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Week 11 Reading Reflection

***After reading the Edutopia article on Social Emotional Learning (SEL), do you think SEL should be added to the common core standards? Why or why not?***

Personally I do see a lot of benefits from such a curriculum. We live in a world where people are increasingly contradictory and combative, and the arts of tact, compromise, and negotiation seem to be a dying breed. In fact, Pew Research shows that we as a country are more divided today than we have been in over 20 years ("Political Polarization in the American Public", 2014). I truly fear that if we as a country continue on this path, that a situation not dissimilar to that experienced by the country during the Civil War may very well erupt and leave our people and land ravaged and barren. We desperately need SEL and the values that it teaches today.

So how is SEL effective, and why do we need it? It promotes more **positivity**, for people themselves, as well as for others. It helps students develop more **empathy, confidence, and persistence** to accomplish their goals. It **decreases stress**, and overall leads to improved outcomes for students, such as **better test scores, grades, positive family and work relationships, better mental health**, etc. (Weissberg, Durlak, Domitrovich & Gullotta, 2018).

This only happens with robust **school support**, which depends on us as admins and educators. If we as a school community can "promote positive school environments" by, for example, creating strong after-school programs, support and counseling programs, strong school culture, etc., we're well on our way. These efforts, together with SEL and strong family & community partnering, will help us make a real difference in our students' lives & our community.

**Sources:**

Political Polarization in the American Public. (2014). Retrieved from <http://www.people-press.org/2014/06/12/political-polarization-in-the-american-public/>

Weissberg, R., Durlak, J., Domitrovich, C., & Gullotta, T. (2016). Why Social and Emotional Learning Is Essential for Students. Retrieved from <https://www.edutopia.org/blog/why-sel-essential-for-students-weissberg-durlak-domitrovich-gullotta>