





SEL Programming Update

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Agenda

- Approach to SEL
- Key Findings from 2020-2021 Universal Screening data
- SEL Priorities for 2021-2022 school year
- Updates on Adjustment Counselors/Social Workers

SEL Programming Guiding Principles

1. SEL skills are important for **all** students
2. SEL skills **can** and **should** be taught
3. Teaching SEL skills will **improve** academic and non-academic outcomes.
4. The skills should be taught **in school**.
5. Anti-racist, culturally-affirming, and strength-based approaches to SEL can be a **lever for educational equity**.

SEL Core Competencies



Supporting SEL Development

- 1) Infusing SEL into teaching practices/routines
- 2) Infusing SEL into academic curricula
- 3) Free standing lessons
- 4) Small group and individualized interventions

Examples

- Routines/practices
 - Greeting every student at the beginning of class, regularly engaging in community-building activities, using cooperative learning structures, ending each class/day with a optimistic closing activity
- Embedding SEL into academic curricula/activities
 - Reflecting on what a character felt in a story, offering students choice about how to demonstrate their knowledge, asking students to describe the strategies they used to complete a task
- Leading a lesson that is designed to explicitly teach stress management or responsible decision making.



Key Findings from 2020-2021 Universal Screening Data



Universal Screening in PSB

- We utilize surveys from Panorama Education
 - Self-report measure designed for grades 3 to 12
 - Measures school connectedness, self-efficacy, positive emotions, negative emotions, and SEL skills
 - Does not ask questions regarding risk-taking behavior, safety, or mental health diagnoses.
 - Completed in the fall, winter, and spring
 - Average completion time = 8 minutes
- Completion rate was 75% in the spring (end of April).

Key Finding 1: Fewer students identified a safe adult at school than in previous years.

- Students in STS, METCO, and Special Education were more likely to have a safe adult at school as compared to their peers.

More personalized interactions = stronger student-adult relationships.

Strong student-adult relationships are a consequence of investing time with students (and demonstrating caring during these interactions)

Key Finding 2a: Students reported lower levels of school connectedness as compared to previous years.

Key Finding 2b: Significant differences in school connectedness were found between student groups.

- As the school year progressed, students endorsed increasing levels of school connectedness.
 - Overall, however, students reported lower levels of school connectedness as compared to last year.
- Students in STS, students in METCO, and English Learners endorsed lower levels of school connectedness than their peers.
- Significant differences in school connectedness were found based on race/ethnicity.

Safe Adult and Connectedness

- These data suggest that students in STS and METCO were more likely to be able to identify a safe adult, but felt less connected overall to school.
- These data may indicate that some students have protective relationships with at least one staff member, but don't feel a larger sense of belonging or connectedness to school.

Key Finding 3: More students reported regularly feeling negative emotions than in previous years.

- Positive feelings were relatively stable (slight decreases) throughout the year.
- The frequency of negative emotions increased in the winter and remained at similar levels through the spring.
 - In the spring, 45% of students in grades 3 to 5 and 60% of students in grades 6 to 12 reported to regularly feeling worried.
 - In the spring, about 40% of students in grades 3 to 5 and 50% of students in grades 6 to 12 reported to regularly feeling lonely, angry, or sad.

Key Finding 4: Significant differences in self-efficacy emerge by 3rd grade.

- By 3rd grade, significant discrepancies in self-efficacy are found based on race/ethnicity, SES, being an English Learner, and participation in STS, METCO, and Special Education.

Self-efficacy is heavily influenced by environmental experiences (e.g., implicit or explicit communications from others regarding a student's ability to have academic success).

Moving Forward in 2021-2022

Given what we have learned, our 3 district-wide SEL priorities this year are to:

1. Build and maintain strong adult-student relationships
2. Create safe, positive, and affirming classroom communities
3. Establish classroom and school routines

By investing time on these priorities, we will help ensure that all of our students are emotionally and psychologically prepared to engage in learning.

Supporting this Work

- SEL as been identified as a priority by principals and senior administration.
 - Allocating time during planning days for SEL PD and planning.
 - Increased time at the beginning of the year to build relationships, create positive communities, and establish routines.
 - Increased opportunities for community building (e.g., Advisory).

- OTL highlighting opportunities in the curriculum to build relationships and community.

Supporting this Work

- Partnering with OTL to further understand the relationship between social-emotional functioning and academic performance
- Partnering with METCO and STS to support skill building
- Ongoing Universal Screening (fall, winter, spring)

Supporting this Work

- Ongoing PD to help embed SEL into teaching routines and curriculum
 - Weekly SEL Newsletter
 - [SEL Website](#)
 - [SEL Toolkit](#)

PUBLIC SCHOOLS of
BROOKLINE

SEPTEMBER 8TH, 2021

THE PSB SEL NEWSLETTER

PRACTICES TO SUPPORT THE ACADEMIC, SOCIAL, AND EMOTIONAL DEVELOPMENT OF ALL STUDENTS.

ESTABLISHING CONNECTIONS

The last 18 months have impacted how students feel about their connections to adults and school. Given how important relationships are for learning, establishing strong relationships with a students is a priority as we open the school year.

Positive relationships are caused by adults and students frequently spending time together AND by demonstrating interest and care during these interactions. On page 2, we offer some stratreiges to help facillate this important work.

Strong teacher-student relationships are strongly predictive of increased engagement, attendance, and academic development.

When students have safe adults at school, they are more likely to feel safe, supported, and cared for. In turn, these psychological experiences are likely to increase attention, focus, memory, and persistence

LOVE WHAT YOU TEACH,
BUT LOVE **WHO** YOU TEACH
MORE.
Dr. BRAD JOHNSON

Access the SEL Toolkit here

Relationship Building Activiites

Click on each activity to get more information about how this can look in your classroom.

Getting to know you:

- Engage in a short activity where students provide information about their strengths, identities, needs, interests, hobbies, preferred ways to learn, hopes, and worries.

Getting to know me:

- If you feel comfortable doing so, share information with students about your interests, experiences, and feelings in one way to help students know you better.

The 5-minute chat:

- At the beginning of the year, structure a class so that you can meet with each student individually to learn more about their personal experiences.

Students who have experienced difficulties in school may take longer to form positive relationships with adults. But, rememer, all students can develop strong positive relationships with adults.

School Counselors and Adjustment Counselors

By adding mental health staff to each building, we will collectively increase our capacity to promote the SEL and wellness of **all** students.

- Tier 1 programming that proactively addresses students' needs and promotes SEL development.
- Tier 2 and Tier 3 programming that helps ensure that all students who need school-based counseling to access academic curriculum receive it.

School Counselors and Adjustment Counselors

- School Counselors will help support Tier 1 programming (e.g., pushing in to lead SEL lessons) and will continue to engage in Tier 2 work (e.g., check-ins, short-term group or individual counseling)
- Adjustment counselors will primarily (but not exclusively) provide Tier 2 and Tier 3 services to students to help ensure that students with more intensive needs can continue to access the curriculum.

Adjustment Counselor Hiring Update

- Exceptionally strong candidate pool
- Offers have been extended (and accepted) for seven K to 8 positions
- Matching skills of adjustment counselor to the needs of the school
 - Partnering with school principals and STS