

# Westport Public Schools

## Strategic Planning Update

January 4, 2022




# Mission Statement

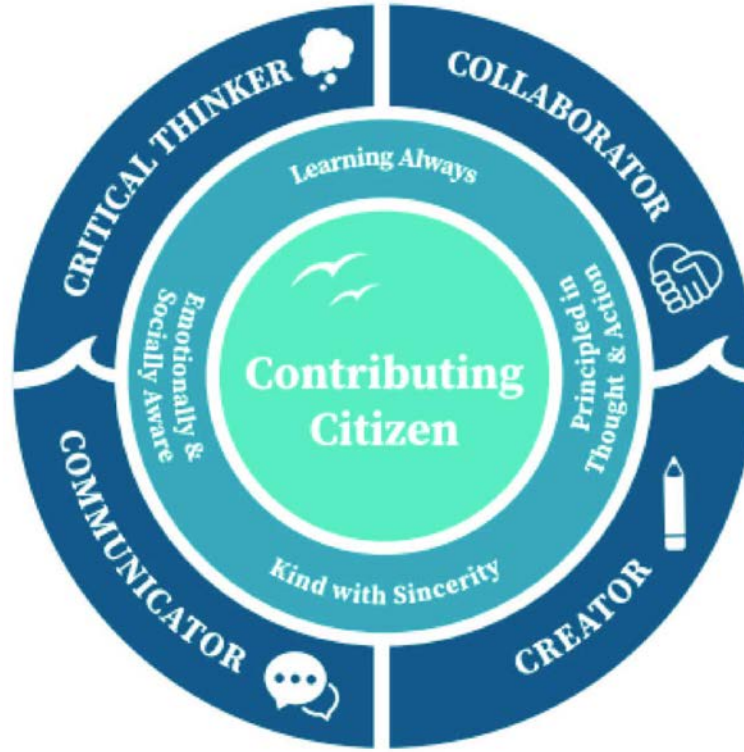
**Our Mission** is to prepare all students to reach their full potential as life-long learners and socially responsible contributors to our global community.

**We achieve this** by fostering critical and creative thinking and collaborative problem solving through a robust curriculum delivered by engaging and dedicated educators.

**We are committed** to maintaining an environment that supports inquiry and academic excellence, emotional and physical well-being, appreciation of the arts and diverse cultures, integrity and ethical behavior.



# Portrait of a Graduate



# BOE Role in Setting Strategic Direction

- “Of all the board’s governance responsibilities, the most important and powerful is formally setting the strategic direction for the school district.”

*“The Governance Core”*

Michael Fullan(2019)


- Requests for Board Input into Strategic Direction
- What is being asked of the Board?
  - Board consensus in support of two recommended priority areas to serve as strategic direction focal points:
    - social/emotional wellness and collaborative problem solving/design thinking
  - Feedback that can serve to clarify and improve next steps
  - Support to proceed with next steps, development of strategy map

# BOE Role in Setting Strategic Direction

- Next steps subject to Board consensus (timeline TBD):
  - Move beyond broad strategic direction stage:
    - target opportunities for growth across the system within: “social/emotional wellness” and “collaborative problem solving”
  - Form small action planning teams
  - Action Planning..begin development of “Strategy Map”:
    - Strategic objectives
    - Supporting initiatives
    - Accountable Measures
  - Return to Board for feedback prior to implementing plans

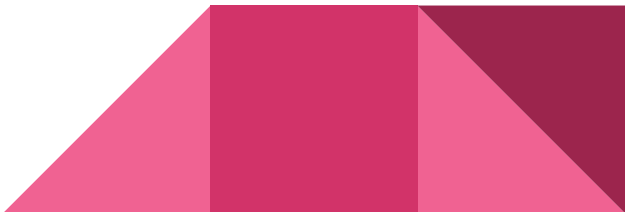


# Summary of January 4 Presentation

- Public School Response to Societal Need
    - Each generation had a call to action, a response to societal need
    - Current and future generations have need for well-adjusted collaborative problem-solvers to thrive as young adults
  - Build on Previous Work: “Westport 2025”, 2017 Plan
    - Continued emphasis on critical thinking and cognitive focus of “Westport 2025”
    - Build on strength of academic program
  - What Strategic Plan Is and Is Not
  - 2021 Inquiry Process: focus groups, surveys, interviews, “futurists”, Core Team
  - 2 Recommended Areas of Focus
- 

# Essential Questions

## Essential Questions for Consideration:

- To what extent are we preparing our students for the true challenges of work and citizenship that they will confront as young adults?
  - What are the consequences for students, and our society, if our students are unable to meet these challenges as a result of not transforming our current practice?
  - How can our schools justify much of what we do?
- 

# Core Planning Team

## Deep Analysis of Input/Scan the Horizon

Valerie Babich Psych Services	Coordinator of	Jessica Marino SES	First Gr. Teacher,
John Bayers Superintendent, HR	Asst.	Erin Marschner	Asst. Principal LLS
Christopher Breyan GFS, CES	Asst. Principal	Patrick Micinilio	Asst. Principal SHS
Anthony Buono Superintendent C & I	Asst.	Allison Moran Coordinator	K-5 Curriculum
Jessica Carey	Literacy Coach SES	Ann Neary SHS	English Teacher,
Sandra Decembre	Special Education	Enia Noonan SHS	Italian Teacher,
Lisa Doocy Preschool	Teacher SSP	Penny Proskinitopoulos	Asst. Principal, SHS
Carla Eichler	Art Teacher, SHS	Adam Rosen	Principal, BMS
Joanne Fasciolo CMS	Math Teacher,	Michael Rizzo Services	Asst. Supt. Spec
Lauren Francese Studies	Coordinator Social	Thomas Scarice	Superintendent
Deborah Goldenberg	Art Teacher, CES	AJ Scheetz Science	Coordinator
Jessica Grabowski LLS	3rd Gr. Teacher,	Daniel Seek Teacher, GFS	Technology
Sara Harding	Counselor, BMS	Kerin Tighe	Math Coach, LLS
Elizabeth Johannesson	Special Education, SHS	Christine Wanner	Coordinator
Micah Lawrence	Asst. Principal	Health/PE	



# Social Emotional Wellness



# Westport's Mission and Commitment

The Mission of the Westport Public Schools is to prepare all students to reach their full potential as *lifelong learners* and *socially responsible* contributors to our global community.

We are committed to maintaining an environment that supports inquiry and academic excellence, *emotional and physical well-being*, appreciation of the arts and diverse cultures, *integrity and ethical behavior*.

# Social Emotional Wellness

Includes many factors, optimally working in a coordinated manner to support the social emotional wellness of all students.

- Policies and procedures/practices
- Schedules
- Curriculum
- School Climate
- Relationships
- Family and community/environmental factors
- Social Emotional Instruction



# SEL - A Priority in Peer Districts



## Strategic Planning Goals:

- Wellness
- Every Child Known
- Achievement Gap
- Innovation and Experimentation
- Care, Connectedness and Communication



## Scarsdale Public Schools



# SEL - Peer District Illustration - New Canaan Public Schools

- **New Canaan Framework:**

- “New Canaan Public Schools firmly believes in the importance of developing the “whole child” and that Social Academic and Personal Learning is a crucial aspect of our students’ education. SAPL skills such as self-awareness and relationship skills are increasingly important in the 21st century for career success as well as personal well-being. In addition, research has consistently linked competence in SAPL and academic achievement (Durlak, 2014). In an effort to develop consistent expectations for teaching SAPL skills across the district, a team of educators developed the SAPL (Social Academic and Personal and Learning) framework. This framework is based on CASEL (Collaborative for Academic Social Emotional Learning) standards and addresses the major areas of SAPL skills including Self-Awareness, Self-Management, Social Awareness, Relationship Skills and Responsible Decision Making. The framework offers definitions of these skills, as well as the enduring understandings and learning expectations for developing learning plans related to SAPL skill building. In addition to the framework overview, our team of educators developed specific benchmarks of learning expectations for each SAPL strand. These benchmarks provide guidance for where we expect our students to be at the end of grades K, 2, 4, 6, 8, 10, and 12, and guidance for educators when developing lesson plans at each grade level. We believe (and research has shown) that SAPL skills are best developed when they are integrated into daily instruction.”

- **K-12 Student Outcomes:** [https://www.ncps-k12.org/site/handlers/filedownload.ashx?moduleinstanceid=4713&dataid=7053&FileName=SAPL%20Framework\\_2017.pdf](https://www.ncps-k12.org/site/handlers/filedownload.ashx?moduleinstanceid=4713&dataid=7053&FileName=SAPL%20Framework_2017.pdf)

# SEL In Higher Education



Cornell: “Your Character-Honesty. Open-mindedness. Initiative. Empathy. Your values are important to Cornell.”



Tufts University Initiative on Social-Emotional Learning and Civic Engagement



EMORY  
UNIVERSITY

Emory University Center for Contemplative Science and Compassion-Based Ethics

## CHALLENGE SUCCESS

*Transform the Student Experience*

MIT: collaborative and cooperative spirit, initiative, risk-taking, hands-on creativity, intensity, curiosity, and excitement, character of community, ability to prioritize balance

FAST FACT



**8 in 10**

employers say social and emotional skills are the most important to success and yet are also the hardest skills to find.<sup>13</sup>

# SEL in the Workforce

- **American Enterprise Institute (AEI):**
  - <https://www.aei.org/op-eds/soft-skills-are-essential-why-college-may-not-have-prepared-you-for-success-at-work/>
- **McKinsey & Co:** 50% of “Distinct Elements of Talent”(DELTAAs), Skills Needed for Future of Work are Social/Emotional Based:
  - <https://www.mckinsey.com/industries/public-and-social-sector/our-insights/defining-the-skills-citizens-will-need-in-the-future-world-of-work>
- **World Economic Forum (WEF):** “Future of Jobs Report 2020”
  - [https://www3.weforum.org/docs/WEF\\_Future\\_of\\_Jobs\\_2020.pdf](https://www3.weforum.org/docs/WEF_Future_of_Jobs_2020.pdf)
- **LinkedIn:**
  - <https://www.linkedin.com/pulse/8-new-workplace-skills-future-adele-du-rand-mba/>
- **Indeed:**
  - <https://www.indeed.com/career-advice/career-development/future-skills>

# SEL As Educational Policy Priority

- **OECD** (Developer of International Benchmark Test: PISA)
  - Next Generation International Benchmark: “Survey on Social and Emotional Skills”:
    - *“Research shows that both cognitive, and social and emotional skills improve life outcomes at a societal and an individual level. Considerable information exists on the development of cognitive skills but is lacking for social and emotional skills. The Survey on Social and Emotional Skills (SSES) aims to help close this information gap.”*
  - <https://www.oecd.org/education/ceri/social-emotional-skills-study/about/>
- **Aspen Institute:** Aspen Institute National Commission on Social, Emotional, and Academic Development
  - **Chester Finn, Fordham Institute:** *“I’m all for SEL done right, much as the Aspen commission envisioned it, in support of academic learning.”*
  - <http://nationathope.org/report-from-the-nation/about-the-commission-and-this-report/>
- **American Enterprise Institute (AEI):** “What Will It Take for SEL To Succeed?”
  - <https://www.aei.org/social-and-emotional-learning/>
- **Brookings Institute:**
  - *“Research increasingly suggests that social and emotional learning (SEL) matters a great deal for important life outcomes like success in school, college entry and completion, and later earnings. This research also tells us that SEL can be taught and nurtured in schools so that students increase their ability to integrate thinking, emotions, and behavior in ways that lead to positive school and life outcomes.”*
  - <https://www.wallacefoundation.org/knowledge-center/Documents/FOC-Spring-Vol2-Compiled-Future-Children-spring-2017.pdf>



# SEL: Research on School Based Student Performance

- Decrease in:
  - conduct problems
  - emotional distress, such as anxiety and depression
- Improvement in:
  - academic performance
  - attitudes about self, others, and school
  - social and emotional skills
  - school and classroom behavior



<https://files.eric.ed.gov/fulltext/ED505369.pdf>

<https://kappanonline.org/social-emotional-learning-outcome-research-mahoney-durlak-weissberg/>


[https://www.researchgate.net/publication/49807966\\_The\\_Impact\\_of\\_Enhancing\\_Students'\\_Social\\_and\\_Emotional\\_Learning\\_A\\_Meta-Analysis\\_of\\_School-Based\\_Universal\\_Interventions](https://www.researchgate.net/publication/49807966_The_Impact_of_Enhancing_Students'_Social_and_Emotional_Learning_A_Meta-Analysis_of_School-Based_Universal_Interventions)

# CT Law - Social-Emotional Learning - Legal Definition

## CT SDE Overview:

Social-emotional development contributes to academic and career success by helping students **understand and respect themselves and others, acquire effective interpersonal skills, understand safety and resilience skills, and develop into contributing members of society.** Improving student academic and behavior outcomes requires ensuring all students have **access to the most effective instructional, behavioral practices and interventions.** School need to create an environment ensuring that all students feel emotional and physically safe. *The integration of SEL is a vital component in K-12 education and it contributes to whole-child success.*

**Connecticut's definition of SEL:** The process through which children and adults achieve emotional intelligence through the competencies of **self-awareness, self-management, social awareness, relationship skills, and responsible decision-making** (Public Act 19-166).



# SEL: National/ State Curriculum Standards

<b>Health Education</b>	Goal setting, Interpersonal communication, Analyzing influences
<b>Math</b>	Persevere in solving problems, Critique the reasoning of others
<b>Language Arts</b>	Self Advocacy, Critique the reasoning of others, Character analysis
<b>Social Studies</b>	Self awareness, Perspective taking, Problem solving, Citizenship
<b>World Languages</b>	Interpersonal communication, Perseverance, Problem solving
<b>Physical Education</b>	Personal responsibility, Social responsibility
<b>Media/Technology</b>	Use of digital tools to connect with others; Contribute to project teams
<b>Fine Arts</b>	Performing, Connecting
<b>Science</b>	Asking questions, Defining problems, Arguing and defending new ideas
<b>Guidance</b>	Academic Achievement and Success Domains: Social/Emotional, Career, Academic

# SEL: A Teaching and Learning Priority

CT Common Core of Teacher Rubric (CCT): pp. 6-8 Domain 1 (Classroom Environment, Student Engagement, and Commitment to Learning)

Westport 2025

Staples High School Vision of the Graduate



# SEL: A Community Priority

When asked during a magazine interview about the biggest challenge right now, First Selectwoman, Jennifer Tooker, replied:

*"Social emotional well-being for the residents of Westport....it's a concern for the whole community, youth and adults."*

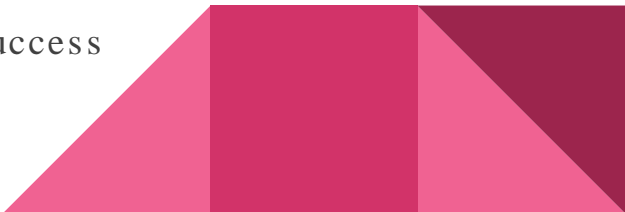


# SEL: Feedback from Inquiry Process

- Focus groups

- Most Frequently Mentioned Among Groups:
  - Social/Emotional, Whole Child Development
  - Executive Functioning
  - Social Skills
  - Practical Life Skills
- “Summarize Expectations for District in One Statement”:
  - 71% of statements include social/emotional capacities

- Futurists

- Humility, Ownership, Emergent Leadership
  - Effective Collaboration
  - Self-awareness and Social Awareness necessary for career success
  - Risk-averse dispositions can compromise career potential
- 

# SEL: Feedback from Inquiry Process

- Surveys - Some Key Responses That Influenced the Core Team's Thinking
  - Community: "Top 3 Skills Needed to Succeed" -
    - 60% Listed Social/Emotional Capacities
  - Parents:
    - Social Skill Development is Evident and Important in My Child's School:
      - Elementary 80%
      - Middle Schools 60%
      - High School 42%
    - Support for Social, Emotional & Mental Health Meets My Expectations:
      - Middle Schools 48%
      - High Schools 42%
    - Open Ended Responses for Setting Strategic Direction
      - 50% Listed Social Emotional Capacities at Secondary Level



# History of SEL

Collaborative for Academic, Social and Emotional Learning (CASEL)

Social Emotional Learning (SEL) term was coined

Five competencies were developed and now widely adopted





# Comprehensive “Systems” Approach to Social Emotional Wellness



# Indicators of A “Systems” Schoolwide Approach



Explicit SEL instruction



SEL integrated with academic instruction



Youth voice and engagement



Supportive school and classroom climates



Focus on adult SEL



Supportive discipline



A continuum of integrated supports



Authentic family partnerships

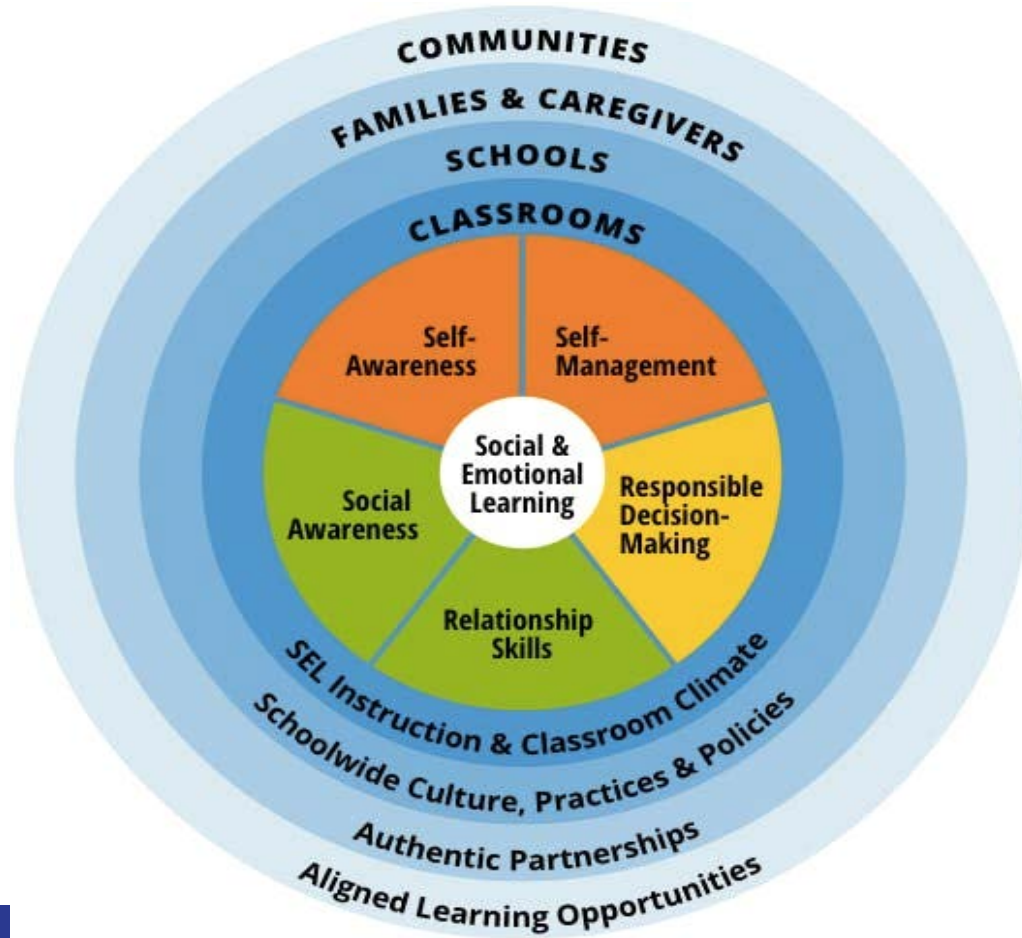


Aligned community partnerships



Systems for continuous improvement

# CASEL SEL Framework



# THE CASEL 5

Five broad, interrelated areas of competence



## self-awareness

Understand one's own emotions, thoughts, and values and how they influence behavior across contexts.



## self-management

Manage one's emotions, thoughts, and behaviors in different situations and to achieve goals and aspirations.



## social awareness

Understand the perspectives of and empathize with others, including those from diverse backgrounds.



## relationship skills

Establish and maintain healthy, supportive relationships and effectively navigate settings with diverse individuals/groups.



## responsible decision-making

Make caring and constructive choices about personal behavior and social interactions across diverse situations.

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## CASEL:

### Community Questions About Diversity, Equity, Inclusion Commitment and Initiatives

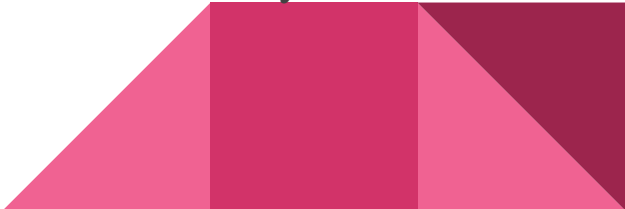
- **CASEL:** How Does SEL Support Educational Equity and Excellence?

<https://casel.org/fundamentals-of-sel/how-does-sel-support-educational-equity-and-excellence/>



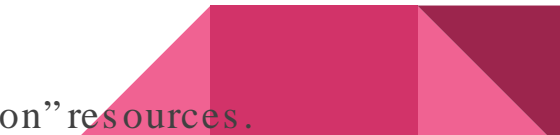
## CASEL:

### Community Questions About Diversity, Equity, Inclusion Commitment and Initiatives

- The Westport Public Schools are committed to equitable access to programs, opportunities, and services for all students, a school culture that fosters an inclusive sense of belonging, and preparing all students for a diverse world.
  - 2018-2019 WPS Comprehensive School Climate Inventory identified a Sense of Social Emotional Security (a sense that students feel safe from verbal abuse, teasing, and exclusion) as a relative weakness in the district. Out of the 13 dimensions measured, a Sense of Social Emotional Security was identified as the area of greatest concern.
- 

## CASEL:

### Community Questions About Diversity, Equity, Inclusion Commitment and Initiatives


- The CASEL “Equity and Excellence” resource was not a driver in Core Team’s recommendations
  - The CASEL “Equity and Excellence” supporting resources were not referenced, used, or discussed during the Core Team’s work in analyzing and recommending a strategic direction for the district.
  - The Core Team did reference and use the CASEL:
    - framework,
    - SEL definition,
    - Research bank,
    - and “10 Indicators for Schoolwide Systemic Implementation” resources.
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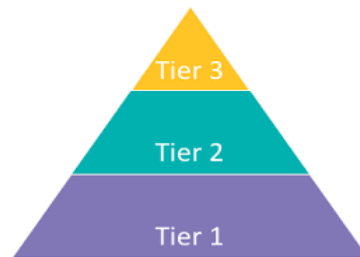
# Educational Organizations with Focus on Diversity, Equity, Inclusion

- **NEASC** (Accreditation Provider) “Equitable and Inclusive Education”: <https://www.neasc.org/resources>
- **National Council of Teachers of Mathematics (NCTM)**: “Supporting Each and Every Student: Equity and Diversity” <https://www.nctm.org/conferences-and-professional-development/Tips-for-Teachers/Tips-on-Supporting-All-Students-Equity-and-Diversity/>
- **National Association of School Psychologists (NASP)**: <https://www.nasponline.org/resources-and-publications/resources-and-podcasts/diversity-and-social-justice/social-justice/the-importance-of-addressing-equity-diversity-and-inclusion-in-schools-dispelling-myths-about-critical-race-theory>
- **CT Association of Boards of Education (CABE)**: <https://www.cabe.org/page.cfm?p=1460>
- **National Association of Secondary School Principals (NASSP)**: [https://www.nassp.org/wp-content/uploads/2021/01/NASSP21ADV-0060\\_WS\\_Position\\_Statements\\_Racial\\_Justice\\_2021.pdf](https://www.nassp.org/wp-content/uploads/2021/01/NASSP21ADV-0060_WS_Position_Statements_Racial_Justice_2021.pdf)

# Companies with Focus on Diversity, Equity, Inclusion

- **Coca Cola:** <https://www.coca-colacompany.com/shared-future/diversity-and-inclusion/racial-equity>
  - **Intel:** <https://www.intel.com/content/www/us/en/diversity/diversity-at-intel.html>
  - **McKinsey:** <https://www.mckinsey.com/featured-insights/world-economic-forum/knowledge-collaborations/diversity-equity-inclusion-and-social-justice>
  - **Verizon:** <https://www.verizon.com/about/our-company/diversity-and-inclusion>
- 

# SEL in Westport: A Tiered Approach



## **Tier 1: Universal Support (All students): SEL competencies are explicitly and implicitly included in PK-12 instruction**

- Preventative and proactive classroom instruction and practices
- Examples: RULER, Responsive Classroom, Comprehensive School Counseling Lessons, Advisory Programs, Wellness Seminar, Health classes, Link Crew, Mindfulness

## **Tier 2: Targeted Support (Students at-risk)**

- Small group instruction for targeted students
- Examples: Lunch bunch, Skill-based groups (e.g. organizational skills, friendship skills, stress management, coping skills)

## **Tier 3: Intensive Support (Students at high risk)**

- Intensive and individualized supports and services for specific students
- Examples: Individual and group counseling, RTI/Special education/504 plans, Crisis intervention, Effective School Solutions (ESS)

# SEL in Action: PK-Elementary





Being able to work collaboratively in a group is a life skill. Giving students opportunities to partake in partner work is a valuable lesson that our students encounter daily. It gives students' a sense of ownership of their learning when they can work together, help teach one another, and investigate and broaden their knowledge around a specific subject.

These third graders were figuring out a division problem using manipulatives.



# SEL in Action: Middle School



# SEL in Action: High School

Link Crew



PE Class



Connections Group

# SEL in Action: Parent Workshops





# RULER and SEL competencies



## SOCIAL AND EMOTIONAL LEARNING COMPETENCIES

SOCIAL AND EMOTIONAL LEARNING (SEL) COMPETENCIES	Self-Awareness	Social Awareness	Responsible Decision Making	Self-Management	Relationship Skills
<b>RULER Skill-Building Activities:</b> Staff personal and professional learning, pre-K to 12 classroom content, and family engagement materials include activities to enhance development of the five RULER skills of emotional intelligence.					
Recognizing emotions in oneself and others	✓	✓			✓
Understanding the causes and consequences of emotions	✓	✓			✓
Labeling emotions with a nuanced vocabulary	✓	✓			✓
Expressing emotions in accordance with cultural norms and social context			✓	✓	✓
Regulating emotion with helpful strategies			✓	✓	✓

# What's Different?

- Comprehensive Systems Approach
  - Beyond “Pockets of Excellence”
  - PK-12 Framework
  - Critical Assessment of Policies/Practices
    - Aligned or inconsistent?

- Social Emotional Wellness:
  - Respond to Acute Current Social/Emotional Needs
  - Project Critical Social Emotional Capacities Necessary for Students to Thrive as Young Adults
    - Intentionally integrate these into current academic program

- Collaborative Problem Solving Focus
  - Unpack Design Thinking Steps
  - Identify “Micro-skills” of steps and intentionally integrate into current academic program
  - Analyze curriculum units to include opportunities for practice and mastery



Explicit SEL instruction



SEL integrated with academic instruction



Youth voice and engagement



Supportive school and classroom climates



Focus on adult SEL



Supportive discipline



A continuum of integrated supports



Authentic family partnerships



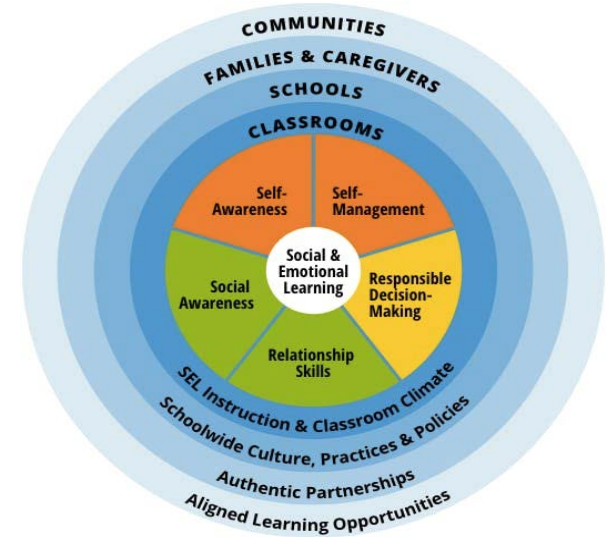
Aligned community partnerships



Systems for continuous improvement

# Social Emotional Wellness & Collaborative Problem Solving

## A Natural Connection



**“Educating the mind without  
educating the heart is no  
education at all.”**

**Aristotle**



# Questions and Discussion

