PLANNING & MANAGEMENT
ACADEMICS & ENRICHMENT
STAFFING & PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT
SITE CLIMATE
STUDENT RECRUITMENT & ATTENDANCE

summerlearningtoolkit.org

Evidence-based tools and guidance
for delivering effective programs

G GUIDANCE FOR SAMPLE: **PITTSBURGH POSITIVE SITE CLIMATE STRATEGIES**

This document provides guidance on how to use the Pittsburgh Positive Site Climate Strategies
sample available in the Summer Learning Toolkit. *You can also access the sample in
the Site Climate section of the Toolkit.*

What is the *PITTSBURGH POSITIVE SITE CLIMATE STRATEGIES* sample and how can you use it?

Developed by Pittsburgh Public Schools, Pittsburgh Positive Site Climate Strategies is a guide for site managers to
design and build camp culture at program sites. The guide describes core elements of Summer Dreamers Academy's
culture and provides tips for implementation. It also includes samples of culture activities that can be incorporated
at each site such as meetings; events and rituals; student incentives and recognition; and use of media. Sample camp
meeting agendas and schedules are provided.

Why is site climate important?

Site climate refers to the quality and character of the program at a given site that sets the foundation for all youth
experiences in a program. RAND recommends that site leaders develop a clear, positive message of their summer
site culture and communicate it to staff and students. Pittsburgh Public Schools' guide reflects steps programs can
take to create a positive culture, including promoting high staff engagement and enthusiasm for activities. RAND
found that when engaged adults led enrichment activities, student enthusiasm for those activities was typically
high—regardless of the activity. The Pittsburgh sample guide, which includes an emphasis on a daily All Camp
Meeting, also demonstrates the role a clear and consistent daily schedule plays in creating a positive site climate.

Who can benefit from this resource?

- District central office managers
- School-based program leaders
- Nonprofit program leaders
- Teachers
- Enrichment staff

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Tips for building a positive site climate

The Pittsburgh guide makes it easy for site staff to create their own culture by providing a balance of concrete ideas/requirements and flexible options for customization. Consider how you can standardize certain aspects or templates to make it easy for staff to tailor and implement at their sites. Additional tips include:

- Support new site leaders to develop site culture through peer learning, sharing, or coaching with seasoned site leaders.
- Use program photos, videos, and other culture artifacts in staff training to provide inspiration and illustrate culture in action from previous summers.