



What are Foundational Practices?

Foundational Practices are found within the Growth Strategies tab in the Aperture System. They are used to support growth in:

- *Culture* – how we do things (practices, rituals and routines, traditions) (Sarason, Barth & Wagner)
- *Climate* – quality and character of school life (Cohen & Elias)

When we talk about Foundational Practices, we like to use the analogy of vitamins & minerals vs. a prescription. Foundational Practices are things you want to do proactively and often to help build a culture of SEL in your classroom, like vitamins help us to have proactively healthy bodies. If there is a need in our bodies or something that needs to be addressed after we have noticed a problem, then we will go to the doctor and get a prescription to address that need.

The following are key points or features about Foundational Practices:

- Cover a variety of topics in SEL
- Designed to be introduced as early as possible in the school year
- Provide universal lessons (for all students in a class or group)
- Practiced, sustained, integrated and reflected on as the year progresses
- Choose an area that is new or that especially resonates with you to develop with students
- After an area is well established, move onto a new area
- Not tied to a specific social-emotional competency