

Key Take-Aways

Elementary/Middle School Workshop: Social Emotional Learning (SEL) 101:

What is SEL and how do you begin to integrate it into adult practice in your schools?

March 12, 2009

One of the leading experts in the field of SEL, Dr. Maurice Elias, shared vital information about SEL, the backbone of the **teach, empower AND model** initiative. He provided a deep understanding of what it is and how it applies both personally and professionally.

- If we can create a place where we feel good and care for each other, all else falls into place.
- Parents and school staff need to join together to advance the students.
- Social Emotional Learning is not about changing the curriculum. It is about making sure there is a thread going through the curriculum.
- This work needs to be kept on the front burner for visibility, buy in and ultimate culture change.
 - Make it a regular part of the agenda for faculty meetings
 - Add this to morning announcements
 - Celebrate the good things
 - Create a resource file for teachers to share their lesson plans developed.
 - Write about this in newsletters
 - Have a team who shares this responsibility and rotates.
- Individual voice of all is one of the most important areas. This voice needs to be thought of as useful so you can learn from it.
- A deep reflection on the leadership team needs to happen. This deep reflection then needs to ripple out.

The questions are:

 - What type of pedagogy do we need?
 - What do adults need to do to make this work happen and move it forward?
 - How shall we proceed to get to where we know we must go?
- There is no limit if you actually decide you want to do something.
- If we, the staff, can do our job right, we can be as powerful in influence to the kids as their parents are.
- There are different points of access in reaching the staff in your school. Some understand this work by the general "idea" and "feelings" about what the culture should be like in the classroom. Others need to get there by practicing it with their kids. When they teach, they realize they can take this information and take it in for themselves.
- Enemy #1 "jumbled school house" – too many programs in the school. This can inhibit progress toward creating a caring school culture.
- SEL/CE work cannot be marginalized!

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Key Take-Aways continued....

- Nothing that goes on in the school building should be separate from social emotional character development - it needs to be pervasive throughout the school building.
- The tipping point is lower than you think (30-40% of people on board), not everyone needs to get on board, as things start to feel different, you will notice change and more people will get on board – talking about BUY IN.
- Put the strongest pieces together first, then build your program.
- Need to have character in schools, it begins with how we start the day.
- Focus on creating a safe, caring, cooperative, well-managed learning environment in the classroom and throughout the school building.
- Reflection time needs to be included more in professional development for staff, allow time for reflection and sharing of knowledge, learning with colleagues - reflection is essential for staff and students!
- Requirements for success: it starts with the staff!
- Staff need to have a positive view of the school climate, their roles and students.
- Students, staff and the community need to be engaged in schools and vice versa (have conversations about commitment to school), must have collaboration!
- Empathy requires fine attunement, perception of others' emotions and non verbal cues.
- A person does not have character in the absence of social emotional skills and a person is dangerous to have skills without character – the 2 are interdependent.
- Character can be developed, part of the development process is skill building that is focused on emotions (including awareness and management of emotions).
- Create authentic partnerships with parents.
- Create time for the staff to come together as an adult learning community.
- Don't spend too much time trying to win over the recalcitrant.
- The concept of risk must be rethought.
 - A well managed set of school and classroom environments create incentives for schools to prevent risky behavior.
 - Need to promote effective interactions.
 - SE character is essential to reduce emotional barriers.

Imagine... utilizing SEL as the backbone that changes your entire school culture.