

September Staff Development

A newsletter by Dr. Dominy

September

Staff,

What a great start to the year! I am so thankful to each of you and the role that you play to ensure that each child experiences success. This year I will feature mental health and instruction in my monthly newsletter. It is critical that we dive into this important topic of mental health, understand it more deeply, and provide strategies that help students be available for learning. We also must do this through the lens of instruction which is why we are all here! My hope is that you will see the connections between mental health and instruction through not only this newsletter but your PLC's and other staff development opportunities. I look forward to working by your side as we get to understand this topic more deeply.

Thank you for all that you do!

Matt

Instructional Model and Mental Health Framework- Why?

We have shared the "why" several times regarding why we are embarking on the Social-Emotional health journey. I was reviewing our professional development book of the year, All Learning is Social and Emotional, and I found a section that struck me as the biggest why yet.

"It's important to stress that social and emotional learning is about much more than developing kids who are nice to one another, cooperative in class, and civically engaged. SEL is also an equity issue. Students who lack the communication and regulation skills needed to navigate a complex societal landscape are vulnerable to becoming victims or perpetrators (and sometimes both). These students are often marginalized to the fringes of school and community life, and endure pity, shame, humiliation, and punishment. It is crucial for schools to implement systems that develop students' social and emotional skills so that they can carry, practice, and use these throughout their day, at home when the school day is over, and for the rest of our lives."

Social-Emotional Learning Vocabulary

Part of this journey is becoming familiar with the vocabulary of social-emotional learning. Our book provides a framework for helping us understand social-emotional learning and they break it down into 5 areas. We will take time during our 2nd PLC to talk more about the 5 areas of social-emotional learning.

Identity and Agency- the way they see themselves and their belief in their ability to influence the world around them.

Emotional Regulation- Being able to accurately identify and describe emotions, manage impulses and delay gratification.

Cognitive Regulation- Metacognition, goal setting, decision making, resolving problems.

Social Skills- Tools to foster, maintain, and repair relationships.

Public Spirit- People are valued and treated fairly.

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