Social and Emotional Learning
Benefits All Students and Adults

**OAKLAND UNIFIED
SCHOOL DISTRICT**
Community Schools, Thriving Students

About Social and Emotional Learning

In OUSD, we believe that strengthening our social and emotional skills and competencies enhances our ability to connect across race, class, culture, language, gender identity, sexual orientation, learning needs, and age. Social and emotional learning (SEL) is a process through which children and adults develop the fundamental skills for life effectiveness. These are the skills we all need to handle ourselves, our relationships, and our work effectively and ethically.

"SEL is a skill set they'll take on for the rest of their lives no matter where they go. So we have an obligation to teach it."

-High School Principal

Everyone—students and adults—benefits from school and workdays that are infused with Social and Emotional Learning.

Our Vision for SEL

OUSD aims to seamlessly integrate Social and Emotional Learning into the academic experience as a strategy for reversing old paradigms predicated on hierarchy, violence, race, and subordination. Instead, equality, mutual respect, collaboration, civic participation, high academic achievement, and joy in learning will be the norm.

Since 2011, the SEL Vision has been supported by the District's strategic plans. In 2015, the creation of the Department of Academic Social and Emotional Learning, headed by the deputy superintendent, both broadened and deepened the District's commitment to its vision for SEL. Cross-district teams are now working to create a coherent and sustainable plan for long-term SEL implementation.

SEL in OUSD

- OUSD is the first district in the nation (2013) to adopt a school Board Policy on Social and Emotional Learning.

- OUSD's Social and Emotional Learning Standards are integrated into the district's system of performance frameworks for students, teachers, principals, and schools.

- Evidence-Based SEL Programs Pre-K-12 support the explicit teaching of SEL skills and integration with academics. In OUSD, these programs include **Caring School Community, Expeditionary Learning, and Engaging Schools**.

- OUSD's Department of Academic Social and Emotional Learning is an innovative organizational structure. It supports SEL integration into academics, creating positive climate and culture through SEL and explicitly teaching SEL Pre-K to adults.

- Oakland is a member of the Collaborative for Academic Social and Emotional Learning's (CASEL) Collaborating Districts Initiative (CDI). It is a partnership of ten large urban districts across the country supporting mutual growth toward district-wide systemic implementation of SEL.

SEL Framework

OUSD's SEL Pre-K to Adult Standards are based upon CASEL's integrated framework that promotes intrapersonal, interpersonal, and cognitive competence. The five core SEL competencies, as represented on the CASEL Wheel, can be taught in many ways across a variety of school settings:

▶ Direct instruction lessons to build students' SEL competence.

▶ Teaching practices that promote SEL.

▶ Integration of SEL within academic curriculum.

▶ Organizational strategies that promote SEL as a school-wide initiative, creating a welcoming climate and culture conducive to learning for all.

SEL Core Competencies

Classroom Discussion Indicators

Self-Awareness

Students demonstrate an accurate self-concept that includes their personal, cultural, linguistic assets as well as their prejudices and biases. They understand the relationship between their emotions, social contexts, and identity, and know when they need help.

- Reflect on their progress as a learner
- Express what is easy or hard about the academic discussion and why
- Identify their role and responsibilities during academic discussions and why

Self-Management

Students demonstrate the skills to effectively regulate their emotions and behaviors in various contexts. They develop an action plan, reflect on progress, and achieve personal, academic, and classroom goals.

- Manage and express emotions and thoughts in a constructive way
- Stay engaged in discussion
- Use "I" messages in the social context of academic discussion

Social Awareness

Students demonstrate empathy for other people's emotions, perspectives, cultures, and languages. They embrace diversity and take the perspectives of people different from themselves.

- Respectfully paraphrase others' ideas
- Engage collaboratively with people different from oneself
- Add on to and build off of others' ideas
- Able to take the perspective of people different from oneself

Relationship Skills

Students communicate clearly and effectively with people similar to and different from themselves. They cultivate and maintain healthy relationships with diverse individuals and groups.

- Engage in constructive argument
- Give and receive constructive feedback
- Ask questions based on careful listening
- Express value of collaboration

Responsible Decision-Making

Students problem-solve effectively and make constructive choices based upon the well-being of oneself and others. They behave responsibly across various contexts.

- Actively participate in group decision-making process
- Generate alternative ideas and solutions
- Ask "why" and "what if" questions
- Demonstrate the "good of the group"

"If you are not taking care of the social and emotional learning of students, you are not going to get to the other learning."

Elementary Principal

The most effective social and emotional learning requires a strategic, systemic approach that involves everyone, from district and school leaders to community partners to family members, working together to ensure students receive the support they need. Successful SEL is not a standalone program or add-on. It is central to how schools, communities, and families value and support the social, emotional, and academic development of their children.

- Collaborative for Academic, Social, and Emotional Learning (CASEL)

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