

# The Whole Child Matters: How Hilliard City Schools Builds Buy-in for Social-Emotional Learning Across the Community

At Hilliard City Schools (OH), the definition of student success goes beyond report cards and test scores. In a rapidly changing world and workforce, Hilliard students are [Ready for Tomorrow](#) when they demonstrate skills across three key areas: **academics**, **mindset**, and **interests**.

That's why Hilliard doubled down on [social-emotional learning](#) (SEL). The district is working hard to build an SEL curriculum and educate the community about the importance of traits like grit, growth mindset, and compassion. Along the way, however, district and school leaders sought a way to **monitor students' social-emotional growth** and **validate their SEL approach**. Hilliard decided to partner with [Panorama](#) in order to bring data, measurement, and accountability to the work they're doing.



## Strategy:

### Develop a Program to Build Growth Mindset in Students and Families

As part of Hilliard's whole-child vision, the community identified **growth mindset** as an important social-emotional attribute to build in students. Research shows that growth mindset, or the belief that you can grow your talents and abilities, is [linked to higher academic achievement](#) in the classroom.

In response, Hilliard launched a **growth mindset parent program**—offered at the elementary school level—that brings educators, families, and students together to focus on this skill. In the evenings over several weeks:

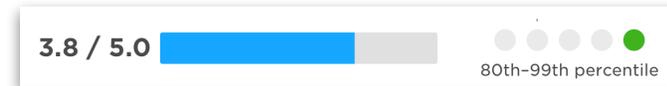
- Families participate in teacher-led workshops about cultivating a growth mindset in children
- Students participate in growth mindset activities facilitated by teachers
- Families walk away with strategies for helping their children turn challenges into growth opportunities

"Attendance remains high, and the parents are engaged," said Superintendent John Marschhausen. "We have to take a bigger role in helping parents cultivate a positive growth mindset at home. If we can instill that in moms and dads, our children will come to school **more ready to learn**."

## Results:

### Elementary Students Report Strong Growth Mindset Skills

Hilliard uses [Panorama's Social-Emotional Learning Survey](#) to measure student progress in SEL—and to understand if programs like the parent workshops are working as intended.



Data from Hilliard's first survey of elementary students (pictured above) reflected positively on their efforts to build growth mindset. **Seven out of 10 students** in grades 3-5 self-reported they could change their level of intelligence, and two elementary schools ranked in the **90th percentile** on Growth Mindset compared to other schools in Panorama's national dataset.

"The data helped us build capacity and **validate our approach**," said Molly Walker, director of social-emotional learning and measurement at Hilliard.

As a next step, Hilliard is developing "success profiles" that pull in student-level SEL data alongside academic, attendance, and behavior data. This holistic view of each student will help educators better target interventions and ensure that every student is on the path to being Ready for Tomorrow.

**LOCATION**  
Columbus, OH

**STUDENTS**  
16,500

**DEMOGRAPHICS**  
25% FRPL  
40 languages spoken

*"We're moving the conversation away from standardized tests and toward the whole child. The focus on academics doesn't need to be diminished, but it needs to be balanced with an approach to social-emotional learning, mindset, and student interests."*



**John Marschhausen**  
Superintendent  
Hilliard City Schools