

Hi everyone,

My name is Veronica Spencer-Palmer. I am a mom of three at Roy Cloud School and wanted to reach out to all of you to go over the SEL (Social Emotional Learning) that is happening at Roy Cloud. I hope to clear up a few misconceptions and let you know that you can email me if you have questions.

As parents we feel deeply responsible for our children's wellbeing and success in school and in life. Having the school teach social and emotional skills can leave some parents feeling as if their parenting is in question and/or they are not doing their job. Educational jargon can sometimes sound like fluff or not sit well with some parents. This is 100% not the purpose of the SEL program at Roy Cloud.

Schools and teachers are working to approach SEL as a true partnership to help our children succeed, create a positive and thriving school culture and for our children to be the best version of themselves. Social emotional learning is a broad term but in a nutshell, it is really how students regulate and comprehend their emotions, communicate with others, use compassion and empathy to understand the needs of other people, create frameworks to achieve their goals, build relationships and make good decisions. These skills pave the way for positive life experiences. When these skills are taught AND supported, youth are more likely to succeed academically and have a positive attitude toward self and school.

Here is a little background about the PTO-funded SEL program at Roy Cloud over the past few years...

Roy Cloud SEL in 2019-20

Back in 2019 you AMAZING parents helped raise money at our school's auction for our Fund-a-Need. That year the Fund-a-Need was to bring in Social Emotional Learning to our school. Implementing a new program, it was important that we not overwhelm the teachers by adding a new curriculum to their already-full plate. So that year we tried different programs:

- First we brought in Mission Be and a mindfulness coach was able to visit our classes.
- We brought in speakers for assemblies – younger grades saw Spreading Kindness and the middle school saw Teen Truth.
- We also began to implement a Rising Up program, where jr. high students learned to become peer mentors for younger grades.
- We were also able to host a handful of parent workshops.

Roy Cloud SEL in 2020-21

The following year our awesome parents raised more money at the 2020 auction to keep SEL going in the school. Unfortunately, the pandemic hit and halted everything for our students for a

while. The administration still rallied behind SEL and knew to keep momentum we needed to continue teaching it in some way. The hope was to have SEL just be a part of the school and its culture.

There was a lot of research being done and Character Strong was discovered. Character Strong (Purposeful People for grades K-5) is a very inexpensive program designed for every grade level and has a variety of lessons that teachers can choose from. This was a way to have an SEL curriculum that is not overwhelming for our teachers. It is easy to use and navigate through and can support families at home.

During 2020, we also were able to hold small parent group meeting through the principals meet up. During this time, the Redwood City School District announced that every school would implement some SEL into their curriculum. Great news for Roy Cloud since we were already in motion and ahead of the game.

Now moving on to 2022 the students are back in the classroom and teachers are continuing their Character Strong and Purposeful People lessons.

Looking Forward

Our hope for the years to come is that SEL becomes a norm at Roy Cloud; it is part of our culture. We hope families feel supported and kids get an overall well-rounded education.

Beginning in fall of 2022 we are working hard to have in-person parent ed nights and family nights. Social Emotional Learning for everyone at any age doesn't happen overnight, but schools and parents that stick with the principles have identified numerous positive outcomes that arise over time.

I hope this answers any questions you may have and hopefully makes you proud of the amazing school your children go to.

If you have any questions, please feel free to reach out to me directly.

Take Care,

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