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Pleasantdale Middle School has implemented “What I Need” (WIN) this year—a daily, 20-minute Social Emotional Learning (SEL) and executive functioning period designed to enhance student well-being and academic readiness. The WIN initiative is grounded in research, aligned with the district's strategic roadmap, and responsive to both staff and student feedback.

Background and Purpose

The WIN period grew out of the district's ongoing SEL efforts that began in 2017. Over time, efforts such as the introduction of “Homebase,” SEL toolkits, and monthly schoolwide lessons laid the foundation for a more structured and consistent approach. In the 2023–2024 school year, a short pilot of WIN generated overwhelmingly positive feedback from both students and staff. Students noted stronger relationships, increased self-awareness, and meaningful classroom discussions. Following the success of the pilot, the committee moved forward with full implementation of WIN during this 2024–2025 school year. This expansion supports the district's strategic goal of embedding high-quality social-emotional learning into daily instruction. WIN now serves as the Tier 1 foundation for SEL within the MTSS framework, ensuring that all students benefit from consistent, proactive support that nurtures their academic, social, behavioral, and emotional development.

Structure and Curriculum

Implemented school-wide, WIN takes place daily from 10:20–10:40 a.m. in groups of 12–14 students. It includes lessons in SEL, team building, goal-setting, executive functioning (e.g., time management, organization), and class meetings. Curriculum resources include Everyday Speech, Rush Executive Functioning, and interactive activities such as games and challenges.

Outcomes and Impact

Evaluation through student and staff surveys, 5Essentials data, connection surveys, and academic benchmarks revealed:

- **Social Growth:** 96% of students reported a connection to a staff member; student-teacher trust increased 9 points on 5Essentials.
- **Academic Gains:** Students self-reported growth in grades and executive functioning; MAP scores and improved organization were also frequently cited.
- **Engagement and Belonging:** Strong preference for team-building and interactive projects; students reported higher group identity and belonging.
- **Skill Development:** Notable growth in emotional regulation, social skills, and self-awareness.

- **Behavioral Infractions:** A reduction in Tier 2 and Tier 3 behavioral infractions (561 in 23-24 to 397 in 24-25), indicating improved self-management and overall student regulation.

Next Steps

For 2025–2026, the WIN committee will:

- Clarify the purpose of WIN through consistent language and visual cues.
- Provide staff with professional development on SEL practices.
- Tailor WIN activities to grade-level needs.
- Allocate dedicated planning time for grade-level teams.
- Continue to collect data and feedback to adjust programming.

By making social-emotional learning a consistent part of the middle school experience, Pleasantdale's WIN initiative supports the development of well-rounded students who are prepared to thrive academically, socially, and emotionally.