

September 2022

Dear Parents & Guardians,

As we start a new school year, we wanted to update you on the social emotional learning support that we offer to students at Westosha Central. Social emotional learning is a buzzword right now, and we wanted to update you on what we mean when we say social emotional learning and the opportunities we provide at Westosha Central. Here are some frequently asked questions that we hope helps you understand more in regards to social emotional learning at Central.

What is SEL?

- SEL stands for Social Emotional Learning. Social emotional learning includes management of emotions and behavior, the ability to identify and understand feelings in ourselves and others, the ability to form and maintain positive relationships, and the development of empathy for others

Why is SEL important?

- SEL teaches important life skills that will carry over into adult life, making students positive contributing members of society. Some of these lifes skills include the ability to understand themselves, develop positive self-esteem, take responsibility for actions, and maintain healthy personal and working relationships.

What is happening at Westosha Central in the area of SEL?

- Word of the Month- Focus on one positive characteristic trait each month as a school and embed it throughout the day. An example is Organization- teachers will embed this word during the month and focus on providing some ways for students to stay organized ...
- Wellness Advisory Opportunities- Wellness opportunities like walking the track, yoga, playing board games, etc. will be offered during a few advisory periods throughout the month. This is optional for students to participate in.
- Harbor Videos- Once a month during advisory periods, students will watch videos and have the opportunity to discuss topics addressed in the videos. These topics include: stress and time management, communication, safe dating and healthy relationships, grit, defining yourself, problem solving, tolerance and acceptance, and setting goals.
- Occasional mental health surveys- These surveys are optional and have a short amount of questions. This information is used to guide the practices we provide in social emotional learning and help identify if a student needs additional support in this area. There is an option to opt out of these sel surveys; they are also optional.
- Drop in school counseling support - Student are able to stop in by their school counselor to talk about a variety of topics

- For students that need a more targeted level of support, our school psychologist, social worker, and counselors offer small groups and 1:1 support on topics specific to those individual students. Parents will be notified and asked permission to have their child participate in a SEL group
- We also partner with Professional Services Group (PSG) which is a school based mental health service. PSG mental health therapists go directly into the schools and provide mental health services including individual therapy, education/consultation for school staff, and family therapy as needed. Providing these services within the school lessens the amount of time students spend out of school attending therapy appointments, and allows for the family, the school staff, and the therapist to collaborate on care for the child. Professional services group will see students during the school day to provide 1:1 counseling with the student. This is an optional service, and a referral process is required. It is a for profit organization, so parents and their medical insurance companies are billed, not the school. The school acts as the satellite office for the therapy sessions to take place. If this is something you are interested in looking into, please contact your child's school counselor.

As you can see, we offer a variety of support, and would like to continue to offer more. Our hope is to have a large menu of options that students can choose from. These options and opportunities are optional for students; not required.

If you have any specific questions about our social emotional learning opportunities at Westosha Central, please do not hesitate to contact us.

Respectfully,



Lauren Spierenburg
Director of Pupil Services
Westosha Central High School
spierenburgl@westosha.k12.wi.us
262-843-2321 ext. 257



Kevin Kitslaar
Principal
Westosha Central High School
kitslaark@westosha.k12.wi.us
262-843-2321 ext. 309