

SWOS Glossary

6 Ps Polite, Produce, Participate, Prompt, Prepared, Positive Mental Attitude (PMA). The norms we live by, at school and elsewhere.

7th P, Honorary Some examples are Patience and Perseverance, but there are other “Honorary Ps.”

Be an ox Everyone is expected to pull their own weight, to the best of their ability.

Circle Down Same process as **circle up**. Usually occurs at the end of a term, week, or trip, or sometimes at the end of the day.

Circle Up A common practice in classes and sometimes meetings, especially at the beginning of a term (intensive, semester), week, or trip. Norms are routine and established across the SWOS community.

- Participants sit or stand in a circle with nothing between them (no tables, etc.).
- Begins with a quotation or short reading, usually related to the prompt.
- A prompt is stated. (*Examples: Which of the 6 Ps do you want to concentrate on this week? If you were an animal, what would you be, and why?*)
- Each circle member states their name, how they’re feeling at that moment on a 1-10 scale, an emotional state (happy, stressed, thoughtful, etc.), and their response to the prompt.
- The process continues in a pre-determined way, i.e., clockwise, counterclockwise, or **popcorn**.
- Participants may “pass” one or more times, but eventually their turn will come around again.
- Everyone gives their full attention to the speaker. No phones, earbuds, side conversations, or other distractions.
- Speakers are not interrupted.
- Everyone in the circle applauds after each speaker, as a sign of respect.
- What is said in the circle stays in the circle. It is a safe haven.

A quicker, alternative method (called **check in** or **gladiator** style) is to omit the number scale and prompt. Circle members state their name and give a “thumbs up,” “thumbs down,” or a horizontal thumb to indicate the state they’re in at that time.

Community Second block of the day, 9:00-9:30. Community teachers are the advisors for their Community students throughout their careers at SWOS, making Communities cohesive groups. Some have names and/or mascots. The 30-minute blocks may be structured in various ways, but they all function as a way to foster high relationships and community. Students need 1.5 Community credits to graduate.

Design Principles The SWOS community’s guiding principles.

- Discovering Potential
- Responsibility for Learning
- Respect
- Honoring and Accepting Diversity
- Teamwork and Individuality
- The Natural World

Dominant culture The established language, religion, values, and social customs that are the norm for the society as a whole. It achieves its dominance by controlling social institutions such as communication, educational institutions, artistic expression, law, political process, and business. Students are taught that they may have to modify their language, appearance, attire, and behavior to function successfully within the dominant culture. Members of sub-cultures can maintain their individual identities while also functioning within the dominant culture.

Fish Bowl A way of acknowledging positive student behavior at school. Anyone may participate, but usually staff write on a form the observed behavior (consistently on time to class, picked up cigarette butts on campus, etc.), fold it up and put it in the fish bowl. At governance a few forms are drawn out, read aloud, and the director gives a small prize to the honorees. The fish bowl resides in the main office, with a supply of paper slips beside it.

Formal language Speech that is polite and free of vulgarities and slang. Appropriate and expected at school. (See also **informal language**.)

Governance Weekly, all-school assembly held at Lifeway Baptist Church each Tuesday from 11:50 to 12:30. Attendance is required for (most) staff and all students. Planning and execution is the responsibility of a different **Community** each week. A student introduces each segment.

Format:

- Quotation or reading
- Announcements: staff, student, Student Council (including **fish bowl**), post-trip
- Activity or presentation, if time permits

Norms:

- Walk—don't drive—to church.
- Go directly from school to church—not a break period.
- No use of electronics.
- Students sit with their Communities.
- Respectful behavior (pay attention to speaker, raise hand to speak, applaud after each speaker, use formal language, do not sit in upholstered chairs, return folding chairs to racks).
- Students who do not attend are counted absent for 4th block.

I-Message Basic tool for effective, assertive communication, taught in SWOSology. The format is “I feel ___ (emotion) when (behavior) because (effect/impact on me). Next time (request).” Example:

I feel embarrassed when students use curse words on a class trip. Next time, please remember the SWOS norm of using formal language in school settings, and especially out in public.

Positive Example:

I feel really gratified when I see you helping out around campus, because it lets me know you value and respect SWOS.

[No request needed.]

Informal language Speech that is appropriate only in casual, informal settings, usually slang and curse words. (See also **formal language**.)

Norms The accepted and expected behavior for a particular situation/environment, as distinct from rules and regulations. See **circle up** and **governance** for examples. An important norm at SWOS is that fighting is not tolerated.

Popcorn A method of conducting a circle up or circle down in which the participants speak in no particular order. When someone is ready to speak, they say “popcorn” and proceed.

Portfolio A compilation of a student's work at SWOS, presented to and assessed by a panel of peers, staff and (for Senior portfolios) community members. Exploration House students (a.k.a. lower house) must pass their portfolio presentations to advance to Destination House (a.k.a. upper house). Destination House students must pass their portfolio presentations to graduate.

Respect “the mortar that binds our school together” One of the six Design Principles. Give it to get it!

Stepping into the circle...To step into the SWOS circle means to accept and intend to practice the principles and norms embodied in the SWOSology curriculum.

SWOSology The character education class that all students must pass before moving onto academic coursework. New staff must also take/teach SWOSology. SWOSians sometimes refer to “SWOSology skills.”

SWOSy Behavior or appearance which exemplifies SWOSology principles. *The Parade of Lights float was very SWOSy this year. Heckling the speaker was not a very SWOSy thing to do.*

Synergy $1 + 1 = 3$ The interaction of elements that, when combined, produce a total effect that is greater than the sum of individual elements, contributions, etc.

Time and place Shorthand for “There is a time and a place for everything.” Behavior/clothing/language appropriate to one time and place may be inappropriate to another.

True Colors A method for determining learning style, core values, and personality traits. Knowing your “true color” (gold, orange, green or blue) and the true colors of those with whom you interact can be helpful in navigating relationships. Students discover their true colors in SWOSology.

“We are crew, not passengers.” A favorite quotation among the staff. It speaks to some of the school's **Design Principles** and several of the **6 Ps**.

Finish strong Our motto for engaging in a class, a project, etc. Instead of starting strong and then dropping off until efforts peter out and come to a standstill, SWOS students keep up their efforts and even intensify them during the finishing round—to “finish strong!”

Frontload An instructional strategy. Instead of releasing info/content gradually, distribution or allocation of the greater proportion occurs at the beginning (of a lesson/unit, presentation or process), to provide the audience/students with crucial information, to increase understanding of the lesson/unit/presentation/process.

Reflection Careful thought about one's learning, actions, or beliefs. Through reflection, students learn to focus their thoughts on their experiences, gain greater understanding of their learning, increase awareness of the knowledge and skills that they have developed, identify their strengths and areas for development, and create an action plan for future practice.

Reptilian brain American physician and neuroscientist Paul D. MacLean's original model distinguishes three different brains that appeared successively during evolution. The **reptilian** brain, the oldest of the three, controls the body's vital functions such as heart rate, breathing, body temperature and balance. Our reptilian brain includes the main structures found in a reptile's brain: the brainstem and the cerebellum. The reptilian brain is reliable but tends to be somewhat rigid and compulsive.

80% Refers to attendance and production (of learning assignments, projects...). In order to receive credit for a class, a student needs to show 80% of attendance and 80% of production.

Intensive Classes that occur 3 times a year, at the beginning of the school year, at the end of the calendar year, and at the end of the school year. Classes are 4 weeks in duration; 2 full credits per class. Intensive (all day) and interdisciplinary in nature, these “fun” classes provide experiential learning opportunities with high student interest.