

## **Social and Emotional Learning Resolution**

A resolution to support H.R. 2437: a bill to support evidence-based social and emotional learning programming.

The social and emotional health of children and adolescents – how they experience and express feelings, interact with others, build and sustain positive relationships, and manage challenging situations- is an intrinsic part of their overall health and well-being. Children that are emotionally health are more likely to enter school ready to learn, succeed in school, be physically healthy, and lead productive lives. In, contrast, children with mental health challenges have lower educational achievement, greater involvement with the criminal justice system and poor health and social outcomes overall.

### **Findings:**

To succeed in school, students need to be engaged. They need to know how to maintain focus and effort in the face of setbacks, work effectively with others, and be good communicators and problem-solvers.

Not only can these skills be taught, they can be taught by regular classroom teachers in schools of every type to students of every background.

Academic outcomes resulting from social and emotional learning include greater motivation to learn and commitment to school, increased time devoted to schoolwork and mastery of subject matter, improved attendance, graduation rates, grades, and test scores.

Students who are involved in social and emotional learning programming show gains on academic achievement tests of 11 percentile points over students who are not involved in such programming.

Social and emotional learning programming also results in reduced problem behavior, improved health outcomes, a lower rate of violent delinquency, and a lower rate of heavy alcohol use.

According to a 2009 report by the CDC, students who feel more connected to school are more likely to have positive health and education outcomes. To accomplish this goal, the CDC recommends that schools provide students with the academic, emotional, and social skills necessary to be actively engaged in school.

Students who exhibit these skills such as problem-solving, conflict resolution, responsible decision-making and relationship building, not only perform better academically, but are far less likely to engage in problem behavior like alcohol and drug use, violence, truancy, and bullying.

Furthermore, Illinois was the first state to adopt developmental and sequential Social and Emotional Learning Standards (SEL). Through the leadership of the Illinois Children's Mental Health Partnership and the Illinois State Board of Education, a cadre of trainers/coaches and family advocates have worked with schools and school districts to support efforts to implement the Social and Emotional Learning Standards. Over 80 schools – impacting over 46,000 students- have implemented SEL plans.

H.R. 2437, as introduced by Representative Judy Biggert of Illinois, would be the first piece of federal legislation to encourage all schools to integrate SEL into their schools curriculum.