



Classroom **WISE**

Well-Being Information and
Strategies for Educators

Classroom WISE Implementation Stories: Maplewood High School

Background

Educators and school personnel play a vital role in promoting mental health and well-being and identifying and responding to emerging mental illness in children and adolescents. However, they often have not received the education, training, and/or ongoing support needed to respond in the classroom.

To address this need, the MHTTC Network, in partnership with the National Center for School Mental Health (NCSMH) at the University of Maryland School of Medicine, has developed a free, self-guided online course, video library, and resource collection focused on educator mental health literacy. The 3-part training package, Classroom WISE (Well-Being Information and Strategies for Educators; www.classroomwise.org), was informed by and co-developed with educators from across the nation.

In Fall 2021, the MHTTC Network and NCSMH worked with 13 schools throughout the U.S. to facilitate the implementation of Classroom WISE in their everyday practices. This is the story of how Maplewood High School worked to bring Classroom WISE to their school.

The School

Maplewood High School is a public school within Penncrest School District in rural Pennsylvania that houses 460 students, 35 educators, and 8 other staff members. School mental health staff include a school counselor, a school psychologist, an outsourced trauma therapist, and two outsourced outpatient mental health counselors.

The Need

Maplewood school indicated they have a high volume of student mental health issues. Often, services are not available to help students because of the school's rural location and families' lack of transportation, finances, and health insurance. Maplewood indicated that Classroom WISE would benefit their school because teachers could support students at school and provide early intervention to help avoid the need for more intensive care as students age. Classroom WISE would also help educators understand mental health and center health and wellness in their instruction.

What Help They Received

A small implementation team from Maplewood, consisting of a school administrator, school mental health staff member, school district representative, and educator, was invited to attend an orientation webinar for Classroom WISE and received a Classroom WISE implementation guide. In addition, they attended sharing two sessions to learn what other schools were doing to implement Classroom WISE, as well as a one-on-one facilitation session with school mental health experts from NCSMH.



MHTTC

Mental Health Technology Transfer Center Network
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What They Did

Maplewood's implementation team worked with school leaders to bring information about Classroom WISE to the school. The school mandated that educators complete the Classroom WISE online course, while providing time during professional learning community times for this purpose. The school also tracked course completion by asking staff to forward their course certificates to the assistant principal.

Who Used Classroom WISE?

Thirty-five educators and school staff were asked to take the Classroom WISE online course. Maplewood exceeded this target, as 36 educators and school staff members completed the 6-module course, and some paraprofessionals watched videos from the Classroom WISE video library.

What Changed?

At Maplewood High School, there appeared to be a lack of student engagement after returning from asynchronous learning during the COVID-19 pandemic. However, the school has worked to address student engagement in different ways. There is more communication between staff and students during grade-level meetings to assess student progress and create a plan to address behavioral stressors going forward. These stressors are also communicated to staff members so they can be more prepared to address behaviors in a more effective manner. An SEL curriculum is also being delivered with more rigor than in previous years, to the point where teachers reported students being more engaged with and enjoying the material for the first time in a long time. All of this is reflective of Maplewood's efforts to address student behavioral health, so that they may find creative solutions to ensure students are happy, healthy, and able to graduate.

Barriers and Facilitators

Maplewood staff cited some barriers to using Classroom WISE, including time to take the course and other responsibilities associated with their roles in the school. For facilitators, they cited administrative support, as Maplewood's assistant principal was very active in cheerleading staff to take the course and use the materials. Staff also appreciated time within professional learning communities to share information and complete the course.

Lessons Learned

Those who took the online course indicated that Classroom WISE would have a moderate impact on their work over the next 3 months. Classroom WISE highlighted the desire and importance of having access to a wider variety of mental health resources for students at Maplewood High School. The assistant principal discussed how the school wants to improve communication with the district about mental health resources available to students, with the hope of disseminating those resources to others within the school, including educators. This way, school staff can have a wider variety of resources to use with students to help improve and maintain their well-being.

The MHTTC Network thanks Maplewood High School for participating in the Classroom WISE School TA Opportunity, which was conducted from August to December 2021.