

## **Overview of Social Emotional Learning (SEL) Standards**

Social and Emotional Learning (SEL) is the process through which children and adults acquire the knowledge, attitudes, and skills they need to: recognize and manage their emotions; demonstrate care and concern for others; establish positive relationships; set and achieve goals; make responsible decisions; and handle challenging situations constructively. Students who develop skills in these SEL areas thrive in all aspects of their lives from the academic and extracurricular domains to the personal, family, and community settings.

According to CASEL, the Collaborative for Academic, Social, and Emotional Learning, research shows the positive impact that strong SEL skills have on students' academic and personal well-being. Based on this body of research and the Children's Mental Health Act of 2003, Illinois legislators enacted Section 15(a) of Public Act 93-0495, which expanded the Illinois Learning Standards to include SEL standards. The Illinois State Board of Education (ISBE) established the following standards for all K-12 students:

- Goal 1 - Develop self-awareness and self-management skills to achieve school and life success.
- Goal 2 - Use social-awareness and interpersonal skills to establish and maintain positive relationships.
- Goal 3 - Demonstrate decision-making skills and responsible behaviors in personal, school, & community contexts.

At Gower, Social and Emotional Learning and applying those skills are part of what we do. Our Capturing Kids' Hearts Process and our direct teaching of the standards are embedded from Early Childhood classes through 8th grade. The School Counselor and the Social Workers work with our Physical Education teachers to develop lessons and units that are aligned to the standards as a part of our overall Health and Physical Education curricular programs. There are many more examples at both schools such as our "zones of regulation" or stations at the elementary level or our advisory activities at the middle school level.