

DeKalb County School District: A Snapshot of SEL Usage





The Importance of SEL

Social and Emotional Learning (SEL) plays a crucial role in supporting DCSD students' academic success, mental well-being, and long-term achievement. By teaching students to manage emotions, build healthy relationships, and make responsible decisions, SEL equips them with the necessary skills to thrive in school and beyond.

SEL Second Step Lessons in Middle Schools



A total of 79 SEL lessons in both English & Spanish

Over 200 advisory activities, includes professional learning, program training, and family communications.



Includes a Bullying Component

The SEL lessons in middle schools have a dedicated supplemental unit focused on addressing and preventing bullying behavior.



Facilitated by school counselors

Currently the SEL lessons are led by the school counselors from September through May, providing a thorough and continuous approach to social-emotional learning.

The middle schools in DeKalb County School District have a comprehensive SEL program that provides students with 26 lessons per grade level, including a unit on addressing bullying.



DCSD MIDDLE SCHOOL
2024-2025 SOCIAL EMOTIONAL LEARNING
DATA SUMMARY



District and School Completion Rate

Month	6th Grade Lessons	23-24	24-25	% Difference
September	Lesson 1a: Starting Middle School	64%	81%	23.45%
October	Bullying Lesson 2: Recognizing Bullying	41%	73%	56%
October	Bullying Lesson 3: Responding to Online Bullying	n/a	69%	
November	Lesson 21: Why Conflicts Escalate	31%	74%	81%
December	Lesson 14: What Emotions Tell You	58%	74%	24%
January	Lesson 8: What are Guiding Principles	66%	59%	11%
February	Lesson 23: Respectful Communication	n/a	59%	
March	Lesson 4 & 6: Teen Lures	48%	63%	27%
May	Lesson 12: Thinking Short-Term & Long-Term	n/a	44%	

Month	7th Grade Lessons	23-24	24-25	% Difference
September	Lesson 1b: Helping New Students	62%	76%	20%
October	Bullying Lesson 1: What is Harassment	63%	74%	16%
October	Bullying Lesson 5: Our Rights & Responsibilities	n/a	59%	
November	Lesson 21: Keeping Cool in Conflicts	46%	70%	41%
December	Lesson 14: Emotions Matter	58%	43%	29%
January	Lesson 8: What is Self-Concept	n/a	72%	
February	Lesson 25 : Taking Responsibility for Your Actions	n/a	70%	
March	Lessons 4 & 6 :Teen Lures	62%	61%	1.63%
May	Lesson 12 Your Future Concept	n/a	1%	

Month	8th Grade Lessons	23-24	24-25	% Difference
September	Lesson 2: Who Am I? My Identity	57%	87%	42%
October	Lesson 2: Social Factors that Contribute to Bullying	32%	88%	93%
October	Lesson 5: Be Inclusive & Ask for Change		83%	
November	Lesson 22: Recognizing Other's Perspective	39%	80%	70%
December	Lesson 14: Understanding Stress & Anxiety	53%	79%	40%
January	Lesson 9: Sources of Confidence		85%	
February	Lesson 21: Values and Relationships	43%	83%	63%
March	Lessons 4 & 6: Teen Lures	50%	82%	49%
May	Lesson 12: Agency & Confidence	n/a	67%	

Social and Emotional Learning (SEL) matters because it equips students with essential skills to manage emotions, build healthy relationships, and make responsible decisions. These skills foster better academic performance, mental well-being, and long-term success in life.

N/A = Second Step Lesson new lesson added to the curriculum for the 24-25 school year

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SEL Second Step Elementary Lessons



20 SEL lessons per grade level (K-5)

Alongside the lessons, there are 32 optional Mind Yeti mindfulness sessions, five songs designed to aid students in recalling concepts from the units, and 18 extension activities that encourage student engagement through art, games, and movement.



Supplemental units on Bullying and Child Protection

Bullying lessons teach children to identify, report, and reject bullying behavior. The Child Protection lessons educate kids on how to recognize, react to, and report instances of abuse and ensure compliance with Georgia's Senate Bill 401 (Erin's Law).



Lessons from September to May

Currently the SEL lessons are led by the school counselors from September through May, providing a thorough and continuous approach to social-emotional learning.

The elementary schools in DeKalb County School District have a robust SEL program, with 20 lessons per grade level (K-5) delivered by school counselors throughout the academic year. This comprehensive approach demonstrates the district's commitment to supporting the holistic development of its students.



District Completion Rate 23-24SY to 24-25SY

Month	Kindergarten Lessons	23-24SY	24-25SY	% Difference
September	We Watch, We Learn, We Think	28%	54%	26%
September	Why We Pay Attention	26%	51%	25%
October	Recognizing Bullying	34%	56%	22%
October	Reporting Bullying	28%	57%	29%
November	Sometimes We Feel Happy	22%	45%	23%
February	We Can Be Kind	17%	45%	28%
March	Ways to Stay Safe	29%	51%	22%
March	The Touching Rule	11%	39%	28%
May	We Can Say the Problem	7%	30%	23%

Month	1st Grade Lessons	23-24SY	24-25SY	% Difference
September	Time to Pay Attention	72%	58%	-14%
September	Everyone Gets Distracted	28%	52%	24%
October	Recognizing Bullying	41%	63%	22%
October	Reporting Bullying	36%	54%	18%
November	Noticing Feelings	26%	46%	20%
February	The Power of Kind Acts	20%	46%	26%
March	Ways to Stay Safe	37%	54%	17%
March	The Touching Rule	14%	43%	29%
May	How to Say the Problem	11%	34%	23%

Month	2nd Grade Lessons	23-24SY	24-25SY	% Difference
September	How to Get Good at Something	35%	63%	28%
September	What Mistakes Tell Us	30%	57%	27%
October	Recognizing Bullying	49%	67%	18%
October	Reporting Bullying	44%	60%	16%
November	Feeling Proud	28%	50%	22%
February	What's Empathy?	25%	45%	20%
March	Ways to Stay Safe	35%	56%	21%
March	The Touching Rule	15%	42%	27%
May	The Way to Say a Problem	12%	34%	22%

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District Completion Rate 23-24SY to 24-25SY

Month	3rd Grade Lessons	23-24SY	24-25SY	% Difference
September	Changing Your Brain	26%	63%	37%
September	Getting Better With Practice	21%	54%	33%
October	Recognizing Bullying	33%	59%	26%
October	Reporting Bullying	40%	98%	58%
November	Why Emotions?	25%	97%	72%
February	Kindness and Friendship	22%	90%	68%
March	Ways to Stay Safe	32%	52%	20%
March	The Touching Rule	11%	43%	32%
May	STEP by Step	10%	26%	16%

Month	4th Grade Lessons	23-24SY	24-25SY	% Difference
September	Setting a Good Goal	32%	66%	34%
September	Making a Plan	28%	54%	26%
October	Recognize, Report, Refuse	41%	70%	29%
October	Bystander Power	35%	60%	25%
November	The Balanced Brain	28%	49%	21%
February	The Same, But Different	30%	46%	16%
March	Keeping Yourself Safe	28%	57%	29%
March	The Private Body Parts Rule	14%	48%	34%
May	A Good Problem-Solver	10%	29%	19%

Month	5th Grade Lessons	23-24SY	24-25SY	% Difference
September	My Plan	22%	51%	29%
September	The Right Goal for Me	26%	58%	32%
October	Recognize, Report, Refuse	40%	64%	24%
October	Bystander Power	23%	56%	33%
November	Strong Emotions	29%	48%	19%
February	Empathy in the Community	23%	43%	20%
March	Keeping Yourself Safe	29%	49%	20%
March	The Private Body Parts Rule	16%	42%	26%
May	Beginning to STEP	9%	29%	20%

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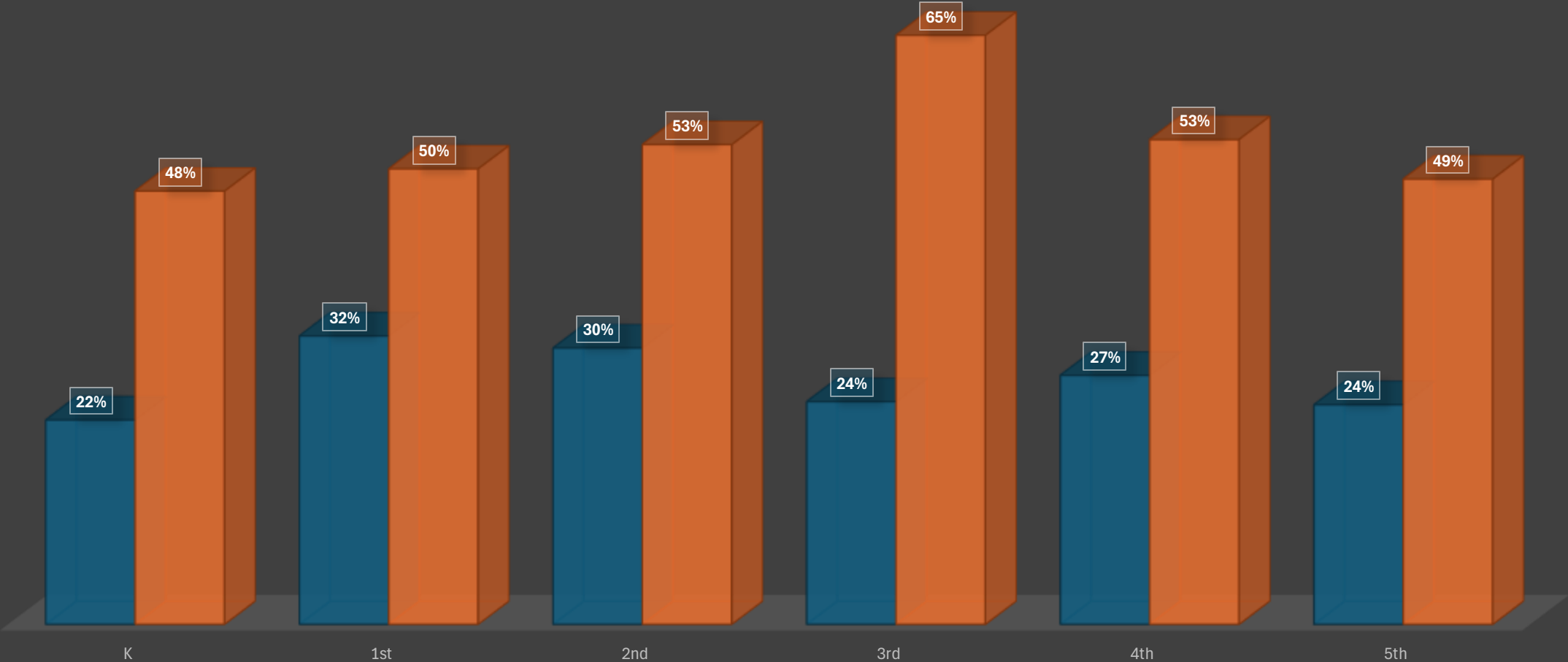
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ELEMENTARY LESSON COMPLETION BY GRADE

■ Lesson Completion 23-24SY ■ Lesson Completion 24-25SY



Outcomes of SEL Lessons



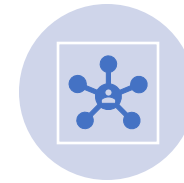
Improved Student Attendance: Schools with increased SEL lesson completion reported fewer chronic absenteeism cases, indicating stronger student engagement and connection to school.



Reduction in Student Behavior Incidents: Campuses implementing SEL consistently saw noticeable declines in office referrals, suspensions, and disruptive behavior, fostering a more positive learning environment.



Academic Gains: Students participating in regular SEL lessons demonstrated increased focus, persistence, and classroom participation—contributing to improved academic performance, especially in literacy and math.



Enhanced School Climate: Staff and student feedback highlighted improved peer relationships, stronger sense of belonging, and more respectful communication schoolwide.



Increased Social and Emotional Competency: Students showed measurable growth in self-regulation, empathy, and responsible decision-making—skills that support long-term academic and life success.

Call to Action

- **Continue Supporting SEL Programs**

Encourage stakeholders to maintain their commitment to the SEL programs within the DeKalb County School District.

- **Enhance SEL Curriculum**

Work to improve and expand the SEL curriculum across all grade levels to ensure the holistic development of students.

- **Promote Student Engagement**

Strive to increase student participation and completion rates in SEL lessons to maximize the impact on academic success, mental well-being, and long-term achievement.

- **Collaborate with Educators**

Foster strong partnerships between district leadership, school administrators, and counselors to further strengthen the SEL programs.

- **Allocate Necessary Resources**

Ensure that the SEL programs are adequately funded and supported with the necessary resources to deliver high-quality learning experiences.