

Becoming a School of Compassion

Virginia Chance School

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www.chanceschool.org

Tenets of our Progressive Approach

Focus on the whole child (rather than just cognitive)

Create a caring learning community (classroom environment is essential)

Encourage learning using intrinsic versus extrinsic motivators (no grades or awards)

Provide active, hands-on experiential learning opportunities (active instead of passive)

Develop critical thinking, problem solving and higher order thinking skills

Focus on collaboration and cooperation (tables and gathering areas instead of desks in isolation)

Treat each child with dignity and respect

Focus on process over product (project work , more than one way of doing, choice emphasized)

Provide developmentally appropriate learning experiences

Give children a voice (questions instead of telling, facilitating vs directing)

Provide compassion and social justice learning

Have an integrated curriculum

Provide authentic assessment (observation, sharing one's thinking, student work samples to guide instruction)



What words come to mind when you hear the word *compassion*?

Compassion is not a virtue - it is a commitment.
It's not something we have or don't have - it's
something we choose to practice. Brene Brown

Our emphasis on Compassion



On 11-11-11, Louisville Mayor Greg Fischer signed a resolution committing to a multi-year Compassionate Louisville campaign – making Louisville an international compassionate city, the largest city in America with that distinction.



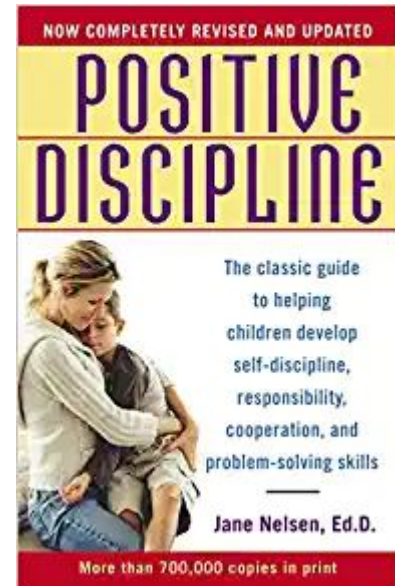
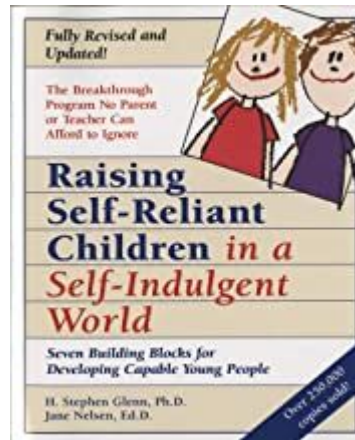
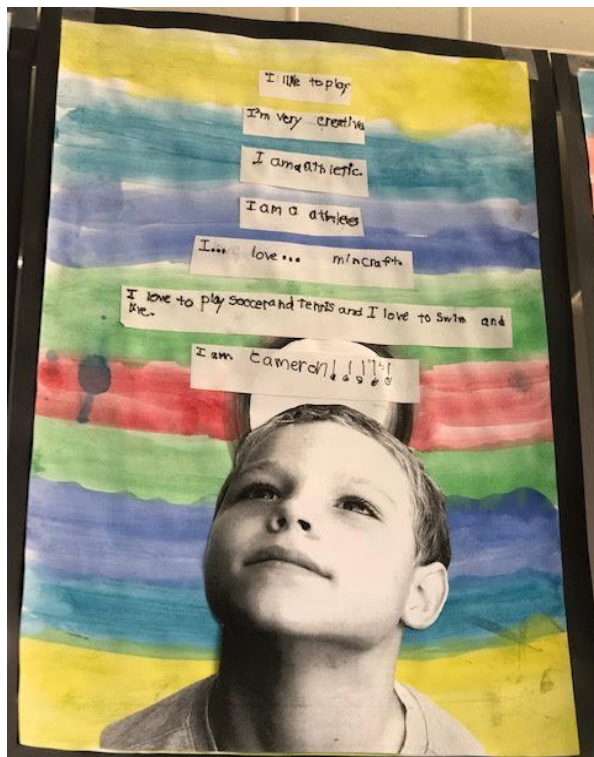




Our emphasis on SEL



“ Teachers must align their practices, interactions . . . so that **care and respect** are established as the **“air we breathe”**



Helping Children Develop Self-Discipline, Self-Responsibility, Cooperation, Problem-Solving Skills, and Resiliency - I am significant, I can contribute, and I am capable!

SEL Tenets - Impact on Compassion

1. **Self-Awareness:** The ability to [reflect](#) on one's own feelings and thoughts
2. **Self-Management (self-control and self-regulation):** The ability to [control](#) one's own thoughts and behavior
3. **Social Awareness:** The ability to [empathize](#) with others, recognize [social cues and adapt](#) to various situations
4. **Relationship Skills:** The ability to [communicate](#), make friends, manage disagreements, recognize peer pressure, and [cooperate](#)
5. **Responsible Decision Making:** The ability to make [healthy choices](#) about one's own behavior while [weighing the consequences](#) for others



Results:

- Sense of self - **I know who I am**
- Internal locus of control - **I can have an impact on myself, others and the world**
- Cooperative and collaborative spirit - **I can work with others with a common goal or purpose**
- Empathy - **I care about your well-being and your circumstances**

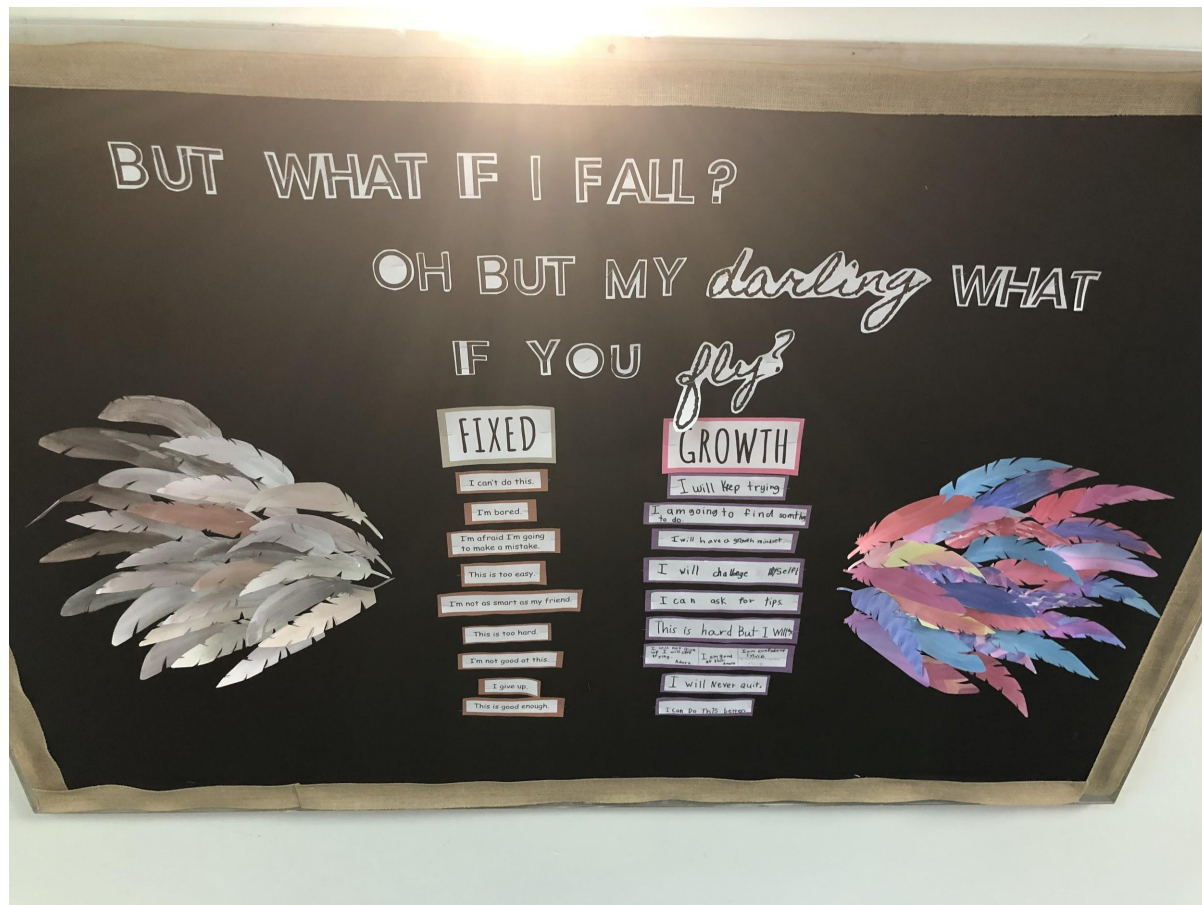
...compassion

SEL practices in our classrooms

Growth Mindset Grit

Changing "I can't" to "I can try"

Digging in - passion and
perseverance



Integrity



Zones of Regulation

Green - ready to learn or play

Blue - sad, tired, lonely

Yellow - mad, irritated,
annoyed

Red - excited, frightened, out of
control



Peace Corner









Ask Yourself...

How much time is allotted for social-emotional learning, discussion, and practice on a daily basis?

Shaping the idea of Compassion into practice

Resources

Teacher/Student Roles

OBJECTIVES

A process

Honor Children's Voices

Time

Beliefs

Collaborative Spirit

QUESTIONING STRATEGIES

Just one person to lead

Growth Mindset

Virginia Chance School Charter of Compassion:

At Virginia Chance School, we believe...

The earth is a place for everyone

We want to be in harmony with other people, our earth and animals

And it is important to have a warm heart and open mind

Therefore, we promise to:

People:

Treat others the way we want to be treated

Play with friends

Help someone who needs help or who is hurt or sad

Share with friends and share with those who don't have something

Use kind words, and say, "I love you"

Encourage one another

Help people when they fall and with their problems

Say "I'm sorry"

Pass out hugs as needed

Earth:

Recycle and compost

Pick up litter

Participate in environmental groups like "Roots & Shoots" and The Green Team

Plant trees and flowers

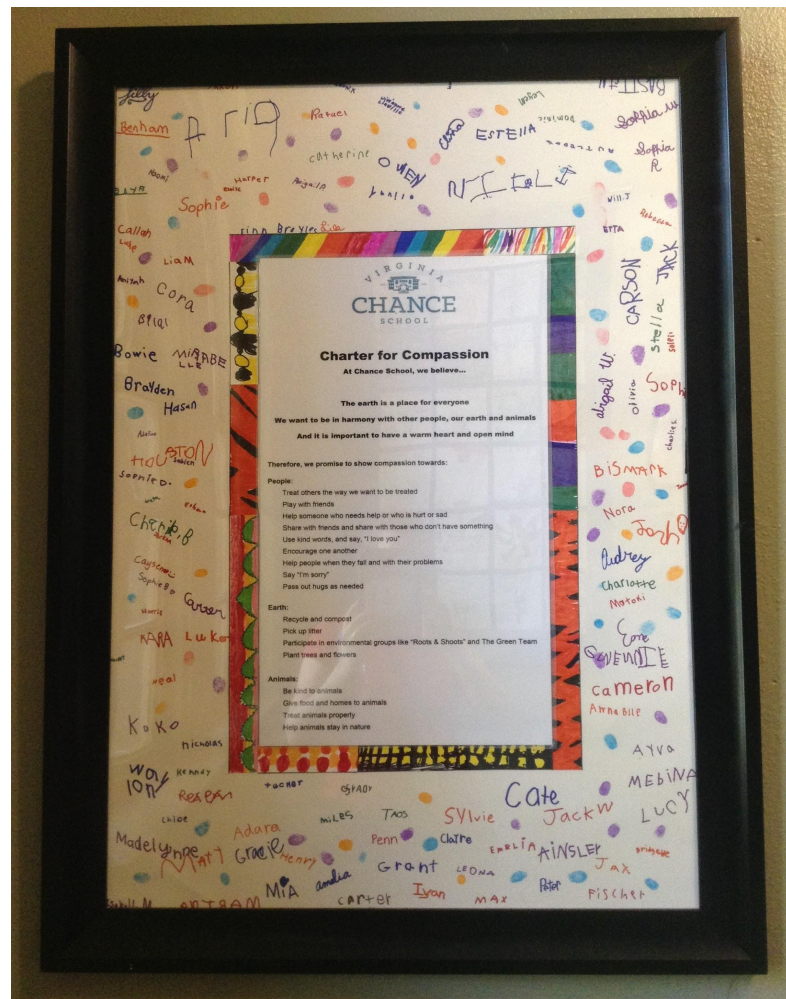
Animals:

Be kind to animals

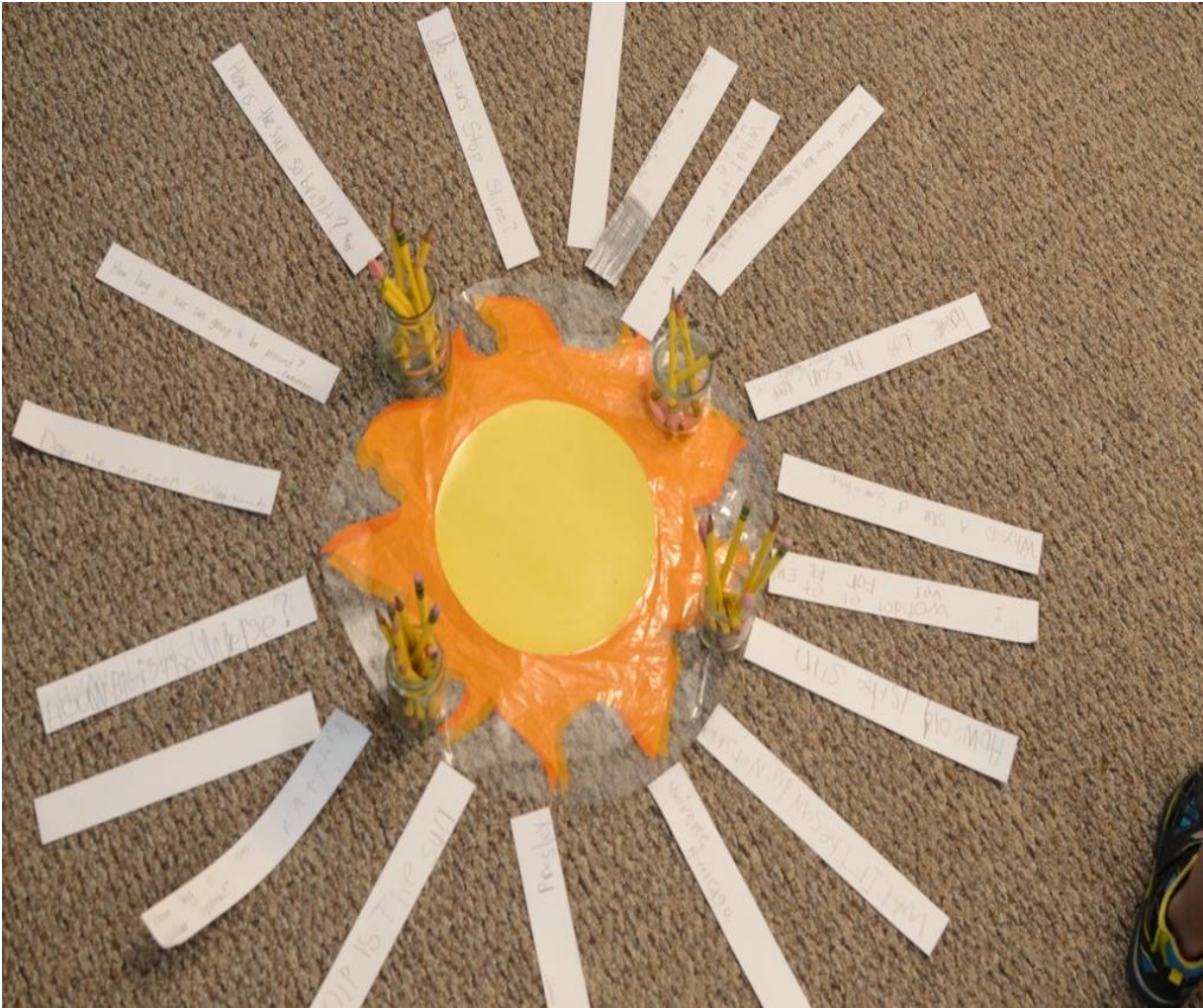
Give food and homes to animals

Treat animals properly

Help animals stay in nature



Provocations








What happened to our plant?

We Wonder...

Early in the school year, a dried bean germinated in a sensory table, hidden in the wet sand. To our surprise, a seedling sprouted up one day! We relocated it to a glass jar filled with sand and dirt and placed it in a sunny spot. Children randomly sprayed its roots with water, and some students took the time to draw it growing in the jar. One day, though, we noticed the plant had changed.

We Wonder...

Henry


 HAW! DOIBARS!
 IKLIN!

Q10. Do all bears have short tails?

I wonder if ^{Callan} Howards rich?

Twider what is the Slow is Bears. (B)

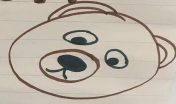
HO FAST. CAN. FAG RIS BEN. BIG STOE GGL
JACKSON

I Wonder how Bears get fish in the North Pol?

I wonder if Bears run fast?

Nea

What do you know about bears?



- ① They live in caves - Miles
- ② They catch fish - Sophia D.
- ③ They can walk on 4 legs - Christian
- ④ Bears eat fish - Olivia
- ⑤ They hibernate - Leona
- ⑥ They can also stand on 2 legs - Emerson
- ⑦ They can growl (be mean) - Brady
- ⑧ Polar Bear is a type of bear - Presley + Brooks
... panda bear " " - Christian
... black bear " " - Miles
- ⑨ They sometimes live in a forest - Sophia P.
- ⑩ They can sometimes be a bit nervous around people - Ethan
- ⑪ Sometime the mamma bear can push you back (when they're protecting baby bears) - Olivia

What is your favorite type of bear?



Panda Bear

Emerson
Olivia
Sophia D.
Lillian
Silas
Brady
Max
Miles
⑧



Polar Bear

Brooks
Ethan
Presley
Sophia P.
④



Brown Bear

Bastijn
Madina
②



Black Bear

Christian
Hazel
Leona
③



QFocus Strategy

Steps:

1. Provide a provocation
2. Gather in small groups, choose a recorder and generate questions - no discussion (5 minutes)
3. Label your questions as **O**-open or **C**-closed
4. Focusing on the open-ended questions, highlight 2-3 of the most important questions
5. Add selected questions to Wonder Wall to foster an investigation, research groups

Examples of Student Work

Environment









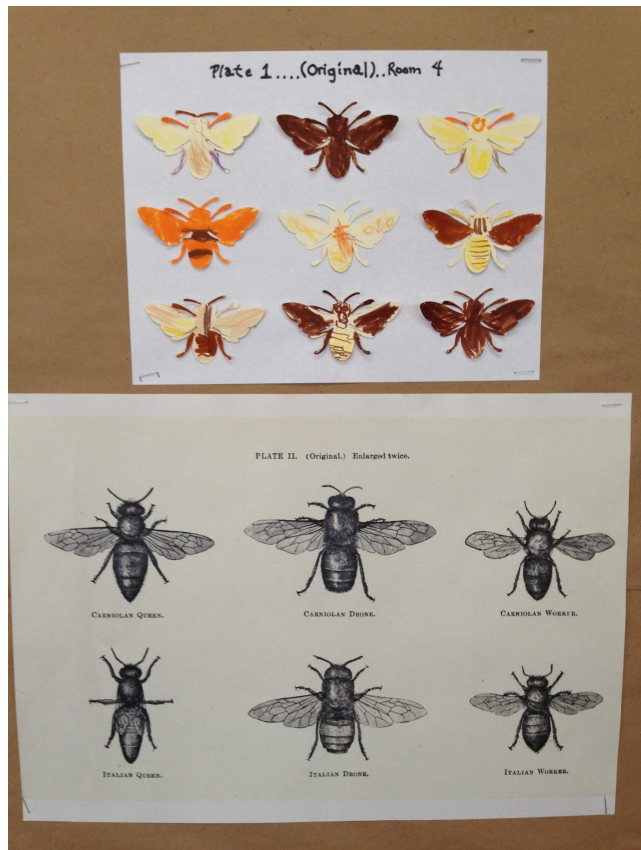
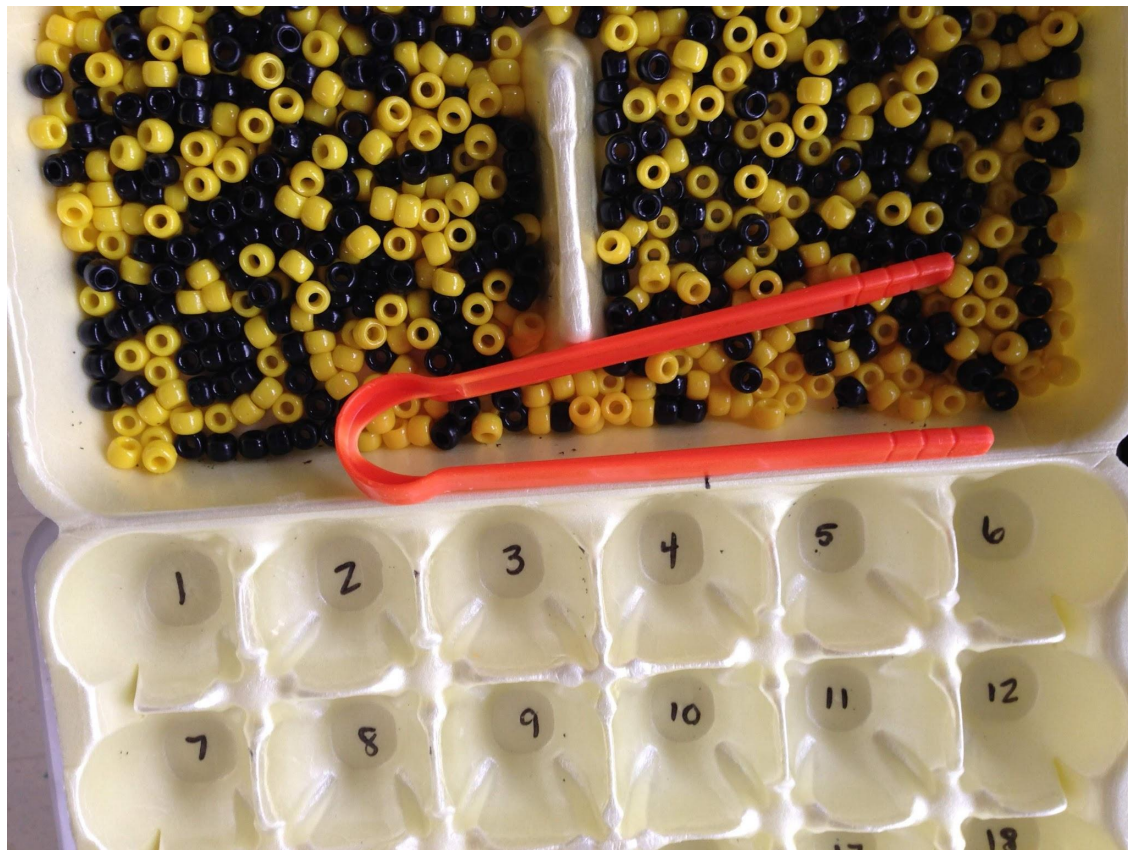
Examples of Student Work

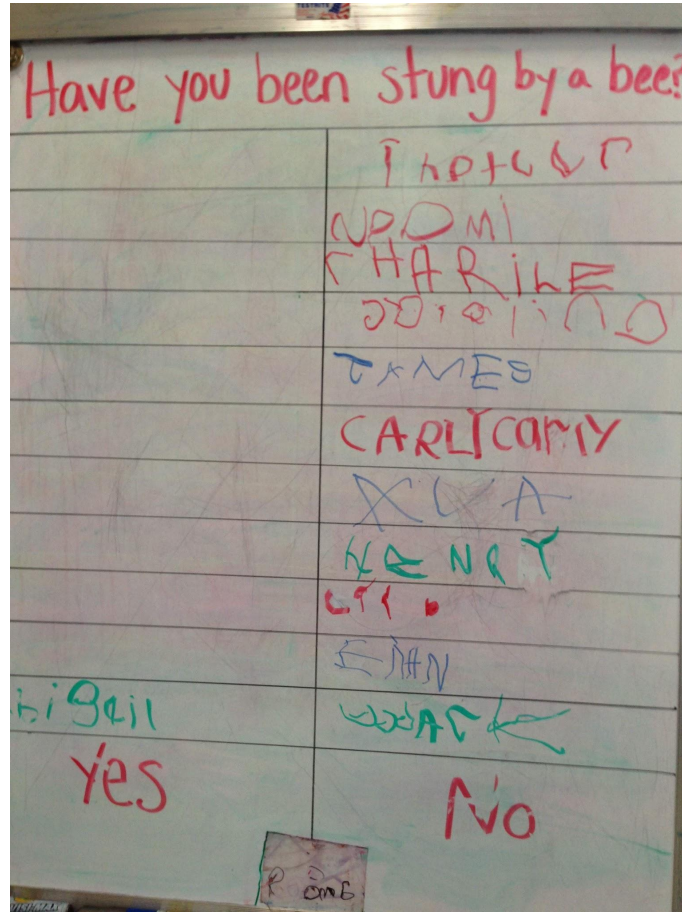
Animals

BEE CONSERVATION PROJECT





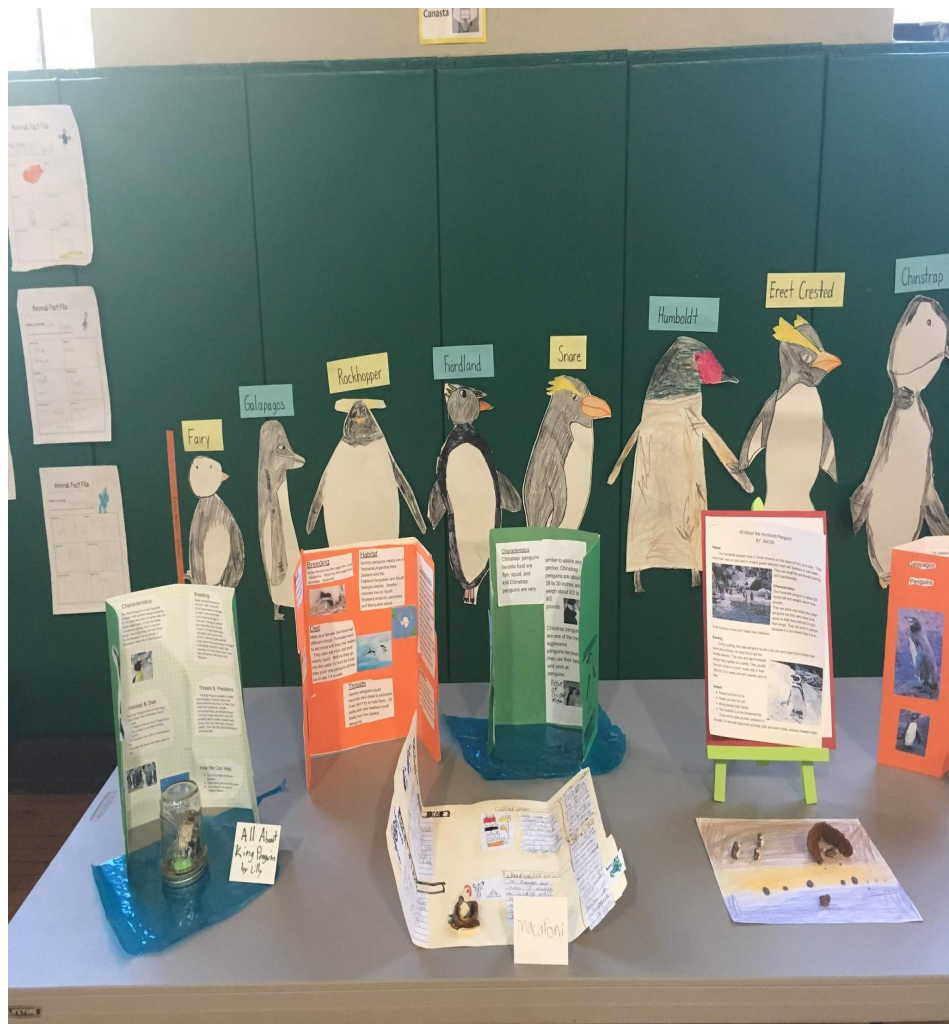


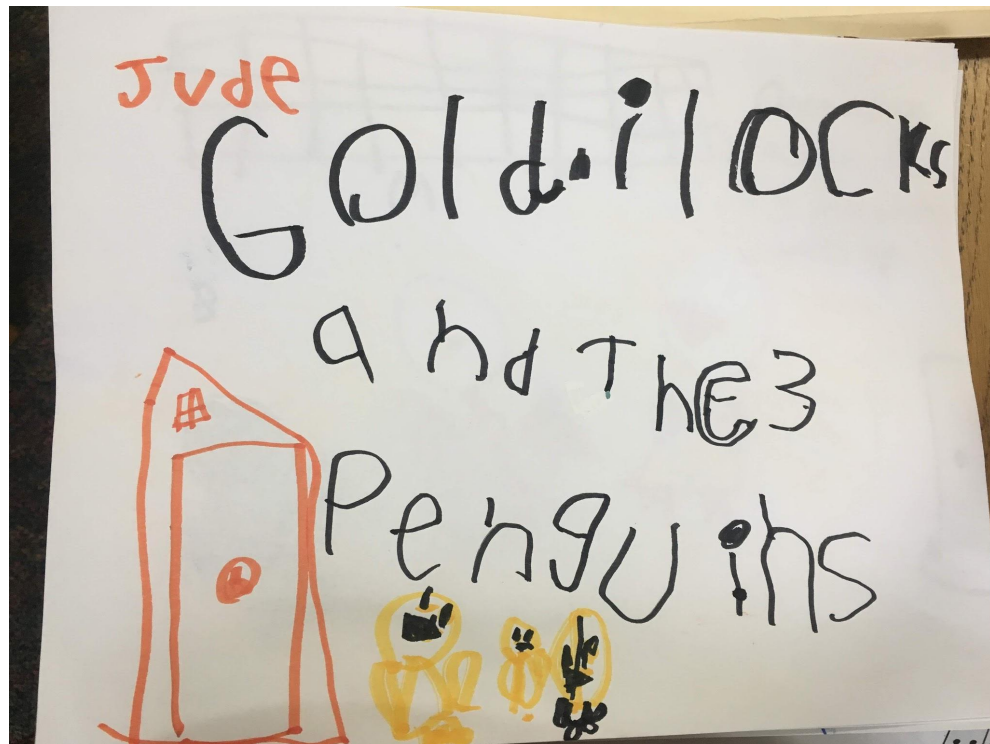


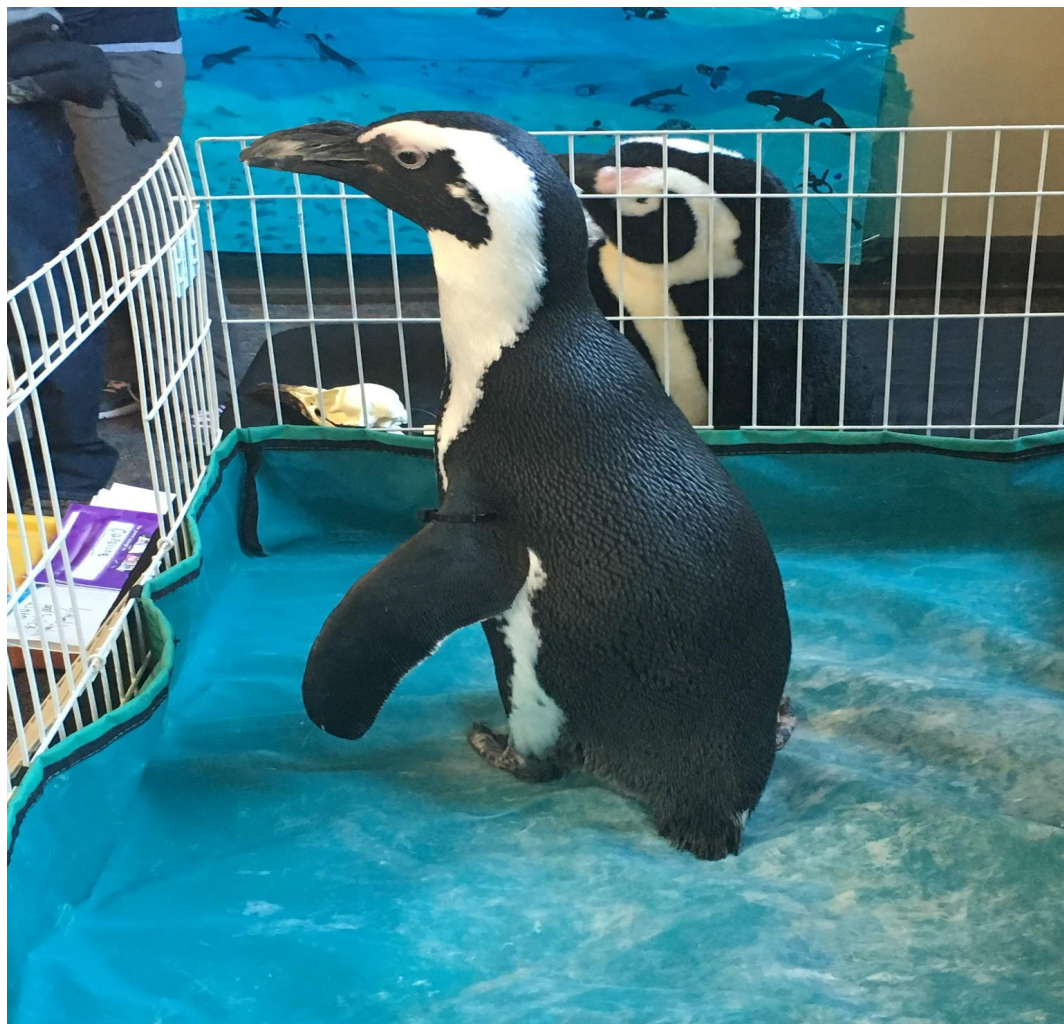




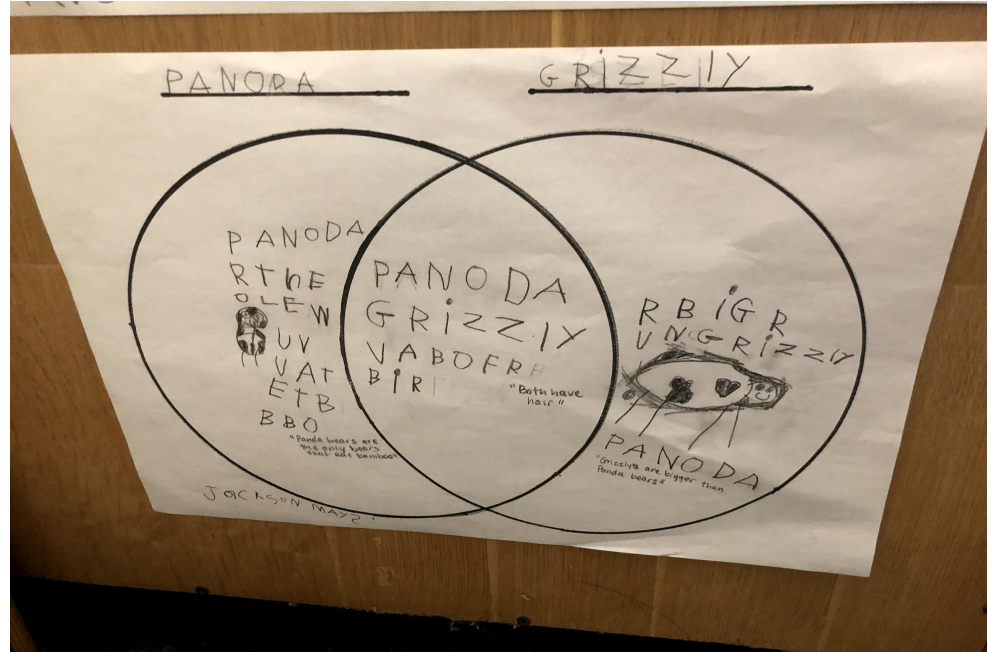
Penguin Compassion Project

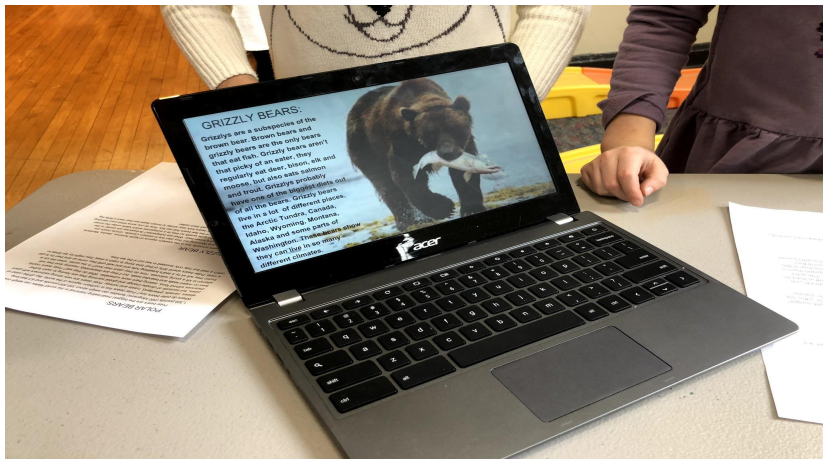


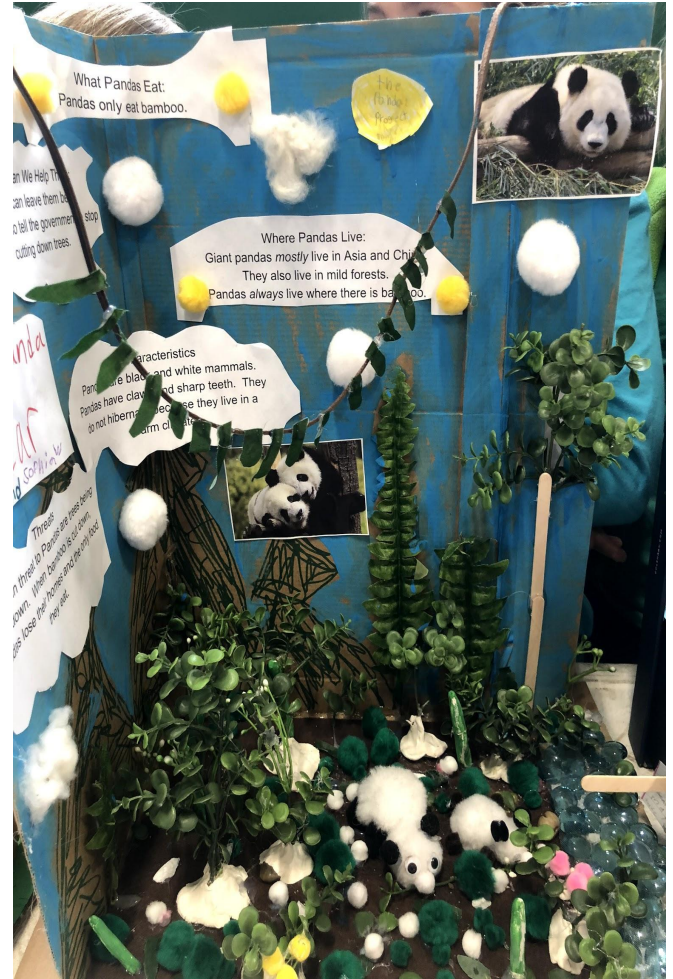




Bear Compassion Project







SUN / HARD

JUICY
APPLE JUICE

WHICH ANIMAL
LEARN MORE

FROG



AURORA
ATTICUS
LUCA

ELLIOT
HARRISON
MIAZY
EVAN

DO YOU WANT TO
ABOUT?

OWL



CASH

ABBY
VIORET

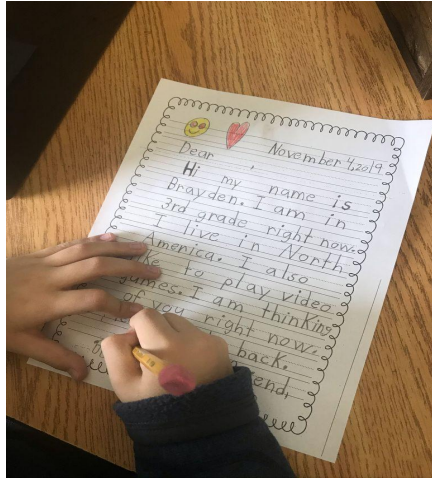
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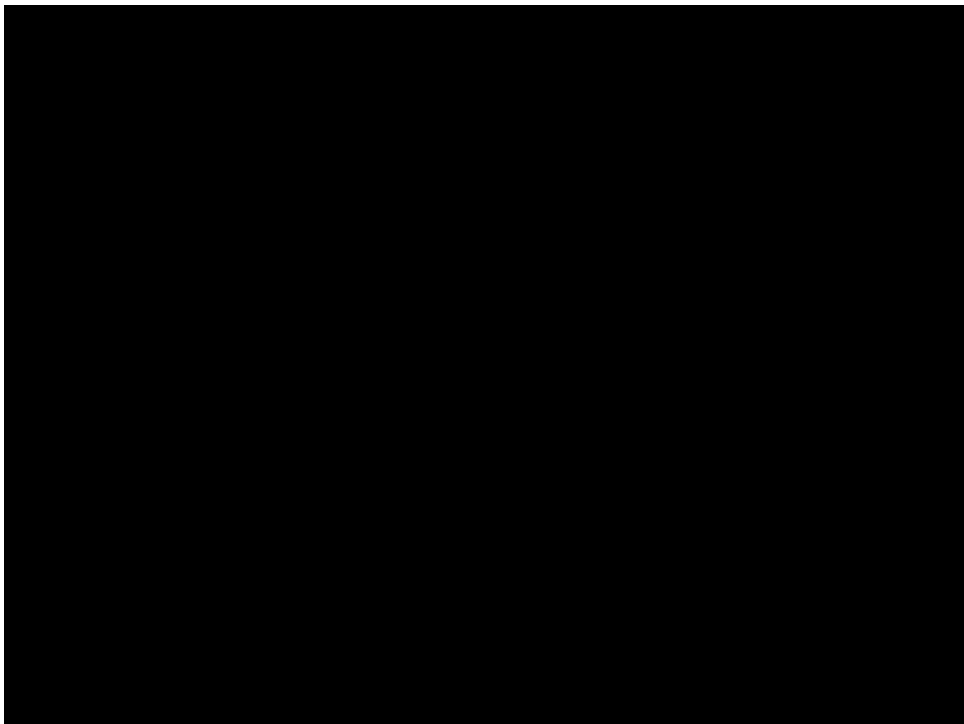
ANALISE

Examples of Student Work

People





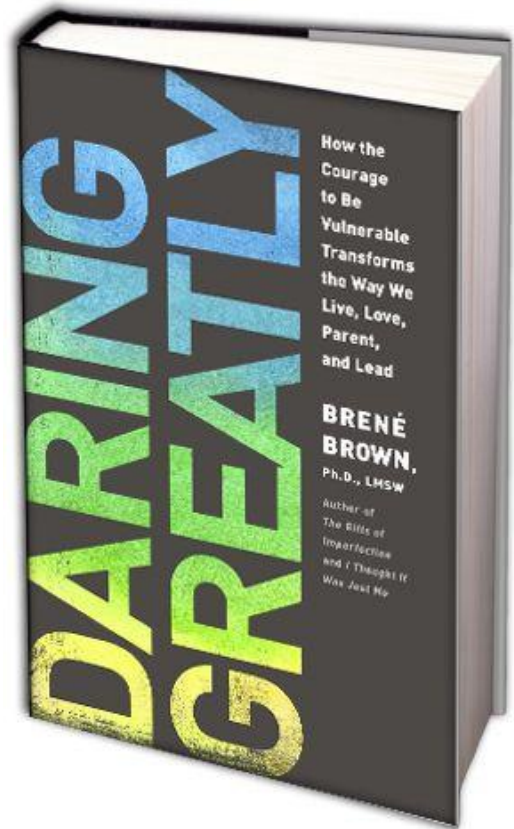


Showing compassion to the adults in our building is another aspect of our commitment.

Go back to the Tenets of Progressive Education with a new lens

- Focus on the whole **person** (identify and optimize strengths in order to support challenges)
- Create a caring learning community (devote a physical space where teachers can go for personal time or collaboration)
- Encourage learning using intrinsic versus extrinsic motivators
- Provide active, hands-on experiential learning opportunities
- Develop critical thinking, problem solving and higher order thinking skills
- Focus on collaboration and cooperation (provide space and time for teachers to gather and share)
- Treat each **person** with dignity and respect
- Focus on process over product
- Provide developmentally appropriate learning experiences
- Give **people** a voice (provide opportunities for teachers to be a part of decision-making processes)
- Provide compassion and social justice learning (provide teacher training to educate and inspire)
- Have an integrated curriculum (teachers discuss, develop and help decide curriculum and resource decisions)
- Provide authentic assessment (teachers have opportunity to provide input and reflection in the assessment process)

We think about feedback



My teammates have my back.

I know I will be recognized for excellent work.

In my work, I am always challenged to grow.

I have the chance to use my strengths every day.

I am surrounded by people who share my values.

I clearly understand what is expected of me.





Overall Outcomes of a Compassionate School Environment

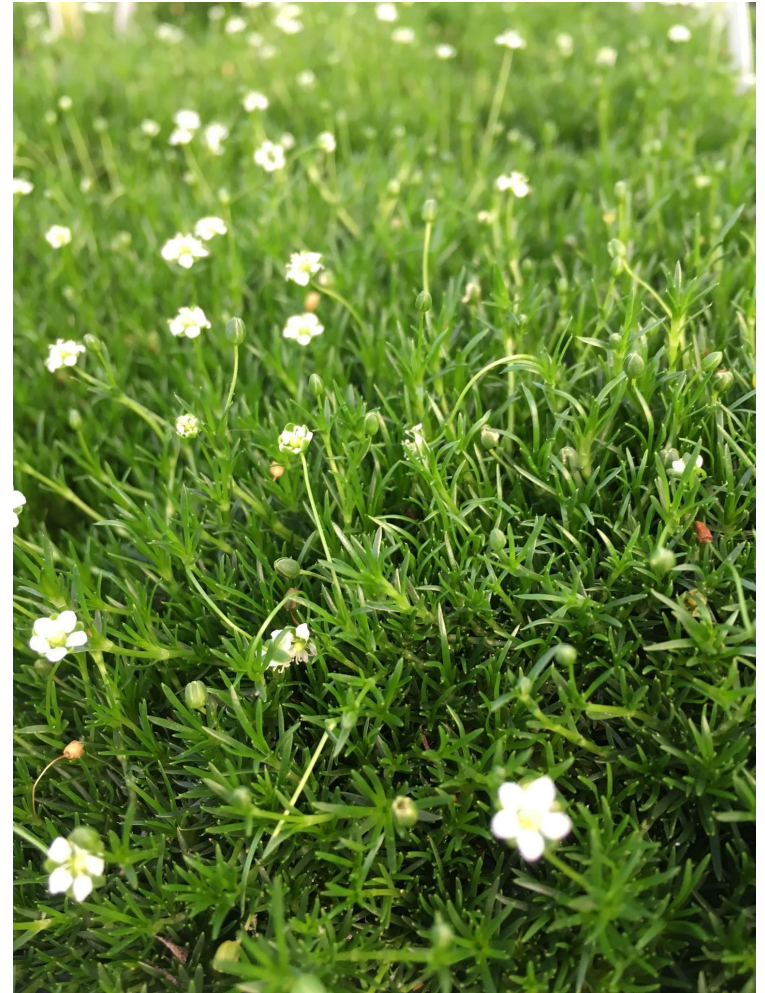
- Extends and Supports SEL
- Offers Leadership Opportunities
- Affords Active Engagement
- Instills Stewardship
- Increase Global Awareness
- Cultivates Cultural Competence

What's the
impact of
ignoring
social-emotional
learning?



To promote
compassion in my
classroom and school
I will...

Dalai Lama... "Love and compassion are necessities, not luxuries. Without them, humanity cannot survive."



Resources

Articles:

Teaching Peace in Elementary School by Julia Scelfo

Empathy in the classroom: Why should we care by Lauren Owen

Video:

5 Keys to Successful Social and Emotional Learning - Edutopia

Educating the Heart and Mind - Sir Ken Robinson

Teacher Book List:

Make Just One Change; Teach Students to Ask Their Own Questions by Dan Rothstein and Luz Santana

Children's Book List:

A Chair for My Mother by Vera B. Williams

Hey, Little Ant by Phillip and Hannah Hoose

Strictly No Elephants by Lisa Mantchev

The Invisible Boy by Trudy Ludwig

If You Plant a Seed by Kadir Nelson

A Sick Day for Amos McGee by Philip C. Stead

Pass it On by Sophy Henn

Can I Join Your Club? by John Kelly and Steph Laberis

Be Kind by Pat Zietlow Miller

All the Water in the World by George Ella Lyon

Each Kindness by Jacqueline Woodson

