



# SOCIAL & EMOTIONAL LEARNING

We are a community that fosters hope, belonging, and purpose by teaching all scholars and adults the social emotional skills needed to thrive as contributing members of society.

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Grand Rapids Public Schools

## Social & Emotional Learning Definition

Our community is dedicated to educating the whole child. This includes focusing on social and emotional learning (SEL) for scholars and adults by explicitly teaching and modeling attitudes and skills necessary to:

- Recognize and manage their emotions
- Demonstrate caring and concern for others
- Establish positive relationships
- Make responsible decisions
- Constructively handle challenging social situations

## SEL & Equity Mission Statements

Grand Rapids Public Schools understands that SEL is a powerful lever for building caring, just, inclusive, and healthy communities that enable all individuals to reach their full potential. Systemic SEL implementation both promotes and requires an equitable learning environment in which all scholars and adults are respected, valued, and affirmed for their unique interests, abilities, social identities, cultural values, and backgrounds. By grounding SEL in a focus on equity, Grand Rapids Public Schools can further promote the conditions that enable all students to build on their unique assets and abilities to be their best.

## SEL & the Grand Rapids Public Schools Strategic Plan

Social and emotional learning is included in the Grand Rapids Public Schools Strategic Plan with the intent to:

- Identify, establish, and implement an integrated framework of positive strategies to support students and staff that will become the foundation for and include social, emotional, and behavioral health supports
  - Create multiple feedback loops for scholars to share in decision making that promotes scholar engagement and influence about their collective and individual experiences and opportunities
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# Benefits of SEL

Decades of research studies demonstrate the following benefits of SEL:

- Improvement in our scholars’ social and emotional skills, attitudes, relationships, academic performance, and perceptions of classroom and school climate
- Decline in scholars’ anxiety, behavior problems, and substance use
- Long-term improvements in scholars’ skills, attitudes, prosocial behavior, and academic performance
- Wise financial investment according to cost-benefit research

# Adults Benefit from SEL Too!

- Teachers who possess strong social and emotional skills are more likely to stay in the classroom longer because they’re able to partner more effectively with scholars and address challenging behaviors—one of the main causes of burnout
- Statistically significant associations exist between measured social and emotional skills in kindergarten and key young adult outcomes across multiple domains of education, employment, criminal activity, substance use, and mental health

# CASEL Framework



**For more information on  
Social & Emotional Learning  
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