A STRATEGIC APPROACH TO SOCIAL EMOTIONAL LEARNING: EMBEDDING SEL INTO CLASSROOM INSTRUCTION

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Objectives

1) Define social emotional learning (SEL) and discuss how it relates to the role of a school counselor

2) Describe the five CASEL categories of social emotional skills

3) Discuss ways to embed each of the categories of skills into classroom practices and instruction

4) Use the problem-solving approach to set goals, monitor progress, and assess student skill development
Learning Objective 1: Define social emotional learning (SEL) and discuss how it relates to the role of a school counselor.

Why Social-Emotional Learning Matters:

- **29%**: Students who feel like their school provides a supportive, encouraging environment.
- **83%**: Students who made academic gains when participating in an SEL program with an academic component.
- **11%**: Average gain on standardized tests by participating in an SEL program.
- **11%**: Average increase in GPA for participants in one SEL program.

SEL programs improve behavior & attitudes toward school and prevent substance abuse.

Source: Collaborative for Academic, Social and Emotional Learning (www.casel.org)
Social Emotional Learning (SEL)

Development of students’ social-emotional knowledge and skills

• Includes activities and strategies that promote student understanding and management of emotions, goal setting and achievement, relationship building and maintenance, problem solving, and decision making

Students must be explicitly taught social-emotional skills

Yoder, 2014
Importance of SEL

• Increased academic achievement
• Increased social-emotional skills
• Improved attitudes toward self and others
• Improved positive social behaviors
• Decreased behavioral problems

• Decreased emotional stress
• Improved school climate
• Increased attendance and graduation rates
• Improved college and career readiness (e.g., problem solving skills, frustration tolerance)

Barbarin et al., 2006; Yoder, 2014; Zins, Weissberg, Wang, & Walberg, 2004
Examples of SEL Skills

Deveraux Competencies

- Personal Responsibility
- Optimistic Thinking
- Goal-Directed Behavior
- Social Awareness
- Decision Making
- Relationship Skills
- Self-Awareness
- Self-Management
How does this relate to school counselors?

- Responsive Services
- Individual Planning
- Guidance Curriculum
- System Support
How does this relate to school counselors?

CONTENT AREA STRAND: PERSONAL AND SOCIAL DEVELOPMENT (PS)

- **Big Idea:** PS.1. Understanding Self as an Individual and as a Member of Diverse Local and Global Communities

  **Concepts:**
  - PS.1.A. Self concept
  - PS.1.B. Balancing life roles
  - PS.1.C. Being a contributing member of a diverse global community

- **Big Idea:** PS.2. Interacting With Others in Ways That Respect Individual and Group Differences

  **Concepts:**
  - PS.2.A. Quality relationships
  - PS.2.B. Respect for self and others
  - PS.2.C. Personal responsibility in relationships

- **Big Idea:** PS.3. Applying Personal Safety Skills and Coping Strategies

  **Concepts:**
  - PS.3.A. Safe and healthy choices
  - PS.3.B. Personal safety of self and others
  - PS.3.C. Coping skills
Learning Objective 2: Describe the five CASEL categories of social emotional skills

5 Competencies:
Self-awareness

WHAT MATTERS MOST IS HOW YOU SEE YOURSELF.
Self-management
Social Awareness

Whole Body Listening

- ears are listening
- eyes are looking
- hands are down and still
- feet are down and still
- brain is thinking about what is being said
- mouth is quiet
Relationship Skills
Responsible Decision Making

1. Read the question. What am I being asked to do?
2. What do I know?
3. What will help me?
4. Have a go. Show my working
5. Is my method working? Can I carry on or shall I start again?
6. Check - does my answer work?
Part 3: Strategies

Learning Objective 3: Discuss ways to embed each of the categories of skills into classroom practices and instruction.
Strategies Vs. Programs

- Complements multi-tiered systems of support
- Can be thought of as Tier 1 SEL supports
- Does not require a shift in curriculum or content
- Can be applied to any content area and any grade level with age-appropriate modifications
- Could supplement and support packaged SEL programs
- Easily incorporated into teacher consultation
- Supports the work of school mental health professionals

Weissberg & Cascarino, 2013
Ten Effective Classroom Strategies to Promote SEL

1. Student-Centered Discipline
2. Teacher Language
3. Responsibility and Choice
4. Warmth and Support
5. Cooperative Learning
6. Classroom Discussions
7. Self-Reflection and Self-Assessment
8. Balanced Instruction
9. Academic Press and Expectations
Student-Centered Discipline

**Definition:** Classroom-management that is developmentally appropriate and motivating

**Strategies**
- Shared classroom norms and values
- **Proactive** classroom-management
- Logical consequences

GTL Center, 2014
Teacher Language

Definition: Providing specific, positive feedback to students

Tips for success

• Praise effort and work

  Example: “You worked really hard” versus “You are so smart”

• Be specific – tell them what they did well and what they need to do

  Example: “I like how you used a graphic organizer to think of creative ideas and make connections in your writing” versus “Great job in writing”

• Encourage self-monitoring and regulation

  Example: “What strategies can we use to overcome a disagreement when working as a group?”

GTL Center, 2014; Yoder, 2014
Responsibility and Choice

Definition: Allowing students to have control and make decisions related to their work in the classroom

Strategies
- Involve students in classroom rule-making (related to student-centered discipline)
- Use student input in developing academic content/learning
  - Give students academic decisions (e.g. writing a paper versus creating a presentation)
- Incorporate service learning in the community or involvement in school-related events.

Yoder, 2014
Warmth and Support

**Definition:** Academic and social support from peers and teacher(s)

**Strategies**
- Ask questions (academic and nonacademic)
- Follow-up on student concerns
- Provide anecdotes and stories of personal experiences
- Encourage academic risk-taking and questioning
- Foster peer inclusion and support
- Focus on community building

Elias et al., 1997; GTL Center, 2014; Yoder, 2014
Cooperative Learning

**Definition:** Specific instructional task in which teachers have students work together toward a collective goal

- Stories
- Role plays
- Small group activities
- Think-Pair-Share

**Tips for success**

- Students must be well prepared and need to have some SEL skills in place
- Plan ahead of time

Elias et al., 1997
Classroom Discussions

**Definition:** Conversations students and teachers have around content

**Strategies**
- Establish expectations
- Provide precorrects
- Use OARS and teach students to use OARS
  - Open-ended Questions – “What did you think about…” “Tell me more about…”
  - Affirmations – “I can see your perspective…”
  - Reflections – “It sounds to me like…”
  - Summaries – “So what are saying is…”
- Perspective shifts
  - Encouraging students think from another person’s perspective
Self-reflection and Self-assessment

**Definition:** tasks were teachers ask students to actively think about their own work

**Strategies**

- **Teacher think-alouds (modeling)**
  “I’m feeling frustrated because we have a lot going on and we are running out of time. I need to calm down and think. I will take a deep breath, then make a list of things that need to get done, and then decide the ones that are really important.”

- **Teach self-monitoring of feelings**
  - Feelings thermometer
  - Scaling
  - Cuing self-monitoring
  - Problem-solving diary

- **Teach goal-setting**
  - Personal problem-solving worksheet
  - Behavior contracts
  - Homework planner

Elias et al., 1997
Balanced Instruction

**Definition:** Create instructional balance between active and direct instruction and individual and collaborative learning

**Strategies**
- Games, play, and projects
- Project-based learning
  - Students work to solve a problem either collaboratively or independently
  - Students plan, monitor, and evaluate their progress

**Tips for success**
- Balance is key
**Academic Press and Expectations**

**Definition:** Academic press is the teacher’s implementation of meaningful and challenging work

**Definition:** Academic expectations are the teacher’s beliefs that all students can succeed

- Provide rigorous instruction
- Make expectations clear
- Differentiate instruction based on student needs

**Tips for success**

- Must know what students are capable of doing (requires frequent evaluation of student learning)
Differentiated Instruction

**What is Differentiation?**

**Traditional Classroom**
- Student differences are masked or acted upon when problematic
- Assessment is most common at the end of learning to see "who got it"
- A relatively narrow sense of intelligence prevails
- A single definition of excellence exists
- Student interest is infrequently tapped
- Relatively few learning profile options are taken into account
- Whole-class instruction dominates
- Coverage of texts and curriculum guides drives instruction
- Mastery of facts and skills out-of-context are the focus of learning
- Single option assignments are the norm
- Time is relatively inflexible
- A single text prevails
- Single interpretations of ideas and events may be sought
  - The teacher directs student behavior
  - The teacher solves problems
  - The teacher provides whole-class standards for grading
  - A single form of assessment is often used

**Differentiated Classroom**
- Student differences are studied as a basis for planning
- Assessment is ongoing and diagnostic to understand how to make instruction more responsive to learner needs
- Focus on multiple forms of intelligences is evident
- Excellence is defined in large measure by individual growth from a starting point
- Students are frequently guided in making interest-based learning choices
- Many learning profile options are provided for
- Many instructional arrangements are used
- Student readiness, interest, and learning profile shape instruction
- Use of essential skills to make sense of and understand key concepts and principles is the focus of learning
- Multi-option assignments are frequently used
- Time is used flexibly in accordance with student needs
- Multiple materials are provided
- Multiple perspectives on ideas and events are routinely sought
- The teacher facilitates students' skills at becoming more self-reliant learners
- Students help other students and the teacher solve problems
- Students work with the teacher to establish both whole-class and individual learning goals
- Students are assessed in multiple ways

**Figure 2.2 Comparing Classrooms**
Competence Building—Modeling, Practicing, Feedback, Coaching

Direct instruction of SEL skills
- Teach
- Model
- Practice
- Feedback
- Provide support (coaching)

Strategies
Integrate into lessons
Examples:
- Discuss problem-solving, reasoning, and emotions in content
- Provide lessons on SEL content

Use teachable moments
- Examples: sharing, giving compliments, apologizing, taking turns

Elias et al., 1997; Yoder, 2014
Part 3: SEL & Problem-solving

Learning Objective 4: Use the problem-solving approach to set goals, monitor progress, and assess student skill development
Problem-Solving

Brainstorm... In your building, who could you collaborate with to help with each step of this problem-solving model?
Activity

1. Get in groups of four
2. Divide roles
   • Timekeeper
   • Recorder
   • Presenter
   • Discussion leader
3. Select a scenario from the list
4. Answer the questions on the handout as a group
Scenarios

How might a school counselor help in integrating SEL in the following situations…

Scenario 1: A kindergarten teacher has been noticing a handful of students that play independently at recess and rarely talk to peers in the classroom.

Scenario 2: A high school world history teacher is about to begin a unit on WWII.

Scenario 3: A third grade teacher has students with diverse abilities in her classroom for reading each day.

Scenario 4: A first year teacher is creating classroom community and establishing her classroom expectations during the first week of school.

Scenario 5: Several middle school teachers are noticing some bullying behaviors in their classrooms.

Scenario 6: A school counselor is wanting to help her elementary teachers integrate SEL into their lessons.

Scenario 7: Teachers from the early childhood center are concerned about the large number of behavioral/emotional outbursts occurring each day.

Scenario 8: The elementary school principal is interested in integrating SEL into PBS tier 1.
Resources

http://www.gtlcenter.org/sel-school
http://www.casel.org/
http://www.interventioncentral.org/
References