



Executive Summary

A result of the small group work activity

Community Engagement Session (CES) #4 • Jan. 21, 2019

An estimated 60 participants attended the *Destination 158* community engagement session on Jan. 21, 2020. Facilitating Team members, Board of Education members and some District staff are not asked to sign-in.

The topic for session four of the *Destination 158* community engagement program was The Power of Emotions: Social and Emotional Well-Being and Student Safety and Security. Participants heard a presentation by Superintendent Dr. Scott Rowe and Dr. Erika Schlichter, the Huntley Community School District 158 Assistant Superintendent for Learning and Innovation.

To view the presentation, visit Destination158.com. Following the presentation, participants worked in ten small groups to complete the tasks discussed below. Following is a summary of the responses from the groups. Verbatim responses can be found at Destination158.com.

Task #1: The framework

How can the school district link all three aspects of the framework (mental health, behavior and skill building) to ensure families are a partner in every level of support for our children?

Participants provided various suggestions for linking the three aspects of the framework to ensure families are partners in every level of support for our children. Communication, proactive student support and community education were the most commonly listed topic areas.

Communication

Eight of the ten tables of participants listed enhanced, multi-channel, communication as a way the District can link all three aspects of the SEL framework to ensure families are partners in every level of support for our children. They highlighted the importance of two-way communication with the one group's comment of, "communications between all parties - more frequent between parents and teachers," capturing the sentiment of many of the groups. It would be beneficial for additional information about lessons, curriculum, competencies and classroom activities to be shared with the community so that as one group wrote, "skills can be reinforced and supported at home." Multiple groups specifically mentioned using multiple forms of technology including the website, email, Facebook and text messages to communicate with parents about this topic.

Proactive Support

Providing proactive support and assessment for students in the area of SEL was listed by half of the tables. One group noted the District should, "increase and expand identification procedures for students in a more proactive manner," while another listed, "Taking proactive assessments for specific skills, proactive teaching situations for individual grade levels," as a suggestion.

Community Education

Nearly half of the tables listed community education as a way to enhance the partnership between families and the District to support our children. Suggestions included parent education classes, including information about common language used in the classroom, and collaboratively bridging the gap between parents and teachers.

Task #2: Welcoming, safe and secure

How are we doing to balance the need to feel welcome in our schools and yet provide a secure environment for our students? What areas could our system improve to maintain that balance of schools being community centers and safe/secure learning environments?

The responses to this task were varied amongst the ten groups. Overall, participants think the District is doing a good job balancing the need to feel welcome while providing a secure environment for our students. However, two tables did mention a need for improvement in making building security more consistent and improving efforts to reduce bullying. There was also a concern about the security of the buildings when school is not in session, including during before and after school programs and weekend activities.

Many groups recommended building personal connections as a way to maintain a balance of schools being community centers and safe/secure learning environments. Two groups highlighted the importance of staff being visible and interacting with students and parents. Comments in this area included, “continue teacher presence-greeting students/checking in individually,” and, “personal greetings from staff when entering the building.” One group specifically highlighted that students, “love having officers on campus,” and suggested a beginning of the year meet and greet with campus officers. Another focused on the importance of school events to help families feel connected, and suggested more building-level parent training and family events focused on wellness.

Task #3: School safety and security priorities/goals for strategic plan

Write up to three “priority” or goal statements for the school safety and security section of our district’s new strategic plan that we should consider as we move forward. What follows is a synthesis of the responses into five goal statements.

- Provide learning environments where every student feels safe.
- Continually monitor and evaluate the effectiveness of school safety measures.
- Research, invest in and implement current best practices and technology in the area of safety and security to provide safe, secure learning environments.
- Ensure that all District facilities are secure at all times, including during non-school hours.
- Provide the appropriate level of support staff, including school resource officers, and recess, lunchroom and bus supervisors, to help ensure safe and secure learning environments.
- Provide consistent, clear and transparent communication with parents about school safety procedures and emergency situations, and information on how they can support their children in the area of school safety and security.

Task #4: Social and emotional learning priorities/goals for strategic plan

Write up to three “priority” or goal statements for the social and emotional learning section of our district’s new strategic plan that we should consider as we move forward. What follows is a synthesis of the responses into five goal statements.

- Establish a District 158 framework and guidelines to continually assess, monitor and support each student’s social and emotional development from kindergarten through graduation.
- Provide adequate staff resources to support social and emotional learning within each building.

- Develop methods to involve and educate parents in the social and emotional development of their children.
- Integrate the importance of social and emotional learning into the culture of District 158 for every student through effective professional development and communication.

CONSENSUS POINTS

Points of general agreement from the work activity

- Huntley 158 can link all three aspects of the SEL framework (mental health, behavior and skill building) to ensure families are a partner in every level of support for our children through enhanced communication, proactive support for students and community education.
- District 158 provides a safe and secure environment for its students, however, there is concern about the security of the buildings when school is not in session including during before and after school programs and weekend activities.
- The community considers building personal connections as a way to maintain a balance of schools being community centers and safe/secure learning environments.
- The District should provide safe and secure learning environments with the appropriate staff to support the social and emotional well-being of all students.

**For a complete listing of all responses
see the CES #4 Verbatim Response Document**