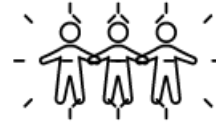


De-escalation

MPS Foundations



Last updated: July 2025

Anti-Racist SEL Strategies

Our Anti-Racist SEL comes alive with purposeful, evidence-based strategies that create a space of trust and belonging. In the 2023-2024 school year, MPS officially adopted the use of the following strategies in support of Anti-Racist SEL.

Strategy #1

Be a Warm Demander

A person who sets high expectations and cares deeply about the success of others.

This could look like:

- Holding **all** students to the same standard; not lowering expectations due to a student's identity.
- Get to know everyone present, to strengthen relationships and break down biases.
- Listen and affirm by using sentences like:
 - "What did you mean by...?"
 - "Did I hear correctly when you said...?"

Strategy #2

Use Social Contracts

The collaborative process of (1) setting goals (2) creating "common" agreements and (3) modeling behavior.

This could look like:

- Creating classroom rules **with** students.
- Agreeing on meeting conduct, like closing laptops.
- Taking turns speaking.

Strategy #3

Apply the Natural Learning Cycle

A three step process in which the mind learns something new.

This could look like:

1. **Welcoming:** Greeting others into the space, to create a sense of belonging.
2. **Engaging:** Participating in activities that connect to people's interests.
3. **Reflecting:** Looking back on today's events. Thinking about which experiences from today you want to take with you into tomorrow, and which experiences you want to explore even further.

THE ANTI-RACIST EDUCATOR

By committing to anti-racist practices both personally and professionally, staff can connect their own experiences and perspectives to current anti-bias educational and support strategies that foster inclusive environments for all students.

An anti-racist educator is:

- 1** Actively working to dismantle systems of oppression that make social, academic, emotional and life outcomes predictable by race.
- 2** Is engaged in a life-long process of personal and professional growth through humble self-examination and putting into practice the awareness of how or as whom they show up as daily.
- 3** Deliberately centering and uplifting the needs and experiences of people of color and understanding that by doing so, they are improving the conditions for all MPS students to learn and thrive.
- 4** Bravely modeling making mistakes so students can see adults fail forward, thereby creating an environment of grace and humility in action and thoughtful dialogue.
- 5** Consistently walking in the expectation that everyone is inherently good and wants to do good and to be well.
- 6** Regularly supporting students' individual identities and ensuring the space they steward as educators is a reflection of those identities.

Draft an Educator Identity Statement

Take what you've learned about systems, identity, and anti-racist practices to think critically about what kind of educator you want to be.

Who am I, as an educator?	
What do I value?	
How will I show up for others?	

Optional template for creating your educator identity statement:

As an educator, I'm someone who _____
because I believe that _____

My expectations for students are _____.

Expectations for myself are _____.

Students can expect that I _____.

Families and caregivers can expect that I _____
_____.

Fellow MPS staff can expect that I _____.

My community can expect that I _____.

Additional writing space for educator identity statement.

GET CURIOUS

Situation Summary Reference the prompts.	Situation Details Who's involved? Where is this situation taking place?	Antecedents What else is happening, or has already happened?	Observed Behavior What did you see?	First Clues What did you notice earlier?
Reflect on Biases Are there any biases that could affect the situation?	Behavior Reflection Are there relevant changes which could be impacting behavior (culture, family, or others)?	Communication Are there any underlying causes prompting this behavior?	Responses What are the different ways you can react?	Restorative Measures How do we safely return to learning or normalcy?
Debrief: What went well? What didn't go well? Were there opportunities to do things differently? What adjustments need to happen?				

GET CURIOUS situational prompts

People

- A. Student
- B. Staff
- C. Caregiver or family member
- D. Visitor
- E. Law enforcement



Situations

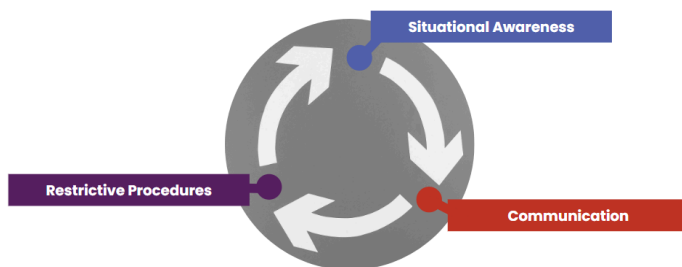
- 1. Didn't get what they wanted.
- 2. Someone is perceived as harmed.
- 3. In need of help.
- 4. In an area they're not allowed to be in.
- 5. Unknown emotional escalation.

Reflecting and Interrupting Biases

Ask yourself the following questions and think critically about your answers.

- 1. Am I enthusiastic about working with others who are different from me?
- 2. Am I open to continuous learning and adapting across cultures?
- 3. Am I an active listener and observed in cross-cultural situations?
- 4. Do I reach out to others who are more experienced in working across cultures?
- 5. Do I enjoy trying to understand how my students, caregivers and colleagues are similar or different from me?
- 6. When I experience a cultural bump (differences that disrupt my expectations) do I stay calm and seek understanding or do I become defensive?
- 7. Do I invest time in researching likely differences with my students, caregivers, and colleagues?
- 8. When I work across cultures, am I comfortable asking questions (questions that are likely to reveal my lack of understanding/knowledge)?

Continuum of Behavior & Interventions



There is no typical behavior, there are no levels to behavior, and there is no single response.

Each situation needs to be assessed individually, always taking the least amount of intervention possible.

Force should be used at a minimum, and only when absolutely necessary for the safety of others.

Restrictive Procedures: Staff Guide

Restrictive procedures are a serious intervention and should only be used as a last resort in situations where a student's behavior poses an imminent threat to themselves or others.

MPS is committed to providing staff with the training and resources necessary to ensure that these procedures are used safely, ethically, and effectively.

Legal and Ethical Framework

- Duty of Care: School staff have a legal and ethical responsibility to intervene when a student's behavior poses a risk of harm.
- Reasonable Force: Minnesota law (121A.582) permits educators to use reasonable force to prevent harm, but restrictive procedures must not be used to punish or otherwise discipline a child. Excessive force or actions violating section [125A.0942](#) are strictly prohibited.
- MPS defines "restrictive procedures" as the use of physical holding in emergencies, never for punishment. "Physical holding" involves immobilizing a student using body contact to ensure safety.

Core Principles

- Last Resort: Physical intervention should only be used when all other de-escalation strategies have been exhausted.
- Least Restrictive Means: The intervention must be the least restrictive option available to address the immediate risk.
- Best Interests: All actions must prioritize the safety and well-being of both students and staff.
- Human Rights: Treat students with dignity and respect, even during challenging behaviors.

Situational Awareness

- Definition: The ability to identify, process, and understand critical information about the current situation.
- Importance: Helps anticipate needs, predict future actions, and adapt to changing circumstances.
- Barriers: Complacency, information overload, fatigue, and poor communication can hinder situational awareness.
- Development: Be mentally present, process information for meaning, recognize patterns, and observe environmental changes.

De-escalation Strategies

- Warm Demand: The warm demander believes in students and uses approaches to foster student agency and potential. They focus on communication to create space and empower the student to resolve the situation safely.
- Communication: Be mindful of verbal and non-verbal communication and listen to the student's perspective. Choosing neutral or positive language to avoid escalating the situation.

Physical Intervention

- Team Approach: Employ a team approach for physical interventions to ensure staff and student safety and utilize appropriate techniques.
- Techniques: "Block and Move" and "Grab Release" are techniques to reduce harm.

- Disengagement: Move away from the student when safe, continue verbal interventions, and re-engage physically only if necessary.
- Multiple Students: Maintain situational awareness, use verbal intervention, employ crowd control, and intervene physically only with adequate staff support.

Safety and Monitoring

- Monitoring for Distress: Staff must continually monitor the student during physical holds for any signs of physical or psychological distress.
- Positional Asphyxia: Be aware of the risks and signs of positional asphyxia, a life-threatening condition.
- Emergency Medical Assistance: Know the procedures for contacting emergency medical services and be prepared to call 911 if necessary.

Post Intervention

- Documentation: All physical interventions must be documented in Infinite Campus. For special education students, a Restrictive Procedures form may be used.
- Debriefing: Conduct a debriefing with all involved parties to understand the situation, prevent future incidents, and promote restorative practices.
- Restorative Practices: Use restorative questions to help students understand the impact of their actions and identify ways to repair harm.

Resources



Slide show

Review the slides from today's presentation.



Video demonstration

Review the video demonstration on how to properly execute a team physical intervention.



Training schedule

View dates for upcoming in-person training offerings.

Human Needs and Functions of Behavior

Human needs can generally be grouped into five categories:

1. **Physiological:** bodily needs like food, water, sleep, etc.
2. **Safety:** ways to remove risk like housing, healthcare, access to funds.
3. **Social belonging:** develop a sense of acceptance through interactions and connections with others.
4. **Self-esteem:** a sense of self-worth. Typically this is first found from external sources of recognition. At a higher level, we seek this from ourselves.
5. **Self-actualization:** determining our place in the world, and achieving our fullest potential.

When children are dysregulated it's because one (or more) of their needs are not met. Often times, children are seeking out one of the following:

1. **Safety:** They seek individuals who make them feel safe and secure. We hope that these are the adults in their classrooms but often are peers or community members.
 - *How can we focus on relationships as a way to provide safety for our students?*
2. **Control or Agency:** All people have a desire to feel as though they're free to make choices. In school, so much of students' lives are determined for them. They have to eat at a certain time, regardless of whether they're hungry or not. They have to take math. They might have a uniform or dress code that they have to follow. It's extremely common for students to feel as though they have little control over their own lives. Students want to feel empowered to make their own decisions.
 - *Reference Climate Framework values.*
3. **Connection and Belonging:** Students seek both social and academic belonging. This is especially important to think about given the cultural and linguistic diversity of our students. Kids need to see themselves in their classrooms and content. A lack of these connections can lead to demonstration of challenging behaviors.
 - *How does a lack of representation in our staff impact our student's willingness to learn?*
4. **Fun and Engagement:** Our students are still kids. They crave activities which can hold their attention, are relatable to their lives, and that they enjoy. No one wants to participate in activities they find boring or that they don't see any connection to.