

Why SEL is a Must-Have Not a Nice to Have



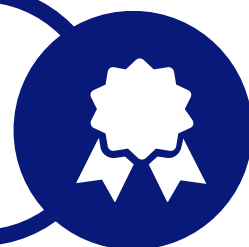
6 Benefits of Social-Emotional Learning for K-12 School Districts & Students

Social and emotional learning (SEL) plays an important role in student development and is increasingly becoming a top priority for school districts across the United States. SEL not only contributes to academic success but also promotes holistic development, preparing students to thrive academically, socially, and emotionally in school and beyond. This infographic shares six reasons why school districts should prioritize SEL implementation.

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1. IMPROVED ACADEMIC PERFORMANCE

Studies have shown that when schools prioritize social-emotional learning, student achievement increases.¹ By focusing on whole-child education and making space for student voices to be heard, SEL helps foster a positive learning environment and can increase student engagement.²



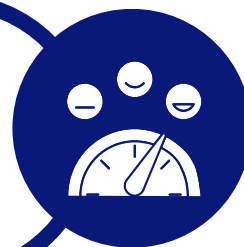
2. DEVELOPMENT OF DURABLE SKILLS

Creating learning environments that provide opportunities to reflect on learning and growth fosters SEL competencies like self-awareness, responsible decision-making, and critical thinking skills. Encouraging collaboration with peers and providing connections to the community help students develop interpersonal skills like communication, empathy, and compassion; all durable skills that are in demand for employment over the next 5 years.³



3. ENHANCED EMOTIONAL REGULATION

SEL provides students with the tools and strategies needed to recognize, understand, and manage their emotions effectively. By fostering the development of emotional intelligence, SEL not only helps students improve competencies like empathy and compassion but it can lead to more positive behavior, reducing conduct problems.⁴



4. FOSTERING FUTURE-READY STUDENTS

As the world rapidly changes, K–12 school districts must ensure students graduate prepared with the competencies needed to succeed in new environments. SEL can help students recognize and cope with stressors,⁵ cultivating their ability to adapt to challenges, remain resilient, and persevere in the face of adversity.



5. INCREASED LEVELS OF INCLUSION

SEL emphasizes a holistic approach to education and promotes a sense of belonging, empathy, and understanding of different perspectives. By providing students with opportunities to develop social awareness, schools can create a more inclusive environment and improved school climate⁶ where every student feels seen and supported.



6. SUCCESSFUL STUDENT TRANSITIONS

SEL helps foster social and emotional skills that are crucial for students to experience successful transitions between grade levels, schools, and life stages. It teaches coping mechanisms and resilience that can support students in successfully navigating transitions and adapting to new environments.⁷



1 Durlak, Joseph A., et al. "The impact of enhancing students' social and emotional learning: A meta-analysis of school-based Universal interventions." *Child Development*, vol. 82, no. 1, Jan. 2011, pp. 405–432. <https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1467-8624.2010.01564.x>.

2 Weissberg, Roger. "Why Social and Emotional Learning Is Essential for Students." *EduTopia*, 15 Feb. 2016. www.edutopia.org/blog/why-sel-essential-for-students-weissberg-durlak-domitrovich-gullotta.

3 "The Future of Jobs Report 2023." *World Economic Forum*, 30 Apr. 2023. <https://www.weforum.org/publications/the-future-of-jobs-report-2023/>

4 Sklad, Marcin, et al. "Effectiveness of school-based universal social, emotional, and behavioral programs: Do they enhance students' development in the area of skill, behavior, and adjustment?" *Psychology in the Schools*, vol. 49, no. 9, Nov. 2012, pp. 892–909. <https://doi.org/10.1002/pits.21641>.

5 "Social and Emotional Learning (SEL) and Student Benefits: Implications for the Safe Schools/Healthy Students Core Elements." *Collaborative for Academic, Social, and Emotional Learning*, 7 Nov. 2008. <https://eric.ed.gov/?id=ED505369>

6 Cipriano, Christina, et al. "The state of the evidence for social and emotional learning: A contemporary meta-analysis of Universal School-based SEL interventions." *Child Development*, vol. 94, no. 5, 13 July 2023, pp. 1181–1204. <https://doi.org/10.1111/cdev.13968>.

7 "What Is Social Emotional Learning (SEL): Why It Matters." *National University*, 17 Aug. 2022. www.nu.edu/blog/social-emotional-learning-sel-why-it-matters-for-educators/