

# Lean into SEL to Improve Student and Staff Wellbeing and Improve Student Outcomes

March 18, 2024

Kylie Massey, Tammy Bolen, and Debra Parker



Washington Office of Superintendent of  
**PUBLIC INSTRUCTION**

# OSPI Presenters



**Kylie Massey, M.Ed.**

**Program Supervisor,  
Elementary School  
Counseling**



**Tammy Bolen, M.Ed.**

**Assistant Director,  
Social Emotional Learning &  
Title IV**



**Debra Parker**

**Program Supervisor,  
Social Emotional Learning**

## Vision

*All students prepared for post-secondary pathways, careers, and civic engagement.*

## Mission

Transform K–12 education to a system that is centered on closing opportunity gaps and is characterized by high expectations for all students and educators. We achieve this by developing equity-based policies and supports that empower educators, families, and communities.

## Values

- Ensuring Equity
- Collaboration and Service
- Achieving Excellence through Continuous Improvement
- Focus on the Whole Child



Washington Office of Superintendent of  
**PUBLIC INSTRUCTION**

# Equity Statement

Each student, family, and community possesses strengths and cultural knowledge that benefits their peers, educators, and schools.

Ensuring educational equity:

- Goes beyond equality; it requires education leaders to examine the ways current policies and practices result in disparate outcomes for our students of color, students living in poverty, students receiving special education and English Learner services, students who identify as LGBTQ+, and highly mobile student populations.
- Requires education leaders to develop an understanding of historical contexts; engage students, families, and community representatives as partners in decision-making; and actively dismantle systemic barriers, replacing them with policies and practices that ensure all students have access to the instruction and support they need to succeed in our schools.



Washington Office of Superintendent of  
**PUBLIC INSTRUCTION**

# ***Tribal Land Acknowledgement***

***I would like to acknowledge the Indigenous people who have stewarded this land since time immemorial and who still inhabit the area today, the p'squosa or Wenatchi people, "people in between" had villages along the Wenatchee river and surrounding areas.***



# By the end of this session, participants will...



Identify and challenge misconceptions (“myths”) about Social Emotional Learning (SEL)



Understand how SEL practices impact teacher wellbeing and student outcomes



Walk away with resources that support best practice



# Welcome! Please take our Mentimeter!

Join at [menti.com](https://menti.com) &  
use code 4755 1372





## SEL Misconceptions (“Myths”)



SEL makes kids soft. I want to prepare them for the real world.

Isn't that why we have a school counselor?

I'm a teacher, not a therapist!

I just want my kid to learn math.

I'm the school counselor...if the teacher teaches SEL, what am I supposed to do?





# Myth #1: SEL Only Teaches Students about Feelings



# Truth: SEL Teaches More Than Just Feelings

Self-Awareness

Self-Management

Self-Efficacy

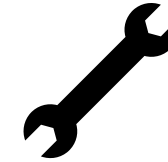
Social Awareness

Social Management

Social Engagement

## Future...

79% of employers identified SE skills as being the most important qualities needed for success, yet are the hardest to find



Technical Expertise	Interpersonal Qualities
Medical Field	Ambition
Teaching	Confidence
Electrician	Teamwork
Software Design	Adaptability

# The Reality

It's also about positive classroom & school environments



That means we need to...

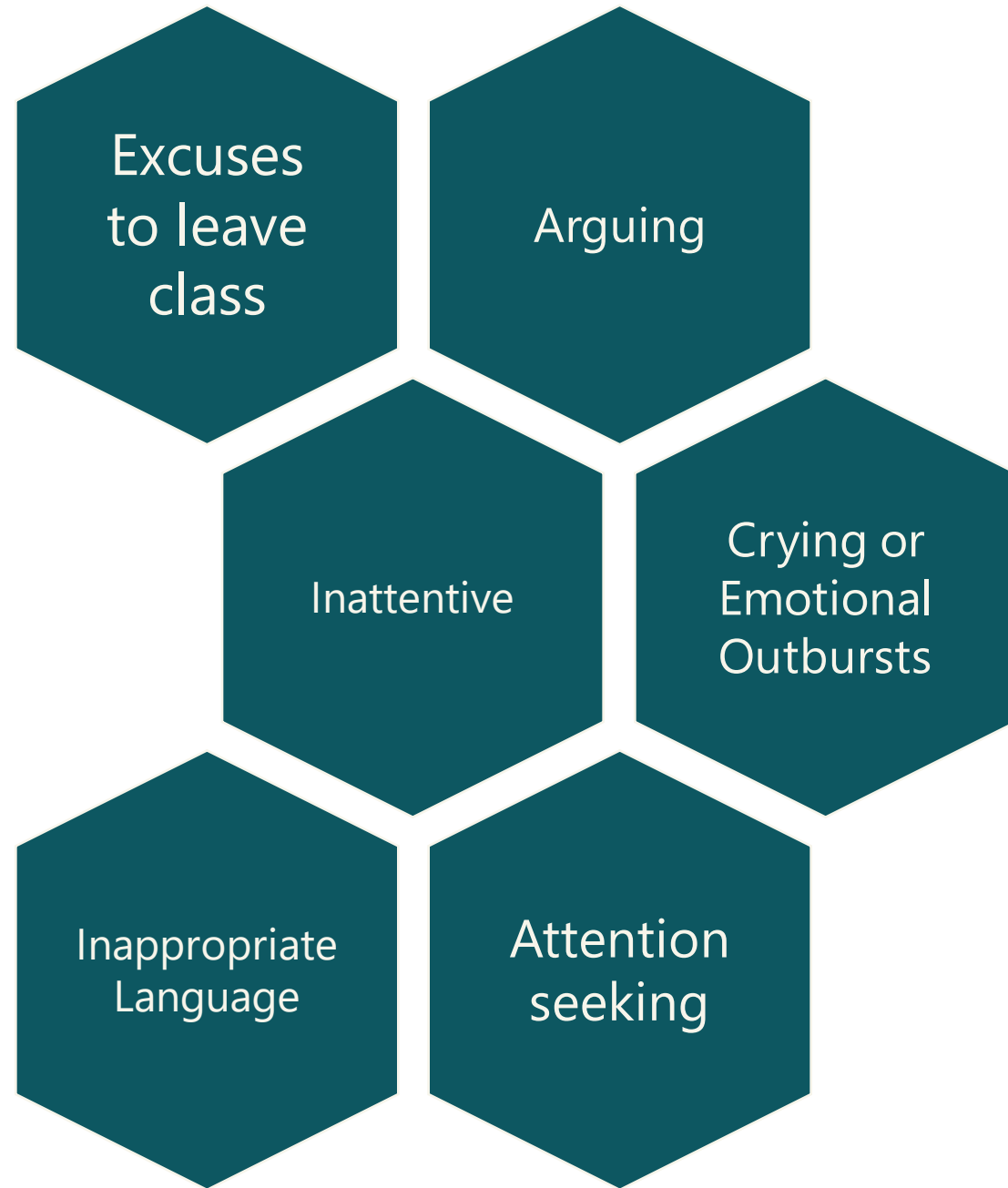
- Engage our families
- Get to know students as individuals
- Organize classrooms that represent all students



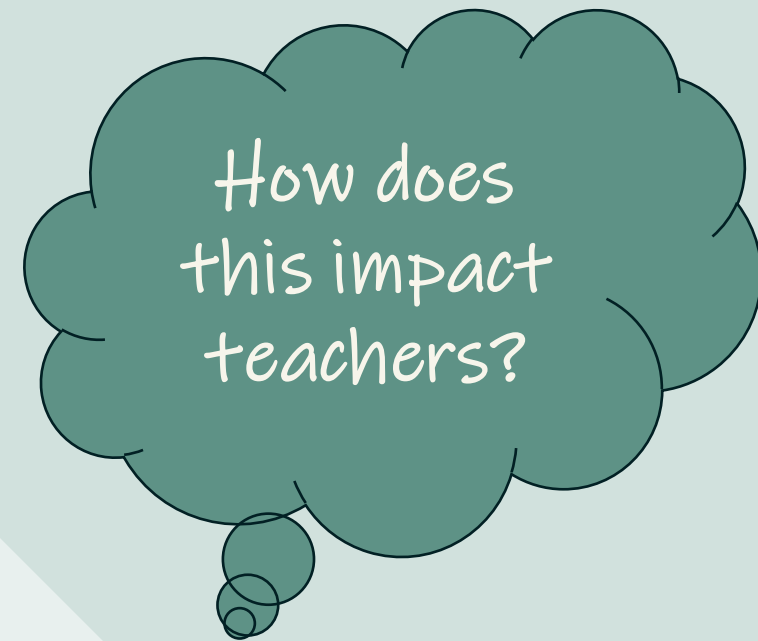
How it impacts teacher wellbeing



# Myth #2: SEL is Only for Kids with Behavior Issues



# TRUTH



↓ 9% - conduct problems, such as classroom misbehavior and aggression

↓ 10% - emotional distress, such as anxiety and depression

↑ 9% - attitudes about self, others, and school

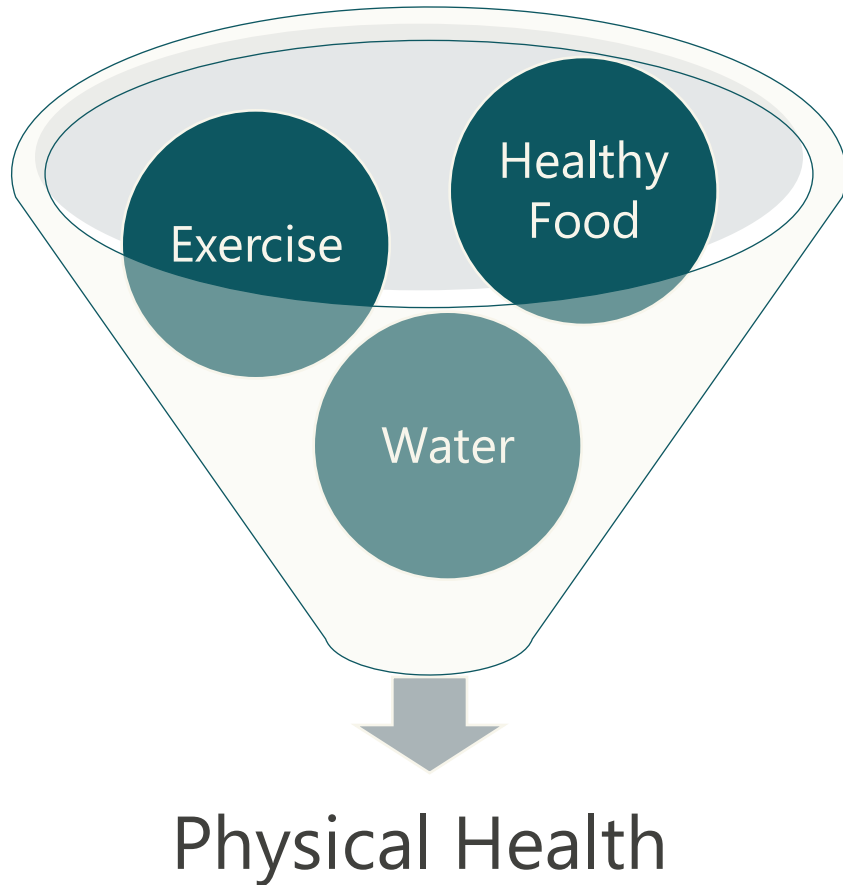
↑ 23% - social and emotional skills

↑ 9% - school and classroom behavior

↑ 11% - achievement test scores



# The Reality



- Academic Learning IS social and emotional; and
- When students have unmet needs, their *behavior* will communicate them
- SEL teaches the essential skills needed to manage and organize thoughts and behaviors

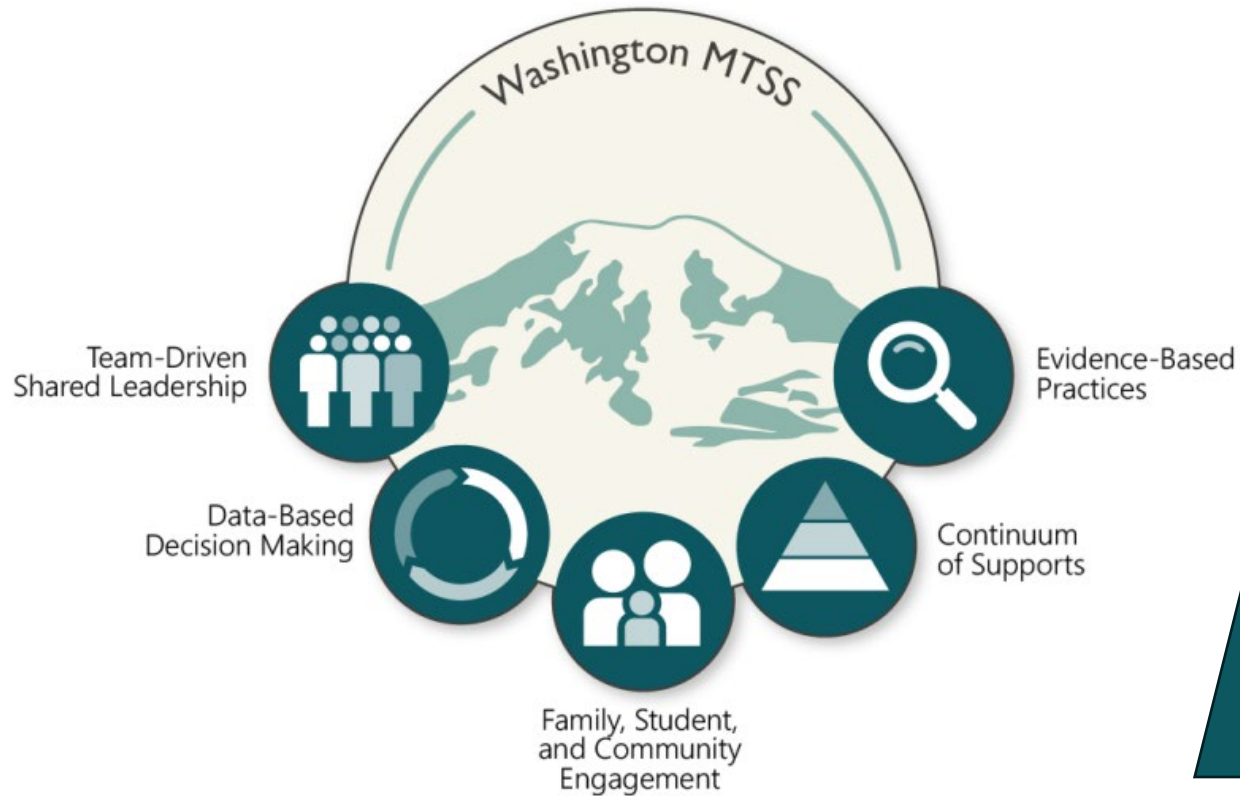




Myth #3:  
SEL Should be Taught by the Counselor



# TRUTH: SEL is, can, and should be taught by EVERYONE!



- Solution-focused brief counseling
- Consultation
- Referrals

**Tier 3 - FEW**  
(5-10% of students)

- Targeted interventions

**Tier 2 - SOME**  
(20% of students)

- Core instruction
- District-/school-wide activities

**Tier 1 - ALL**  
(100% of students)

<b>Academic</b>	<b>Social Emotional</b>	<b>College &amp; Career</b>
-----------------	-------------------------	-----------------------------

**Domains of instruction**

# The Reality is, some staff are resistant...

Limited time  
& resources

Uncomfortable  
with the content

Afraid of  
backlash

Scarcity  
mentality

Uncertain how to  
deliver other  
parts of  
programming

Threat to  
professional  
identity

- Validate the discomfort
- Student success = the destination; let's carpool to get there!
- Start with the standards
  - [WA-SEL](#)
  - [ASCA](#)
  - [Crosswalk](#)
- Provide space for continuous learning
  - [Blank MTMDSS Worksheet](#)

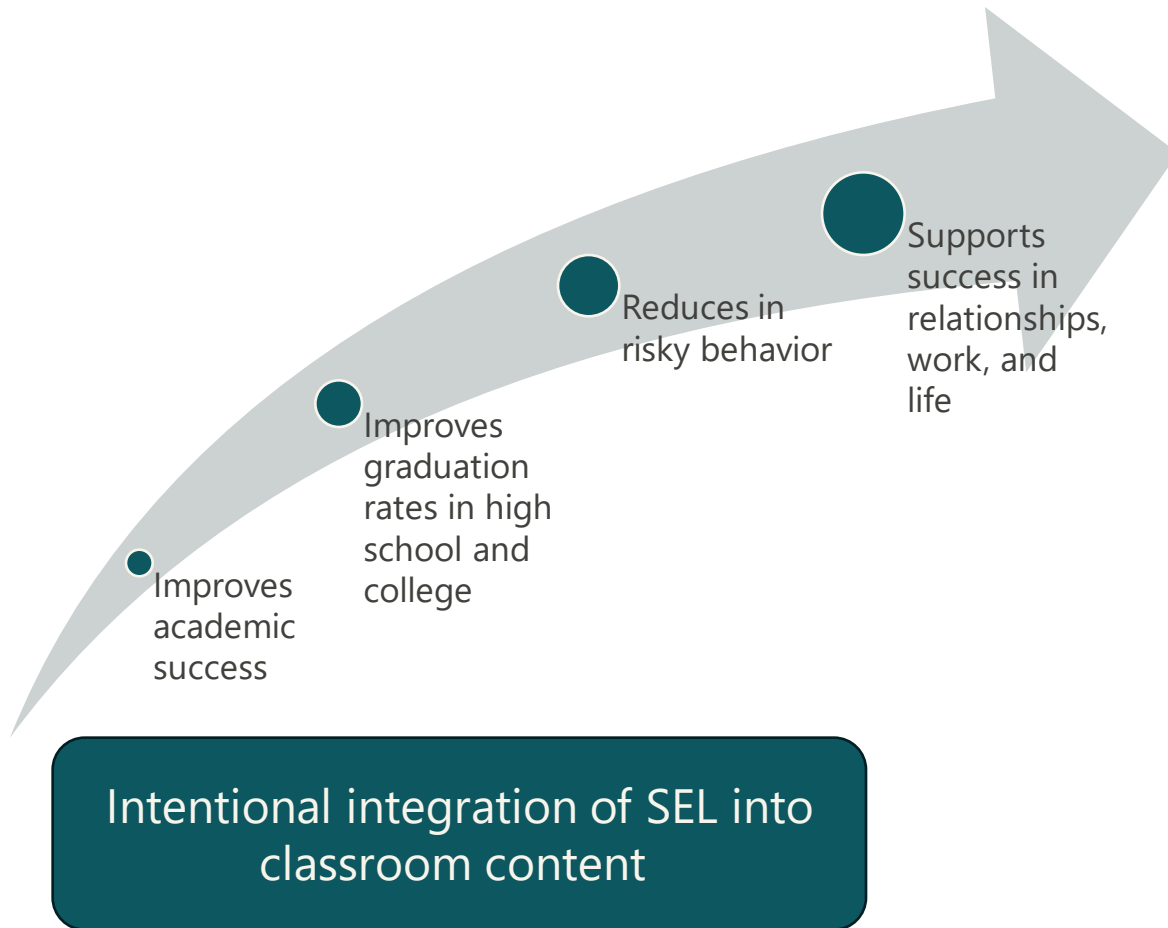


# Myth #4: We Can't Teach SEL without an SEL Curriculum



# Truth!

## SEL can be taught without an SEL Curriculum



Many teachers are already providing some social emotional learning without using a curriculum.

It is a function of good teaching:

- Relationship Building
- Metacognition
- Problem Solving
- Collaboration
- Teamwork





# Reality: It can be hard!

- Use the adopted [SEL Standards, Benchmarks and Indicators](#) during lesson planning to build in SEL
- Utilize the SEL [3 Signature Practices](#) from CASEL
  - Focus on and model your own SEL skills
  - To start, focus on planning and using just 1 practice
- Use a [lesson plan template](#) that includes SEL

Coming Soon!  
Essential Practices  
companion  
document for SEL  
and Content  
Integration

**How it impacts teacher wellbeing:** When teachers build relationships with students and teach SEL, they report feeling more connected and burn-out is reduced.



# SEL 3 Signature Practices



**Welcoming rituals** like morning meetings or an interactive “do-now” build community and set the stage for the learning that’s about to happen. This practice also brings all the voices into the room, and when you have students talking at the start of class, they are more likely to stay engaged throughout.




**Engaging strategies** like “turn to your partner,” “Socratic Seminar,” and “Jigsaw” are infused with SEL, vary in complexity, and consist of sequential steps facilitated by the teacher to support learning individually and collectively.



**Optimistic closures** like an “Appreciation, Apology, or Aha” aren’t meant to be only happy ways to end class. Rather, they provide an opportunity to reflect on what happened in class, share a next step, express gratitude, or lift up new understanding.





What Myths  
Are You  
Hearing?



# Resources/Evidence/Tools

- [The School Counselor and Character Education - American School Counselor Association \(ASCA\); The School Counselor and School-Family-Community Partnerships - American School Counselor Association \(ASCA\)](#)
- [Washington SEL Implementation Guide](#)
- [Washington SEL Implementation Brief: For Educators](#)
- [Why “Social and Emotional Learning” is So Important for Kids Right Now](#)
- [How to Sell SEL: Parents and the Politics of Social Emotional Learning](#)
- [Early Social-Emotional Functioning and Public Health: The Relationship Between Kindergarten Social Competence and Future Wellness \(ctfassets.net\)](#)
- [New Poll Shows Overwhelming Support Among Parents for Teaching Social and Emotional Skills in Schools](#)
- [Article: “Find Your Marigold: The One Essential Rule for New Teachers”](#)







## Contact Us!

Kylie Massey, [kylie.massey@k12.wa.us](mailto:kylie.massey@k12.wa.us)

Tammy Bolen, [tammy.bolen@k12.wa.us](mailto:tammy.bolen@k12.wa.us)

Debra Parker, [debra.parker@k12.wa.us](mailto:debra.parker@k12.wa.us)



Washington Office of Superintendent of  
**PUBLIC INSTRUCTION**

*Connect with us!*



[k12.wa.us](https://k12.wa.us)



[facebook.com/waospi](https://facebook.com/waospi)



[twitter.com/waospi](https://twitter.com/waospi)



[youtube.com/waospi](https://youtube.com/waospi)



[medium.com/waospi](https://medium.com/waospi)



[linkedin.com/company/waospi](https://linkedin.com/company/waospi)