

What is Systematic Supervision & How Does It Affect Your Child at School

What is Systematic Supervision?

Systematic Supervision is a way to monitor school common areas that helps students become more cooperative and engaged. The approach is based on research that shows that students respond well to being treated positively and respectfully. In fact, the same research shows that when adults pay a lot of attention to students' negative behavior, negative behavior actually increases. At our school, we are using this positive approach to supervising students when they are in common areas like hallways and cafeterias. We are also using it when students are hanging out or are making transitions from one activity to another.

In schools where systematic supervision is used consistently, teachers and students report that they feel safe and respected at school and are motivated to behave responsibly.

This information sheet is intended to give you a good picture of what Systematic Supervision is. We want you, as a parent, to know what we are doing at school. We hope this will help you understand what we do, and why. We also hope it will encourage you to support our efforts at making our school a place where everyone is safe, respectful and responsible.

How Does Systematic Supervision Work?

Supervisors who use Systematic Supervision are working everyday at school to create a safe, respectful, and responsible environment for your child by:

Being Active: Supervisors are encouraged to know what is going on around them by moving around a lot and looking and listening carefully to what students do and say. Being active means moving and scanning (with eyes and ears). This approach is different than in some settings where supervisors stand in one spot, often missing important things that are happening.

Being Positive: Supervisors are encouraged to be friendly, upbeat, and engaged with students. We describe this as connecting in a positive way with all students and reinforcing students who are behaving appropriately (being helpful, friendly, etc.). This approach is different than some settings where staff interact most frequently with problem students. Even though staff make a special point to notice and reinforce positive behavior, they do not ignore problem behavior.

Responding to Problems: Even though Systematic Supervision focuses on the positive, it does require supervisors to respond to inappropriate behavior by letting the student know that his or her behavior is unsafe, disrespectful, or irresponsible. Students are then asked to make a choice to stop the behavior or be referred to someone else who is not busy supervising a group of students.

Communicating: Supervisors are encouraged to communicate with everyone involved in the school community, including staff, students and parents. Regular communication among staff can improve student supervision generally, as well as improve relationships with individual students. Staff can communicate with students to ensure that students understand school rules and expectations, and to establish good relationships with them. Communication with parents is another important activity in ensuring a safe, respectful, responsible school. This information sheet is one effort to involve you in what is happening at school. We encourage you to be a partner in your child's school experience. Please visit the school, volunteer at special events, and ask for more information about Systematic Supervision or any other topics that interest you.