



Principal
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Dear Families,

In an effort to support all children at Hastings each grade level will be devoting time to social/emotional learning for all students. Our goal for this allotted time is to help all students feel safe, respected, and included. Research has shown that by explicitly teaching social and emotional skills, academic growth increases by 13% (Casel, 2019). Social emotional learning can include self-awareness (naming your feelings), self-management (being in control of your feelings and body), social awareness (thinking about others), relationship skills (how to make a friend, how to speak to others), and responsible decision making (making safe choices).

In Kindergarten and 1st grade we will cover the following topics. In addition, we have included books you may want to read with your child at home as well as some suggested activities to support our learning.

Topics/Books/Suggested Activities:

- Community building and routines
 - Suggested Books: Who's in a Family? by Robert Skutch; Chrysanthemum by Kevin Henkes
 - Suggested Activity: Create a GoNoodle account (gonoodle.com) and practice some fun energizers and calm-down activities
- Zones of regulation, executive functioning
 - Suggested Books: I Feel Silly and Other Moods by Jamie Lee Curtis; Froggy Gets Dressed by Johathan London
 - Suggested Activity: Make a morning and evening to do list
- Growth mindset
 - Suggested Books: The Most Magnificent Thing by Ashley Spires; Going Places by Paul A. Reynolds; What Do You Do With an Idea? By Kobi Yamada and Mae Besom
 - Suggested Activity: Have a conversation about perseverance; talk about activities your child can do now and activities they can't do "yet"
- Self-management/self-regulation
 - Suggested Books: You Get What You Get by Julie Gassman; My Mouth is a Volcano by Julia Cook
 - Suggested Activity: Play a board game and practice reactions to winning and losing
- Problem-solving and independence
 - Suggested Books: Don't Let The Pigeon Drive the Bus by Mo Willems; The Day The Crayons Quit by Drew Daywalt
 - Suggested Activity: Talk about the size of the problem in each story
- MLK core values
 - Suggested Books: The Other Side by Jacqueline Woodson; Malala's Magic Pencil by Malala

- Suggested Activity: Conduct random acts of kindness with your child
- Working with peers
 - Suggested Books: The Jelly Donut Difference by Maria Dismondy; The Rainbow Fish by Marcus Pfister
 - Suggested Activity: Set a goal to play with a new friend recess; Have a playdate!
- Perspective taking
 - Suggested Books: The Tale of Two Beasts by Fiona Robertson; The True Story of the 3 Little Pigs by Jon Scieszka
 - Suggested Activity: As you read books together, ask your child to consider the feelings of the characters and make a guess as to why they are acting in a certain way
- Celebrating differences
 - Suggested Books: We're All Wonders by R.J. Palacio; Pink is Just a Color and So is Blue by Niki Bhatia
 - Suggested Activity: Have a conversation about you and your family are unique

By partnering in this work, we will share a common vocabulary with specialist teachers, assistants, recess staff, and families, so that all adults use consistent language to support the children. We are all committed to building strong and positive self-perceptions in our students, so that each person can navigate the power and social dynamics that exist across all settings and for all ages.

For more information, please visit the CASEL (Collaborative for Academic, Social, and Emotional Learning) Website (casel.org) and/or the Hastings Social Emotional Learning Website <https://sites.google.com/lexingtonma.org/hastingsssel/home>.

Most Sincerely,
Your Teacher

Self-awareness: Know your strengths and limitations, with a well-grounded sense of confidence, optimism, and a “growth mindset.”

Self-management: Effectively manage stress, control impulses, and motivate yourself to set and achieve goals.

Social awareness: Understand the perspectives of others and empathize with them, including those from diverse backgrounds and cultures.

Relationship skills: Communicate clearly, listen well, cooperate with others, resist inappropriate social pressure, negotiate conflict constructively, and seek and offer help when needed.

Responsible decision-making: Make constructive choices about personal behavior and social interactions based on ethical standards, safety, and social norms.



Casel, 2017