Forward in Excellence

Somers Central School District
SEWAC 5.31.23
Agenda

- Welcome
- SEWAC Mission, Vision, and Collective Commitments
- Executive Functioning
- CoVitality Spring 2023
  - Collaborative Inquiry
- Shared Learning Experience
  - Belonging
- Exit Ticket
Social Emotional Wellness Advisory Committee

MISSION: (Why we exist.) The SEW Advisory Committee will provide input and direction to SCSD on how best to support all Somers students’ social and emotional wellness.

VISION: (How we want to exist.)
- Advocate for children that cannot speak for themselves.
- Work in concert with families, school professionals, and community partners.
- Provide a safe place for children's voices to be elevated.
- Provide a place for learning for all about SEW.
- Ensure alignment between parent, student, and school district goals for supporting the SEW of all students.

Collective Commitments to Each Other:
- Engage in understanding the impact of SEW on the whole child.
- Engage in learning current practices on how to support SEW in SCSD
- Offer perspective and input on relevant data related to SEW in SCSD.
- Help to steer decision making regarding next steps for supporting our the SEW of all children.
- Collaborate with all members of SEWAC
- Create a safe and welcoming place for all members to be engaged in the work of SEW.
Goal 1: Ensure Awareness and Commitment of Social Emotional Wellness
Action(s):
• Provide guidance regarding opportunities for all stakeholders to be familiar with the different SEW supports in SCSD.
• Contribute to the development of the SEW master plan/structure across the district.

Goal 2: Enhance Our Individual and Collective Understanding of Social Emotional Wellness
Action(s):
• Provide feedback on the opportunities regarding the current initiatives and explore future possibilities.
• Provide insights regarding learning opportunities for students, employees, and families. (e.g. Wellness Summit)

Goal 3: Support Social Emotional Learning for All Children
Action(s):
• Provide feedback on SEW screener implementation.
• Explore alignment with district programs. (Align with MYP – ATL skills.)
Executive Functioning

- Learning Opportunities
  - Families
    - Kristen Jacobson (Cognitive Connections) – Fall Wellness Summit
  - Faculty
    - April 11th: 32 staff members begin initial EF cohort.
    - 5/30: Secondary Wellness Teams Tier 2 EF training
    - June dates TBD: Follow up with initial cohorts and district-wide administrative training

Staff Q: How effective do you believe the EF skills and support strategies shared would be if utilized in daily instruction at your level?

- Very effective: 22
- Somewhat effective: 9
- Somewhat ineffective: 1
- Very ineffective: 0
Key Social Emotional Wellness Milestones

Approximately 1300 spring screenings administered and over 100 individual check-ins conducted.

Over 60 staff members trained this school year

First full year of lessons delivered to all students in grades 6, 8 & 10 (Approx. 650 students)
Shared Learning Experience: Belonging

- What is belonging?

- What does research say about creating belonging environments?
The Importance of Student Sense of Belonging

Sense of belonging refers to the extent to which students feel personally accepted, included, and supported at school, and includes school-based experiences, students’ relationships with teachers and peers, and students’ general feelings about school.¹,²

Students with a strong sense of belonging are more likely to be engaged in school and to perform well academically.³, ⁴, ⁵, ⁶, ⁷

Factors related to students’ sense of belonging in school include:

- Student academic motivation
- Student emotional stability
- Student personal characteristics
- Parent support, peer support, teacher support
- Environmental and school safety

* Examples include motivation, personality, and social skills.
Spend five minutes with your group defining “fitting in” or “belonging.”

How do you know when you fit in or belong?
What does it feel like?
How does the experience shape your responses and behaviors?
What other words do you associate with the term?

Read pages 108-109 “Toward an Understanding of School Belonging”
Making meaning of the educational environment

Do I belong here?

race and ethnicity
gender
social class
interests
values
language
culture
sexual orientation
past experiences

curriculum
relationships
assessment
teacher identity
school policies
family engagement
school resources
physical environment
instruction

Source: Walton & Brady, 2017
## The Research

**Table I: The Research Story**

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>The Belonging Challenge</th>
<th>The Belonging Opportunity</th>
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<td>1 in 4 young people feel they do not belong in school: a figure which is rising.</td>
<td>A sense of belonging has been linked to:</td>
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<td>Children from disadvantaged communities are twice as likely as their more advantaged peers to feel they don’t belong and four times more likely to be excluded.</td>
<td>✓ Increased student motivation.</td>
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<td>Black Caribbean and special educational needs children are more likely to be excluded than their peers.</td>
<td>✓ Increased staff well-being, motivation and retention.</td>
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<td>Young people who experience a sense of exclusion from school or society seek ‘belongingness’ elsewhere.</td>
<td>✓ Reductions in student absenteeism.</td>
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<td>✓ Other positive social outcomes e.g. health and well-being.</td>
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<td>✓ Improved academic achievement.</td>
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<td>✓ A growing sense of agency in students and staff: a belief that they can make a difference.</td>
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2023-24

- Continuation of SEWAC membership
- Will identify dates for 5 meetings next year

Focus
- Executive Functioning
- Belongingness
Exit Ticket – Your Feedback is Helpful to Our Work