Social and Emotional Learning

Family & Community Handbook

# What is SEL?

Social and Emotional Learning (SEL) is a process for helping children and adults develop the fundamental skills for life effectiveness. SEL teaches the skills we all need to handle ourselves, our relationships, and our work effectively and ethically. SEL is rooted in brain research. More and more, we are seeing that Tier 1 colleges and universities and Fortune 500 companies value social and emotional skills as a part of their recruitment/hiring processes.

In a 15 year study on Seattle students who experienced a high-quality SEL program, these students:

* Had higher rates of graduation and college attendance
* Achieved higher rates of employment and economic status
* Experienced better emotional and mental health
* Accrued fewer criminal records and substance abuse issues
* Returned a cost-benefit of $3.14/student fo reach $1.00 invested.

*Sources: 1. Hawkins, J. D., Kosterman, R., Catalano, R.F., Hill, K.G., Abboj, R.D. (2005). Positive Adult Functioning Through Social Development Intervention in Childhood: Long-Term Effects from the Seajle Social Development Project. Archives of Pediatrics & Adolescent Medicine, 159 (1), pp. 25-31. 2. Aos, S., Lieb, R., Mayfield, J., Miller, M., , Pennucci, A. (2004). Benefits and Costs of Prevention and Early Intervention Programs for Youth. Washington State Institute for Public Policy. Accessed from hjp://www.wsipp.wa.gov/rpniles/04-07-3901.pdf.*

Further studies have shown that with high-integrity implementation of Social and Emotional Learning:

* Students see an 11% gain in standardized testing in math and reading, a 9% gain in pro-social behavior, and a 9% gain in attitudes about self/others/school
* Students see a 9% reduction in problem behaviors and 10% reduction in emotional distress
* Classroom behavior improves
* Stress and depression is reduced
* Students see long-term impacts on behavioral and academic health

*Source: Durlak, J.A., Weissberg, R.P., Dymnicki, A.B., Taylor, R.D., & Schellinger, K. (2011) The impact of enhancing students’ social and emotional learning: A meta-analysis of school-based universal interventions. Child Development: 82 (1), 405-432.*

For more information, see Additional Resources or visit casel.org. To see WCSD's resources and information on SEL, visit <https://www.washoeschools.net/Page/569>.

# Collective Commitments

The Bohach SEL Team will work relentlessly to implement the five Social and Emotional Competencies (self-awareness, self-management, social awareness, relationship skills, and responsible decision-making) schoolwide by supporting teachers and staff in high-quality implementation of Social and Emotional Learning. We commit to educating staff, providing resources and activities, building relationships with the entire Bohach team, and being knowledgeable champions of Social and Emotional Learning and the Sanford Harmony curriculum who are willing to demonstrate and model successful SEL strategies for others.

Bohach Nighthawks will foster the five Social and Emotional Competencies through a student-centered, culturally-responsive, and comprehensive framework of integration, explicit instruction, and culture and climate that unites school staff, students, families, and our community in the work of Social and Emotional Learning. Through our work, we will build a team of teachers and learners that are safe, open, aware, and responsible and are motivated by the intrinsic reward of achievement and community.

Family involvement is a crucial piece of building a culture and climate of Social and Emotional Learning. We will provide meaningful opportunities for families to understand, participate in, and collaborate with SEL activities. We will build and share a common SEL language to develop and facilitate 2-way communication with our families. Feedback from our families about their experiences and changing needs will be collected and used to improve our partnership. We need to work together with families to ensure that SEL is a priority and a practice both at school and at home.

Social and Emotional Learning is a continuous effort. The work of SEL is a practice, not a product. Bohach Nighthawks are committed to improving our Social and Emotional Competences throughout our lives. As educators, it is imperative that we model, provide students practice, and be responsive to current events in our society and community. Through these actions, we will achieve our goal of preparing students for long-term success in life. They will have the tools needed to become responsible, caring citizens in our multicultural and ever-changing society.

# Framework for Instruction

#### Three-Legged Stool of SEL Implementation

Social and Emotional Learning is implemented through the use of a three-pronged approach: Integration, Explicit Instruction, and Culture and Climate.

* Integration: SEL is woven into procedures, practices, and academic learning throughout the day and is not taught as a separate subject.
* Explicit Instruction: Time is allotted in the schedule for teachers to provide lessons on specific Social and Emotional Competencies that will be strengthened through Integration and Culture and Climate.
* Culture and Climate: Bohach Nighthawks will build and maintain an environment in which Social and Emotional Competencies are expected and practiced by all students, staff, and community members to create a school that is safe, open, aware, and responsible.

#### Sanford Harmony Curriculum

To explicitly teach and integrate practice of Social and Emotional Competencies to our students, we will use the Sanford Harmony curriculum. The curriculum includes three practices: Lessons, Meet Ups, and Buddy Ups. Read more at online.sanfordharmony.org.

* Lessons: Each grade level has a dedicated time in their schedule to explicitly teach and practice the five sequential units of Social and Emotional Learning which scaffold and build upon one another year to year.
	+ Diversity & Inclusion: Students recognize and appreciate each other's similarities and differences.
	+ Empathy & Critical Thinking: Students develop the ability to identify with and understand another person's emotions, reduce stereotyped thinking, and learn critical thinking skills.
	+ Communication: Students learn effective ways to communicate with others by exploring healthy and unhealthy communication patterns.
	+ Problem Solving: Students use constructive approaches to solve conflicts through healthy relationship patterns.
	+ Peer Relationships: Students study positive social skills, important friendship traits, consequences of bullying, and how to support peers.
* Meet Up: During Meet Ups, students can discuss a variety of experiences, solve problems, and build a community with their peers while feeling safe and comfortable in an inclusive classroom environment. Students will be able to utilize skills they have learned throughout the units of Sanford Harmony during the Meet Ups to better discuss and facilitate the topics.
* Buddy Up: Buddy Ups are a strategic system that provides students with opportunities to get to know one another through a variety of activities. Children will build relationships with all classmates rather than partnering up with the same person to become more comfortable with each other and build a more collaborative classroom.

#### Three Signature Practices

Teachers use the three signature practices of SEL to integrate Social and Emotional Learning into daily operations and create a culture and climate of safety, openness, awareness, and responsibility. These are:

* Opening Ritual: A 2-10 minute activity which allows for inclusion, establishes safety and predictability, allows students to connect with one another, and creates a sense of belonging. These activities are connected to the learning that will take place that day and include morning greetings with student names, class meetings, and Sanford Harmony Meet Ups.
* Engaging Practices: These practices occur throughout the instructional day and include integration of SEL competencies into academic content and transitions to foster relationships, cultural awareness, empowerment, and collaboration. These practices may include partner and group discussions, Socratic Seminar, jigsaw activities, brain breaks, and Sanford Harmony Buddy Ups.
* Optimistic Closure: A 3-5 minute reflective activity at the end of the school day which provides intentional closure by asking students to name something that helps them transition on a positive note. Closures may include something learned today, something positive about the day, something you are looking forward to, and Sanford Harmony Buddy Ups.

#### The Five Competencies

The work we do with the three-legged stool, curriculum, and signature practices are all to strengthen the five Social and Emotional Competencies: self-awareness, self-management, social awareness, relationship skills, and responsible decision-making. These competencies are woven into the practices discussed above but are also taught explicitly as skills to develop and refine. While the competencies are learned in a spiraled setting, they are sequential with responsible decision-making being the culmination of all other practice. For more information, see Additional Resources.

#### Social and Emotional Learning Meets Restorative Practices

Social and Emotional Learning and Restorative Practices are positive approaches to creating a safe and supportive school climate. Both strategies give students and staff opportunities to develop and use prosocial skills that help build authentic relationships and create consistency in the school community. Assembly Bill 168 mandates the use of proper planning and the employment of Restorative Practices as part of behavioral and social support to prevent a habitual pattern of behavior.

Restorative Practices are instrumental when building and maintaining healthy communities, increasing social capital among students, reducing the impact of negative behavior, decreasing antisocial behavior, repairing harm, and restoring impacted relationships. Restorative Practices promotes inclusiveness, relationship-building and problem-solving, through such restorative methods as circles for teaching and conflict resolution to conferences that bring victims, offenders, and their supporters together to address wrongdoing. Instead of punishment, students are encouraged to reflect on and take responsibility for their actions and come up with plans to repair harm.

SEL and Restorative Practices go hand-in-hand. Talking through conflicts helps teach and strengthen skills such as communication, self-efficacy, and problem-solving. By listening to others, students learn to be more respectful, consider different perspectives, practice impulse control, and reflect on how their actions affect the people around them. Restorative Practices are an effective, sustainable, and equitable alternative to punitive disciplinary methods. It gives youth a better opportunity to overcome conflict and avoid the risks associated with suspension and expulsion.

For more information, see Additional Resources.

# Additional Resources







