

Social Emotional Learning (SEL): Part 2

February 3, 2020



Background

In the 2018-19 school year, the Des Moines Public Schools Board of Directors engaged parents, community members/partners, district staff, and students in work sessions that resulted in three areas of focus for district goal setting. These areas are:

- *Early Literacy* – how well are students learning to read in early elementary school.
- *Algebra* – are students taking and passing Algebra I as freshman in high school.
- *Social Emotional Learning (SEL)* – how well are students learning to connect with others, develop identity, and how welcome and safe do students feel.

Update

On February 2nd, 2021 district staff provided the second update on the district's progress in the Social and Emotional Learning goal area. The full presentation can be reviewed [here](#). The SEL goal area does not have a specific student outcome goal, the way the Early Literacy and Algebra goal areas do. Instead, the SEL goal area is evaluated based on a Board Management Limitation, which requires that the district operate in conditions that support social and emotional needs of all students. This limitation is interpreted to mean that the district must have:

- Full integration of learning supports
- Sufficient staff to support student's social and emotional needs
- A professional development plan for adults that supports the needs of all students
- Curriculum for social and emotional learning
- An assessment tool to measure social and emotional learning
- Policies and processes that support the physical and psychological needs of students and create the best conditions for teaching and learning

Data Overview – In December and January, DMPS collected student perspective data through the Panorama SEL survey, both to support the district's understanding of student's well-being and to meet the management limit requirement of having an assessment tool to measure SEL. This data was collected in the categories of Self-Efficacy (how positively do students feel about their ability to succeed), Student-Teacher connection (how positively do students feel about their relationships with teachers), and school climate (how positively do students feel about their overall interactions at school). Below is a summary of the outcomes on the assessment:

- Both Elementary and Secondary student outcomes **fell** in comparison to the national average in self-efficacy
- Both Elementary and Secondary student outcomes **increased** in comparison to the national average in student-teacher relationships
- Elementary, Secondary, and Teacher perception of school climate **increased** compared to last spring.

Response to Data and Ongoing work –

Integrated Services Model - The schools that are currently in the first year of implementation of the Integrated Services Model continue to build the foundation for the district's ongoing work around providing integrated access for all students. This means, the teams at these schools are engaging in weekly learning, collaborative coaching, and alignment of services. The plan is that by 2023-2024, 100% of schools will have a highly effective integrated services teams; the teams that are piloting the work now are helping to build the roadmap that other schools will follow in future years.

Adult SEL - The district is also working toward implanting adult SEL, which is foundational for district staff to be able to support students. This work is being completed through foundational professional learning for district and building leaders through the spring semester. Two of these trainings will be led by the SEL Task Force and additional trainings will be deep dives into topics at the building and department level. District staff is also working to build out the scope and sequence of learning, so that SEL can be utilized to ensure equity throughout the district. In order for every student to have what they need to learn and thrive, regardless of race, gender, ethnicity, disability, family background or income, the district must foster a safe and supportive working environment that improves adult social and emotional learning and competency.

Student SEL – District staff is also working toward implementation of additional social and emotional learning supports for students. This work breaks down into four areas:

- Ensuring that school climate, programs, and practices promote SEL
- Creating supportive classrooms that use both explicit SEL practices and SEL practices that are integrated throughout the lessons
- Forming authentic family partnerships and opportunities for student voice
- Utilizing the strengths of both greater Des Moines partnerships and DMPS students, staff, and families to support achievement of student outcomes