What is Social-Emotional Learning (SEL)?

SEL is the process through which people “acquire and effectively apply the knowledge, attitudes, and skills necessary to understand and manage emotions, set and achieve positive goals, feel and show empathy for others, establish and maintain positive relationships, and make responsible decisions.” – Collaborative for Academic, Social, and Emotional Learning (CASEL)

A systemic approach to SEL intentionally cultivates a caring, participatory, and equitable learning environment that actively involves all students in their social, emotional, and academic growth. This approach infuses social and emotional learning into every part of students’ daily lives—across all of their classrooms, during all times of the school day, and when they are in their homes and communities.

Research shows that students who have been intentionally taught both SEL and academic skills make better decisions, have more positive attitudes about school, higher test scores, better behavior and reduced emotional distress — all of which positively influence the quality of instruction, academic achievement, and classroom and school climate (Durlak et al., 2011).

PURPOSE: Why a Newsletter?
The goal of this newsletter is to provide updates, strategies, resources, and research that support FCUSD’s work in creating a positive learning environment for our students, staff, and families.

Through our district’s focus on social-emotional learning, we have the opportunity to build strong and lasting academic and behavioral success for our students built on a strong relational foundation.

In this Issue:

- Try This: Self-Care Strategies
- At-a-Glance: FCUSD’s SEL Action Plan
Self-Care Strategies

How taking care of yourself first can make you happier, healthier, and better able to support others.

There is so much about life that we can’t control and it can be difficult to remember that there is so much that we can control. Research shows that one way to make stress feel more manageable is to take good care of our physical and emotional well-being — a task that can be very difficult for those who work in “caring” professions such as teachers, nurses, and parents (Norcross & Barnett, 2008).

From getting enough sleep and drinking enough water to spending quality time with loved ones, there are dozens of ways to build time for self-care into our daily routine.

Self-care strategies shouldn’t feel like a burden, instead they should feel rejuvenating, making you better able to respond to life’s curve balls while making you feel more confident and productive in the process.

This year, the district leadership team is reading Dr. Samantha Brody’s book Overcoming Overwhelm to better understand stress and how to feel happier and more successful. Dr. Brody offers the following reminders:

- **Know That You Can’t Fail at Self-Care.** There will be good days and bad days. And that’s okay. It is a process of learning.
- **Remember Your Power and Agency.** There are always things you can do to lighten your load. You have power in choice.
- **Believe in Yourself.** You can do this. It may not happen overnight but things can get better.
- **Be Judicious.** Go slow to go fast. Start off with a reasonable amount and build upon success.
- **Be Realistic.** Set realistic expectations.
- **Be kind to Yourself.** Piling on guilt and self-judgement doesn’t help you make better choices. Replace the unkind thought with a kind thought.
- **Be Flexible and Willing to Let Go.** In order to make positive change, we need to be willing to let go of the things that don’t deserve our attention.
- **Be Yourself.** Your values. Your life. Your choices.

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**AT-A-GLANCE: FOLSOM CORDOVA’S SEL ACTION PLAN**

FCUSD is in its second year of SEL implementation. Led by a committed team of stakeholders (teachers, principals, staff, parents, and students), the SEL Guiding Coalition and SEL Core team spent the 2018-19 school year charting a course for a district-roll out which included drafting an overarching SEL goal and writing an action plan.

- **FCUSD SEL Goal:** Through an intentional focus on social, emotional, and academic learning, FCUSD schools will create positive learning environments where students, families, staff and community feel connected, respected, and included.

In future newsletters we’ll spotlight different strategies happening across the district. If you want to join the SEL Guiding Coalition come check out our next meeting on Wednesday, January 22nd at 3:30pm ESC Board Room! All are welcome!