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an exemplary school for ALL students.*

Equitable Excellence in Action

Improving Students' Social-Emotional Skills

Nov. 4, 2021

“Social-emotional learning,” or SEL, is a phrase used a lot in education these days--but you may be wondering exactly what it means. SEL focuses on developing students' skills in five key areas: self-awareness, self-management, social awareness, relationship skills, and responsible decision making. Research shows that SEL not only improves academic performance, but it also reduces depression and stress, improves attitudes toward school, and increases prosocial behaviors such as kindness and empathy.

Building students' social-emotional learning skills is an important goal at OPRFHS. Throughout the school year, students will participate in several exercises during Advisory to better understand their own SEL mindsets and approaches to learning.

In addition, in order to make sure we're providing additional SEL support equitably--that is, directing our resources where they're most needed--we're using data to identify students who may need extra help. One of the changes we have made is using a social-emotional screener, along with additional data sources, to match students with appropriate supports, including social and emotional learning groups.

Beginning this week, our social worker team lead five strategy groups to support our students:

- **Coping Skills:** Managing depression and anxiety.
- **Self-Regulation:** Managing emotions and problem solving.
- **Resilience Skills:** Coping with trauma.
- **Social Skills:** Developing appropriate peer interactions and self-awareness.
- **Problem-Solving:** Self-management with on-task school behaviors.

By using our new screener to identify participants in these groups, we can help ensure that all OPRFHS students have the skills they need to succeed in life.