

**DOVER CITY SCHOOLS
OFFICE OF THE SUPERINTENDENT
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Dover Schools Increasing Focus on Social-Emotional Well-being

Disrupted routines, social isolation, food insecurity. These are just a few of the consequences of COVID-19 that have impacted children and are leading to an exponential rise in mental health concerns. Experts say we may not see the full effects of the pandemic on children's social-emotional well-being for years to come. That's why, at Dover Schools, we are focusing on the whole child through a broad social-emotional learning curriculum.

As part of the federal CARES ACT I, II and III schools are provided with one-time funds to meet pandemic related needs, including learning recovery and wellness initiatives. This funding is an important resource to help us provide critical services to students.

In addition, last year we were awarded grant money from Tuscarawas Alcohol, Drug Addiction and Mental Health Services (ADAMH) for drug and alcohol prevention education for K-12 students. This funding is part of an \$18 million investment by Governor Mike DeWine and the Recovery Ohio initiative, the Ohio Department of Mental Health and Addiction Services, and the Ohio Department of Education.

These grant monies will allow us to implement Second Step, a K-5 program that brings continuity throughout our schools to students' social-emotional learning. For the first time, we are gathering and tracking social-emotional learning data through the district-wide Panorama program in order to better evaluate student progress.

At the middle and high school level, students are participating in Positive Action, a program designed to improve youth academics, behavior and character. Additionally, both the middle and high schools are building Hope Squad, a peer-to-peer suicide prevention program. Members are nominated by their classmates as trustworthy peers, and students and staff alike receive suicide awareness training.

We are fortunate to be offering more wellness resources to Dover students than ever before. We recognize that it's only by closing the gaps in students' social-emotional well-being that they can reach their full academic potential.