

# CPCSC Social Emotional Learning

## A Guide for Parents and Caregivers

Social Emotional Learning SEL has recently become a focus in some political conversations. Districts may approach SEL differently, and we feel it is important to explain social emotional learning in our district.

The Indiana Department of Education requires the social emotional standards embedded in the [Indiana Employability Skills](#) to be taught in Indiana public schools. Schools are encouraged to teach and provide guidance around the [Indiana School Counseling competencies](#).

The information below is specific to Crown Point Community School Corporation. We welcome further conversation with parents to provide any information that can explain SEL within our schools.

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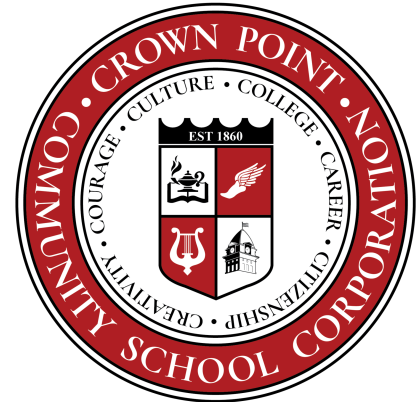
### What is SEL?

Social and emotional learning involves the process through which children and adults acquire and effectively apply the knowledge, attitudes, and skills necessary to approach life creatively and confidently, set and achieve goals to enhance our life and the lives of others, understand and manage emotions, feel and show empathy for others, respect others, establish and maintain positive relationships, and make responsible decisions.

The mission of CPCSC is closely aligned with social emotional learning. SEL is reflected in the core values shown in our district seal: Courage, Culture, Creativity, College, Career, and Citizenship. These are also the attributes of a Crown Point High School graduate.

These values are not new to our district, nor is social emotional learning. Although the term *social emotional learning* may be new, teachers have always strived to prepare students for life beyond and outside of K-12 schooling. CPCSC believes that preparation is done in partnership with parents and is part of building a strong community.

Strong social emotional learning has proven ties to better school safety and higher academic performance. When students feel safe, confident, calm, and part of a community, they have a better chance of personal success.



## SEL is not...

CPCSC's social emotional learning does not teach students what to think. It does not include teaching Critical Race Theory (CRT). It does not include topics like gender identity or sexuality. CPCSC firmly believes that SEL in our district is not controversial, and we welcome questions from parents who would like to learn more about SEL.

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## Where/how do students learn SEL?

Social emotional learning is not a single class or specific part of a student's day. While certain SEL topics are covered in some classes, SEL is not a single prescribed curriculum.

When schools promote students' academic, social, and emotional learning, students will possess the basic competencies, work habits, and values for engaged postsecondary education, meaningful careers, and constructive citizenship. (Dymnicki, Sambolt, & Kidron, 2013).

Schools can help prevent or reduce many different risky behaviors (e.g., drug use, violence, bullying, and dropping out) when they engage in multiyear, integrated efforts to develop students' social and emotional skills.

Schools filled with socially and emotionally skilled students are more caring and safe.

Here are some examples of how social emotional learning is included in the district:

### ELEMENTARY

**Positive Behavioral Interventions and Supports (PBIS)** creates a culture within the school with students to support positive student outcomes for all by promoting social skills, resolving peer conflict, and providing individual, small group, and classroom services. PBIS services may be required per 504 and/or IEP.

**Morning meetings** are a time for all members of a class to join together to help everyone be connected, calm, and capable at school. This usually involves a greeting, sharing in a short discussion or answering a question, and participating in a quick activity. This daily warm-up helps kids and adults transition into the day from home into the classroom.

To support active engagement in learning, students are offered multiple means by which to **self-regulate and re-engage** in learning. Quick strategies target productivity, creativity, emotional regulation, cognitive flexibility, and social skills.

Our students live health and wellness every day. The HealthSmart curriculum gives children the knowledge and skills to make **healthy choices** and establish life-long healthy behaviors.

**School counselors** are an integral part of the total education system; school counselors help students form healthy goals, mindsets, and behaviors.

- With the support of the school counselor, students learn to develop effective collaboration and cooperation skills, to practice perseverance, to develop time management and study skills, and to learn self-motivation and self-direction habits.
- School counselors meet with classrooms, small groups, and individual students.
- In addition, school counselors deliver developmentally appropriate lessons to educate all ages of children about what to do if confronted with abusive behavior such as safe and unsafe touches and other physical and emotional abuse. Students learn the “Protect Yourself Rules” to empower them to protect themselves and to seek out a trusted adult.

Second Step lessons are delivered in kindergarten, 1st grade, and 2nd grade by PBIS staff and/or the school counselor and are reinforced by the classroom teacher. **Second Step** lessons focus on cooperation, communication, and decision making to enhance learning and support the development, safety, and well-being of children.

**The Drug Abuse Resistance Education** program (D.A.R.E.) is a nationally recognized decision-making model delivered to students in grade 5 by a D.A.R.E. Officer teaches them the foundational skills needed to be safe, healthy, and responsible in leading drug-free lives.

## SECONDARY

### School-wide focus on Indiana Employability Skills

- Mindsets: Life-Long Learning & Self-Confidence
- Learning Strategies: Effective Communication; Decision-Making; Initiative; Attention to Detail; Problem Solving; Aptitude Awareness
- Work Ethic: Self-Discipline; Independence; Perseverance; Time Management & Organization; Adaptability; Integrity; Professionalism
- Social & Emotional Skills: Connection; Regulation; Collaboration

### Use of Focused Attention Practices and Brain Breaks in order to encourage emotional regulation

- Focused Attention Practices - activities which help to calm the brain, regulate emotions and behavior, and activate executive functions such as sustained attention.
- Brain Intervals - activities which re-engage our brains for learning, combat boredom, and prime the brain to soak in new information

#### **Resource/Advisory period programming which includes:**

- The development of Core Values: Courage; Citizenship; Culture; College & Career; Creativity; Connection
- The development of Indiana Employability Skills
- Challenge Education for learning while solving real-world Challenges. The framework is collaborative and hands-on, asking all participants to identify Big Ideas, ask good questions, discover and solve challenges, gain in-depth subject area knowledge, and share their thoughts with the world.
- Stress-Management including Focused Attention Practices / Brain Intervals.
- Prevention of at-risk behavior / issues harmful to self and/or others.

#### **Use of purposeful and positive connections strategies with students which allow teachers/staff to create appropriate and meaningful connections with students**

## **Does CPCSC use the Panorama Education Student Survey?**

The CPCSC has used this survey tool in the past with grades 3-12. We no longer use Panorama and instead use our own survey tool.

- The survey measures whether students feel safe, feel confident, have a trusted adult, have positive peer relationships, and know how to handle their emotions.
- CPCSC maintains full control over the questions presented to students. We don't include questions about religion, gender, sexuality, personal beliefs, etc. You can view the 2024 questions for secondary at this link.
- CPCSC staff such as principals and counselors can see individual student data, and the district owns the information.
- The data from the survey is used to improve school climate and culture, and can also be useful in determining which students may need more individual support. For example, if a school's data

reveals that students don't feel confident in their work, staff can build confidence boosting experiences into the school day. If an individual student indicates he or she does not have a trusted adult to turn to, a teacher or counselor can connect with that student and provide support.

- Parents are given advance notice of the survey and can choose for their child to opt out of participating.

It is important to note that this survey is only one part of how school improvement and student services are determined. Grades, attendance, and behavior are also strong indicators of students' needs, and they are considered in addition to any survey results.

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## Is SEL the same as Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion (DEI)?

The terms diversity, equity, and inclusion have received a lot of attention recently. While respecting others' viewpoints, cultures, and differences is part of SEL, it is not the only focus. Some parents may feel concerned that when they hear terms like *inclusion* it means controversial topics are covered. This is not the case. Topics that are better reserved for college-level courses (like CRT) or discussion at home (like sexuality) are not part of social emotional learning.

CPCSC firmly believes that every student, no matter his or her background or personal circumstances, deserves to learn in an environment that is safe, respectful, and supportive. Inclusion means that every child is welcomed and afforded the right to an equal education. Our district will continue investing in improving inclusion practices because our students deserve that investment. We are ALL CP.