

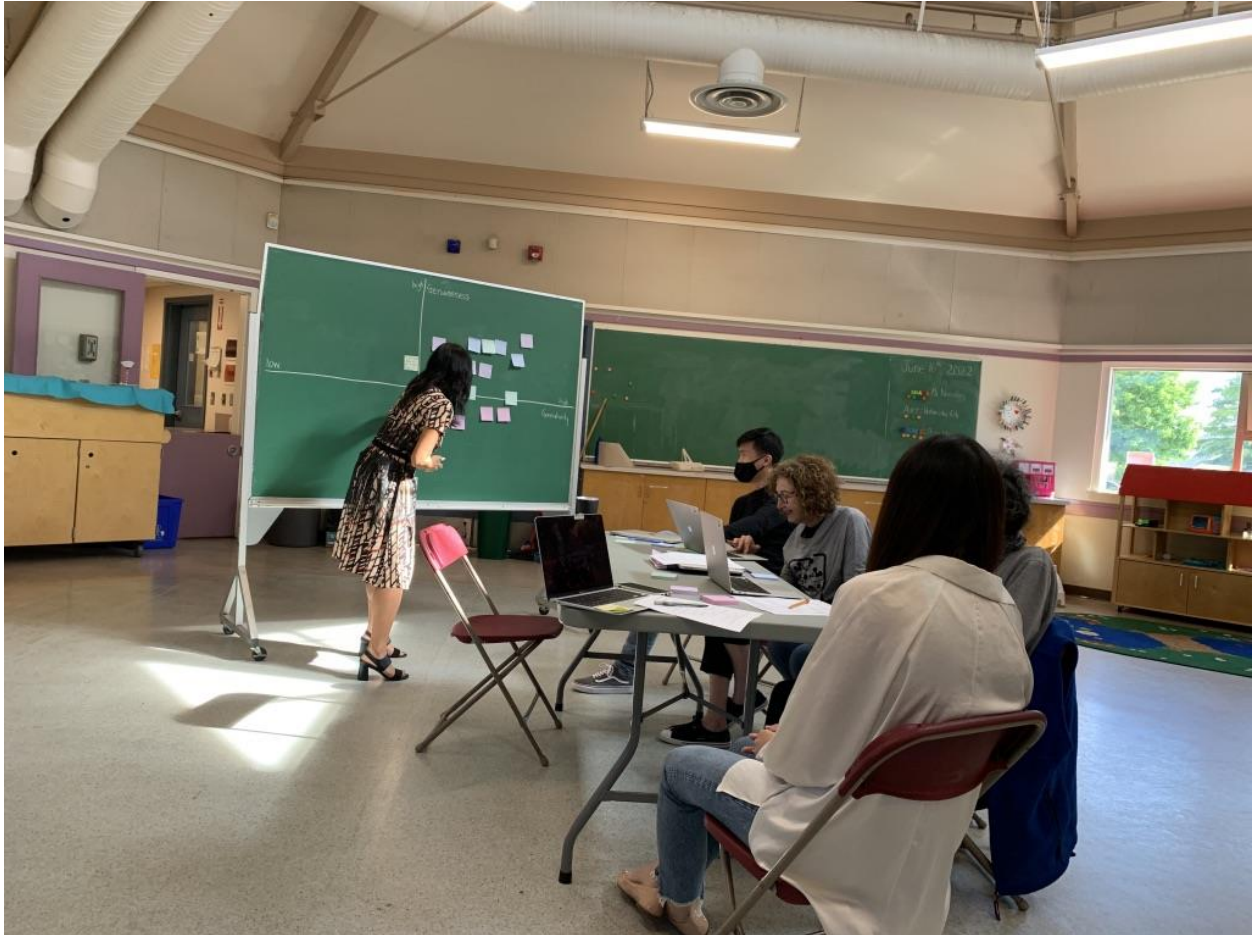
Reflecting on the Year...and Looking Forward to the Next

In the month of June, the Westwind staff had the opportunity to collaborate in grade groups and work with Ellen Hsu, the District Teacher Candidate for Mental Health and SEL. The work on our school focus came to a full circle, as we had established our school goal this past year with the support of Ellen at the beginning, midpoint, and now end.



Over the course of the year, different classrooms took it upon themselves to try different SEL programs in their classrooms. Mood meters, zones of regulation and Mind Up were three strategies and programs that were tried in various rooms around the school. Some classrooms were successful in adopting different strategies, but it became quite apparent after discussions during staff meetings and previous Pro-D Days that a **school wide focus and common language is necessary** to ensure that students eventually internalize and employ SEL strategies independently, with less support from a caring adult. It was quite often

mentioned during collegial discussions amongst our staff that Westwind students are able to verbalize what to do when they are in an uncomfortable situation, but when they faced with a problem, they are not able to put their knowledge into action.



During our collaboration time with Ellen Hsu, teachers in grade groups were able to share the questions that they still had regarding Social Emotional Learning in their classrooms. We grouped and prioritized these questions. The questions that came up included:

From the early Primary Group...

1. If parents don't support at home, how are we expected to impact kids at school?
2. What are some programs or lessons we can teach in the class?
3. Can someone from the district come in to teach SEL lessons to our class?
4. How to help students practice empathy with each other?
5. How do we get started in school startup to engage the students individually?

6. How do we get started in school startup to engage the students as a class?
7. Students can be good at labelling feelings but how can we support them to implement the strategies taught?
8. How to help build students' resilience?
9. What are some SEL programs that are K friendly?
10. Where might I find additional resources for SEL?
11. How might we connect SEL and goal orientation? (Growth mindset)
12. How to raise student awareness of SEL and develop their comfort level to share?
13. Is SEL primarily focussed on self reflection?

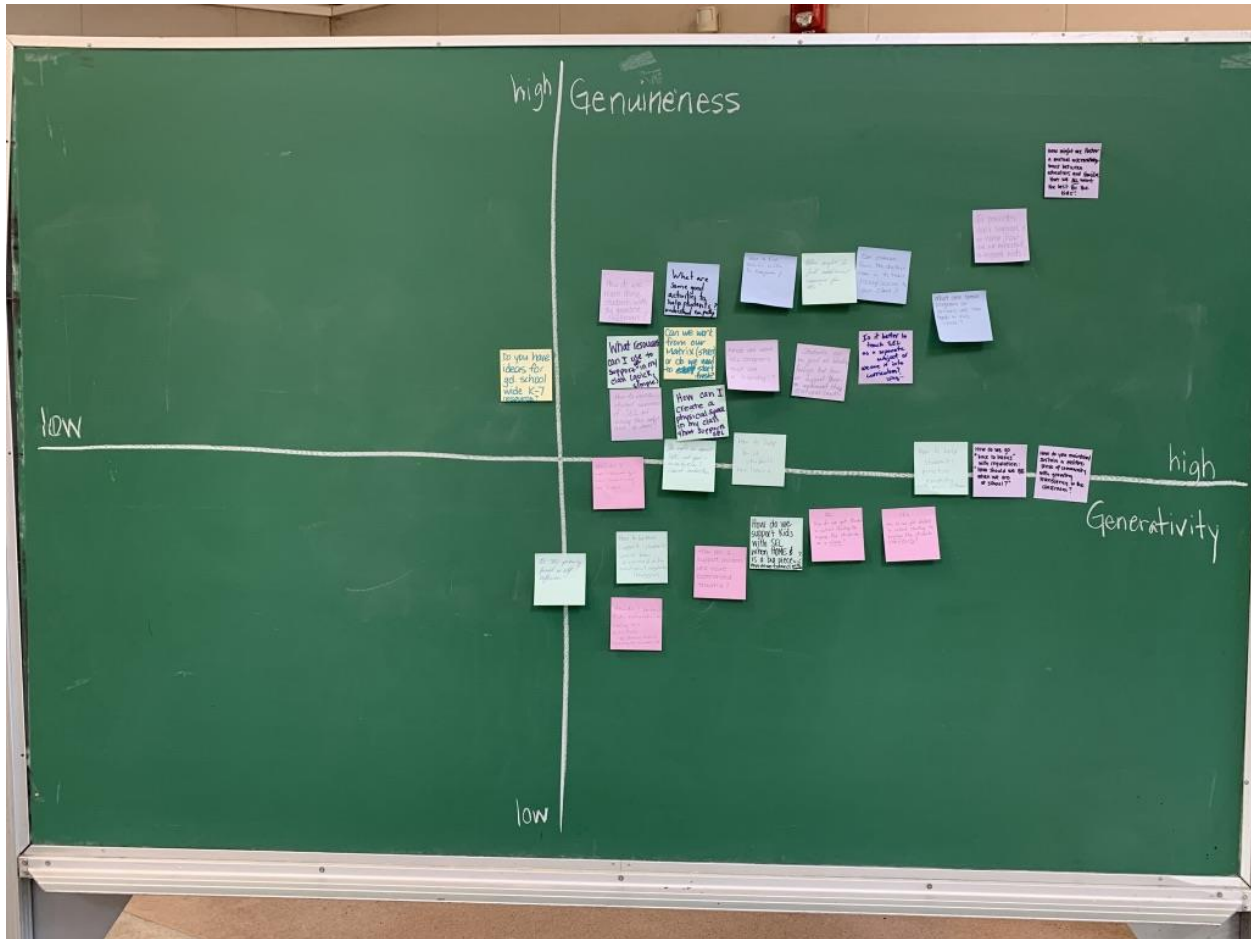
From the Grade 3 to 5 teachers...

1. How might we foster a mutual acknowledgement between educators and families that we ALL want the best for the kids?
2. Is it better to teach SEL as a separate subject or weave it into curriculum? Why?
3. How to better support students who've been diagnosed with emotional regulation struggles?
4. How do we reach those students with the greatest challenges?
5. How to raise student awareness of SEEL and develop their comfort level to share?
6. What resources can I use to support SEL in my class (quick/ simple)?
7. What are some good activities to help students understand empathy?
8. How can I create a physical space in my class that support SEL?
9. How do we support kids with SEL when home is a big piece? How do we connect with Home?
10. How do I protect kids vulnerabilities during SEL activities? E.g. During Circle, reporting on moods etc.
11. How to better support students who've been diagnosed with emotional regulation struggles?
12. How do I individualize SEL teaching for kids?
13. How do we go "back to basics" with regulation: "how should we BE when we are at school?"
14. How do you maintain/sustain a positive sense of community with growing transiency in the classroom?"

From the Upper Intermediate Teachers...

1. How can SEL help students understand each other and their roles?
2. How do we teach REAL empathy?
3. What can we do to increase awareness of SEL in classrooms?
4. I feel that SEL is very targeted to primary. What programs are there that are upper elementary?
5. How much time for planned activities ? 20 min? 30 min?
6. Are planned activities more effective than "moments"?

7. What if some kids are OVERLY emotional and react unproportionally to their problems?
8. How do I have a student who is scared of going into a class?



Conversations from these questions ensued and Ellen shared some SEL resources with the Westwind Staff. Time was given to look through what was available. As a group, we looked to the coming year and gave feedback as to what themes we could explore in the coming year. This brainstorming activity gave everyone the opportunity to give their voice and start the conversation. By establishing a common theme or focus in the coming year will allow for rich conversations on a school wide level – from morning announcements, to classroom discussions, family team events and assemblies, to a community level like PAC meetings and weekly WAAG notices to all families.



Our rough ideas:

September - focus on Building Community (or Diversity and Inclusion or Growth Mindset)

October – ideas included focus on Responsible Decision Making or Diversity and Inclusion

November – ideas included Problem Solving, Body Language Communication, or Social Awareness

December – ideas included Effective Communication, Self Control and Awareness, or Healthy Relationships

January – focus on Problem Solving

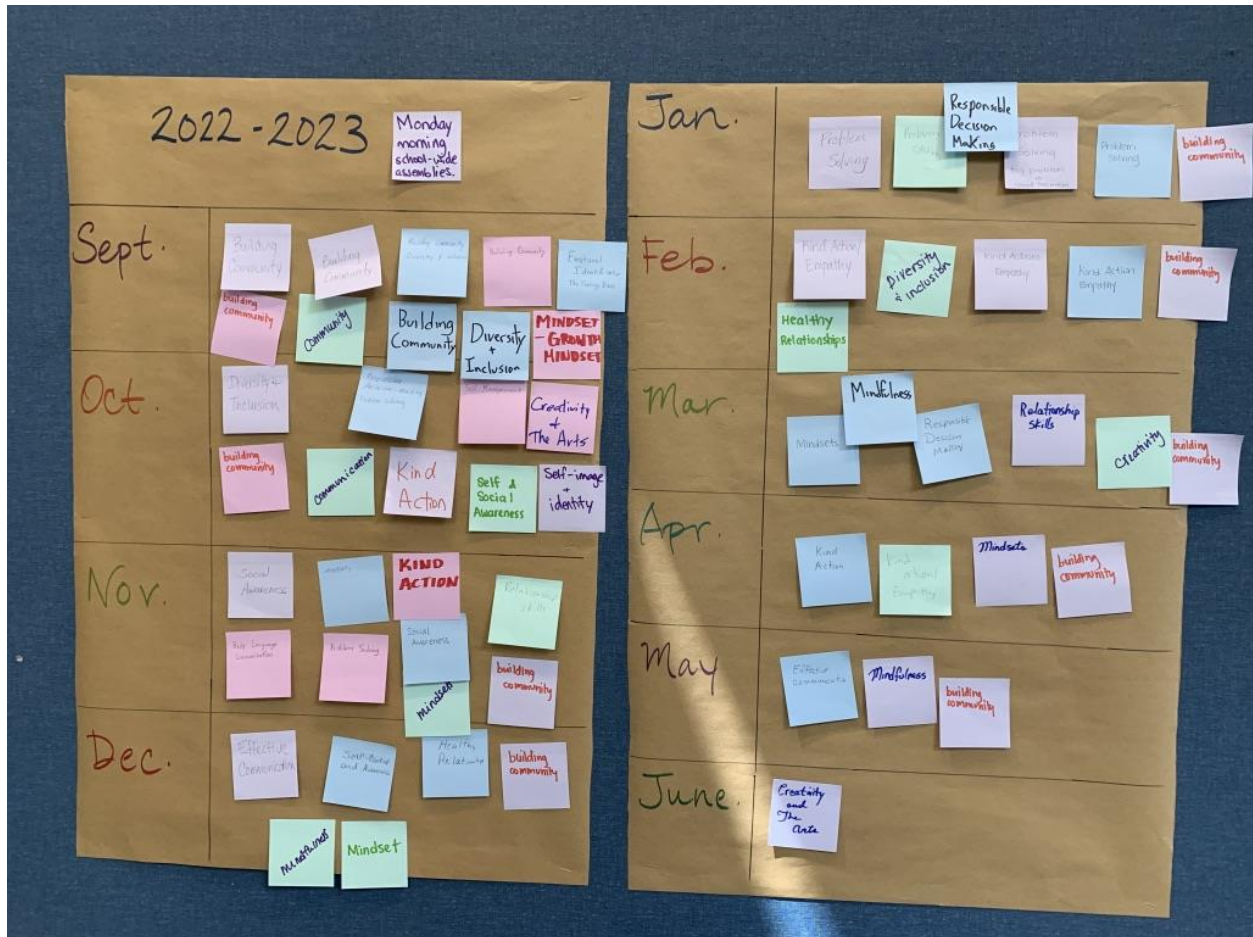
February – focus on Kind Actions, Empathy

March – focus on Mindfulness

April – focus on Mindset

May – focus on Effective Communication

June – focus on Creativity and the Arts



Our collaboration time ended our year in rich conversation. We were given the gift of time to share, reflect and discuss the year past whilst looking forward to a new school year. We were able to harness our positive energy to come up with a rough idea of what the 2022-23 year could look like – a school wide focus that would be integrated into everything that we do.