

BOARD MEMO

Date: April 11, 2024
For ACTION _____
For INFORMATION X

FROM: Kennetra Wood, Executive Director of Equity and Alternative Programs
Victor Martin, Ed.D., Executive Director of Student Support Teams (SST)

THROUGH: Marcia Jackson, Ed.D., Chief of Student Services and Equity
Melanie Kay-Wyatt, Ed.D., Superintendent of Schools

TO: The Honorable Michelle Rief, Chair, and
Members of the Alexandria City School Board

TOPIC: Social, Emotional and Academic Learning (SEAL) Update

ACPS 2025 STRATEGIC PLAN GOAL:

- Goal 1: Systemic Alignment
- Goal 2: Instructional Excellence
- Goal 3: Student Accessibility and Support

SY 2023-2024 PRIORITY AREA:

- Academic Achievement
- Tier 1 Instruction: Alignment, Rigor, Engagement
- Student Supports
- CASEL Social Emotional Learning Competencies
- Student Connection and Attendance
- Staff Supports
- Continue Culture Building

FY 2024 BUDGET PRIORITY:

- Target Chronic Absenteeism
- Restorative Practices Supports

SUMMARY:

The Social Emotional and Academic Learning (SEAL) program provides opportunities for students to build social emotional competencies aligned with the Collaborative for Academic, Social, and Emotional Learning (CASEL) framework. The five CASEL competencies include self-awareness, self-management, social awareness, relationship skills and responsible decision-making. This presentation will update the School Board on what is new with monitoring and assessing how students are acquiring the five CASEL competencies. We will also highlight how the work in the Department of Student Services and Equity supports students, staff, families and the community through the SEAL program.

BOARD MEMO

DETAILS:

In this presentation, staff will inform the School Board about the difference between social emotional learning and mental health. Mental health and social emotional learning are often used synonymously yet, they are not the same. Explicit teaching of the SEL competencies can provide students the skills they need to overcome a number of mental health challenges that might affect the psychological well-being of students. Therefore, social emotional learning works to support students' mental health. Data collection continues to be a focus to inform the SEAL program. In the Fall, we administered the Devereux Student Strengths Assessment (DESSA) universal screener and it is being administered again this Spring. We have also collected data from SEL Walkthroughs in schools to further collect data on the SEAL implementation. Student feedback has also been collected from SEAL lessons related to the SEL competencies to determine to what extent students are learning the competencies and can apply them.

BACKGROUND:

The overall goal is for all students to be well socially and emotionally with the ability to thrive and achieve academically. In order to accomplish this, adults who work with students must also be socially and emotionally well, connected and engaged. One important aspect of the SEAL program is Restorative Practices (RP). Tier 1 RP includes use of community circles that supports staff building relationships and fostering community with students and with one another. Tier 2 and 3 restorative circles and conferences are used when harm occurs as a way to repair harm and restore the community. This presentation shares some of the current data around how RP is supporting SEL implementation. We are currently working with a contractor to conduct a SEAL program evaluation that will provide additional information as we move forward with SEAL implementation.

RECOMMENDATION:

The Superintendent recommends that the School Board review the information provided on the continuous improvement efforts related to SEAL implementation for the 2023-24 school year.

IMPACT:

The School Board's review of this SEAL presentation is designed to support understanding of the continuous improvement efforts impacting students' learning of the social emotional competencies that support academic development.

ATTACHMENTS:

1. Presentation: Social Emotional and Academic Learning (SEAL) Update

REFERENCES:

Social, Emotional, and Academic Learning (SEAL) Update - November 2, 2023

BOARD MEMO

CONTACT:

Ms. Kennetra Wood, kennetra.wood@acps.k12.va.us

Dr. Victor Martin, victor.martin@acps.k12.va.us

Dr. Marcia Jackson, marcia.jackson@acps.k12.va.us