



A Community of Learners

Informational Memo - December SEL Update

TO: School Board
Superintendent Dr. Trisha Kocanda

FROM: Barry Rodgers, *Director of Innovation, Teaching, and Learning*

December 17, 2019

Overview & Background

This memo serves to provide an update of current efforts to support District Goal 2.1: *Build a community-wide understanding and commitment to the value of Social Emotional Learning (SEL) and its impact on students' holistic success and well-being.*

As indicated in prior presentations, we focused this year's work on the alignment of the adults within our community (staff, parents, community members) on their shared understanding and dedication to supporting the social-emotional well-being of each other as well as our students. To this end the following activities were facilitated during the month of December.

WPI: Social Emotional Learning: An Introduction Focus on the CASEL competencies of Self-Awareness and Self Management

On December 3, The District hosted a Winnetka Parent Institute entitled, "Social Emotional Learning: An Introduction Focus on the CASEL competencies of Self-Awareness and Self Management." The session was presented by District Facilitators, teachers, and parents. Presenters shared that Social Emotional Learning 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. This informational session focused on the importance of SEL and the key competencies of self-awareness and self management. This is the first in a

series of three WPI's workshops that the District will offer this school year focusing on this important District-wide initiative. A link to the presentation can be found here: [December SEL WPI](#)

CASEL Workshop

On December 12, the District 36 SEL Supercommittee comprised of administrators, teachers, and parents, met for the second of three full day professional learning opportunities led by representatives from the Collaborative for Academic and Social Emotional Learning (CASEL). The December session focused on strengthening adult SEL competencies in the areas of social awareness and relationship skills. As part of the professional development staff studied tools to promote reflection and group engagement and interaction.

Participants learned about how to design structures and adopt practices for staff collaboration while modeling SEL for students. The group also examined the question of "How do we measure progress in the area of SEL?" The group looked at how we can individually and collectively set measurable goals and measure progress. Lastly, time was allocated to planning for District and school-wide teams in order to determine how we can best take the key learnings and integrate them into practice.

New Trier Township Instructional Tech Professional Learning Community (NT@iPLC)

On Friday, December 6, 2019, Winnetka Public Schools hosted technology coaches, instructional specialists, and tech directors from the NT Township iPLC to collaborate on the topic of Social Emotional Learning and Technology. Activities included modeling appropriate use of technology for teachers and students, utilizing a laser engraver to create SEL tokens, and sharing resources related to technology and social-emotional learning with the most time spent digging into [Common Sense Media's Character Strengths](#).

- Empathy & Compassion
- Integrity & Self-Control
- Courage & Perseverance
- Humility & Gratitude
- Teamwork & Communication
- Curiosity

Township Partnership

The significance of Social Emotional Learning is being embraced and supported across the Township. New Trier and NT Township Schools are currently reviewing a proposal to work collaboratively with CASEL in a joint partnership. Over the next month, District Superintendents will be reviewing the proposal and sharing information with their respective boards. The potential ability for area school communities to work together shows considerable promise for positively impacting this important initiative.

Next Steps

The District will continue to steward the important work around the goal of social emotional learning leading to the adoption of and SEL framework at the end of the 2019-20 school year.

- Feedback gained from the December CASEL workshop will be analyzed for planning purposes of our final CASEL Supercommittee workshop to be held on February 20.
- District Administrators, in concert with the District SEL team, will finalize plans for the January 20, 2020 Teacher Institute Day focused on SEL themes of social awareness and relationship skills.
- New Trier Township school superintendents are considering a Township-wide partnership with CASEL
- The District will continue to present its series of WPI workshops on SEL on January 30 and April 7.
- Adoption of SEL Framework and 2020-2021 Implementation scheduled for May 2020.