



# SACRAMENTO CITY UNIFIED SCHOOL DISTRICT BOARD OF EDUCATION

Agenda Item# 10.2

**Meeting Date:** November 20, 2014

**Subject:** Social and Emotional Learning: An Essential Component of High Quality Education

- Information Item Only
- Approval on Consent Agenda
- Conference (for discussion only)
- Conference/First Reading (Action Anticipated: \_\_\_\_\_)
- Conference/Action
- Action
- Public Hearing

**Department:** Superintendent's Office/Office of Innovation

**Recommendation:** N/A

**Background/Rationale:**

The Social and Emotional Learning (SEL) initiative is a multi-year district initiative that is funded by the Novo foundation and guided by the Collaborative for Academic and Social Emotional Learning (CASEL). We're in our third year of SEL implementation across the district and the last year of the grant cycle. This executive summary will provide an overview of our systemic implementation through year 2 and set the stage for next steps in year 3.

**Financial Considerations:**

\$250,000 from the NoVo Foundation for Year 1 (award)  
\$250,000 from the NoVo Foundation for Year 2 (award)  
\$250,000 from the NoVo Foundation for Year 3 (award)

**Documents Attached:**

Executive Summary

**Estimated Time of Presentation:** 40 Minutes

**Submitted by:** Koua J. Franz, Chief of Staff  
Mai Xi Lee, Director

**Approved by:** Jose Banda, Superintendent

# Board of Education Executive Summary

## Superintendent's Office/Office of Innovation

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### I. Overview

Three years ago, the district received a grant from the Novo Foundation to systemically implement Social and Emotional Learning (SEL) across the district. With guidance from the Collaborative for Academic and Social Emotional Learning (CASEL), SCUSD embarked on a journey to implement and integrate SEL into schools and all major district initiatives. The implementation began with 4 schools in C. K. McClatchy network of schools in year 1. These schools would serve as pilot schools for the district to learn from and help to guide the district toward full integration. In year 2, sixteen schools were added to the SEL implementation plan based on their identification as receiving schools for the school closure families. At the end of year 2, 5 more schools had joined Cohort 2 for a total of 21 schools. For year 3, we decided to give schools the opportunity to assess their readiness for SEL implementation and self-select to be in Cohort 3 via an application process. This process resulted in 18 schools applying and 17 schools coming on board for Cohort 3. We have a total of 42 SEL schools.

As previously noted in earlier presentations, Social Emotional Learning is the process by which kids and adults develop fundamental emotional and social competencies and experiences to:

- Understand and manage emotions
- Set and achieve positive goals
- Feel and show empathy for others
- Establish and maintain positive relationships
- Make responsible decisions

SEL builds and deepens a positive school climate and culture. Additionally, our SEL work is centered around the five core competencies of: Self-Awareness, Self-Management, Social Awareness, Relationship Skills, and Responsible Decision-Making. These are essential skills to be successful in school, college, career, and life.

Our SEL vision continues to be developed and refined as we go into year 3 of systemic implementation. The diverse SEL Leadership Team, which consists of district staff, school staff, students, parents, community members, and representatives from our collective bargaining units, continues to collaborate on framing the vision for our district. We've worked on developing a common language, increasing our professional learning capacity for staff and community members, integrating our work into other key district initiatives, and continuing to support schools to fully and systemically embed SEL into their leadership, organizational, and instructional structures.

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As a result of the Leadership team's insistence on making SEL an explicit and intentional part of our work in SCUSD, we were able to accomplish the following things going into year 3:

- Trained all leadership teams for 21 Cohort 2 schools on the CASEL Theory of Action or Key Activities of School-wide Implementation
- Trained teachers and support staff from CKM Network and Cohort 2 schools on evidenced-based curriculum. All schools are teaching curriculum.
- Over 2000 SCUSD staff and community members received SEL trainings:
  - Parents and community members trained through the Parent Information Exchange meetings
  - Parents Leadership Academy trainings
  - All Office Managers
  - Classified Staff
  - Expanded Learning/After School staff
  - All Principals, Assistant Principals, School Instructional Coordinators
  - All district leadership staff
  - Teachers and support staff from CKM and Cohort 2
- Integration into:
  - Common Core trainings
  - Graduate Profile
  - Guide to Success
  - Sacramento Pathways to Success
  - Positive School Climate Board Policy
  - Discipline Board Policy
- Developed a Rubric for SEL Core Competencies

One of the biggest accomplishments of this work has been the systemic rollout at the school sites. Using the CASEL Dimensions of School-wide Implementation as a framework has been instrumental in providing a clear and tangible blueprint for schools to implement this work. The Dimensions of School-wide Implementation includes the following components: Explicit Instruction for SEL Skills, SEL-Infused Instruction and Pedagogy, SEL-Embedded Curriculum with Standards and Assessment, SEL Practices Beyond the Classroom, and Professional Development. Many of our schools are beginning the process of incorporating some or all of the dimensions into their systemic implementation plan.

For this presentation, we'd like to highlight several of our Cohort 2 schools who are well on their way to systemic implementation of SEL. Each school will demonstrate an example of their implementation process for each of the Dimensions of School-wide Implementation. Oakridge Elementary will highlight SEL curriculums that they use to explicitly teach SEL skills. Rosa Parks

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K-8 School will share their SEL Instructional Practices. Ethel Phillips Elementary will focus on Practices Beyond the Classroom and highlight their parent engagement efforts. Luther Burbank High School will highlight their SEL and California Common Core State Standards integration.

In addition to the highlights and accomplishments of SEL implementation, there are countless challenges and lessons we can learn from those challenges. One of the areas that has challenged schools is creating structures to support continuous professional learning and collaborative opportunities among teachers. In order for SEL to be sustained and effective, they have to be given opportunities to collaborate and learn from each other. A lesson learned is that SEL skills form the foundation to support programs such as Restorative Practices. There is a natural alignment between SEL and Restorative Practice. The question remains: How do we integrate both in a cohesive and well-structured process? We'll need further training and supports to answer this question. Additionally, sustainability continues to be an issue for SEL implementation. To truly embrace SEL, we must begin to shift from thinking of SEL as an initiative funded by a grant, and begin infusing it into our SCUSD identity and way of processing and being.

## **II. Driving Governance**

Pillar I: Career and College Ready  
Pillar II: Family and Community Engagement  
Pillar III: Organizational Transformation  
Results 1: Mega Result  
Results 2: Academic Achievement  
Results 3: Well-Rounded Individuals  
Results 4: Local, State, National, Global Citizenship  
Board Policy 5030 Student Wellness  
Board Policy 6011 Academic Standards  
Board Policy 6020 Parent Engagement  
Board Policy 6141 Curriculum Development  
Board Policy 5144 Discipline  
Board Policy 5137 Positive School Climate

## **III. Budget**

\$250,000 from the NoVo Foundation for Year 1 (award)  
\$250,000 from the NoVo Foundation for Year 2 (award)  
\$250,000 from the NoVo Foundation for Year 3 (award)

## **IV. Goals, Objectives and Measures**

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At the heartbeat of Pillar One of the district's Strategic Plan 2010-2014 is the charge to prepare students for college and career readiness. Social emotional learning responds to Pillar one as it prepares students for 21<sup>st</sup> century skills and beyond. CASEL's five SEL competencies are included in the Graduate Profile so it is critical that the district and schools begin to teach and model them. In addition, California Common Core State Standards (CCCSS) also call for SEL skills in that students have to think critically, communicate effectively, work collaboratively, and learn how to learn.

**2012-13 School Year Goal:** Create awareness of SEL district wide so that stakeholders begin to understand how SEL contributes to college and career-ready students.

During the first year of the grant, the Team's goal is to create awareness of SEL so that stakeholders begin to understand how SEL contributes to college and career-ready students. This was accomplished through developing a governance structure for SEL in SCUSD and outlining a structure of communication to inform staff about the SEL work at the district and school site level. Smaller strategic workgroups, each chaired by a member of the SEL team was formed. Targeted professional learning sessions conducted by CASEL consultants will help build district and school site staff, students, parents and community partners' expertise and awareness of the five core competencies among.

**2013-14 School Year Goal: Integrate SEL into the district's work.** Integrating SEL into the district's work will be the goal of year two of the grant. As the McClatchy network expands its work, the SEL Team and workgroups will collect and share data and incorporate learning from the network to add another cohort of schools.

**2014-15 School Year Goal: Gear up for district-wide SEL Implementation for 2015-16 school year.** In year three of the implementation grant, SCUSD will create a system of accountability to look at SEL data outcomes and use evaluation data to adjust and plan for district-wide implementation. The SEL Team will continue the development of an SEL vision by creating a policy around SEL implementation district wide. The proposed SEL policy will be presented to the School Board for approval and adoption and then the SEL Team will begin drafting Administrative Regulations to support and enforce the policy. This work will be timely with the new district strategic plan.

## V. Major Initiatives

Year 1 focused on building social emotional learning (SEL) awareness across Sacramento City Unified School District (SCUSD) and especially around building connections to our long-term goal of college and career readiness. In year 2, our focus went deeper as SEL became more

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integrated into our district structures, especially at our schools. Below is a summary of highlights for each of the 5 key priorities for integrating SEL:

- A. **Continue to Develop SEL Vision-** We continue to develop our SEL vision through the leadership of the SEL Leadership Team. Developing a common language, building a robust professional learning plan, and continuing to outreach to district staff, principals, teachers, parents, students, and community members remained a primary focus. Through regular collaborative meetings and continuing push to integrate SEL into all district initiatives, the leadership team was able to accomplish the following integrations: The Guide to Success, an accountability system that explicitly measures social emotional learning through the Engagement Pillar, reflecting the work of school sites; the Graduate Profile (Student Guide to Success), where SEL standards are integrated and embedded into daily operations and curriculum at school sites; and Academics, where SEL skills are explicitly called out during Common Core trainings to further align and integrate the importance of SEL skills needed for student academic success. Additionally, the creation, expansion, and adoption of the Positive School Climate Board Policy and the Discipline Board Policy further supports and strengthen the SEL vision development.
- B. **Collect and Share Data and Learning from the CKM Network-** The first group of schools, known as the CKM Network, has provided valuable data, insight, and leadership to support and inform the systemic implementation process for SCUSD. They have shared their knowledge/experience at school, community, and board presentations, by providing testimonials and mentoring support to new schools. Additionally, their participation in a series of interviews provided valuable insight into key ingredients to successful SEL implementation, effective professional learning, how to promote school-wide SEL, successful SEL instructional strategies, methods for informing parents and community about SEL, and additional resources that schools need to have in order to be successful in their implementation processes. The interviews were summarized into a report which have been shared with SCUSD leadership team, the SEL Leadership team, and Cohort 2 schools
- C. **Continue Stakeholder Engagement and Communication Around SEL-**The messaging and community engagement around SEL has been consistent and inclusive of all stakeholders. In year 2, SEL was consistently messaged via the Superintendent's newsletters to staff, via the eConnect newsletter, and on the district website. Stakeholder engagement involved the following: Staff stayed engaged through various collaborative work projects such as the development of the SEL Core Competency Rubric, the Guide to Success, the Local Control Accountability Plan, Bullying Prevention training, the Common Core trainings, the Pathway to Success initiative, and a variety of other professional learning opportunities; students were engaged via work in the

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Student Advisory Council; parents were engaged via Parent Academy trainings and Parent Information Exchange meetings; bargaining units were engaged through several meetings with the SEL Director; community partners were engaged through a variety of informational meetings and collaborative learning opportunities; and collaborative learning communities were engaged through several leadership institutes focused on SEL.

- D. **Deepen SEL Integration into Professional Learning and Other Work-** Recognizing that learning is not done through chance and happenstance, SCUSD embarked on a very robust plan to integrate SEL into current professional learning structures. Year 2 was about integrating and deepening learning by intentional focus on social emotional learning competencies and systemic implementation. Well over 2000 staff and community members received trainings on SEL. The highlights of our professional development in year 2 were the trainings for all principals, assistant principals, school instructional coordinators, and district leaders this past summer, which focused on building awareness, implementation processes, and the integration of SEL and Common Core State Standards.
- E. **Align Resources to Sustain SEL-** Aligning resources in order to sustain SEL was an on-going discussion this year. Understanding the value of SEL, Cabinet members directed their staff to support the implementation of SEL by allocating staff time to collaborate and share resources. The SEL Director worked closely with the Bullying Prevention Specialist and the Parent Trainer to ensure that SEL was embedded in their training modules. Additionally, staff from the Assessment Research and Evaluations department gave in-kind time and expertise to support the development, vetting, and implementation of the SEL Rubric Assessment. The LCAP will provide a potential source for new funding to sustain this work.
- F. **Increase the Selection and Implementation of Evidenced-based Programming-** This is an area where we've made tremendous gains. In year 1, while all 4 CKM Network schools were using Positive Behavior Intervention Supports (PBIS) and inclusive practices, only 2 schools were using evidenced-based curriculums to teach SEL skills. In the process of walking schools through the Theory of Action, all schools reviewed and adopted SEL curriculum. This summer, all schools received curriculum training and are currently teaching SEL lessons in their classrooms. With the exception of a few schools who opted for Caring School Communities, most K-8 schools adopted Second Step as their primary SEL curriculum. The high schools adopted School Connect, which they've integrated into core English 9 and Geography classes.

## VI. Results

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Social and Emotional Learning (SEL) was an unfamiliar term to most individuals participating in training and professional learning sessions even if it had been present in their work all along. Developing a common vision and language has helped district staff and partners to see that while we had some practices and competencies embedded in current work and habits, we had not developed a strategic district-wide approach that everyone could articulate and own. Deeper exploration of the five core competencies provided staff and parents with a “name” and greater intentionality to their work. As a result, there has been an increased request for more professional development around SEL core competencies and strategies/tools to develop those competencies. To date, we’ve trained 2000 plus staff (both teachers and support staff) and community members. All of our school leaders at all of our 75 schools have received SEL training, which is unprecedented in the Cross District Initiative.

Parents and community members continue to list SEL as a key priority for the LCAP and as an essential component of a high quality education for their students. Teachers see the value of SEL skills supporting students’ access to the Common Core State Standards and critical to their success.

Schools anecdotally report that since implementing SEL curriculum, they’ve seen the number of referrals and behavioral incidents decrease. SEL provides the foundation for supporting Restorative Practices, as we begin to implement the new Discipline Board Policy.

### VII. Lessons Learned/Next Steps

As we move into year 3 of SEL implementation, it’s important that we continue to create conditions for collaboration and professional learning. Social emotional learning will continue to thrive as long as we continue to make it an explicit and intentional part of our work in SCUSD.

As next steps, we’ll continue to support the learning for Cohort 3 schools through the CASEL Theory of Action. We’ll focus on developing a robust accountability structure to look at impact of SEL implementation. The SEL Leadership team will begin the process of developing a whole child policy that is centered on social emotional learning competencies. Additionally, we’ll begin the process of renewing our NoVo grant, which will guarantee funding for another 3 years. Finally, we plan to continue to communicate SEL to the larger community by convening a SEL Summit focused on “The Power of Relationships”, scheduled for February 13, 2015. The goal is to begin to build a coalition that is focused on making social emotional learning an intentional and institutionalized part of our collaborative and engagement processes.