

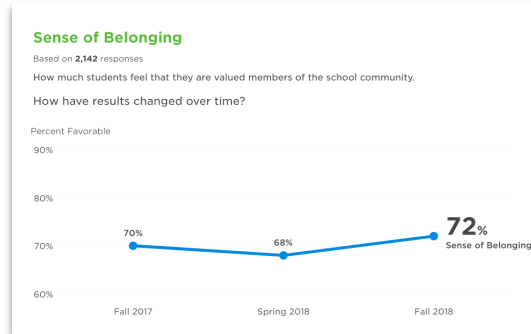
A Learning Environment Where Every Student Thrives: How Worthington Schools Focuses on Students' Social and Emotional Needs

For Worthington Schools (OH), the commitment to support student learning depends on providing a **safe environment** where every student can grow **intellectually, emotionally, socially, and physically**. "In our community, students' physical safety and emotional safety are a major focus point for us," said Trent Bowers, Superintendent of Worthington Schools. "This is why our district has a passion around meeting our students' social and emotional needs."

As part of this commitment to building a safe learning environment, Worthington Schools partners with Panorama Education to measure social-emotional learning (SEL) using the [Panorama Social-Emotional Learning Survey](#). In particular, the district uses Panorama to understand students' sense of belonging in the school community, the strength of the connection between teachers and students, and how students are developing social-emotional skills such as self-management, social awareness, and growth mindset.

A District-Wide Focus on Sense of Belonging and Teacher-Student Relationships

To understand how students feel about their connectedness with school and their teachers, Worthington Schools chose **Sense of Belonging** and **Teacher-Student Relationships** as areas of focus for their twice-yearly SEL assessments. In the district's second year of using the survey, Worthington has seen an uptick in students' perceptions of their sense of belonging.



"When we first saw our results for Sense of Belonging, we were surprised," said Angela Adrean, Chief Academic Officer of Worthington Schools. "Now, we are taking action to build connections, because **we recognize that emotions drive how much and how deeply students learn.**"

How Worthington Incorporates SEL into School Improvement Plans

Example Worthington Middle School Goals

- ➔ Improve **Sense of Belonging**
- ➔ Fully implement **PBIS**
- ➔ Participate in health, wellness, and suicide prevention program

Each of the 19 schools in Worthington is using SEL data from Panorama to set goals for their school improvement plans.

By identifying SEL goals alongside behavior and academic goals, educators at Worthington are committing to the idea that all of these areas contribute to a safe environment where all students can learn and grow.

Recently, Worthington Schools hosted a convening for Ohio districts to discuss **approaches to supporting SEL and school climate**. They started the day with a Responsive Classroom activity used in Worthington classrooms, and participants discussed how to understand and take action on SEL and school climate data.



"We make a commitment to our students and their families that we will constantly evaluate our practices and utilize our resources to do whatever is necessary to help them learn and grow."



Trent Bowers
Superintendent
Worthington City Schools

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