

CASE STUDY

Diverse Texas District Uses 7 Mindsets to Catapult over Barriers

Four years ago, a group of administrators from Chilton ISD heard Roberto Rivera's dynamic speech about social and emotional learning (SEL) at a TASA/TASB meeting leadership conference. With a significant population of English language-learners (ELLs), Chilton ISD was projected to perform at an "F" level in Texas based on its psychometric analysis at the time.

CHILTON INDEPENDENT SCHOOL DISTRICT, CHILTON, TX



- HISPANIC
- WHITE
- AFRICAN AMERICAN



TWO
CAMPUSES



90%
FREE AND REDUCED LUNCH

CHALLENGE

A rural area with a high minority and free and reduced lunch population needed a solid mental framework to overcome outside challenges and be able to focus on success in school.

SOLUTION

Adopted a social emotional learning (SEL) curriculum focused on 100% accountability for everyday actions.

RESULTS

Pegged as an "F" district by the state, Chilton ISD rated as a "B" for the last year that schools were assessed and ranked.

Ready to make a change and in the market for an SEL platform, Superintendent Brandon Hubbard's ears perked up when Rivera mentioned the 7 Mindsets SEL curriculum.

"I was intrigued," said Hubbard, who upon returning to Chilton made a few calls, tested out several SEL platforms and decided 7 Mindsets was the best fit for his 500-student district, which serves a diverse student population, 90% of which qualifies for free or reduced lunch. "We're starting year four of our 7 Mindsets implementation here; the rest is history."

THE MENTAL FRAMEWORK FOR RESILIENCY

In rural, agricultural areas of Texas, academic performance and test results often take a backseat to other life priorities for both students and teachers alike. Knowing this, Hubbard said the district wanted to help everyone build a mental framework for resiliency, overcoming obstacles and believing in their own success.



"There's more to life than simply performing academically. We all need the mental framework to be able to overcome challenges and be successful in the things that we have to do."

BRANDON HUBBARD, CHILTON ISD SUPERINTENDENT

Hubbard said all teachers, staff and some board members participated in the initial training for the district's new SEL curriculum, which was then rolled out districtwide. "Our very first training here was engaging; teachers bought in and saw the need," said Hubbard. "We had a pretty positive buy-in from that process."

THE HEARTBEAT OF THE COMMUNITY

Chilton ISD initially began teaching SEL on “Mindset Mondays.” The time was blocked off on the school calendar and all students, teachers and classrooms focused on implementing the appropriate mindset for 30 minutes in homeroom or during a tutorial period. “We started with the ‘We are Connected’ mindset because, as a small community, our school is the heartbeat of that community,” Hubbard explained.

The district then worked through the remaining mindsets, changing them out on a weekly basis. It’s now working to integrate mindset lessons throughout the week in order to support a more holistic, SEL-focused culture on campus.

Chilton ISD is also doing more “shout outs” to recognize teachers that exhibit the week’s mindset in their classes. Next, Hubbard wants to start having more “intentional conversations” around specific mindsets on a regular basis on campus and also integrate SEL-related activities into the district’s leadership meetings.



“The reason we were able to make that leap and perform is because of the focus placed on SEL and on providing students and teachers with the mental frameworks they need to be resilient.”

BRANDON HUBBARD, CHILTON ISD SUPERINTENDENT

LIVING TO GIVE

The district’s commitment to culture also spills over into the Chilton community, where students and teachers both quickly embraced the “Live to Give” mindset. Chilton ISD is now involved with an annual coat and blanket drive for area nursing homes. It also hosts a “Pirate Wonderland” that includes a holiday toy drive.

“We get to ride around on a sled and deliver toys, baskets and other items to families in need within our community,” said Hubbard, who sees these community interactions as an invaluable part of his district’s SEL culture. “It’s one thing to sit in class and discuss a mindset, but it’s another thing to put it into practice and actually demonstrate it in real life.”

CATAPULTING OVER THE BARRIERS

Chilton ISD’s SEL curriculum is easy for teachers to use and doesn’t require them to search for resources, plan out their curriculums and/or pool their resources to achieve a common goal. And while teachers do preview the lessons and develop thoughtful discussions around specific topics, the heavy lifting has already been done for them. “Everything they need to implement is in the 7 Mindsets portal,” said Hubbard. “Every video, activity and lesson is right at their fingertips, so there’s minimal planning.”

By blending 7 Mindsets curriculum with a real desire to make a difference, Chilton ISD has significantly exceeded expectations set forth by the state of Texas’ education department. In fact, the last year that Texas schools were measured (the A-F rankings were put on hold due to the pandemic), the district earned a “B” rating.

“The reason we were able to make that leap and perform is because of the focus placed on SEL and on providing students and teachers with the mental frameworks they need to be resilient,” said Hubbard. “We may have been labeled a potential F-district, but 7 Mindsets has given us the platform we needed to be able to catapult over some of those barriers.”

7 MINDSETS

7 Mindsets is a proven, research-based social emotional learning solution that helps PK-12 districts and schools create and sustain positive school cultures rooted in healthy relationships. The 7 Mindsets SEL program provides in person and virtual PK-12 and adult curriculum including lessons and activities, coaching, implementation support, and professional development focused on strength-based thinking for SEL growth and understanding of self in relation to others. The 7 Mindsets program nurtures the mindsets of both students and educators, focusing on attitudes and perspectives rather than specific skills or habits, providing the foundation for better decision making.

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