

Fundamental 3 –

Develop self-awareness, empathy, emotional/social intelligence, responsible decision-making and citizenship.

Superintendent's Interpretation

Mercer Island School District is committed to the educating the whole child, including developing his/her self-awareness, emotional/social intelligence, responsible decision- making and citizenship. Interpretation of this fundamental requires definitions of the terms that follow:

Self-Awareness

Self-awareness includes the ability for students to set goals (both academic and social), advocate for themselves, and take responsibility for their learning. This involves student reflection on their abilities and determining next steps in a variety of contexts.

Empathy

Empathy is generally thought of as the ability to understand and share the feelings of another. Those described as empathetic often sense other's emotions or have the ability to imagine what someone else might be thinking or feeling at a given moment. This learned capacity to take the perspective of someone else, show empathy, is important to students as they interact in social, academic, and extra/co-curricular environments.

Emotional/Social Intelligence

According to Mayer, Caruso and Salovey (2000), emotional intelligence refers to an ability to recognize the meanings of emotion and their relationships, and to reason and problem-solve on the basis of them. Emotional intelligence is involved in the capacity to perceive emotions in themselves and others, assimilate emotion-related feelings, understand the information of those emotions, and manage them.

Emotional/Social intelligence is defined as the ability to form and sustain positive relationships; experience, manage, and express emotions; and explore and engage with the environment. Students develop their emotional/social intelligence as they grow from elementary to high school students.

Responsible Decision-Making

Decision-making involves defining a problem, taking responsibility, planning, taking action and reflection. Responsible decision-making involves the added layer of taking into account the impact on a decision on oneself and/or others at all of the stages. This could be as simple as a playground dispute, or more complex decisions involving goal setting, academic achievement, athletic development and/or a potential bullying situation. Students need to understand the ramifications of decisions, both large and small, as they take on more and more impactful decisions.

Citizenship

Students are all citizens of their classrooms, schools, communities and the global world. To participate as citizens, students need to build their awareness outside themselves; to understand how societies work, including their school and classroom; to respect and value diversity; to work towards a more equitable and just society; and take responsibility for their actions.