



## CASE STUDY

# Wheaton Warrenville Community Unit School District 200 (CUSD 200)

Social and emotional learning began in the Wheaton Warrenville Community Unit School District 200 (CUSD 200) in 2010 with the convening of an SEL committee that became known as the SEL Design Team. Then, in 2011, Joanne Panopoulos joined the district as assistant superintendent of student services. During the 2011-12 school year Dr. Panopoulos and the SEL Design Team decided to engage in further study and plan implementation of social and emotional learning tailored to the unique educational needs and to the structure of CUSD 200.

The 17th largest school district in Illinois<sup>1</sup>, with 13,500 students, CUSD 200 is the largest of the 16 districts that partner with the DuPage County Regional Office of Education (ROE) and CASEL to implement SEL districtwide. CASEL Senior Consultant Ruth Cross, a retired principal and district administrator, provides professional development and coaching to the districts that are part of this SEL professional learning community (PLC).

### SEL Implementation Strategy

Within a few months of starting their work, members of the SEL Design Team attended a one-day introduction to SEL workshop ("SEL 101") at the DuPage County ROE facilitated by Ruth Cross. They also completed a districtwide SEL resources and needs assessment. In spring 2013 the SEL Design Team completed a five-year SEL plan aligned with the district's vision and goals. The plan applies adult learning theory to strengthen adult SEL competence in order to change students' learning experience.



During summer 2013 a small subcommittee of the SEL Design Team developed seven SEL learning modules for principals to use with all teachers at the district's 20 school sites. Principals serve as CUSD 200's

### DISTRICT INFORMATION

130 West Park Avenue  
Wheaton, IL 60189  
(630) 682-2000  
[www.cusd200.org](http://www.cusd200.org)

Dr. Jeff Schuler,  
*Superintendent of Schools*

Enrollment: 13,423

#### Race/Ethnicity

Asian: 5.6%  
Black: 6.7%  
Latino: 15.5%  
White: 68%  
Other: 3.5%

#### Other Subgroups

Free/Reduced Lunch: 27.3%  
Limited English Proficiency: 8.5%  
Disabilities: 15.5%

#### Schools: 20

Early Childhood: 1  
Elementary: 13  
Middle: 4  
High: 2

#### Staff:

Teachers: 1,110  
Administrators: 277  
Auxiliary: 553

#### SEL Leadership

Dr. Joanne Panopoulos,  
*Assistant Superintendent for  
Student Services*

#### Related Links

[CUSD 200 SEL Web Page](#)

instructional leaders and have responsibility for their teachers' professional learning. SEL was also a focus of the summer administrators' meeting, where principals learned about the district's SEL plan, the five SEL competencies, and their own SEL skills. During the 2013-14 school year, SEL learning modules were presented at every monthly principal meeting. The first seven SEL learning modules focused on:

- SEL competencies and benefits to academic achievement
- SEL as a part of daily instruction
- SEL competencies inherent in the district's teacher evaluation rubric
- The impact of respect on student learning
- Reflecting on personal awareness of SEL
- Eight practices to reduce stress and burnout, and increase staff social and emotional well-being
- Self-awareness and self-management strategies for staff

*In spring 2013 the SEL Design Team completed a five-year SEL plan aligned with the district's vision and goals.*

Between meetings the principals facilitated the SEL learning modules with their teaching staff. Midway into the 2013-14 school year the SEL Design Team surveyed teachers and principals to collect field data in order to guide implementation. The data indicated that the district's educators needed greater understanding of the SEL competencies, with approximately 60 percent of the teachers saying they wanted a deeper understanding of SEL. The principals said that the learning modules were helpful but they wanted more flexibility in how and when they presented the information to their staffs. The SEL Design Team used these data to guide the development of four additional SEL learning modules, which were introduced in fall 2014. The new modules focused on building relationships with students and creating relationship-centered classrooms.

The SEL Design Team presented these learning modules to the principals during the summer 2014 administrator meeting, and the principals delivered the information and strategies based on what they believed was best for their respective schools. In some schools the site leadership

team took responsibility for facilitating SEL professional learning, while at other schools the principals used existing PLCs to engage teachers with the new SEL modules. Several principals continued to present the SEL modules to their staffs in the same way they did the year before. Again, the district's SEL Design Team gathered feedback from school staffs and used the data to guide ongoing SEL implementation.

During the 2014-15 school year eight members of the district's SEL Design Team attended a full-day workshop with Mark Brackett, director of the [Yale Center for Emotional Intelligence](#). The workshop helped them to develop strategies for the district's future professional learning activities.



Since the beginning, communicating the what, why, and how of SEL has been essential in building expertise and support for SEL in CUSD 200. Posters with the Illinois SEL standards are in all classrooms. The district also distributed SEL bookmarks at schools and around the community. Along with the posters and bookmarks, the district's Social Work Department chair and the director of communications collaborated to create a [video](#) that highlights the district's 2013-14 SEL implementation.

Communications about SEL in CUSD 200 go much deeper than printed materials and a video, however. The school board president serves on the SEL Design Team. Along with an annual SEL report from Dr. Panopoulos, this board member emphasizes the importance of SEL in meetings and keeps SEL at the forefront of board discussions. Through district cabinet meetings and individual meetings with Superintendent Jeff Schuler, Dr. Panopoulos keeps the district's leaders informed. The district also shares newsletters and electronic communications about SEL activities and progress with parents and the community. CUSD 200 has incorporated

SEL communications with principals and teachers into district administrator meetings, site staff meetings, PLCs, and professional development.

Now, midway through their third year of implementation, CUSD 200 is delving deeper into integrating SEL into academic instruction by including SEL in district learning goals, model lessons, and the district’s teaching and learning framework. The district is also examining how SEL can be integrated into their teacher performance framework. CUSD 200 is making significant progress toward building adult SEL capacity and staff and community support for integrating and sustaining SEL in all schools and classrooms.

### SEL Budget Strategy

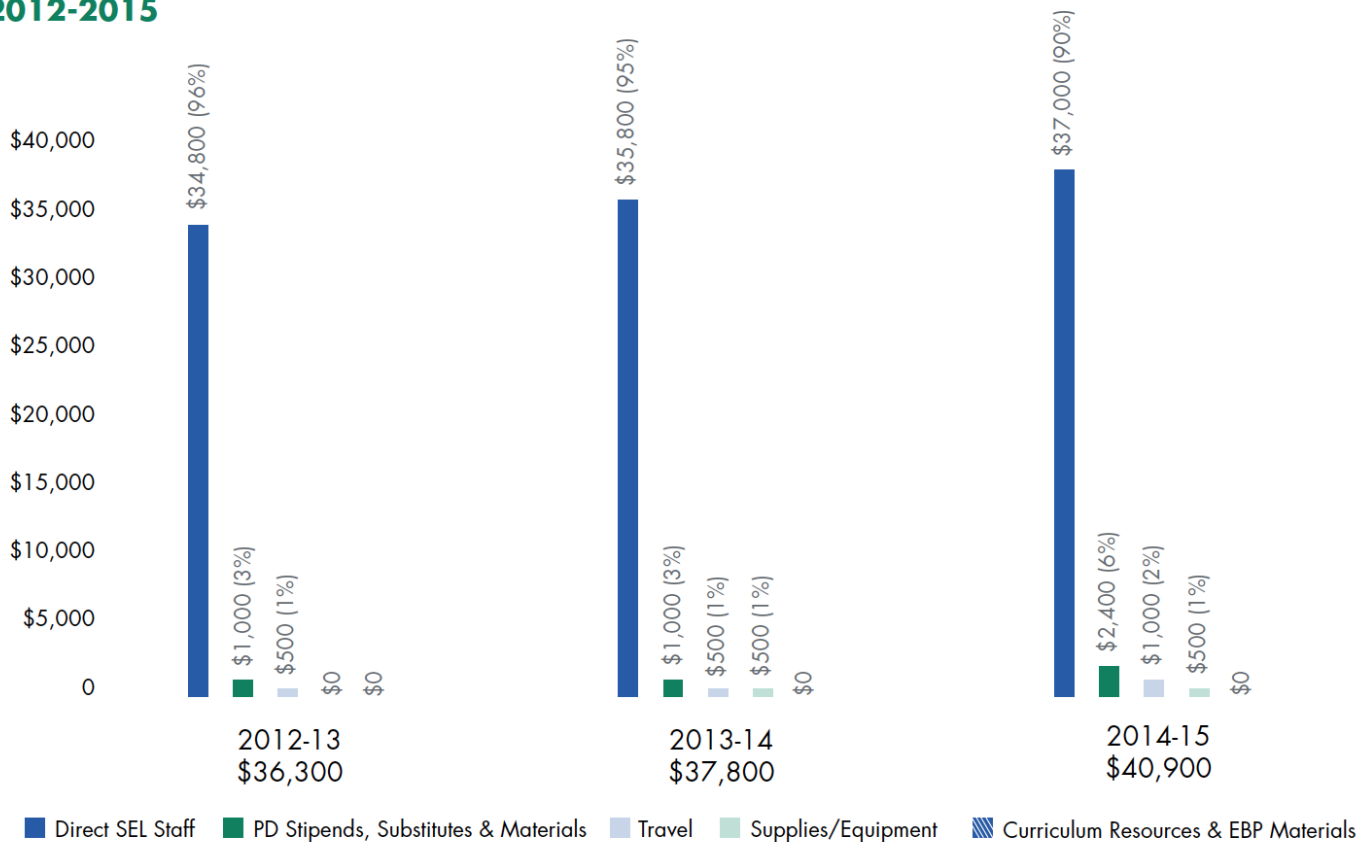
CUSD 200 used existing resources to develop, execute, and fund the first three years of their SEL initiative. During the early phases of planning, capacity building, and implementation, almost all (94%) of the district’s SEL budget are allocated to a small portion of the assistant

superintendent for student services, an existing position (see Table 1 below). Other expenses, which were nominal, paid for substitutes, travel, and supplies/printing.

Leading the district’s SEL initiative is just one part of Assistant Superintendent for Student Services Joanne Panopoulos’ job. Dr. Panopoulos was hired partly for her ability to establish SEL in CUSD 200 and considers SEL to be an integral part of her position. “We support and model that SEL is integrated into what we do,” she said. “It is not an add-on.”

Central to her strategy is making use of existing district policies, procedures, and leadership as a means of building the theoretical framework for SEL, integrating SEL into teaching and learning, strengthening district and community support for SEL, and sustaining SEL long-term. After educating herself about SEL, Dr. Panopoulos convened the SEL Design Team to develop a five-year implementation plan. The team’s focus was on building districtwide capacity, developing a vision, and creating a cost-effective implementation plan. Dr. Panopoulos

### CUSD 200 SEL Expenditures 2012-2015



The primary expenditure in CSUD 200s SEL budget for the first three years was direct SEL staff.

asks, "How important is SEL in our district? What are our priorities? What are our ultimate goals? How deep are we going? These questions guide our planning."

To date, all expenses for professional development and substitutes have supported meetings and professional development for the SEL Design Team. The team has enhanced their expertise through the DuPage County Regional Office of Education, which offers SEL workshops, a countywide SEL professional learning community (PLC), and coaching. Although some minimal costs are involved when the district participates in ROE activities, occasional small grants through the ROE have offset some of the expenses for substitutes and workshop registration.

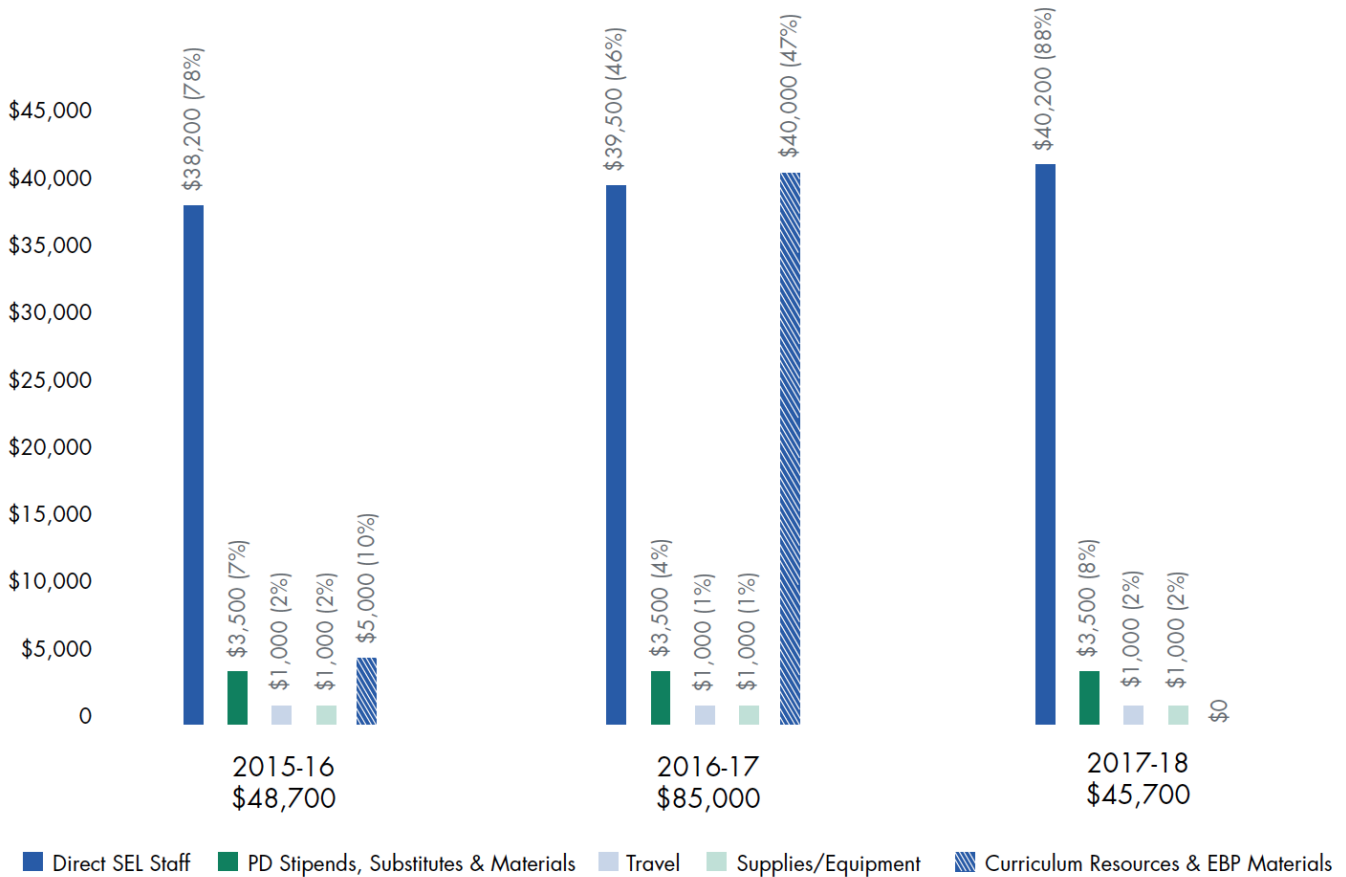
District leaders use existing personnel, meeting, and PLC structures and resources to provide professional development to principals, teachers, and support staff at all 20 schools. This is accomplished without utilizing

the SEL budget. Dr. Panopoulos and ROE/CASEL SEL Consultant Ruth Cross offered two two-hour SEL workshops during the 2013-14 school year for all non-teaching staff.



Although printing expenses for the SEL posters and bookmarks came from the district's SEL budget, the SEL video, use of the district's phone system, and the inclusion of SEL-related articles in district and school newsletters,

### CUSD 200 Projected SEL Expenditures 2016-2018



Except for the 2016-17 school year, when CUSD 200 makes a significant investment in SEL curriculum resources/evidence-based program materials, SEL expenditures for the next three years will remain consistent with direct SEL staff remaining the largest expense.

for example, are all part of the district's infrastructure or are included in other department budgets.

## Sustaining SEL

From the beginning of the district's SEL initiative, CUSD 200's leadership has focused on SEL sustainability. The SEL Design Team has emphasized integrating SEL, creating a framework for SEL, and building consensus among all stakeholders. Leadership, ownership, responsibility, and engagement are shared and widely dispersed throughout the district. Rather than funding SEL specialists or coaches, CUSD 200 has developed the expertise and capacity of existing staff, particularly principals, and continues to support them as they teach others and promote SEL internally.

In CUSD 200 social and emotional learning is an approach, not a program. By incorporating SEL into mathematics, reading, and other academic learning, CUSD 200 is weaving SEL into the fabric of the district. "It isn't about 'doing SEL'. It is about integrating SEL," said Dr. Panopoulos.

By seeking feedback from principals and teachers annually and using this information to refine SEL implementation, the district is developing a cycle of continuous improvement. This will improve the quality of SEL integration and increase constituent support for deepening and broadening SEL throughout the district. For example, providing more flexibility in how and when principals deliver SEL learning modules at their school sites based on the principals' feedback has strengthened their support.

*In CUSD 200 social and emotional learning is an approach, not a program.*

Local district funding and in-kind professional learning and coaching from the ROE are the only sources of financial support for SEL in CUSD 200. Over the next three years CUSD 200 has budgeted \$45,000 for SEL curriculum resources, including evidence-based SEL programs, some of which are already used in some district schools (see Table 2). Dr. Panopoulos expects this level of funding to continue in the coming years. In addition, the district has a history of raising money locally based on need. Dr. Panopoulos is opportunistic about obtaining external grants and federal and state funding for SEL, and will seek

these funds as long as "mandates and regulations don't restrict us from meeting our vision and mission."

CUSD 200 leadership's strategy for sustaining districtwide SEL focuses on:

- Using existing structures, strategies, and resources to build adult SEL expertise, provide professional development, and guide, monitor, assess, and refine SEL integration.
- Keeping costs low and efficiency high through using existing personnel, policies, and structures. The low cost reduces the risk of budget cuts or political changes that might affect the sustainability of SEL.
- Entrusting SEL leadership with an existing district-level cabinet member. This enables frequent communication with the superintendent, the school board, and other district leaders while providing a broad context for weaving SEL into the district culture and operations.



- Building and supporting internal SEL leadership, including empowering a broad-based SEL Design Team, and developing the school principals' skills and positioning them as site SEL leaders.
- Partnering with an outside agency that provides leadership, professional development, coaching, and a professional learning community for superintendents and district SEL leaders.

Dr. Panopoulos is excited about the district's progress in implementing SEL districtwide. "It works for us," she said. "We focus on building internal capacity. Would I take more money? Oh, I would in a heartbeat... But our SEL implementation aligns with where we are and who we are in the district."



# District Resource Center

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## Resources

1. Illinois State Board of Education 2013-14 Fall Enrollment Counts,  
[http://www.isbe.net/research/htmls/fall\\_housing.htm](http://www.isbe.net/research/htmls/fall_housing.htm)

*This case study was conducted by the Collaboration for Academic, Social, and Emotional Learning (CASEL) with funding from the Robert Wood Johnson Foundation. The purposes of the funded project, Identifying Effective Financial Strategies to Sustain Social and Emotional Learning, were to document different districts' approaches to sustaining social and emotional learning (SEL) and to create financial models (scenarios) and planning tools that districts can use to determine how to sustain SEL long-term.*

**Wheaton Warrenville Community Unit School District 200**  
**Social and Emotional Learning Budget and Financial Sustainability Plan**

Wheaton Warrenville Community Unit School District 200	Past and Current Years			Future Years (Estimated)		
	SY2012-13	SY2013-14	SY2014-15	SY2015-16	SY2016-17	SY2017-18
Number of Schools Served	20	20	20	20	20	20
Number of Teachers Served	1000	1000	1000	1000	1000	1000
Number of Students Served	13,500	13,500	13,500	13,500	13,500	13,500
<b>Estimated Operating Costs:</b>						
	SY2012-13	SY2013-14	SY2014-15	SY2015-16	SY2016-17	SY2017-18
SEL Director/Coordinator (salary and benefits)	\$34,800	\$35,800	\$37,000	\$38,200	\$39,500	\$40,200
Specialist (salary and benefits)	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0
Other Positions (salary and benefits)	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0
Administrative Assistant	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0
Professional development stipends, substitutes, and materials	\$1,000	\$1,000	\$2,400	\$3,500	\$3,500	\$3,500
Campus facilitator stipends	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0
Consultants(PD, fund development, communications, etc.)	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0
Program evaluation	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0
Travel	\$500	\$500	\$1,000	\$1,000	\$1,000	\$1,000
Supplies/equipment	\$0	\$500	\$500	\$1,000	\$1,000	\$1,000
Curriculum resources & Evidence Based Program Materials	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$5,000	\$40,000	\$0
<b>Annual Operating Costs</b>	<b>\$36,300</b>	<b>\$37,800</b>	<b>\$40,900</b>	<b>\$48,700</b>	<b>\$85,000</b>	<b>\$45,700</b>
<b>Budget Sources</b>						
	SY2012-13	SY2013-14	SY2014-15	SY2015-16	SY2016-17	SY2017-18
Local District Funds	\$36,300	\$37,800	\$40,900	\$38,200	\$39,500	\$40,200
Federal Funds:						
State Funds:						
Foundation Grants			\$1,000			
<b>Total Budget Sources</b>	<b>\$36,300</b>	<b>\$37,800</b>	<b>\$41,900</b>	<b>\$38,200</b>	<b>\$39,500</b>	<b>\$40,200</b>
<b>Estimated Development Need</b>			<b>(\$1,000)</b>	<b>\$10,500</b>	<b>\$45,500</b>	<b>\$5,500</b>



# District Resource Center

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## COST CALCULATOR ASSUMPTIONS

# Wheaton Warrenville Community Unit School District 200 Model

### Wheaton Warrenville Implementation Summary

Wheaton Warrenville Community Unit School District 200 has used a low cost strategy to implement SEL districtwide. The initiative is led by the Assistant Superintendent for Student Services, with support from an SEL Design Team, and other district leaders. Key to this strategy is providing SEL training and support to principals, who guide a consistent SEL approach at their schools.

- The implementation uses existing structures, strategies, and resources to build adult SEL expertise, provide professional development, and guide, monitor, assess, and refine SEL integration.
- There is an emphasis on keeping costs low and efficiency high through using existing personnel, policies, and structures. The low cost reduces the risk of budget cuts or political changes that might affect the sustainability of SEL.
- Building and supporting internal SEL leadership, includes empowering a broad-based SEL Design Team, and developing the school principals' skills and positioning them as site SEL leaders.
- Wheaton Warrenville is planning to implement an evidence-based SEL program in year five.

### Staffing Assumptions:

- .2 full time equivalent (FTE) of Assistant Superintendent for Student Services

# Wheaton Warrenville Model Cost Calculator Detailed Assumptions

## Fixed Costs

- .2 FTE Assistant Superintendent

## Variable Costs

- Student enrollment is factored into projections for professional development stipends, substitutes and materials
- Student enrollment is factored into projections for travel
- Student enrollment is factored into projections for supplies and equipment
- Student enrollment is factored into projections for curriculum materials.

## Notes

- For years 2 through 6, a 2% annual salary increase/inflation factor is included for all positions (non-compounded)
- No inflation factor is considered for professional development, consultants, travel, supplies/equipment or curriculum materials.
- Enrollment provided by user remains constant throughout 6 years.