

Spreading the Word About SEL

Broward County Public Schools, Florida

Marketing doesn't seem like a term that would come up in a district SEL initiative, but SEL Fellow Daniel Shapiro of Broward County Public Schools (BCPS) in Florida has made it his mission to get the word out. With seven years of SEL implementation under its belts, BCPS has a firm foundation in place. A robust team of SEL staff, under Shapiro's leadership, has brought SEL into all aspects of the district's work. Now the district is ready for its next challenge: communicating out about the "what," "why," and "how" of their SEL efforts in a persuasive and accessible way.

Start With Listening

The effort started with listening. Shapiro and his team sought ways to connect with the community, ask for their perspectives, and gather their input about what their needs are.

They've undertaken this part of the process a variety of ways, starting with an SEL strategic planning committee made up of district and school leaders (principals, assistant principals, teachers), with participation by students. The SEL team shares information, resources, and research about SEL with these stakeholders, but also ask a few key questions:

- What is SEL to you?
- What does SEL look like in your classroom, school, office, or other workplace?

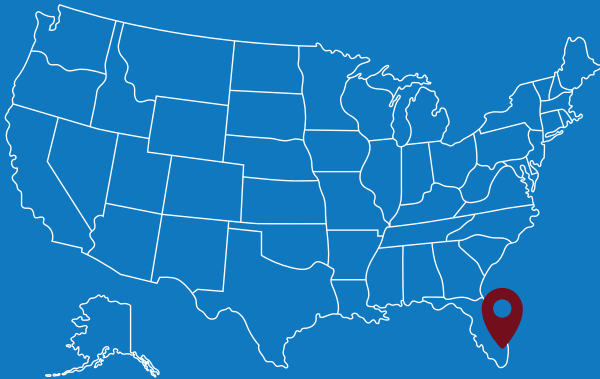
By beginning with questions and listening, the team ensured that they were not simply imposing the their beliefs or dictating best practices. Instead, their goal was to gain insight into what these various stakeholders wanted for students and how they saw SEL as supporting the district's top priorities.



Meet SEL Fellow

Daniel Shapiro

Supervisor of Social and Emotional Learning



Welcome to Broward County Public Schools

- 260,100 students
- SEL work began in 2015-2016
- The District's vision is to provide students with the Social and Emotional Learning (SEL) skills to thrive academically, become responsible citizens in society, to contribute value to themselves as well as their families and communities, and to enjoy productive and satisfying lives.

Challenge: Communicating to all stakeholders about the SEL work

“How do you show up every day, be kind to the person in front of you, help move the work forward, maintain relationships and communication, continue to identify the needs and make sure there are plans in place to meet those needs? It’s the work of a lifetime. I’m so glad to be in the center of it.”

A Multi-Pronged Approach to Communications

Working with this input, the team then put a plan in place to create a variety of communications resources:

One-page flyer for schools, families, and guardians

This one-pager communicates what the SEL team does, including the district’s SEL vision, its SEL priorities, the benefits of SEL, and how BCPS is supporting SEL. It can be placed in the front office or shared at community events as a reference for school staff, families, and community members.

Four-page resource for SEL liaisons

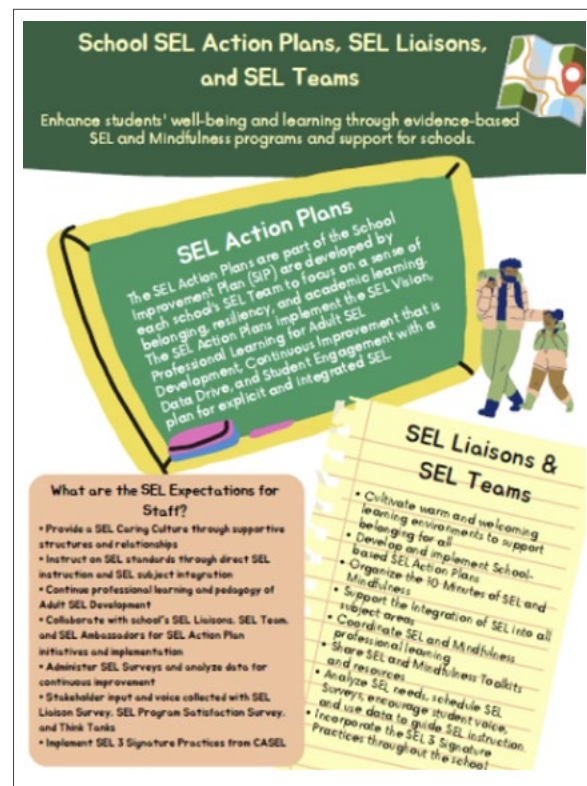
This more in-depth resource supports SEL liaisons working in the schools by providing a step-by-step guide and action plan for bringing SEL directly to students. The school liaisons are staff who work in the schools to provide a bridge from theory into action for students, family, and staff.

The team also created a digital binder to gather all SEL resources in one place, and makes regular updates to the district’s SEL webpage and Canvas sites. His team also produces a “SELebrating Success” newsletter, which celebrates the work and provides information, resources, and tips to help support SEL throughout the district.

For Shapiro, communication is critical to the long-term success and sustainability of BCSD’s SEL initiative. “At some point I’ll be passing this along to someone else,” he says. “I want to build something that’s organized and informed by real needs of kids, families, staff. We’re putting real care into this, making sure it’s connecting with our district stakeholders. It’s a precious opportunity.”



One-page flyer



Four-page resource