

2026 COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT SHOWCASE

The Social-Emotional Learning Project and Career-Ready Skills

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Project Description

- The Social and Emotional Learning (SEL) Project is actively working with Sacramento Valley Charter School (SVCS) to foster lifelong social and emotional skills that can improve psychological well-being.
- The SEL Project strives to provide K-8 students with SEL skills that support them in their development of the five core SEL concepts of self-awareness, self-management, social awareness, relationship skills, and responsible decision making (CASEL).
- In 2nd to 8th grade classrooms, SEL mentors deliver lesson plans, supporting activities, and reflections that address the five core SEL concepts and their subtopics.
- In this poster, we focus on college student success in terms of the development of career-ready skills.

Project Highlights

- Every semester, there are roughly 15-25 college students working as mentors, paired with two supporting faculty members.
- The project involves learning for both elementary/middle school and college students.
 - Elementary/middle school students developed SEL skills.
 - College students gained teaching and real-world professional experience, while developing cultural competency and practicing the use of inclusive language.
- Sac State faculty and SEL mentors collaborate with SVCS to recognize and respond to issues impacting students through a developmental and social justice lens, tackling issues such as bullying, stress, and improving academic success.

Experiential Learning for Career Readiness & Civic Impact

- Connected college level classroom learning to real-world teaching through SEL Project at California State University, Sacramento. For example:
 - Applied Child Development knowledge to adapt and scale down lessons based on elementary and middle school students' developmental skills.
 - Learned to adjust lessons through trial and error, and using concrete examples for younger students and encouraging abstract thinking for older students.
 - Gained practical experience through hands-on teaching, reflection, and adapting strategies in the classroom.
 - Development of key professional skills including communication, leadership, and problem solving.
 - Prepared for future careers in education and child development through community engagement.



Community Impact

- The SEL Project has provided SVCS students with foundational SEL skills designed to meet the social and emotional needs identified by SVCS administrators and teachers.
- SEL instruction in the classroom impacts the schoolwide culture and produces a more supportive learning environment.
- "Our students, our staff, everybody on campus feels kinder... What Sac State does and what [they] provide to our scholars and staff really works, and it has been an honor to have this partnership." -SVCS School Counselor

Campus Community Impact

- The SEL Project strengthened collaboration between Sacramento State students, faculty and local schools, creating impactful community engagement and hands-on learning opportunities.
- Trained Sacramento State students worked to gain 60-70 hours of community service by designing lessons, teaching SEL concepts, building teamwork and leadership skills, while faculty provided guidance and feedback to support students in their transition into their future careers (Kim-Ju, Knifsend, & Gonzales, 2024).

References

Collaborative for Academic, Social, and Emotional Learning. (2020). What is SEL? <https://casel.org/what-is-sel/>

Kim-Ju, G. M., Knifsend, C. A., & Gonzales, A. (2024). Putting social and emotional learning into practice: Best practices in developing and implementing an SEL program through a university-1st-8th grade partnership. *Social and Emotional Learning: Research, Practice, and Policy*, 3. doi: 10.1016/j.sel.2024.100033