



# Smithtown Central School District

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## District Position Paper

### **Topic: Social and Emotional Learning**

The Smithtown Central School District is committed to creating a learning environment that supports and promotes the social, emotional, and intellectual well-being of all students. Social and emotional learning (SEL) is a pathway to achieve this goal. According to the Collaborative for Academic, Social, and Emotional Learning (CASEL), social emotional learning “is the process through which children, youth and adults acquire and effectively apply the knowledge, attitudes and skills necessary to understand and manage emotions; set and achieve positive goals; feel and show empathy for others; establish and maintain positive relationships; and make responsible decisions.”

CASEL has identified Five Core SEL Competencies:

- **Self-awareness:** The ability to understand one’s own emotions, thoughts, and values and how they influence behavior across contexts.
- **Self-management:** The ability to manage one’s emotions, thoughts, and behaviors effectively in different situations and to achieve goals and aspirations.
- **Social awareness:** The ability to understand the perspectives of and empathize with others, including those from diverse backgrounds, cultures, and contexts.
- **Relationship skills:** The ability to establish and maintain healthy and supportive relationships and to effectively navigate settings with diverse individuals and groups.
- **Responsible decision-making:** The ability to make caring and constructive choices about personal behavior and social interactions across diverse situations.

The inclusion of social emotional learning practices within the Smithtown Central School District is meant to increase the opportunity for students to strengthen their belief in themselves, enhance academic performance, and manage potential anxieties in a healthy manner. These acquired skills will likely increase college, career, and civic readiness. Additionally, students have the opportunity to benefit from improved attitudes about others, their school and their academic achievement.

Smithtown Central School District utilizes a Multi-Tiered System of Support to identify and address the needs of our students. Using Multi-Tiered Systems of Support (MTSS) enables our district to proactively provide universal interventions for all students and to customize interventions that address academic and behavioral challenges for at-risk students (secondary interventions) and high need students (tertiary interventions). Universal interventions span a wide range of supports that include, but are not limited to, service learning opportunities, extra-curricular activities, after school programs and expanded learning opportunities, peer tutoring, mentoring, mental and physical well-being workshops, team sports, student government and student clubs.