention of suicide.

Positive Professional Development for Teachers: Sevier School District is always looking for and implementing positive professional development opportunities for staff and faculty dealing with improving school culture, compassion fatigue, student success, positive effect size, etc. We feel if we can give our teachers and staff the right tools and training it will transfer to our students social/emotional development, academic success and improved coping skills. Mental health professionals are always scheduled to present at our annual professional learning conference.

- ❖ **Jimmy Casas:** Sevier School District administration and teachers have participated in

two book studies from Jimmy Casas. The first book study was *Culturize* and now, *Live Your Excellence* is planned to be completed by the end of the 21-22 school year. Professional development is being given to each principal from Jimmy Casas. Principals have direct communication capabilities with Jimmy Casas and he visits Sevier School District a couple of times a year for face to face professional development. Jimmy's focus is on promoting a positive culture and "bringing your best self to school every day".

- ❖ **Jody Carrington:** All Sevier School District employees were given Jody Carrington's book *Kids These Days*. Jody's focus is staying connected with kids. Sevier School District employees had the option to participate in an online chapter reflection professional development. Jody Carrington came to speak about reconnection and emotional regulation on September 11, 2021 to SSD employees and community members.

QPR Training: We have 2 district trainers that work throughout the community to train educators, staff, students, community groups, religious groups, etc. on the *Question, Persuade, and Refer (QPR)* method of suicide prevention. After 2 years of teaching QPR in Sevier County, we have trained many Gatekeepers, and people in *Connect Postvention*. We have several staff who have also been trained in postvention. Teachers, administrators, and counselors attended a QPR and Suicide Prevention training.

Refocus Groups: We have refocus coordinators in 9 of 12 schools. The program was implemented to monitor students in various activities for the purpose of providing a safe and positive learning environment. The refocus coordinator responds productively to conflict situations with students for the purpose of de-escalating student behavior and directing the situation toward a positive outcome.

Restorative Practices: During the 21-22 school year, it was a focus is to implement restorative practice or restorative justice. Restorative practices promote inclusiveness, relationship building and problem solving through restorative methods.

RethinkEd: K-12 social-emotional learning (SEL) online teaching platform. SSD has purchased secondary (6-12) use of the platform to teach SEL in secondary schools. Elementary schools have access to additional materials to supplement *Second Step* SEL lessons. PD for teachers/staff.

SafeUT: Students concerned about the safety of themselves or others are reaching out for help. The SafeUT Crisis & Safety Tip Line App was brought online districtwide in April 2016. All students in grades 6-12 are trained about how and when to use the SafeUT services.

Students in crisis can connect with counselors 24 hours a day by using the mobile app or calling 1-800-273-8255 to talk about relationship issues, drug problems, thoughts of suicide, etc. Safety tips submitted are screened by crisis workers for immediate intervention and then passed along to district/school officials for follow up. Tips can be reported anonymously and may include, but are not limited to: suicide, bullying, cyber-bullying, harassment, hazing, threats, and substance abuse. We have received valuable tips allowing us to respond and intervene in a timely manner to prevent, properly investigate, act upon, restore, and maintain safety. High school counselors review this app frequently with students.

Safety Care- Crisis Prevention Training: All principals, instructional coaches, mental health specialists, and SPED teachers are QBS certified. QBS, short for Quality Behavioral Solutions, trains organizations that support individuals who may exhibit behavioral challenges. Through Safety-Care®, we provide evidence-based incident prevention and management training to help staff provide humane, person-centered interventions that replace challenging behavior with safer and more collaborative behavior. Safety-Care provides the tools you need for safe crisis prevention and management when working with individuals who might exhibit behavioral changes. Using evidence-based and practical techniques from Applied Behavior Analysis (ABA) and Positive Behavior Interventions & Supports (PBIS), the Safety-Care program provides your staff with trauma-informed care-compatible strategies for preventing and managing behavioral challenges. These strategies are appropriate for individuals affected by developmental, neurologic, and psychiatric conditions as well as individuals who have experienced psychological or sexual trauma. Safety-Care promotes a reinforcement-based approach while teaching replacement behaviors and new skills, resulting in fewer incidences of dangerous behavior and less need for restrictive interventions such as restraint.

Registered Behavior Technicians (RBT): All elementary schools have an RBT on staff. An RBT is a paraprofessional certification in behavior analysis certified by BACB.

School-Based Mental Health Screener: Screening is a process for evaluating the possible presence of a particular problem. Mental health screening may only happen after the students' parents opt into a mental health screening program or event, giving active consent. Screening is not an assessment or diagnosis. Based on student results, this will determine if extra support is needed.

School-Based Mental Health Webinar: The Utah School Board of Education provides School-Based Mental Health

webinars for counselors and other student support professionals each month.

School Climate Transformation Grant: Sevier School District was the only School District in the state of Utah and only one of 69 districts awarded the Federal School Climate Transformation Grant nationwide. This grant is a 5 (five) year competitive grant meant to assist school districts in helping positively change the culture of struggling districts to help students and staff become more social emotionally safe. Much of the grant funding will be used to implement social emotional programs and professional development geared toward improving school culture. As part of this grant Joli J. Nay was hired as our SCTG Coordinator.

School Counseling & Mental Health Systems of Support: Our school counselors have an “open-door policy” for responsive services. They know this takes precedence over other needs. Counselors have attended multiple trainings/conferences in the areas of suicide prevention, mental health, emergency services, intervention strategies, abuse and trauma, etc. Counselors have been trained in various suicide prevention programs/strategies, including QPR, as well as other trainings. Sevier School District has also actively increased counseling services throughout the district including in our elementary schools. In addition to this a couple of our elementary schools are using school funding to pilot efforts to include social/emotional intervention aides on staff.

School Resource Officers (SROs): SROs are sworn law enforcement officers who are specially selected and trained to promote safety within schools. SROs can fulfill a variety of roles including:

- preventing and responding to school-based crime
- fostering positive relationships among law enforcement, educators, and youth
- helping to promote a positive school climate.

Second Step (grades K-5): This is a nationally renowned, evidence-based program designed to promote skills and attitudes that increase students' social and school success. It provides a foundation for creating a safe, respectful learning environment. *Second Step* is implemented by classroom teachers in every elementary school in SSD. Counselors, mental health coordinators (MHCs) and refocus specialists use the lessons in small group settings to reinforce what is taught by the classroom teachers.

Sevier County Suicide Prevention Tips: The tip of the month is produced through the Central Utah Counseling Center. The information includes prevention events and tips from many agencies throughout Sevier County.

SHARP Survey: Every other year, students in grades 6-12 participated in the SHARP Survey. This survey is administered every two years, gathering data that is used to continue to support and improve efforts to combat suicide, bullying, drug and tobacco use, etc. within our district and communities.

Solutions Program: One of our high schools has implemented a solutions room to help those students who find themselves having difficulty with attendance, behavior, etc. This is a Tier 2 intervention to help those students find a solution to help them improve their educational experience. They focus on restorative justice conversations, negative behavior solutions, goal setting, tracking, follow-up, parent/school/student team, etc.

SOS (Signs of Suicide):

SOS is an evidence-based youth suicide prevention program that has demonstrated an improvement in students' knowledge and adaptive attitudes about suicide risk and depression.

Designed for grades 6-12, SOS teaches students how to identify signs of depression and suicide in themselves and their peers, while providing materials that support school professionals, parents, and communities in recognizing at-risk students and taking appropriate action.

Special Olympics Unified Champion Schools: The Special Olympics Unified Champion Schools program is aimed at promoting social inclusion through intentionally planned and implemented activities affecting systems-wide change. With sports as the foundation, the three-component model offers a unique combination of effective activities that equip young people with tools and training to create sports, classroom and school climates of acceptance. These are school climates where students with disabilities feel welcome and are routinely included in, and feel a part of, all activities, opportunities and functions. This is accomplished by implementing inclusive sports, inclusive youth leadership opportunities, and whole-school engagement. The program is designed to be woven into the fabric of the school, enhancing current efforts and providing rich opportunities that lead to meaningful change in creating a socially inclusive school that supports and engages all learners. What a Unified Champion School "looks like" can vary greatly from school to school, based on the needs, goals, schedules and other factors unique to each school; but the basic building blocks remain the same.

SSD Mental Health Specialists (MHSs): Sevier School District (SSD) has hired and implemented a School Based Mental Health Counseling program. At this time 6 (six) Mental Health Specialists/Therapists have been hired district-wide to help students on a daily basis dealing with such student issues as resiliency, self-esteem, emotional

safety, anxiety, etc. Our Specialists will work with whole classrooms, small groups and on occasion individual students. SSD School MHSs will help provide students and parents with additional resources outside of the school if necessary.

Summer Teacher Training Series: Administrators, teachers and staff participated in extensive training over the summer 2020 to become familiar with and equipped to teach and implement frameworks, programs, and curriculum directly tied to Positive Behavioral Interventions and Supports (PBIS), Utah Multi-Tiered Systems of Support (UMTSS), and social-emotional learning (SEL). Training and professional development is planned and expected to continue throughout the 2023-2024 school year.

Total Health and Wellness Training: All certified employees have access to SSD's Total Health and Wellness courses on canvas. Courses and activities have been designed to bring attention to and improve each of the eight dimensions of wellness on an individual basis. For the next, We focus on one of each of the dimensions of wellness a month and offer opportunities to learn and grow together.

Totem PD: All Sevier School District employees had the opportunity to participate in Totem Professional Development. Each training opportunity was directed specifically to the role of each employee. Classes included the following topics: classroom management techniques, bullying, self-care, other positive behavior interventions.

WhyTry: This is a nationally renowned, evidence-based program designed to promote skills and attitudes that increase students' social and school success. The WhyTry Program is a resilience education curriculum that provides simple, hands-on solutions for dropout prevention, violence prevention, truancy reduction, and increased academic success.

Zones of Regulation: A curriculum designed to foster self-regulation and control available in every school in the district. The Zones framework provides strategies to teach students to become more aware of and independent in controlling their emotions and impulses, manage their sensory needs, and improve their ability to problem-solve conflicts.