Social Emotional Learning in Blue Valley Schools

Kristin Asquith
Why do students struggle?
Share your thoughts using your phone internet at www.menti.com with this code: 14 28 66
Why do students struggle?

We asked staff members the same question, and these were their responses.
Why do students struggle?

disengagement or lack of interest in the subject

fear of failure

skill/curriculum gaps

lack of connectedness to school/staff/activities/peers

lack of skills in organization and study habits

dealing with mental health issues—

anxiety, depression

lacking prerequisite skills—reading below text level, writing skills lower than needed for complex writing tasks

drug or alcohol dependence issues

overworked

students have bigger worries outside of school that keep them from being able to focus

attendance concerns

lack of family support

lack of self advocacy skills

lack of support or structure
Why Students Struggle

- Staff responses **did not** include statements or perceptions about students’
  - Ability
  - Intelligence
  - Special education needs/disabilities or giftedness
  - Desire to learn
  - Work ethic

- Staff members are committed to supporting students through struggles in order to help them learn
How are these things connected?

- The majority of the reasons why students struggle have connections to social emotional elements
  - Nine of the fifteen reasons for struggle most commonly listed—well over half

- Nearly all of the most frequently cited reasons why students struggle are connected to social emotional elements
  - Dealing with mental health issues
  - Fear of failure
  - Drug or alcohol dependence
  - Dealing with bigger worries
  - Lack of support

- Addressing social emotional elements will support students’ academic success
Social Emotional Learning (SEL) in Blue Valley

- Social Emotional Learning is not new in Blue Valley
  - Personal Growth has been a focus of one of our goals (used to be “Goal 2”)

- Board of Education adopted plans that features SEL and wellbeing with action steps (Spring/Summer 2017)
  - Define Social and emotional learning
  - Embed SEL elements as appropriate into curriculum (start K-5)
  - Enhance suicide prevention and intervention
  - Integrate social workers into the interventions available to support students
  - Investigate the measurement of SEL

- SEL Taskforce established to define Social Emotional Learning for Blue Valley (Fall 2017)
SEL Taskforce
(Teachers, Counselors, Administrators)

Kristin Asquith*  Student Services Admin, DO
Charlotte Anctil  Math, OMS
Amber Basom  Counselor, LKE
Debbie Bond  Principal, MTE
Reilly Dodd  Counselor, OHE
Jennifer Duggan  5th Grade, SPE
Lauren Eubanks  2nd Grade, PSE
Lauren Garcia  Social Science, BVW
Hannah Geenens  Spanish, HRT
Nate Girard*  Assistant Principal, ABM
Jennifer Luzenske*  Director C & I, DO
Kirsta Meacham  Counselor, BVH
Candy Moore  Counselor, BVM
Tamara Newman  Gifted, OTM
Shelly Nielsen  Principal, OTM
Kelly Ott  Executive Director, DO
Eric Owen  Computer Science, PRM
Jason Peres*  Assistant Principal, BVSW
Michelle Phifer  ESOL, OHE
Mark Schmidt*  Assistant Superintendent, DO
Bill Smithyman  English Language Arts, BVN
Sheryl Stein  Math, BVN
John Stone  Counselor, BVW
Laura Volk  Math, BVH
Sandra Wallace*  Principal, SRE
Adam Wessel*  Assistant Principal, BVN
Kayci Yelliott  Counselor, LES

*SEL Steering Team Members
Emotional Intelligence in U.S. Army Leadership Doctrine

“The U.S. Army has long recognized that its success depends upon its people . . . . The Army spends an exceptional amount of time emphasizing the importance of leader-to-follower relationships, teamwork, esprit des corps, and organizational climate. Each of these issues requires the holistic inclusion of emotional-intelligence components in leader-training, doctrine, and leadership literature.”

Lieutenant Colonel Gerald F. Sewell, U.S. Army (Retired)
Assistant Professor of Military Leadership
Command and General Staff College
Fort Leavenworth, KS
MILITARY REVIEW, November-December 2009
Do Soft Skills Make Students Soft?

Army Field Manual for Leadership Development includes these headings
- Soldier and leader **self-awareness**
- Emotional factors of leadership (self control, stability, and balance)
- Interpersonal tact, adaptability, and judgement

SEL doesn’t make us weaker
SEL makes students and staff STRONGER in the face of challenges
SEL is a critical part of leadership skill development
Non-Academic Skills Are Key To Success But What Should We Call Them?

We wanted a way to talk about social emotional skills and learning in concrete, meaningful ways with all stakeholders.
Blue Valley Needed an SEL Framework

- Provide a clear mechanism for communicating about SEL
- Define SEL elements to be learned
- Identify skills to embed into curriculum as appropriate
- Measure students growth in SEL areas
- Taskforce charged with identifying a framework
Choosing a Framework

- Comprehensive—Focused on more than a single skill or attribute
- Research-Based
- One that offers a library of supporting materials (videos, articles, etc.) that will be helpful to the process of curriculum development and instruction
Frameworks Considered

- Habits of the Mind—Costa & Kallick
- College & Career Competency Framework—KSDE
- Core SEL Competencies—CASEL
- Six Pillars of Character—Character Counts!
Taskforce Feedback Used to Narrow to Two Possible Frameworks

CASEL—Core SEL Competencies

KSDE—College and Career Competencies
Comments from SEL Taskforce members:
- Our group likes that it has five specific, well-developed areas.
- We appreciate that this is a K-12 framework.
- We like the family and community partnership.
- We love that this framework teaches preventative strategies.
- This is research based with numerous resources.
- CASEL seems very straightforward.
- The chunking of information seems more accessible to users (teachers, students, parents, etc.).
- Concepts could be grouped for professional learning.
- The A-Z index of resources is helpful.
- CASEL is more widely used and connected to larger organizations.
Collaborative for Academic, Social, and Emotional Learning

- Based on Five SEL Core Competencies
- CASEL is a framework, not a product

**Self Awareness**
- Identify emotions
- Accurate self-perception
- Recognition of strengths/limitations
- Recognition of impact on others
- Self-confidence
- Growth mindset

**Social Awareness**
- Perspective-Taking
- Empathy
- Appreciation of diversity
- Respect for others

**Self-Management**
- Impulse control
- Stress management
- Self-discipline
- Self-motivation
- Goal setting
- Organizational skills

**Responsible Decision-Making**
- Identify problems & solutions
- Analysis of situations
- Reflection
- Ethical responsibility

**Relationship Skills**
- Communication
- Social engagement
- Relationship building
- Ability to handle conflict
- Teamwork
An Overview of CASEL
SEL work is not new in education or in Blue Valley

- With the people around you, discuss the following items
  - How will learning about these social emotional elements help all students?
  - How will learning about these SEL elements help students who are gifted, specifically?
  - What should school staff consider as these elements are embedded into curricula?
  - Other thoughts or impressions?

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What is Next in Blue Valley?
CASEL Recommended Approaches to SEL

Approaches to Promoting SEL

- Use of Teaching Practices
- Infusion of SEL into Academic Curriculum
- Organizational Strategies
- Free-Standing SEL Lessons

Program Outcomes

- Increased Knowledge and Skills
- Supportive Learning Environments
- Improved Attitudes about Self, Others, and School

Student Outcomes

- Improved Positive Social Behavior
- Reduced Problem Behaviors
- Reduced Emotional Distress
- Improved Academic Performance
What is Next?
Approaches to Promoting SEL

- Infusing SEL in teaching practices to create a learning environment supportive of SEL.

  • Blue Valley’s Plan
    - Investigate best and next practice social and emotional instructional strategies (future work)

  • Current Action
    - Middle School content teachers focus on Mindfulness and Mindset (self-management and self-awareness)
    - Classroom Meetings (elementary schools)
What is Next?
Approaches to Promoting SEL

- Infusing SEL instruction into an academic curriculum
  - Blue Valley Plan
    - Integrate CASEL SEL practices into K-12 curriculum (active)
  - Current Action
    - Develop integrated K-5 curriculum (ELA, Social Studies, Science, Technology, and SEL)
    - Embed into new courses (K-12) as they are cyclically updated
What is Next? Approaches to Promoting SEL

- Create policies and organizational structures that support students’ social and emotional development (school culture)

- Blue Valley Plan and Action
  - Revise counselor curricula and intervention plan, where appropriate, to implement best practice suicide prevention and intervention strategies
    - Suicide Prevention Taskforce updating protocols currently
  - Seamlessly integrate social work services into existing SEL supports provided by school counselors and school psychologists
    - Social workers embedded in all schools
  - Identify the appropriate social and emotional learning measurement tools
    - Piloting Panorama with seven schools
  - Investigate school-wide positive behavioral support systems and/or programs that address student/staff wellbeing, self-awareness, self-management, social awareness, relationship skills, and decision-making
    - PBIS, Second Step, Conscious Discipline, etc. used in various schools
Suicide Prevention Taskforce

- Protective Factors Curriculum related to SEL (K-5, 6-8, 9-12)
  - Emphasizes resilience
- Suicide Prevention Scope and Sequence (5th through 12th grades)
  - Being updated currently
  - Including updated resources when possible
- Suicide Intervention Protocol
  - Updating materials currently
  - New research-based intervention tool recommended by taskforce
  - Required at-school follow up after intervention
- After a Suicide Manual for Staff—Self-care and warning signs
  - In development now
- All School Staff Required Professional Learning
  - Jason Flatt Act
  - Update school presentations to account for recommended changes
Suicide Prevention Taskforce Members

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Members</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Kristin Asquith*</td>
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*Steering Committee Members
Measuring Social Emotional Learning

- Seven Blue Valley Schools piloting the use of SEL measurement tool, Panorama
  - Harmony Elementary School
  - Lakewood Elementary School
  - Liberty View Elementary School
  - Sunrise Point Elementary School
  - Leawood Middle School
  - Oxford Middle School
  - Pleasant Ridge Middle School

- Implementing student surveys for their impressions of their SEL skills
  - SEL competencies
  - School environments and supports

- Administering surveys in October/November & March/April

- Resources to embed SEL into classroom instruction

- Data for review of progress
Measuring Social Emotional Learning

Data specific to school, classroom, and student with recommended activities for growth.

**Making Mistakes**

Help students understand that persevering through mistakes helps them learn and grow.

**GOAL:**
Help students learn that everyone makes mistakes and that people can learn from their mistakes.

**ACTION:**
Adapted from the “Making Mistakes” supplementary lesson in the Open Circle Curriculum. Learn more...

Ask if anyone has ever made a mistake in class. Ask students how they feel with they make a mistake. Ask students to help you create a list of mistakes that are common in school (e.g., forgetting your homework, spilling something in the cafeteria, saying something you regret).

Share a book about making mistakes, such as Beautiful Oops!, by Barney Saltzberg, or The Girl Who Never Made Mistakes, by Mark Pett, or The Most Magnificent Thing, by Ashley Spires, and talk about the possible positive outcomes of making mistakes (e.g., you get an opportunity to learn, you discover something new, you learn to tackle something difficult).

Have students come up with some positive or helpful things they could say to themselves when they make a mistake. Create a list of these ideas and display them somewhere in the classroom as a reminder that mistakes are OK and can be opportunities to learn.

**WHY THIS WORKS**
Being able to accept and learn from mistakes is essential to students' success in persevering to achieve long-term goals.
Incorporates resources from various sources including Second Step and Open Circle

Panorama Playbook for access to resources to support SEL integration and professional learning

Measuring Social Emotional Learning
SEL & Panorama

Panorama correlates with the elements included in CASEL Standards.
Investigating School-Wide Positive Behavioral Supports

- Second Step (EC)
- Conscious Discipline (SRE, LVE, HRT, WSE)
- PBIS (OMS)
- Restorative Practices (BVA)
What is Next?
Approaches to Promoting SEL

◦ Directly teaching SEL skills in free-standing lessons

◦ Blue Valley Plan and Action
  • Counselor Curriculum
  • Investigating resiliency curricula for suicide prevention
    • Happiness Project – Elementary and Middle
Community Engagement

- District conversations with parents
  - Suicide prevention ideas
  - SEL impressions and feedback

- Parent engagement in SEL conversations via established groups
  - BVPAGE
  - Student Services Board Advisory Committee
  - C&I Board Advisory Committee
  - Special Education Advisory Council

- Principal and staff member conversations with families regarding SEL
  - PTOs
  - Student Intervention Teams (problem solving process)
  - IEP meetings
  - Individual student meetings
Take-Aways

Blue Valley will use the framework and definition of CASEL for our SEL work
- Every Blue Valley School is currently implementing SEL strategies and lessons that fit into the CASEL framework
- We are investigating strategies and tools to support, practice, and measure SEL. We will need your input along the way
- Stakeholder feedback and engagement currently occurring and ongoing
Questions?