The White Pine County School District and David E. Norman Elementary School desire for all of our students to have a positive affective experience at school. We work extremely hard to make this happen every day. As students interact, it is true that there are occasionally conflicts--this is part of the human condition. In such conflicts, there are always at least two sides to the story. While some might be comfortable releasing details of such conflicts, DEN abides by the Federal Educational Right to Privacy Act (FERPA) and only comments on school procedures and policies as a whole.

Parents, community members, business leaders, and members of the public are welcome at the school at all times as long as the required safety procedures are followed which include checking in at the office and receiving a visitor identification. In fact, the superintendent conducts regular visits to all schools in the district along with regular invitations to community members and the media to join him. DEN educators are proud of the environment they have created and are always willing to showcase the good work going on at the school. We treasure our volunteers and deeply appreciate the service they provide to the school and its students.

DEN leaders and staff are committed to providing a physically and emotionally safe and supportive educational environment for all students. This objective is foundational to high levels of academic learning and underpins all that we do on a daily basis. The school and its caring and dedicated staff take a two pronged approach to attaining this objective. The first is through daily instruction, routines, and procedures (these could be considered the proactive steps taken on a regular basis). Here are just a few.

**Daily Instruction, Routines, and Procedures**

* Student Lighthouse Team through which students learn leadership, make decisions, and promote school culture.
* *Leader In Me* integrated, daily instruction, which helps students learn qualities of good citizens and successful leaders in our community and world (student version of Steven Covey’s *7 Habits of Highly Successful People*).
* Lessons taught in classrooms by certified school counselor and licensed social worker.
* Partnership with Communities Against Childhood Hunger, providing students and families with food each week.
* Participation in Nevada’s Social and Emotional Learning Survey, which provides data regarding students’ perceptions on the physical, emotional, cultural, and relational safety in the school.
* Secure locks on all doors and entry for visitors through the front office only with ID required.
* Building and campus camera and recording systems with real time and recording options.
* Detailed and regularly updated recess supervision plans.
* Monthly district safety teams participation--community members are invited to become a part of this district team.
* Continuous partnerships with local safety authorities including daily sheriff’s office walkthroughs, monthly attendance review meetings with Division of Child and Family Services and Juvenile Probation as service providers for families in need.
* Love and Logic seminars for families and staff members.

Unfortunately, and despite everyone’s best efforts, problems do occur at times. We do plan purposefully for these problems so that their impact is as minimal as possible and students can return to the business of learning as soon as possible. The second of the two pronged approach, therefore, is ensuring that there are plans and protocols for when problems do occur (these could be considered the reactive steps taken upon an incident).

**Responses When Problems Occur**

* “No Bully Zone” on the DEN website for parents and students to report inappropriate activities.
* SafeVoice app and website. Tips on SafeVoice are pushed out immediately to the school’s safety team--even on the weekends.
* Thorough and detailed investigation procedure. The process is designed to be transparent for all parties involved, including parents and students.
* CrisisGo app for all employees, for use during drills and actual crises, coordinating evacuations and reunifications with first responders.
* Classroom safety systems, allowing teacher immediate emergency notification to the office and district office.
* One on one support through the social worker’s office or counselor’s office. This can include daily meetings or debriefs as well as home visits.
* Regular follow up with families regarding social and emotional skills, conflict resolution, problem solving, and mediation.
* Positive Behavior Intervention and Support (PBIS) for students and families

Please find additional parents tools, publications, and more at our website located at <http://norman.whitepine.k12.nv.us/>.

As a last comment on the health of the school climate as a whole, the following information has been retrieved from Nevada’s School Social and Emotional Learning Survey. Students at DEN took this survey in 2015, 2017, and 2018. School leaders regularly review this data and incorporate it into planning documents.

The survey has four categories: Cultural and Linguistic, Relationships, Physical Safety, and Emotional Safety. Each category receives a scale score based upon students’ responses to a number of questions. That scale score is placed into a range for reporting purposes, which are “Most Favorable (401-500), Favorable (301-400), and Least Favorable (below 300).” The data below shows the school’s score by year. Note that each score is within the “Favorable” range and that there is a general trend of positive growth regarding students’ perceptions of the school.

|  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
|  | **2015** | **2016** | **2017** | **2018** |
| **Cultural and Linguistic** | 374Favorable | No data | 364Favorable | 378Favorable |
| **Relationships** | 351Favorable | No data | 350Favorable | 353Favorable |
| **Physical Safety** | 354Favorable | No data | 361Favorable | 354Favorable |
| **Emotional Safety** | 328Favorable | No data | 341Favorable | 345Favorable |

It is not the intent of this communication to paint a picture of “sunshine and roses.” The school is actively working each day to create a world class learning environment. This is a ton of work and does not happen by accident. Nor is it the intent of this communication to criticize or disparage other opinions. It is simply to share with the public a sense of the planning, thoughtful study, and action that dedicated professionals make on an ongoing basis.

In summary, while individual conflicts do occur, and while they are never acceptable, DEN educators have worked, do work, and will continue to work or the physical and emotional safety and well being of all students. Parents and community members interested in additional information or visiting and/or volunteering may contact principal Cammie Briggs at 289-4846.