

October 23, 2014



SCHOOL DISTRICT 43 (COQUITLAM)

Meadowbrook Elementary

Social Emotional Learning at Meadowbrook

Over the past few years, there has been a lot of buzz in the media, the educational world and the general public about Social Emotional Learning. The following information (from the Collaborative Association for Social Emotion Learning CASEL <http://www.casel.org/social-and-emotional-learning>) is an overview of what the term implies, why it is important and how we are addressing the need for SEL in our school.

“Social and emotional learning (SEL) involves the processes through which children and adults 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.”

At Meadowbrook Elementary, we emphasize the development of social and emotional skills at every grade level and know that the best learning occurs in the context of supportive relationships. When our learners are engaged and challenged through participations in integrated and meaningful activities, they have continual opportunities to build and practice the critical competencies of SEL.

The short-term goals of SEL programs are to:

1. promote students' self-awareness, self-management, social awareness, relationship, and responsible decision-making skills
2. improve student attitudes and beliefs about self, others, and school

These, in turn, provide a foundation for better adjustment and academic performance as reflected in more positive social behaviors and peer relationships, fewer conduct problems, less emotional distress, and improved grades and test scores.

Research shows that SEL can have a positive impact on school climate and promote a host of academic, social, and emotional benefits for students. Durlak, Weissberg et al.'s recent meta-analysis of 2013 rigorous

studies of SEL in schools indicates that students receiving quality SEL instruction demonstrated:



better academic performance: achievement scores an average of 11 percentile points higher than students who did not receive SEL instruction;

improved attitudes and behaviors: greater motivation to learn, deeper commitment to school, increased time devoted to schoolwork, and better classroom behavior;

fewer negative behaviors: decreased disruptive class behavior, noncompliance, aggression, delinquent acts, and disciplinary referrals; and

reduced emotional distress: fewer reports of student depression, anxiety, stress, and social withdrawal./

from : <http://www.casel.org/social-and-emotional-learning/outcomes>

SEL is a very large umbrella that is comprised of these five critical competencies.

Self-awareness: The ability to accurately recognize one’s emotions and thoughts and their influence on behavior. This includes accurately assessing one’s strengths and limitations and possessing a well-grounded sense of confidence and optimism.

Self-management: The ability to regulate one’s emotions, thoughts, and behaviors effectively in different situations. This includes managing stress, controlling impulses, motivating oneself, and setting and working toward achieving personal and academic goals.

Social awareness: The ability to take the perspective of and empathize with others from diverse backgrounds and cultures, to understand social and ethical norms for behavior, and to recognize family, school, and community resources and supports.

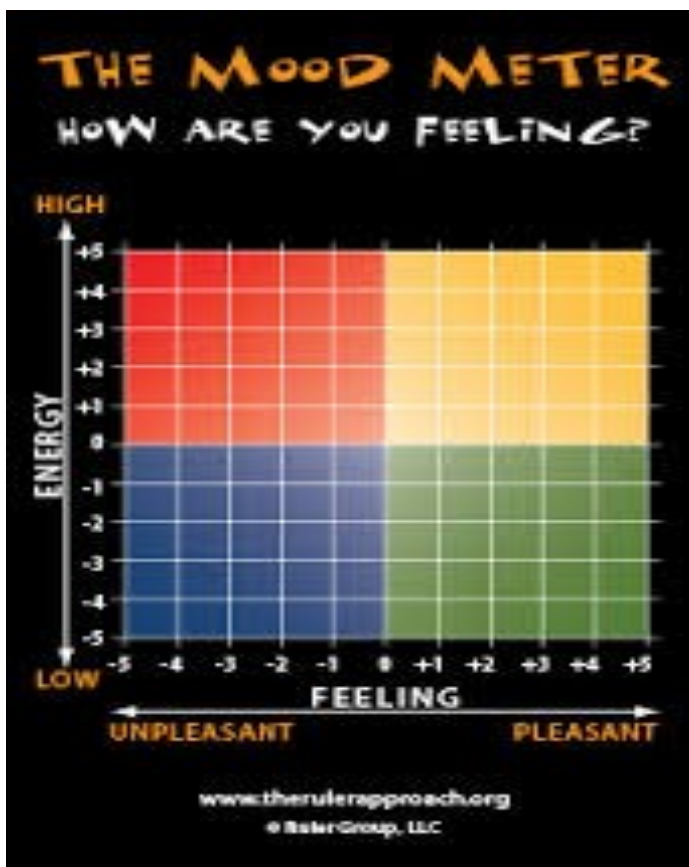


Relationship skills: The ability to establish and maintain healthy and rewarding relationships with diverse individuals and groups. This includes communicating clearly, listening actively, cooperating, resisting inappropriate social pressure, negotiating conflict constructively, and seeking and offering help when needed.

Responsible decision making: The ability to make constructive and respectful choices about personal behavior and social interactions based on consideration of ethical standards, safety concerns, social norms, the realistic evaluation of consequences of various actions, and the well-being of self and others.

<http://www.casel.org/social-and-emotional-learning/core-competencies/>

At Meadowbrook, we are using the Mood Meter in every classroom and in the office to help children develop self-awareness. Last year we focused on identifying personal moods and emotions and plotting them on the Mood Meter. Students are taught strategies to help move themselves from one quadrant to another more appropriate to the situation. It is important to note that no emotion is “bad” or negative – they are plotted on a scale of energy (low to high) and feeling (pleasant to unpleasant). This year we plan to focus on helping students to better communicate how they are feeling by developing a more extensive emotional vocabulary.



Dear Families

Just a reminder that we have our Open House Dinner tonight from 6:00 – 7:30. If you are attending please bring a dish to share with 5-7 people and cutlery/dishes for your family. We look forward to seeing you there.



PAST DUE

We are still waiting for verification forms, student supply fees, emergency release forms and the permission forms. **If you have not returned these to the classroom teacher, please do so as soon as possible.** We require this information for your child's safety. Until we have the permissions for emails, we have to continue with

sending home paper communication rather than via email.

The PAC fundraiser - Save- Around Vancouver coupon books – ends today. If you are not purchasing the book sent home, please return it to the classroom and if you **are** purchasing, please send a cheque for 25\$ made out the Meadowbrook PAC.

Please return
your books



Monday October 27th is picture day – the photographer will arrive in the morning to capture our students' beautiful smiles!

On October 31 – Hallowe'en -we will be having a parade to show off the costumes. Students can bring their costumes to school in the morning but NOT to wear until the afternoon parade. Please - no weapons or violence-inspired costumes.

Happy Halloween

Attached in a calendar marking all the important dates for the next month. Please keep it handy and add to it as new events arise.

Important Dates for Meadowbrook

Friday, October 24th

**Provincial Professional Development
Day – School Closed**

Monday, October 27th

Photo Day – 9:00 a.m.

Thursday, October 30th

Photo Retakes – 9:00 a.m.

Friday, October 31st

Halloween Parade 1:15 p.m.

Thursday, November 6th

Dream Rider Performance – 11:00 a.m.

Friday, November 7th

Remembrance Day Assembly – 10:50

Monday, November 10th

Non Instructional Day—School closed

Tuesday, November 11th

Remembrance Day – School closed

Wednesday, November 12th

PAC Hot Lunch Forms Due!

Thursday, November 13th

Treat Day – 3:00 p.m.

Friday, November 14th

Cassie and Friends Performance – 1:00 p.m.

Wednesday, November 19th

Conferences - Early Dismissal – 2:00 p.m.

Thursday, November 20th

Pizza Day/Conferences-Early Dismissal—2 p.m.

Tuesday, November 25th

PAC Gift Shop-8:30-9, 12:20-1,& 3-3:45 Rm #3

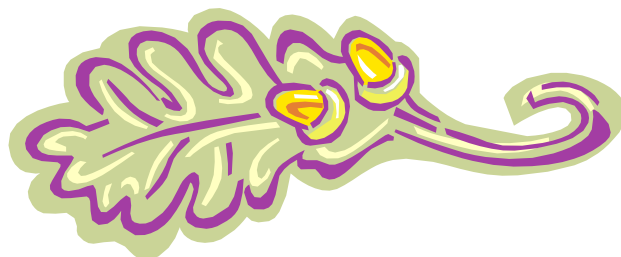
Thursday, December 11th

Treat Day – 3 p.m.

Monday, December 22nd -

Winter Break – School Closed

Friday, January 2nd





Safe Schools and Communities for our Students
October Newsletter

October 23, 2014

To all Parents and Guardians of Children and Youth in the Tri-Cities,

With the goal to strengthen our collective efforts to keep our children and youth safe and unharmed in our communities and neighborhoods, we are committed to another year of bringing our School District 43 families information through a common newsletter. With the support of multiple communities and agencies, and with the three cities and two villages, we will be pooling our resources, knowledge, and data in a collective effort to take care of our future generations. We share the responsibility for the safety of our children with parents, guardians and the greater community. Together we are stronger.

Our focus in this newsletter is to redefine our purpose with this work, to keep parents and guardians up-to-date with information, and supports in place for our children, youth and families, and to provide helpful ideas, based on solid research, to arm our children with the strength and resiliency to confront and succeed in life's challenges.

The focus of this first letter is to serve as a reminder to all of our families that there are simple things we can do as adults that positively influence our kids' ability to cope with life's challenges. We say these are simple, because we already know them to be good practice, however they sometimes get lost in the busy day-to-day challenges.

FACT: 18-25% of our youth report mental health issues by the age of 19, which is significant; and there are family practices that serve as protective factors beginning at a very young age.

FACT: Anything parents and caregivers can do to INCREASE PROTECTIVE SUPPORTS for our children will make a difference. Research suggests the following ideas are extremely impactful.

1. Have meals together as a family often as possible.
2. Ensure that your child(ren) is getting enough rest. From kindergarten to Grade 12, children need at least 9 hours per night to cope with all of the stressors and to be prepared for the day.
3. Be aware of the influences of online activity and social media on brain activity, and plan a "turn off" time well prior to lights out, or limit the use of these devices to reading online before bed. Watch out for kids accessing online media after hours, alone, in their bedroom. This becomes increasingly challenging as our kids use their phones for alarm clocks and other reminders.
4. Help your child(ren) build positive social circles with friends. For younger children, help arrange play dates. For older ones, keep your home open to socializing and welcome youth, with guidelines.
5. Encourage caring relationships with other safe adult family members and close friends.

We have speakers lined up for this year to support SD43 parents, caregivers and educators in our commitment to be the best for our kids. Please expect the next newsletter to arrive in December 2014.

Online Resources: www.connectsafely.org/facebook-for-parents/
www.common sense media.org/advice-for-parents

Julie Pearce, Co-Chair
 Safe Schools Task Force
 School District 43 (Coquitlam)

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