

RECOMMENDATIONS

Based on the scan findings, YDEKC offers the following recommendations to strengthen whole child supports across the whole day:

- Develop consistent messaging about the holistic needs of youth and the systems and structures needed to cultivate SEL across the day.
- Strengthen connections and alignment within districts and across sectors to connect whole child supports.
- Increase professional development and capacity support for educators and leaders to strengthen their own SEL skills and the practices to create learning environments that foster SEL in youth.
- Increase and build upon existing collaborative partnerships with families and community partners by integrating explicit SEL efforts in partnership ecosystems in the Road Map region.
- Support the use of data for continuous improvement that emphasize the learning environment, adult practices and youth and family perspectives.

CORE PRINCIPLES

Through the scan process, these principles emerged for whole child, whole day efforts to thrive in our region. They serve as touchpoints throughout the report and are infused into the recommendations above.

These principles call attention to past learnings from the Road Map Project and must be woven throughout all efforts to build effective and equitable learning environments:

- **A Commitment to Racial Equity:** The active pursuit of increasing culturally relevant school climate, supports, curricula, and pedagogy.
- **Youth and Family Centered:** Seeking, valuing, and honoring ideas, perspectives, and knowledge of both youth and families.
- **Authentic and Collaborative Partnerships:** Trusting relationships between schools and partners are vital in building a system of supports across the whole day.
- **High-Quality Practice:** Focused on adult practice and the quality of experiences young people are having in our classrooms and youth programs.

WHO IS YDEKC?

Youth Development Executives of King County (YDEKC) is a coalition and cross-sector convener supporting the holistic success of children and youth in King County. Our members represent more than 100 non-profit organizations directly serving youth ages 5 through young adulthood within King County. YDEKC works to build bridges between organizations and across systems to create an ecosystem of supports for the whole child across the whole day.

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Visit ydekc.org to access the full landscape scan.

SOCIAL AND EMOTIONAL LEARNING LANDSCAPE SCAN

Systems & Structures that Support
Whole Child Outcomes in the
Road Map Region

September 2018



YDEKC
Youth Development Executives
of King County

WHOLE CHILD, WHOLE DAY

A rich and growing body of research points out that learning is inherently social and emotional. For academic skill development to occur - especially for youth that have been marginalized because of race, poverty, or other circumstances - families, schools, expanded learning providers, and community members must work together to build environments that promote social and emotional learning (SEL), inspire a sense of belonging, and reflect and value the diversity of the youth we serve.

Taking a whole child approach means weaving social, emotional, and academic skill development together in an environment that is welcoming, supportive, and inclusive of all youth. This whole child approach acknowledges that learning doesn't only happen during school time, but across the "whole day" in a variety of settings, and recognizes that families, schools, expanded-learning providers, and community members must work together to build an integrated system of supports for our youth. It has six key attributes:

Stable Leadership and Whole Child Vision

Positive Climate and Culture

SEL-Related Curriculum and Instruction

Whole Child, Whole Day Ecosystem

Professional Development and Capacity Support

Partnerships with Youth, Families, and Community

Continuous Improvement Strategies

SEL LANDSCAPE PROJECT

For young people to succeed in school, work, and life, they must have access to learning environments where every child feels safe, supported, connected, and inspired to learn and thrive.

During the 2017-2018 school year, with support from the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation, YDEKC conducted a landscape scan to better understand how school districts and youth programs in the Road Map Project region (South Seattle and South King County, Washington) are addressing social and emotional skill development through the lens of a whole child, whole day approach.

We intend for this landscape scan to be used by school districts, community partners, and funders to identify opportunities for cross-sector collaboration, alignment, and learning to support whole child outcomes. The full report is available at ydekc.org.



SCAN THEMES

While conducting this scan, we framed our questions in terms of a whole child approach, by asking what supports are in place that foster a positive climate and SEL skill development. Several themes emerged:



"THE READINESS HERE IS PHENOMENAL."
We found an awareness and articulated support for whole child efforts across the region and in all seven school districts' central administrations. While a holistic approach has long been a focus for youth development organizations, the potential of language and practice alignment with schools is growing in the region.



"IT'S NOT THE WHAT. IT'S THE HOW."
Although district central offices are all working towards building a vision and comprehensive framework for supporting all students, the "how" of bringing this vision to life varies from district to district, and even more widely from school to school.



"HOW CAN WE DEVELOP SEL SKILLS IN YOUTH WHEN ADULTS STRUGGLE WITH IT?"
We heard that SEL needs to start with adults, and this can be a challenge. The challenge of shifting adult mindsets, actions, and behaviors to prioritize and model social and emotional learning practices was a prevalent and urgent theme.



"BUILDING AUTHENTIC PARTNERSHIPS TAKES TIME."
Collaboration with families and community partners, though identified as a key piece of supporting SEL and creating a safe and positive school culture, was not always prioritized. School districts in the region are increasing family and community engagement efforts.



"IT'S HARD TO PROVE EFFECTIVENESS OF PREVENTIVE WORK."
Measures of social and emotional skills at the individual level are in a fairly emergent stage. School districts are collecting data on school climate and culture using a variety of student, staff, and parent surveys. Youth programs use Weikart's Youth Program Quality framework that supports staff practice and creates programs with positive climate at the core.