Culture and Emotional Intelligence

A Strategic Framework for Structural Change and Academic Acceleration

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The Structural Foundation

From Decline to Belonging

- **The Challenge:** Two years ago, declining metrics in safety and emotional regulation signaled that standard practices were insufficient.
- **Policy Overhaul:** Instituted zero-tolerance cell phone rules and "No-Bag" policies, yielding immediate improvements in focus.
- **Logistical Flow:** Reorganized the building by grade level ("Zoning") and installed safety tech to create a calm, ordered environment.
- **Core Goal:** To ensure every community member feels seen, heard, and known.

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Implementation: The "How"

Adults First Strategy

We prioritized "Adult Emotional Intelligence" first. A diverse SEL team led book studies and training over the summer before any student rollout.

The Mood Meter

Integrated the RULER approach into the daily schedule. We dedicated morning meeting time to teach emotional vocabulary and recognition.

The Meta-Moment

Targeted the most challenging time of day, post-lunch, by implementing regulation strategies to bridge the gap between trigger and response.

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West Rocks Middle School: SEL Impact

Student Experience (Panorama Survey)

- Growth Mindset: +10 points
- Emotional Regulation: +8 points
- School Safety: +16 points (56% favorable)
- Belonging: +10 points (47% favorable)
- Climate: +10 points (48% favorable)
- Engagement: +7 points (32% favorable)

Students report more confidence, stronger emotional control, and a greater sense of belonging.

Staff Culture

- School Safety: +54 points (94% favorable)
- School Climate: +29 points (56% favorable)
- Staff - Leadership Relationships: +15 points (82% favorable)
- Staff - Family Relationships: +20 points (68% favorable)
- Faculty Growth Mindset: +11 points (63% favorable)
- Educating All Students: 85% favorable (national top quartile)

Staff feel safer, more supported, and more united with families than ever.

Family Voice

- School Communication: 84% favorable
- Family Support: +4 points (70% favorable)
- School Safety: +3 points (68% favorable)

Families recognize better communication, stronger support, and improved safety perceptions.

Schoolwide Outcomes

Chronic Absenteeism: down to 8% (from 14.9% two years ago)

Tardy Reductions: ~33% vs. prior year

Suspensions: down >50%, recognized recognized for a 10-year low

Staff Retention: 95%

Students are showing up more, on time, and staying engaged, teachers are staying and thriving.

Academic Growth

Smarter Balanced Assessments (Math, ELA, NGSS): Growth in all areas and all subgroups, outpacing state averages.
SEL is supporting both academic acceleration and equity.

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