

# SEL Innovation Awards for Districts

## 2017 Recipients and Project Descriptions

The SEL Innovation Awards for Districts sought proposals from districts seeking to improve systems that foster social and emotional skills in fresh, inventive or innovative ways. Examples include novel interventions or instructional practices focused on improving competencies such as resilience, learning mindsets, compassion, self-management and sense of belonging. Though all proposals were welcome, the fund prioritized proposals that specifically support one or more of the following student populations:

- Students from indigenous communities
- New arrivals (such as refugees) or immigrants
- English learners
- Students with significant adverse childhood experiences
- Single-sex environments

We received 328 applications from more than 40 states. Through a competitive process, 30 districts were selected to receive a grant award. See below for the complete list of district recipients, organized by state, followed by a brief description of each district’s SEL project beginning on page 2. Or click on a district name to go directly to that district’s project description. You can also find out more about the SEL Innovation Awards for Teachers and Districts by visiting [education-first.com/social-emotional-learning-innovation-fund](http://education-first.com/social-emotional-learning-innovation-fund).

District	State	District	State
<a href="#">Galena City School District</a>	AK	<a href="#">Kentucky Valley Educational Cooperative</a>	KY
<a href="#">Ajo Unified School District</a>	AZ	<a href="#">Holyoke Public Schools</a>	MA
<a href="#">Big Picture Network</a>	CA	<a href="#">American Promise Schools</a>	MI
<a href="#">Citizens of the World Charter Schools Los Angeles</a>	CA	<a href="#">Minneapolis Public Schools</a>	MN
<a href="#">City Charter Schools</a>	CA	<a href="#">Saint Louis Public Schools</a>	MO
<a href="#">Oakland Unified School District</a>	CA	<a href="#">Neshoba County School District</a>	MS
<a href="#">Sacramento City Unified School District</a>	CA	<a href="#">Northern Cass School District 97</a>	ND
<a href="#">Silverton School District</a>	CO	<a href="#">NACA Inspired Schools Network</a>	NM
<a href="#">Farmington Public Schools</a>	CT	<a href="#">Valor Collegiate Academies</a>	TN
<a href="#">Hartford Public Schools</a>	CT	<a href="#">KIPP Austin Public Schools</a>	TX
<a href="#">Hillsborough County Public Schools</a>	FL	<a href="#">YES Prep Public Schools</a>	TX
<a href="#">Hawai’i State Department of Education</a>	HI	<a href="#">Albemarle County Schools</a>	VA
<a href="#">Chicago International Charter School</a>	IL	<a href="#">Federal Way School District</a>	WA
<a href="#">Oak Park River Forest High School - District 200</a>	IL	<a href="#">Milwaukee Public Schools</a>	WI
<a href="#">Chautauqua County Community Schools, USD 286</a>	KS	<a href="#">Potosi School District</a>	WI

# SEL Innovation Awards for Districts

## 2017 Recipients and Project Descriptions

### **Galena City School District • Galena, AK**

Galena City School District is located in a geographically isolated village in Alaska that serves many Alaska Native families. Most of our students have had multiple Adverse Childhood Experiences (ACEs) and trauma in their lives. We are hosting two student-centered events called Phlight Clubs which build Webs of Support around student participants and connects them to caring adults. Learning Kaleidoscope Connect’s foundational framework will teach critical life concepts, while also providing practice and skill processing to support students emotionally, socially and academically. Furthermore, we will coach students and staff to identify and focus on strengths and increase resiliency.

### **Ajo Unified School District • Ajo, AZ**

This year, Ajo Schools will lay a foundation for restorative practices that take root in the hearts of our students, staff and community. Restorative practices prioritize relationship building and mutual understanding in daily school life and amidst conflict. This initiative will introduce new solutions for discipline and allow us to develop as a trauma-informed school district, attuned to the socio-historical context within which trauma and harm occur universally and in our unique place. Student workshops by Challenge Day will launch this year of culture-building. Experts in the field will coach our High School Peer Mentors, teachers, administrators and certain parents in the use of restorative relationship-centered language, community-building circles and informal restorative conferences when harm is caused. Our Restorative School Culture Steering Committee will ensure the project is collaborative, sustainable and attuned to the real needs of students and teachers. We are thrilled to initiate authentic and holistic growth in the social and emotional culture of our school system.

### **Big Picture Network • San Diego, CA**

Our project will create an SEL Community of Practice that brings together educators from both alternative charter and district schools throughout California who are committed to progressive approaches including Positive Discipline, Restorative Practice and Trauma Informed Care. Because many practitioners operate in isolation at their individual sites, in-person convenings are critical for building capacity for improved social and learning experiences for students. Through two full-day retreats as well as site visits and follow-up networking, participants will explore innovative SEL models and workshop their own SEL implementation experiences with their colleagues.

### **Citizens of the World Charter Schools Los Angeles • Los Angeles, CA**

Citizens of the World Los Angeles (“CWC LA”) will build upon the organization’s comprehensive, innovative social emotional learning program by clearly defining outcomes at each grade level for our K-12 “graduate dispositions” (habits of character that represent our graduates’ readiness to act in a certain way). We will complete this process by convening a working group of school staff to develop rubrics for each graduate disposition, ensuring buy-in and leveraging our internal talent. We also will further codify our existing SEL practices to allow for sharing of our practices with all CWC schools and others in the sector.

# SEL Innovation Awards for Districts

## 2017 Recipients and Project Descriptions

### **City Charter Schools • Los Angeles, CA**

City Charter Schools operates City Language Immersion Charter (CLIC) a dual-language elementary school, and The City School (6-8). Our intentionally diverse schools create an engaging, safe, supportive, and challenging learning experience for students. Through the Immersive SEL Project (ISELP), we will deepen and codify our existing SEL efforts, integrate mindfulness into the K-8 SEL curriculum, and engage parents as partners through Reflective Parenting training. As a result our students will develop critical mindsets and strategies to feel calmer and more fulfilled; get along better with others; concentrate and learn; manage stress; and perform well in academic and extra-curricular activities.

### **Oakland Unified School District • Oakland, CA**

OUSD will partner with Mills Teacher Scholars and two OUSD school sites to build the SEL skills and competencies required for effective adult collaborative learning. Teachers will model and practice academic social and emotional learning through engaging in collaborative teacher inquiry focused on student learning. Teachers will develop the skills to make sound, evidence-based instructional decisions, as they learn how to gather and analyze classroom data that reveal how students are thinking and what SEL competencies students need to be successful in their instructional routines.

### **Sacramento City Unified School District • Sacramento, CA**

Our project is designed around a Theory of Action that aligns our district's SEL competencies, high quality classroom norms, and an intentional instructional approach that allows for real world application of social and emotional skills. This project will place teachers at the epicenter of a shift in intentional practice of aligning SEL and core academic content from a culturally and community responsive lens. This cohort will work to co-design a tool-book for teachers, by teachers, that helps to move our district as whole to meet all students where they are at in the development of specific and meaningful SEL skills.

### **Silverton School District • Silverton, CO**

Silverton School is taking a three-part approach to infusing SEL into our school culture. We have hired a social-emotional leader to guide students, teachers, and parents in SEL; we are creating individualized SEL support plans for each and every student; and we are converting traditional classrooms/offices into spaces that meet the social-emotional needs of our students. To help guide teachers in becoming proficient in teaching SEL, SEL will be a major focus of our professional development days, and four teachers will travel to Sacramento to see SEL in action in different school settings.

# SEL Innovation Awards for Districts 2017 Recipients and Project Descriptions

## **Farmington Public Schools • Farmington, CT**

This award will allow the Farmington Public Schools to deepen our capacity to support those students who struggle with social and emotional challenges. We will use this award to provide additional training to administrators, teachers, social workers, school counselors and other staff and to develop an innovative social and emotional skill-building curriculum for grades K-12. Our ultimate goal is ensure that struggling students can more fully access, and be successful in, our general education curriculum and graduate with the knowledge and skills needed for success in college, careers, and citizenship.

## **Hartford Public Schools • Hartford, CT**

Hartford Public Library and Hartford Public Schools will offer an afterschool and summer program aimed at the growing demographic of students arriving in Hartford at the high school level having just come to the country. Many of these students are refugees, who may not have received formal education for many years and who may have experienced significant trauma. The project will provide a safe environment for them to bridge the cultural gap between their home culture and new culture, help them accelerate their academic English language in an engaging and student-centered environment, and build connectedness through community service-oriented project-based learning.

## **Hillsborough County Public Schools • Tampa, FL**

Hillsborough County Public Schools will utilize funding to pilot the Latinos in Action (LIA) program at three schools: Pierce Middle, Webb Middle, and Leto High. Schools were targeted for inclusion given their large Spanish-speaking English Language Learner populations. The LIA model will be implemented through a year-long, college and career readiness elective course designed to help Latino students meet their potential by leveraging their social, cultural and personal assets to excel academically and emerge as leaders. Other key LIA activities include weekly tutoring at local elementary schools, engagement in additional service opportunities, extracurricular involvement and leadership committee participation.

## **Hawai'i State Department of Education • Honolulu, HI**

*Pono* is the Hawaiian principle of how to live in harmony by respecting all people and things. As a cultural response to bullying in schools, the E Ola Pono Campaign encourages youth to create campaigns that promote peace and pono in schools and communities. Since 2007 the Pono Campaign has been coordinated by the Hawai'i Civil Rights Commission and the University of Hawai'i Center on Disability Studies. Endorsed by Hawaii's Department of Education, there has been participation of youth from every island. Youth-designed and driven campaigns have always been a powerful way to reduce bullying in schools and communities.

## SEL Innovation Awards for Districts 2017 Recipients and Project Descriptions

### **Chicago International Charter School • Chicago, IL**

Chicago International Charter School (CICS) is partnering with Mindful Practices to create a Mindfulness Fellowship that has the power to impact 14 campuses and over 8,600 students. Teachers will have the opportunity to participate in a cohort-based fellowship that will deepen their understanding of trauma-informed, culturally responsive teaching and learning. Throughout this fellowship, teachers will engage in cross-network learning and collaboration to increase their impact on student success as well as seed entrepreneurial innovations in their classrooms. Dr. Kiljoong Kim at the University of Chicago will advise the project team on action research and dissemination of new ideas across the network.

### **Oak Park River Forest High School - District 200 • Oak Park, IL**

The *Student at the Pillar Project* will be a web and app based system of communication between the teachers, counselors, coaches and mentors across a student's network. Educators are often faced with the problem of too little information too late. Sharing basic and timely information (e.g. Shoenice landed a 20 hr. week job at Pete's market!) across normally disconnected groups of adults increases transparency, knowledge and understanding of a student's life and academic circumstances in order to make their educational experience more personalized and effective.

### **Chautauqua County Community Schools, USD 286 • Sedan, KS**

The Chautauqua County Community District L.E.A.P. (Learning for Emotional & Academic Power) is a multi-faceted project that improves academic and emotional wellness of students through a multi-tiered system of academic support, community involvement, and social skills training/support and aligns with the Kansas Education Systems Accreditation. Students are grouped in Power Quads (Academic, Social, Service, and Prep) in a five-day a week program tailored to student needs at the high school and elementary building. Each student receives weekly academic interventions that include extended/expanded learning, participates in social-emotional learning activities, and engages in school/community projects that create productive, successful and engaged members of society.

### **Kentucky Valley Educational Cooperative • Hazard, KY**

Kentucky Valley Educational Cooperative staff designed Girls Planning for Success (GPS) as an empowerment program to address the unique needs and concerns of middle school girls. The program consists of eight topics which incorporate the five Social Emotional Learning competencies, a physical activity component to encourage fitness and a Community Capstone to engage/empower students in their communities. Each middle school in our 22 districts can form a "Squad" with interactions between Squads taking place through a virtual platform. In the spring, we will host a culminating event to bring all Squads together for a day of celebration and solidarity.

# SEL Innovation Awards for Districts

## 2017 Recipients and Project Descriptions

### **Holyoke Public Schools • Holyoke, MA**

The Holyoke Public Schools plan to use the SEL Innovation Fund grant to 1) increase capacity of the existing, award-winning Pa'lante Restorative Justice (RJ) Program at Holyoke High School (HHS) and, 2) expand the program to Peck Middle School—the primary feeder school for HHS. At HHS, these funds will support an additional, half-time Restorative Justice Interventionist position to use restorative practices to support students and their families, and to address educational policies and practices that lead to racial disparities and educational inequities. At Peck, funds will support phase one of a similar youth-led RJ program that will begin by focusing on community-building advisory circles.

### **American Promise Schools • Detroit, MI**

American Promise Schools, a non-profit CMO in Detroit, will pilot a 360 Degree Survey and aligned programming for scholars, teachers and families around specific, research-based, non-cognitive capacities. In particular, our focus is on cultivating the mindsets found to correlate most heavily with academic success, including Growth Mindset, Belonging, and Relevance/Purpose. We will conduct the survey three times per year, gathering data on schoolwide trends and scholar progress over time. These data will then be used to inform differentiated staff professional development, data-driven quarterly parent workshops, and curriculum for advisory periods and small group interventions.

### **Minneapolis Public Schools • Minneapolis, MN**

Ogichidaa Oyata, which means “Young Warriors” in Ojibwe, is a district-wide American Indian Youth Council that will serve as cultural consultants for schools, review and provide mini-grants to schools, facilitate district wide presentations, and represent American Indian Urban Youth on a national level. This program was designed around the intent to build and invest in future American Indian tribal and community leaders. It is an opportunity for American Indian youth to be empowered and to have a voice so they can contribute to the district level decisions that affect them and their future successes.

### **Saint Louis Public Schools • St. Louis, MO**

The Social and Emotional Learning Innovation project in St. Louis Public Schools will focus on empowering newcomer English language learners in grade 6 through 10 as they develop socio-emotional competencies and become SEL leaders. For this project, Saint Louis Public Schools will partner with Bilingual International Assistant Services (BIAS) to develop and conduct lessons and hands-on experiences that will combine the expert knowledge of licensed therapists and language development expertise of ESOL teachers. The project will also support classroom teachers working with newcomers by guiding them through the implementation of student-centered classroom environments that support social emotional learning.

# SEL Innovation Awards for Districts

## 2017 Recipients and Project Descriptions

### **Neshoba County School District • Philadelphia, MS**

This project creates Native American Cultural MakerSpaces where Choctaw students can develop and share their cultural diversity with non-Choctaw peers. MakerSpaces will include Native America beadwork, basket making, storytelling, dancing, drumming and cooking. Elder Choctaw Tribal members will teacher students in these areas. Students will demonstrate and teach other non-Choctaw students about their culture. They will create presentations from research with a new collection of Native American books. Students will share their presentations with elementary and middle school classes. Choctaw students in these grades will be mentored in tribal cultural activities and history by high school tribal members.

### **Northern Cass School District 97 • Hunter, ND**

Northern Cass understands educating the whole student is essential to creating students who are choice ready. To do this at a proficient level, we must provide counseling services to families and students throughout and after the school day. The 'Community in Schools' initiative will include a partnership with North Dakota State University (NDSU) and their Counseling Education Department. Through this partnership, NDSU will place a Site Supervisor on campus at Northern Cass. This person will supervise students earning their master's degree in school or clinical counseling. They will work with families and individuals to provide counseling services. Participants from NDSU will also co-teach with Northern Cass staff to provide family training related to key social-emotional learning skills. In addition, students will be intentionally exposed to guidance lessons teaching the SEL skills of a growth mindset, clear boundaries, resilience, and self-awareness.

### **NACA Inspired Schools Network • Albuquerque, NM**

The NACA Inspired Schools Network (NISN) is committed to supporting Native American identity, culture, language, college preparation and community. Our project will define and build SEL skills within an Indigenous education framework that incorporates: Intellectual, Physical, Social/Emotional, and Community/Relationship Wellness with NISN values of Respect, Responsibility, Community Service, Culture, Perseverance and Reflection. The project will serve 600 students and build strengths critical to post-secondary success, such as determination, perseverance, goal-setting, tenacity, and connection to identity, place, and culture. NISN will document and develop Indigenous SEL modules, utilizing a curriculum hub and multi-state convenings to disseminate information and best practices.

### **Valor Collegiate Academies • Nashville, TN**

The Social Emotional Learning Innovation grant will support the continued development and sharing of "Compass," a unique competency-based human development model created by the team at Valor Collegiate Academies. By launching in-person Compass Camp trainings and developing a Compass Open House [website](#) this year, Valor aims to serve as a learning and sharing catalyst for schools around the country who are interested in adopting the Compass model. We believe that Compass has the potential to be a missing link in public schools that will increase academic and SEL results for scholars by integrating social and emotional learning into the foundation of school models.

# SEL Innovation Awards for Districts 2017 Recipients and Project Descriptions

## **KIPP Austin Public Schools • Austin, TX**

KIPP Austin Public Schools educates students with different motivations for engaging in learning, behaving positively and performing academically. KIPP Austin's Elementary Social-Emotional Learning (SEL) and Restorative Practices Program will provide a foundation for safe and positive learning, and enhance students' ability to succeed academically, socially and professionally. The project will specifically refine and replicate (1) a daily 25-minute "Community Building Time" block for all students; (2) targeted behavior interventions for selected students; and (3) ongoing training for teachers on restorative practices and trauma informed care across all KIPP Austin elementary schools.

## **YES Prep Public Schools • Houston, TX**

YES Prep Public Schools developed The Girls' Leadership Development Project to educate participants on positive peer relationships, qualities of healthy relationships, positive adolescent development, community building and goal-setting. Through Social Emotional Learning sessions, female students will learn skills to employ in their everyday interactions that will improve the campus culture and ultimately increase academic success, including self-awareness, self-management, responsible decision-making, relationship skills and social awareness. Using a train-the-trainer model, a cohort of students will engage in five interactive SEL learnings throughout the year and develop presentations alongside community leaders for large scale conference sessions with up to 500 female students.

## **Albemarle County Schools • Charlottesville, VA**

Pupusas, Cassava Cakes, and Dolmas! "Bridges through Bread" fosters community and cross-generational communication through cooking and conversation. Immigrant and refugee parents/elders will be the leaders and experts, teaching students and their families how to cook international meals. Aided by interpreters, the cooks will teach about different dishes and customs from their countries of origin. Participants can replicate the delicious cuisine with the help of our community cookbook, a culminating project compiled and created by newcomer ESOL students in the Albemarle County, Virginia Public Schools.

## **Federal Way School District • Federal Way, WA**

Federal Way School District's SEL project aligns with the goals and signature strategies embedded in the district's strategic plan. The grant will support the innovative work coordinated by the district's Partnership Academy and SEL leadership team members. Families and student scholars served within the academy's ELL and Special Education services will share and document their transition success stories while building their leadership capacity to support successful transitions with families throughout the community. Families and student scholars will chronicle their progress and lessons learned as they create messages of triumph in spite of barriers. Parents will facilitate and co-construct workshops and presentations linked to fostering authentic family engagement and social emotional confidence in student-scholars.



# SEL Innovation Awards for Districts

## 2017 Recipients and Project Descriptions

### **Milwaukee Public Schools • Milwaukee, WI**

The Fabric of Milwaukee project, led by Milwaukee Public Schools (MPS), will serve immigrant and refugee students assimilating into new environments to ensure cultural identity is not sacrificed. MPS will partner with the Arts@Large Serve2Unite Student Leadership Program to create opportunities for schools to support and enhance understanding of the cultures of all students. The project will focus on students who recently moved to Milwaukee as immigrants or refugees with the purpose of normalizing student fears, providing opportunities to celebrate cultures, connecting students with peers and the community, and providing mentorship opportunities. This will be accomplished by introducing students to service-learning projects that will feature literary, visual, multimedia and performance art.

### **Potosi School District • Potosi, WI**

The social and emotional innovation project at Potosi School District aims to create a three-tiered social-emotional learning model that ensures all students have opportunities to acquire skills in self-management and self-regulation. Our first tier, the universal level of support, will be establishing daily mindfulness practices in classrooms. The second tier will provide support for students who show a need for more situational, short term, and small group supports in mindful practices. Our third tier will be for students who have chronic mental health needs or have been impacted by trauma. These students will receive ongoing support with mindfulness practices through a highly trained and skilled social-emotional/mindfulness coach. Along with this student support model, we also intend to provide education and training in mindfulness to our parents and community members. We will be collaborating with a local business, Healing Pathways to Wellness, with a goal of increasing our small rural district's capacity to meet the social and emotional learning needs of students, staff and parents.