



**Volusia
County
Schools**

Social and Emotional Learning

Essential skills for life, school and work.



www.myvolusiaschools.org

About Social and Emotional Learning

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. 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.



“Building positive relationships with students is the linchpin for student learning and student engagement. There must be a commitment to building a culture of respect and positive relationships with all people; therefore, we must seek opportunities to know our students and their families.”

-Tom Russell, Superintendent of Schools

The implementation of SEL in schools has shown immediate improvements in mental health, social skills, and academic achievement.

Our Vision for SEL

We aim to seamlessly integrate SEL into the academic experience for all learners and educators in Volusia County Schools (VCS). Through SEL, we will continue the work of 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. By providing a foundation for safe and positive learning through SEL, we will enhance students' ability to succeed in school, careers, and life. VCS is committed to creating a coherent and sustainable plan for long-term SEL implementation.

SEL in VCS

- A tiered approach to SEL including the consistent implementation of Positive Behavioral Intervention and Supports, Restorative Practices, and evidence-based SEL programs to support the explicit teaching of SEL skills and integration with academics.
- The implementation of a coordinated professional development program that addresses academic, social, and emotional learning capacity development for all staff at the individual, school, and district levels.
- A dedicated SEL Specialist and staff to support SEL integration into academics, create positive climate and culture through SEL, explicitly teach SEL to students and stakeholders and develop an innovative districtwide SEL organizational structure.



SEL Framework

Volusia County School's approach to SEL is founded on 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

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.

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.

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.

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.

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.

Classroom Discussion Indicators

- 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
- Manage and express emotions and thoughts in a constructive way
- Stay engaged in discussion
- Use "I" messages in the social context of academic discussion
- 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
- Engage in constructive argument
- Give and receive constructive feedback
- Ask questions based on careful listening
- Express value of collaboration
- 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 your emotional abilities aren't in hand, if you don't have self-awareness, if you are not able to manage your distressing emotions, if you can't have empathy and have effective relationships, then no matter how smart you are, you are not going to get very far.”

Daniel Goleman, Author,
Psychologist

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)

Want more information? Contact us.

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