

SOAR FRAMEWORK FOR CHAMPION TEAMS

The SOAR framework helps you identify key strengths, opportunities, aspirations, and desired results as you work to transform school culture and climate. Follow these steps to guide your team's reflection and planning:

Step 1: Strengths (What are we doing well?)

- ✓ **Purpose:** Identify the strengths your team already possesses and how they contribute to transforming the school culture and climate.
- ✓ **Questions to Consider:**
 - What practices, initiatives, or programs are currently successful in fostering connection and challenge?
 - How are we already integrating restorative practices, trauma-informed care, cultural relevancy, and equity?
 - What strengths exist within our team members and school community?
 - How do we celebrate and build on our successes?
- ✓ **Activity:** Brainstorm as a team and list specific strengths (e.g., strong team collaboration, effective communication, positive student engagement).

Step 2: Opportunities (What could we do better or differently?)

- ✓ **Purpose:** Explore areas for growth and innovation to deepen the impact of your efforts.
- ✓ **Questions to Consider:**
 - What gaps exist in our current practices?
 - What external trends, resources, or partnerships could we leverage?
 - How can we better align our practices with the principles of restorative justice, trauma-informed care, equity, and cultural relevancy?
 - Are there specific areas of the school culture or climate that need more attention?
- ✓ **Activity:** Identify internal and external opportunities, focusing on actionable changes or new approaches.

Step 3: Aspirations (What do we want to achieve?)

- ✓ **Purpose:** Define your team's vision for the ideal school culture and climate.
- ✓ **Questions to Consider:**
 - What does a thriving school culture and climate look like to us?
 - How do we envision connection and challenge working in harmony?
 - What long-term impacts do we hope to see for students, staff, and families?
 - How can our work contribute to broader systems change?
- ✓ **Activity:** Write a shared aspiration statement or list key aspirational goals, ensuring they reflect a strengths-based and equity-driven perspective.

Step 4: Results (How will we measure success?)

- ✓ **Purpose:** Establish clear indicators to track your progress and measure the impact of your efforts.
- ✓ **Questions to Consider:**
 - What specific outcomes will show that we are transforming school culture and climate?
 - How will we measure improvements in connection, equity, and restorative practices?
 - What evidence or data will demonstrate our success (e.g., attendance rates, student/staff surveys, behavioral referrals, testimonials)?
 - What benchmarks will indicate we're on the right track?
- ✓ **Activity:** Define measurable results and create a plan to track and evaluate progress.

Tips for Using the SOAR Framework:

- 1 **Involve All Stakeholders:** Include students, staff, and families in the discussion to ensure diverse perspectives.
- 2 **Be Specific:** Provide concrete examples and actionable steps for each category.

- 3 **Stay Positive and Forward-Thinking:** Focus on possibilities and growth rather than challenges and limitations.
- 4 **Review and Revise:** Periodically revisit your SOAR analysis to assess progress and make adjustments as needed.

Use the completed SOAR framework as a living document to guide your efforts and inspire ongoing collaboration toward a transformative school culture and climate.

CREATIVE WAYS TO WORK WITH THE SOAR FRAMEWORK

1 Pair-and-Share Method

✓ How It Works:

- Break the team into pairs or small groups.
- Each pair completes the SOAR framework together, discussing and brainstorming ideas for each category.
- Reconvene as a full team, and each pair presents their ideas.
- Merge ideas into a comprehensive team SOAR, noting common themes and unique insights.

2 Chart and Gallery Walk

✓ How It Works:

- Prepare four large pieces of chart paper, each labeled with one SOAR category.
- Provide participants with sticky notes and ask them to write responses for each category and stick them on the corresponding chart.
- Conduct a gallery walk where participants move around, read, and discuss the responses.
- Facilitate a group discussion to synthesize ideas and prioritize next steps.

3 Rotating SOAR Stations

✓ How It Works:

- Set up four stations around the room, each dedicated to one SOAR category.
- Divide the team into four groups and assign each group to a station.
- Groups spend 5–10 minutes brainstorming and writing ideas for their assigned category.
- After time is up, groups rotate to the next station, reviewing what the previous group wrote and adding their ideas.
- Once all groups have visited each station, review and discuss as a team.

4 SOAR World Café

✓ How It Works:

- Organize four small-group discussions, each focusing on one SOAR category.
- Participants rotate through the categories, contributing to the discussion at each station.
- A facilitator or scribe at each station records ideas and insights.
- Conclude with a team-wide discussion to compile and refine the SOAR.

5 Storytelling SOAR

✓ How It Works:

- Begin with a storytelling prompt for each category (e.g., "Share a story of a time when our team excelled for '**Strengths**,'" or "**Imagine a perfect day at school that embodies our Aspirations**").
- Teams reflect on and share stories related to each category.
- Identify themes and insights from the stories to fill in the SOAR framework.

6 Storytelling SOAR

✓ How It Works:

- Draw a large tree on a board or chart paper.
- Label the roots as "**Strengths**," the trunk as "**Opportunities**," the branches as "**Aspirations**," and the fruits as "**Results**."
- Team members write ideas on sticky notes and place them on the corresponding part of the tree.
- Use the completed tree as a metaphorical representation of your team's work.

7 Digital Collaboration

✓ How It Works:

- Use an online collaboration tool like Miro, Jamboard, or Padlet to create a shared SOAR template.
- Team members add their ideas in real-time or asynchronously, allowing everyone to contribute regardless of location.
- Host a virtual meeting to review and discuss the completed framework