



Pathways for Social Emotional Learning in Montana - Advocacy with Grassroots Efforts

SEL4MT.org





Overview of SEL4MT

Purpose - To promote SEL in schools and communities throughout Montana by providing coordination, resources, and advocacy.

Members - Organizations and Individuals (afterschool association, counseling association, professional development and services provider, administrators).

Process - Regular meetings, outreach, and coordination of events and training experiences

Areas of Focus - Establishing best practices, building a community of practice, providing resources and supports to schools and educators



Montana Values and Culture

History of SEL in Montana

- Montana Behavioral Initiative - Positive Behavioral Interventions Supports
- Multiple Tiered System of Support
 - Academic
 - Behavioral
 - Social Emotional Learning
- SEL Programming
 - School-based Needs
 - School-based Strategies



Montana Values and Culture

Reactions and Responses to SEL in Montana

- Development of the SEL Competencies - 2018-2020
- Attacks by Organizations, Individuals, and Coalitions
- Change Name of SEL Competencies to the Whole Child Skill Development Competencies - 2022
- Formation of SEL4MT
 - Share the voice of administrators, teachers, students, and parents
 - Provide resources or “toolkits” not currently available in MT that help schools and communities with their SEL-focused communication or planning
 - Collaborate across state and regional organizations on approaches to and supports for SEL in MT



Local Control

Montana Constitution

[Article X, Section 8](#) states that “The supervision and control of schools in each school district shall be vested in a board of trustees to be elected as provided by law.” These trustees are provided powers and duties as enumerated in statute [§20-3-324](#).

Montana of Office of Public Instruction

Two essential content standards that are related to Social Emotional Learning are the [*Montana Whole Child Skill Development Competencies*](#) and the [*Montana Content Standards for Career and Technical Education*](#).



Local Control - Benefits of SEL

The [research-based](#) benefits of these competencies include;

- Increased academic performance
- Decrease in behavioral issues
- Increase in educator retention
- Increase in school attendance
- Increase in workforce and college readiness
- High return on investment and sustained positive life-long impacts



Career and College Readiness

Profile of a Montana Graduate According to the Montana Content Standards for Career and Technical Education

- Can act as a responsible and contributing citizen and employee
- Attend to personal health (physical, emotional, psychological, and relationship)
- Communicate clearly, effectively, and with reason
- Demonstrate creativity and innovation
- Consider the environmental, social, and economic impacts of decisions
- Utilize critical thinking to make sense of problems and persevere in solving them
- Model integrity, ethical leadership, and effective management



Career and College Readiness

- The World Economic Forum (2016), encourages students to have foundational literacies (literacy, numeracy, technology, scientific, financial, etc), competencies (critical thinking, creativity, communication, collaboration, etc), and character qualities (resilience, awareness, adaptability, empathy, etc).
- The number one skill identified by Forbes (2015) that was desirable by employers was the ability for employees to work in a team structure. Interpersonal skills (sometimes called soft skills) matter in today's workforce. Teachers, parents, and students recognize that career success relies on perspective taking, empathetic concern, impulse control, the recognition of our shared common humanity, compassion and many other prosocial competencies.

Civic Education



- **Billings School District** - Billings Public Schools Community strives to inspire, educate and empower students to be responsible and innovative global citizens who achieve their full potential.
- **Bozeman Public School** - Bozeman Public Schools exist to provide an outstanding education that inspires and ensures high achievement so every student can succeed and make a difference in a rapidly changing world community.
- **Glendive School District** - Glendive Public Schools are committed to providing academic and activity programs in a safe environment where our students can acquire knowledge, skills and values that will prepare them to be contributing, constructive members of our society.
- **Darby School District** - Every student that graduates from Darby Public Schools is college/career and community ready.
- **Havre School District** - Our mission is to inspire every student to think, to learn, to achieve, and to care.
- **Whitefish School District** - The Whitefish School District cultivates and supports a community that engages each student to succeed in continuous learning, career, and citizenship.

Civic Education



- High-stakes testing and other accountability measures that are focused on reading and math have sidelined history and government education. In the most recent nation's report card (NEAP), 8th grade assessments demonstrated that only 15% of students were proficient in history and only 24% were proficient in civics.
- Twenty-first century civic education requires the development of knowledge and competencies that lead to compassion, communication, and action. It is not enough for students to recite the Articles of Confederation or the Bill of Rights; rather they need to know how to skillfully yield these tools for equality and justice in a rapidly changing world.

Civic Education



Awareness as a Key Component of Citizenship Education

- Self Identity - an understanding of who you are as a person and as a member of a community/society
- Political agency – the belief that you can change the status quo and feel empowered to do so
- Impulse Control - the capacity to regulate one's emotional and behavioral responses
- Personal Wellness - the capacity to promote one's psychological and physical health

Civic Education



Resilience as a Key Component of Citizenship Education

- Emotional regulation - mastery of how emotions arise, are regulated, and influence behavior
- Self-regulation - the ability to regulate emotional and physiological responses to restore personal wellness
- Reappraisal - utilizing cognitive tools to view experiences from different perspectives

Civic Education



Recognizing Shared Common Humanity as a Key Component of Citizenship Education

- Perspective taking - the capacity to see how and others are shaped by knowledge and experiences
- Common humanity - acknowledging that all people are united in the fundamental truth that they seek to promote personal flourishing and the seek to avoid distress, suffering, and hardship
- Communication - through meaningful dialogue we can understand issues and the needs of another person or issue

Civic Education



Compassion for Self and Others as a Key Component of Citizenship Education

- Empathetic concern - the capacity to both understand others' feelings and emotions in context and act to alleviate the distress they may be experiencing.
- Relationships skills - relating to others with kindness and compassion that emerges from the an understanding of shared interdependence
- Social action – the ability to identify injustice in one's community and take steps to oppose social forces to improve one's community

Civic Education



Systems Thinking as a Key Component of Citizenship Education

- Discernment - the ability to evaluate the implications of one's actions both now and into the future
- Understanding complex Issues - understanding systems at different levels is needed to become an informed and engaged citizen
- Developing holistic perspective - the capacity to situate issues on a personal and societal basis to understand the impact issues have on one self and others both now and into the future

Let's stay in touch!

- ★ Visit SEL4MT.org
- ★ Sign up to receive information and updates on how to get involved.
- ★ Contact us: info@SEL4MT.org.

