

SLED Culture

YOUR SLED CHAPTER'S CULTURE IS THE MOST SIGNIFICANT CONTRIBUTOR TO YOUR CHAPTER'S SUCCESS.

— A WISE TRAIL GUIDE

Characteristics of SLED Culture

As the SLED Advisor, your role is to coach and mentor students to become excellent problem-solvers and leaders. Think of your SLED chapter as a team to support students on this journey. How do teams function? How do they stay focused? The most enduring and impactful SLED chapters exemplify the following characteristics:

- **Students feel safe** to take risks, be vulnerable, ask questions, and make mistakes.
- **Students can depend on their peers** to get things done promptly
- **Students have clear goals** and plans for how to achieve them
- **Student work is personally meaningful**, and they understand how working hard in SLED can help them in life, not just in school.
- **Students feel like their work matters** and create change.

In short, students must...

BE KNOWN. BE HEARD. BE UNDERSTOOD. BE SAFE.

By cultivating a supportive environment, you will see positive outcomes like high attendance rates, increased student interest in school, gains in student confidence; students discovering new and positive ways to express themselves and support others; and students finding purpose and meaning in their lives.



 **Ways to Create Positive SLED Culture**

You and your students collectively set the tone for your SLED chapter. When you follow the **Adventure Guide** lessons, a safe learning environment where students strive to acquire new leadership skills and support their peers will be established.

 **Additional Activities**

Set the tone. Create chapter norms, and don't be afraid to get silly; other chapters do 10-second dance parties in between activities, tell a daily knock knock or "dad" joke at the end of class, and parade around the classroom to celebrate birthdays. Be authentic. Ask students how they're doing, and model active listening.

Emphasize teamwork. Recognize students for their contributions to a team, rap or sing a verse rhyming a student name with a positive trait, give high fives, and guide students to ask each other for help (ask three before me). Include all students in discussions about how to improve the community. Hold game days, play QUEST, do karaoke, or otherwise create opportunities for students to team up and work together on something entirely new and unexpected.

Encourage problem-solving. When troubleshooting something, talk out loud so students can hear your thought process. For example, "Hmm, maybe I could try doing this, but I also need to consider that. What else can I do to make this work?" By listening to your self-talk, students learn how to think through problems.