



CANTON PUBLIC SCHOOLS



Canton Launches New Social-Emotional Learning Curriculum

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CANTON, Mass

Self-awareness, self-control, and interpersonal skills are the basic tenets of social-emotional Learning (SEL). SEL's roots can be traced back to researchers at Yale University in the 1960s, but it wasn't until the mid-1990s that SEL started to come to classrooms around the country.

This year, Canton Public Schools introduced a new SEL program known as [Wayfinder](#) after a selection committee evaluated 10 different SEL programs.

“At the elementary level our teachers are implementing lessons during the week,” said Deborah Rooney, Director of Curriculum, Instruction and Assessment for Canton Public Schools. “Because their teachers spend the majority of the day with the students, they are able to work it into their schedule. They find 30 minutes or so every week to do an SEL lesson. For example, it’s nicely aligned with social studies at this age level.”

According to Rooney, most of the core SEL work at the middle and high school level is being taught by health and wellness teachers. Wellness Teachers received training on the new program over the summer and all of our educators received training at the start of the school year. “It’s really user friendly and is easily implementable,” she said.

Recently, parents and guardians were invited to attend a series of webinars to learn more about the Wayfinder curriculum.

“We received such positive feedback for Wayfinder when we were searching for a new program,” said Meghan Byrne, Director of Student Services for Canton Public Schools. “In addition to being easy to use, our staff like that it includes a complete curriculum and a variety of tools with relevant themes. Our staff also liked that it is aligned with CASEL ([Collaborative for Academic, Social, and Emotional Learning](#)), and has an assessment component at the secondary level.”

SEL has become an integral part of educating today’s students.

“We live in a world where technology and social media are captivating our children’s attention,” said Rooney. “It’s become problematic. Kids need to learn how to interact with human beings. We are seeing the impact on

how they are engaging with each other. SEL curriculum is designed to help support students and teach them how to appropriately engage both with people digitally, and when they are standing in front of us.”

Anyone interested in watching any of the three webinars can do so at the following links:

Elementary [presentation](#)

Middle School [presentation](#)

High School [presentation](#)

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