

ADDRESSING ELL STUDENTS SOCIAL EMOTIONAL NEEDS



If we want our ELLs/MLLs to achieve academically, we must first attend to their social emotional needs. Research clearly indicates that many students deal with a variety of stressors such as poverty, health issues, trauma, etc. Under stress, attendance, academic achievement, and graduation rates drop considerably. These low results, therefore, must be seen as a symptom of the problem. The question is, how can schools support students' social emotional needs? Addressing social emotional needs will lead to important benefits, including improvements in attendance, academic achievement, and graduation rates.

A major factor in low achievement arises from social emotional (SE) concerns. Addressing students' SE needs and including Social Emotional Learning (SEL) in our classrooms, will enable students to better manage their emotions, make better decisions, and establish and maintain positive relationships. SEL also leads to higher graduation rates and postsecondary enrollment and completion.

When social-emotional needs are addressed, the schools will also see improvement in attendance, classroom behaviors, graduation rates, a decrease in dropout rates, suspensions, drug and alcohol abuse, less noticeable physical and psychological abuse, mental health problems, and potential suicides.

There are three elements necessary to be in place for a school to be effective in addressing the students' SE needs. First, adults need to know the students very well. Second, there must be systems in place to address the students' needs. Third, constant monitoring and adjustments of these systems must take place, as needed, as students and needs change.

In addition to typical SE needs and behaviors manifested by adolescents, ELL students face other challenges. Students may encounter discriminatory behaviors because, as newly arrived students, they may look, dress, or speak differently. They may have experienced trauma and, as a result, they may have difficulty controlling emotions. Some students have become separated from immediate families, displaced and have lived in refugee camps, experienced war and dire poverty. They are unfamiliar with the new system and, thus, may have difficulty accessing resources for matters pertaining to health, finances, basic needs and immigration issues. As new arrivals to already existing family structures, they might find themselves in conflict with family members due to cultural differences and the sense of not fitting in. They may be having a difficult time making friends since they feel that they do not fit in. They struggle with their identify and feel insecure interacting with people because they do not speak English.

Assessment of social-emotional needs requires three areas of focus. The first area of focus is close observation of physical and affective signs such as bruises, clothing, fatigue, hunger, depression, fear. Staff should be trained to be attentive to identify these external signs. The school must have protocols in place so that the staff can adequately provide assistance.

The second area of focus requires that the staff know the student. Addressing this area of focus also requires the establishment of a positive, trusting relationship between student and staff member. School protocols must be in place to allow staff members to appropriately follow up. Whenever possible, it is most helpful to engage the help of a staff member whom the student trusts to assist the student when addressing his/her SE needs. The most difficult SE signs to identify require the involvement of a team of staff members and a high, multi-tiered level of focus.

Here is one example: If a student's grade drops in a class, the teacher may try to address the situation academically. However, if the student's

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RBE-RN News

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grades are dropping in many subjects, the intervention needed may not be academic. Something else may be causing the student to become disaffected. What systems are in place to ensure that all grades are monitored; To ensure communication is taking place among appropriate personnel; To ensure that staff is following protocols to address students' individual needs, and appropriate interventions are being implemented? Here is another example: If a staff member sees that a student is packing his/her lunch to bring home, do the cafeteria personnel know who to inform? Who will follow up on this case? What kinds of interventions are set in the school to address students who may lack adequate food? Who is reaching

out to the family? Who is helping the family meet with the appropriate agencies that can help them with this and other matters that may be impacting the entire family? Imagine the difference in a student's social emotional state and academic performance if we take the time to get to know the student, identify his/her SE needs, and develop and implement appropriate interventions. Imagine how much more positive the school environment would be. Such a protocol does not require additional classroom time or instruction. It does not demand additional expensive resources. All it takes is the willingness to get to know the students, to become trained in identifying SE needs, and to position ourselves to help our students.

Upcoming Events

For descriptions and registration information about these events., go to our website calendar:

https://www.fordham.edu/info/27866/rbern_events

Date	Workshop Title and Description for March	Audience
8	Integrated ENL: Co-Teaching Models in Practice (3-12) with a focus on identifying teacher goals and objectives while engaging in co-planning conversations about students and developing a co-planning strategy.	3-12
11	Early Childhood Series. Next Generation Literacy Learning Standards for K - 2 Educators working with ELLs/MLLs (Listening and Writing). Fordham University Lincoln Center Campus Presenter: S. Martinez	K-2
12	Embedding Best Practices in LOTE Classrooms Part 2 In-depth Learning Strategies and Teaching Practices that support the NY State Seal of Biliteracy This all-day session builds upon the instructional strategies discussed and shared on January 16 th . Following an overview by our guest speaker about the state of World Languages and the NYS Seal of Biliteracy in New York State, the presenters will guide participants in the analysis and discussion of lessons and the development of task-specific student - centered rubrics in the target language.	9-12
15	NYS/NYC Special Education Teacher Institute for ENL, Second Session. Bilingual Teachers, Content Area Teachers, and administrators who are working with ELLs/MLLs ; also including social workers, school psychologists, speech teachers in school teams making decisions on ELL referrals: IEPs. Inquiry-Based Problem Solving for English Language Learners within a Multi-tiered System of Support (MTSS)/RT12: Collaborative	K-12
18	Understanding the NYS Next Generation ELA Learning Standards and Applying them in the K-5 Classroom . For K-5 ENL, bilingual and co-teachers in integrated ENL, stand-alone programs, coaches, and supervisors. Today's ELL students must be able to communicate and navigate an increasing interconnected society which requires Advanced Literacies. In this session, participants will be introduced to the rationale for these changes, develop an understanding of Advanced Literacies and their implications for instruction in Bilingual, ENL and Integrated K-5 classrooms. In addition, participants will leave with a toolbox of strategies and protocols that support the intentional teaching of advanced literacies	K-5
21 - 23	New York State Association for Bilingual Education (NYSABE) 42nd Annual Conference : Transforming Language Learners, Their Multiliteracies, and the World Through Bilingual Education. Crowne Plaza, 66 Hale Avenue, White Plains, N.Y.	K-12
22	3rd Annual Bronx UFT College Fair . Bronx UFT Office. College Goal Coordinator: James Rodriguez. 2500 Halsey Street, Bronx, N.Y. 10461 10 a.m. - 2 p.m.	9-12
27	New York State Seal of Biliteracy. Presenter: Dr. R. Salavert. Theodore Roosevelt Educational Campus, Bronx, N.Y.	9-12
28	Supporting SIFE in Integrated ENL or Stand-Alone. Presenter: Fausto Salazar, Fordham University, Walsh Library, Room 041, Rose Hill Campus, Bronx, N.Y. 2 p.m. - 4:15 p.m.	9-12
29	ESSA Series for ENL, Bilingual Teachers, Content Area Teachers working with ELLs/MLLs grades 9- 12, NYS/NYC RBERN Staff Fordham University, Lincoln Center Campus. 9 a.m. - 12:30 p.m.	9-12

Information and Resources

Call: (718) 817—0606, Email: nycrbern@fordham.edu

Website: [NYC Regional Bilingual Education Resource Network \(RBE-RN\)](#)