

I. Background

As part of Pleasantdale's Strategic Blueprint - Building Learning Environments, the district formed a Social Emotional Learning committee consisting of teachers from both the elementary and middle schools, parents, administration, and members of the board. Members included Jon Buralli, Robert Muir, Maribeth Kavannaugh, Michelle Interrante, Maggie McCarter, Dan Ratcliff, Barbara Triggs, Griffin Sonntag and Brianne Malatt.

The committee utilized the SEL implementation process and research from the Collaborative for Academic, Social, and Emotional Learning (CASEL). <https://casel.org/> CASEL is an organization that provides research based best practices for implementing high-quality, evidence-based social and emotional learning (SEL). Social Emotional Learning (SEL) as defined by CASEL, is the process through which children and adults:

- Understand and manage emotions,
- Set and achieve positive goals,
- Feel and show empathy for others,
- Establish and maintain positive relationships, and
- Make responsible decisions.

SEL is important for the success of our students. Research shows that an effective SEL program results in an increase in academic achievement, social emotional skills, positive attitudes, and positive social behaviors. SEL decreases conduct problems, emotional distress and drug use. Best practices for integrating SEL include explicitly teaching SEL skills, embedding SEL in the curriculum, and ongoing monitoring to insure success and implementation.

II. 2018 - 2019 Committee Work

Committee Goals

The committee met several times throughout the school year and focused on accomplishing the following goals:

- 1) Creating a shared vision for our district's Social Emotional Learning;
- 2) Evaluating current strategies, resources & programming already in use;
- 3) Completing a needs assessment in all grade levels; and

- 4) Building expertise in the [5 core competencies](#) that provide the SEL framework (self-awareness, self-management, relationship skills, social awareness, responsible decision making)

SEL District Vision

The committee worked diligently to create a district vision for SEL that captured our values, beliefs, consistent with the [Portrait of a Pleasantdale Graduate](#), outlined in the district's Strategic Blueprint. The committee created the following vision for SEL:

To create a community of inspired learners where students are respectful, resourceful and resilient collaborators, problem solvers, and risk takers in pursuit of their passions.

SEL State Goals

The committee spent time analyzing each of the three [SEL State Goals](#) and the performance descriptors for each grade band.

- Goal 1: Develop self-awareness and self-management skills to achieve school and life success.
- Goal 2: Use social-awareness and interpersonal skills to establish and maintain positive relationships.
- Goal 3: Demonstrate decision-making skills and responsible behaviors in personal, school, and community contexts.

Evaluating Current Strategies/Needs Assessment

The committee spent time collecting the SEL activities already implemented across the district and sorted the activities under each SEL goal.

Based on the evaluation of our current strategies across the district, the committee found:

Strengths:

- Strategies & activities to help students managing emotion
- Using assignment notebooks across all grade levels in the middle school
- Time allotted to explicitly teach SEL
- Amount of SEL activities

Future Focus:

- Continuum from Pre K to 8
- Student outcomes

- Toolbox of strategies to use with struggling students
- Managing stress (highlighted from last year's 5 Essentials survey)
- Building capacity district-wide about the [5 core competencies](#) that provide the SEL framework (self-awareness, self-management, relationship skills, social awareness, responsible decision making)

2019 - 2020 School Year Committee

The focus of the committee's work this summer and into the next school year will be to focus on Goal 1A & 3B.

- Goal 1A: Develop self-awareness and self-management skills to achieve school and life success.
 - A. Identify and manage one's emotions and behavior
- Goal 3B: Demonstrate decision-making skills and responsible behaviors in personal, school, and community contexts.
 - B. Apply decision-making skills to deal responsibly with daily academic and social situations.
- Pre K - 8 lessons (integrating Character Counts lessons) with student outcomes, explicit lessons, and ways to integrate the standards throughout the year in other lessons/subject areas.

Committee Goals 2019 - 2020

- Create Pre K - 8 "lesson" for Goals 1A & 3B
- Roll out district vision and plan to staff
- Evaluate implementation of Goals 1A & 3B
 - Teacher & student feedback
 - Student survey results
- Continue to build expertise in the 5 core competencies that provide the SEL framework (self-awareness, self-management, relationship skills, social awareness, responsible decision making)
- Select next focus goals for 2020-2021 -- Repeat process