

7

SCHOOLWIDE

Social Emotional

LEARNING



Observed during an oversight visit of a classroom at New Dawn Charter High School in Brooklyn, NY in the first two weeks after schools switched to emergency remote teaching due to COVID-19:

Teacher: Today we are going to go over political parties and how they impact the three branches of government. Let's watch this video and see where political parties came from.

[Student on camera is pacing back and forth, nervously.]

Teacher: Hey J---, I noticed you're moving around a lot – are you ok? Do you want to talk to me on chat?

Student: No, Miss, I was just supposed to have dinner with my neighbor yesterday, but he died. I was supposed to see him.

Observed by New Dawn Director of Curriculum and Instruction Dr. Lisa DiGaudio.



Photo of New Dawn students courtesy of New Dawn Charter High School. Student in scenario is not pictured.

**140,000+
Children**

From April 1, 2020 through June 30, 2021, data suggest that more than **140,000 children under the age of 18 in the United States lost a parent, custodial grandparent, or grandparent caregiver** who provided the child's home and basic needs, including love, security, and daily care.

**1 in 500
Children**

Approximately **1 out of 500 children in the United States has experienced COVID-19-associated orphanhood or death of a grandparent caregiver**. There were racial, ethnic, and geographic disparities in COVID-19-associated deaths of caregivers: **children of racial and ethnic minorities accounted for 65% of those who lost a primary caregiver due to the pandemic**.

THE NEED FOR SOCIAL EMOTIONAL LEARNING

No member of the school community has gone untouched by the pandemic. Whether losing loved ones or losing one's sense of community connection during quarantines, students, teachers, families, and educational leaders have endured significant losses. At the same time, we have all experienced unprecedented changes, including the way we teach and learn.

Through the pandemic, the need for and the value of social emotional learning (SEL) and support became clear to most educators. A **fall 2022 survey** conducted by the EdWeek Research Center found that...

**OUT OF 824
EDUCATORS**

86% PLACE "SOME" OR "A LOT" OF EMPHASIS ON SEL

83% REPORT SEL HAVING A POSITIVE IMPACT ON STUDENTS*

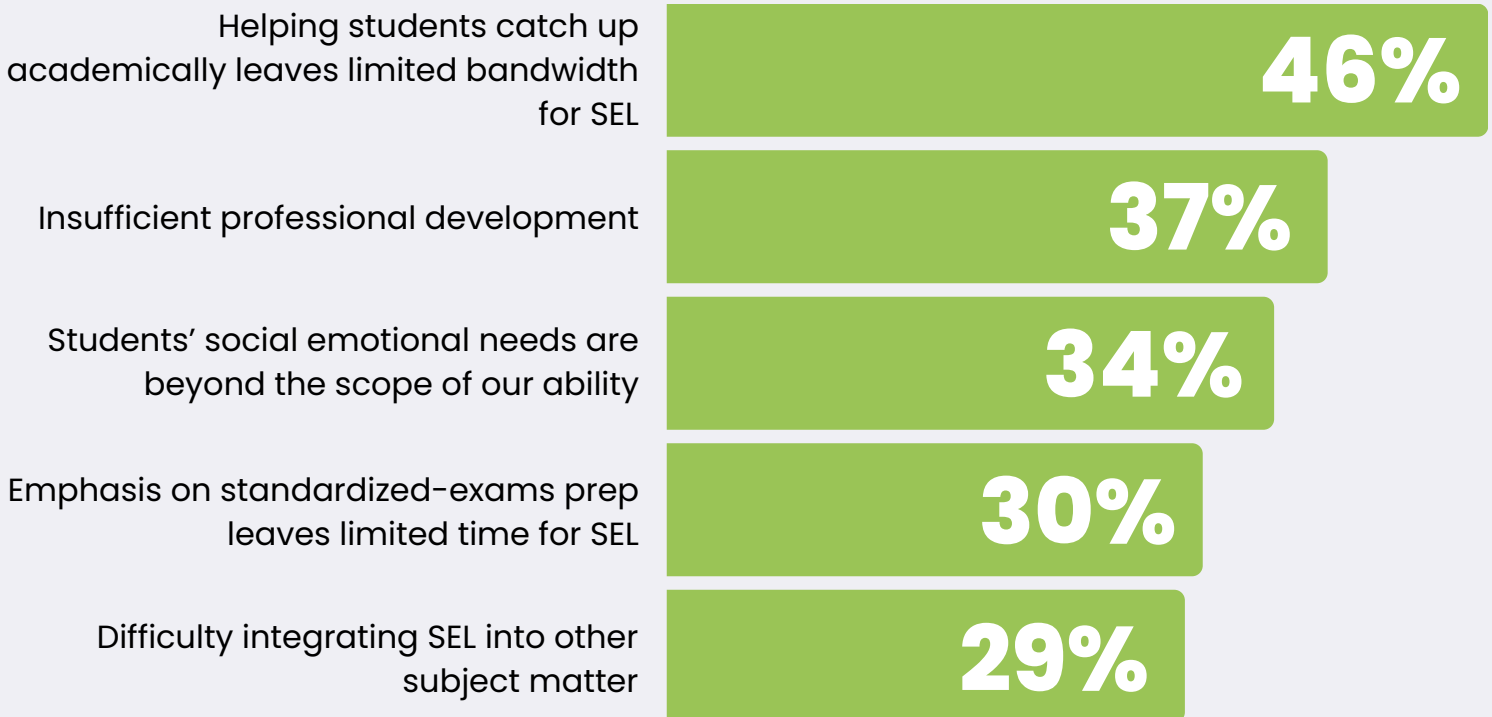
**Only 3% reported a negative impact on students, and the rest reported a neutral impact.*

And yet, nearly two-thirds of surveyed educators said that weaving SEL skills into academic subjects is challenging.

The reasons?



WHEN IT COMES TO TEACHING SOCIAL EMOTIONAL LEARNING, WHAT MAJOR CHALLENGES DO YOU OR THE TEACHERS IN YOUR DISTRICT OR SCHOOL FACE RIGHT NOW?



Adapted from: [EducationWeek](#)

According to [EducationWeek](#), some educators cite their own weariness resulting from the demands placed on teachers these days. This burnout makes them feel ill-equipped to help students cope with stress.

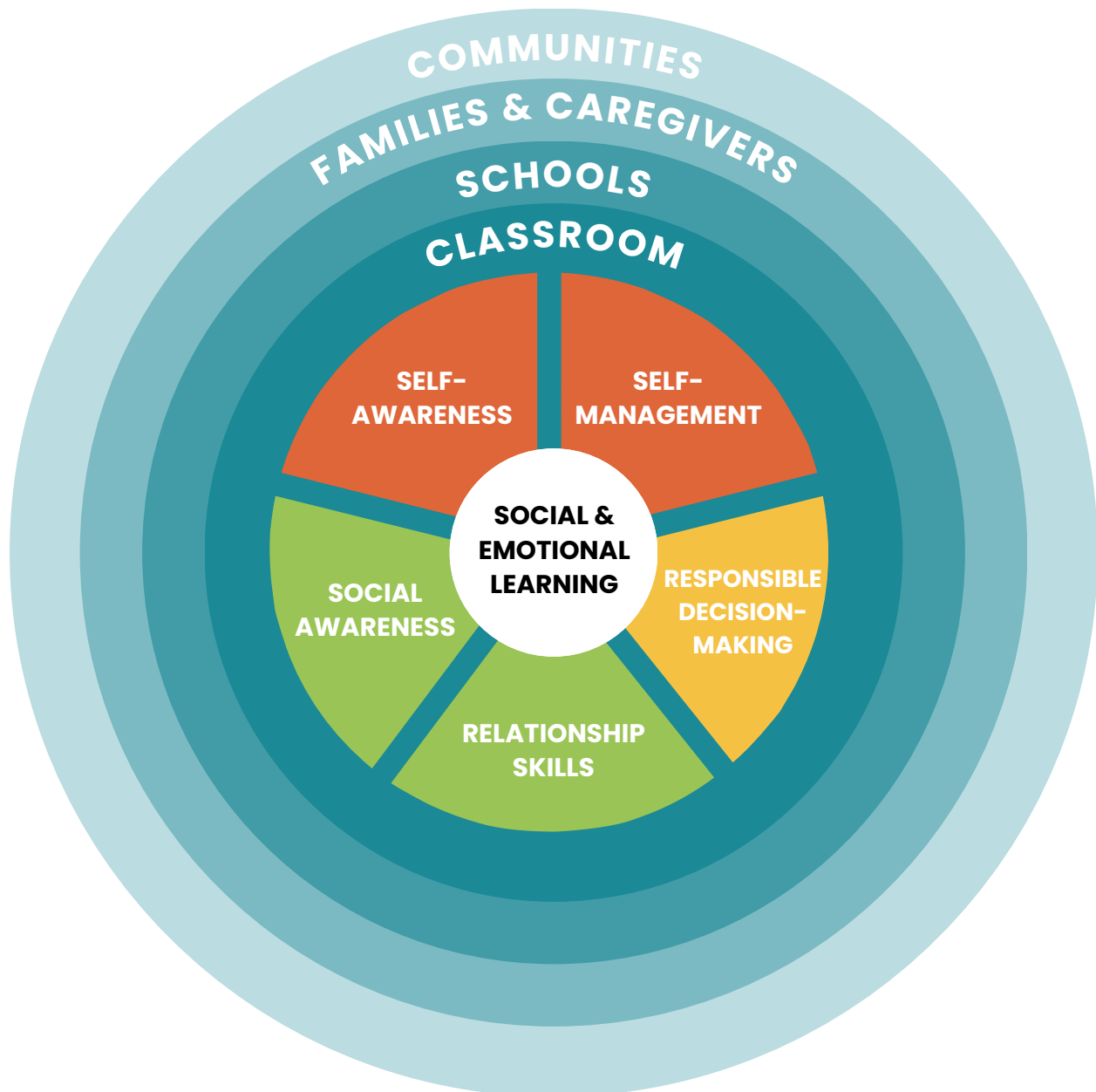
In this session, we look at how school leaders can address these barriers to SEL implementation. Specifically, we explore strategies that school leaders can use to advance SEL throughout their schools and across learning environments.

THE TEACHER'S PERSPECTIVE

In Module 6, we explored the implementation of social emotional learning (SEL) across learning environments. We began by exploring the SEL model created by the Collaborative for Academic, Social, and Emotional Learning (CASEL).

The CASEL 5 model, depicted below in the CASEL Wheel, includes five areas of SEL competence that can be taught from preschool to adulthood: self-awareness, self-management, social awareness, relationship skills, and responsible decision-making. Districts, schools, and states have used the CASEL 5 to establish standards that “articulate what students should know and be able to do for academic success, school and civic engagement, health and wellness, and fulfilling careers.”

CASEL Wheel








ADAPTED FROM THE CASEL FRAMEWORK

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THE TEACHER'S PERSPECTIVE (CONT)

In Module 6, we also established a shared understanding of what high-quality SEL looks like by aligning the three New York State Social Emotional Learning Benchmarks with the five areas of SEL competence identified by CASEL.

Crosswalk of CASEL 5 and NYSED SEL Benchmark Goals

CASEL 5 COMPETENCY	NYSED SEL BENCHMARK GOAL
 1. SELF-AWARENESS	<p>Goal 1: Young people develop a self-awareness that nurtures and affirms a strong sense of identity, informs decisions about their actions, and builds a sense of agency.</p> <p>Goal 2: Young people use social awareness and interpersonal skills to establish, navigate, and maintain mutually supportive relationships with individuals and groups that nurture a strong sense of belonging.</p> <p>Goal 3: Young people demonstrate intentional decision-making skills and behaviors that consider social, emotional, and physical safety and well-being in personal, school, and community contexts.</p>
 2. SELF-MANAGEMENT	
 3. SOCIAL AWARENESS	
 4. RELATIONSHIP SKILLS	
 5. RESPONSIBLE DECISION-MAKING	

THE TEACHER'S PERSPECTIVE (CONTINUED)

Once we aligned the CASEL 5 with NYSED's SEL goals, we explored strategies for integrating SEL in day-to-day instruction across the three components of SEL in the classroom (physical or virtual):

1

Creating a supportive classroom climate and safe community for your students is the starting point for our SEL journey.

2

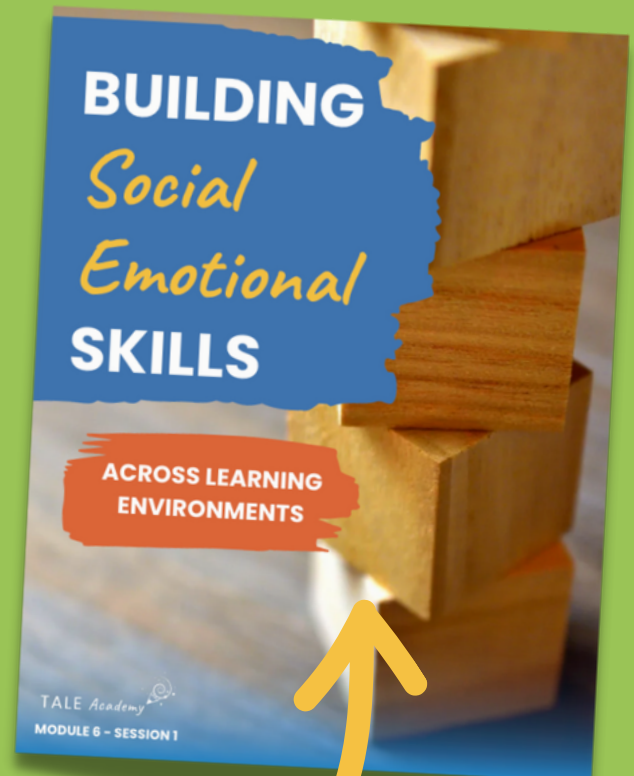
Integrating SEL into academic instruction gives students opportunities to practice SEL competencies, such as relationship skills, during academic activities.

3

Explicitly providing SEL instruction is how we offer age-appropriate and culturally responsive content related to the SEL competencies.

In the rest of Module 6, we explored how to implement SEL practices that align with the three components and are portable across learning environments (in-person, remote, and hybrid). We focused on several high-impact SEL practices for the classroom, including community-building circles, strategies for developing self-awareness and self-direction, and age-appropriate decision-making.

We also looked at how teachers can integrate SEL with culturally responsive and sustaining educational practices such as those explored in Module 2. Finally, we explored how SEL along with civic learning can help students become conscientious digital citizens and improve their overall academic performance. Before we left the module, we turned back to look at ourselves – as teachers – and explore how we can implement self-care and model SEL for our students.



THE SCHOOL LEADER'S PERSPECTIVE

As we discussed in the opening of this session, those who are closest to the students – our teachers – agree about the need for a schoolwide SEL culture. However, they find it difficult to actually implement SEL as an integrated, schoolwide program. Educator Paige Puryear remarked on this paradox via a [LinkedIn discussion of the EdWeek survey data](#): “The problem is time. Many teachers are struggling to find time to fit it in around the pressure of academics and scheduling issues. They WANT to teach it, but evaluations are not about SEL, they ARE about academics. It’s a messed up, broken system, and mental health is now impacting staff who have been holding on through the pandemic.”

On top of these issues and barriers, there is a mindset issue related to SEL implementation that hinders progress as well: many educators report that SEL is an “add-on” to their existing educational program and is “one more thing” that they have to do on top of instruction.

Creating an SEL Culture

In the middle of the pandemic, one school leader at a Queens, New York charter school received a harried phone call at 11:30 pm. A student had just been tossed out of their home, and there was no place for them to go because everything was shut down. Shelters were not accepting anyone that wasn’t already in place. After many phone calls and text messages, the student was eventually put into an Uber and placed with a friend that was willing to take them in for the time being. In this situation, the school leader had direct access to communicate with stakeholders and support agencies, and the student was willing and able to reach out to ask for help.

Unfortunately, the conditions for success in this scenario are not the norm. Most school leaders don’t have such extensive direct access available to them in the middle of the night. And most students are unwilling, unable, or don’t know how to ask for help in moments of crisis.

Challenging situations happen every single day, COVID or not. We cannot rely on exceptional school leaders, teachers, or students. Instead, we need to establish a schoolwide culture that supports SEL so that when any member of the school community is in need, they can access support.

SCHOOLWIDE SEL

CASEL proposes a solution to these issues: schoolwide SEL, which they define as SEL that engages the entire school community in creating caring, motivating, and equitable learning environments that promote social, emotional, and academic growth. Schoolwide SEL can take 3 to 5 years to fully implement, and CASEL provides a list of 10 indicators of schoolwide SEL by which schools can monitor their progress.

CLASSROOM



EXPLICIT SEL INSTRUCTION

Students have consistent opportunities to cultivate, practice, and reflect on social and emotional competencies in ways that are developmentally appropriate and culturally responsive.



SEL INTEGRATED WITH ACADEMIC INSTRUCTION

SEL objectives are integrated into instructional content and teaching strategies for academics as well as music, art, and physical education.



YOUTH VOICE AND ENGAGEMENT

Staff honor and elevate a broad range of student perspectives and experiences by engaging students as leaders, problem solvers, and decision-makers.

SCHOOL



SUPPORTIVE SCHOOL AND CLASSROOM CLIMATES

Schoolwide and classroom learning environments are supportive, culturally responsive, and focused on building relationships and community.



FOCUS ON ADULT SEL

Staff have regular opportunities to cultivate their own social, emotional, and cultural competence, collaborate with one another, build trusting relationships, and maintain a strong community.



SUPPORTIVE DISCIPLINE

Discipline policies and practices are instructive, restorative, developmentally appropriate, and equitably applied.

FAMILY



A CONTINUUM OF INTEGRATED SUPPORTS

SEL is seamlessly integrated into a continuum of academic and behavioral supports, which are available to ensure that all student needs are met.



AUTHENTIC FAMILY PARTNERSHIPS

Families and school staff have regular and meaningful opportunities to build relationships and collaborate to support students' social, emotional, and academic development.

COMMUNITY



ALIGNED COMMUNITY PARTNERSHIPS

School staff and community partners align on common language, strategies, and communication around all SEL-related efforts and initiatives, including out-of-school time.



SYSTEMS FOR CONTINUOUS IMPROVEMENT

Implementation and outcome data are collected and used to continuously improve all SEL-related systems, practices, and policies with a focus on equity.

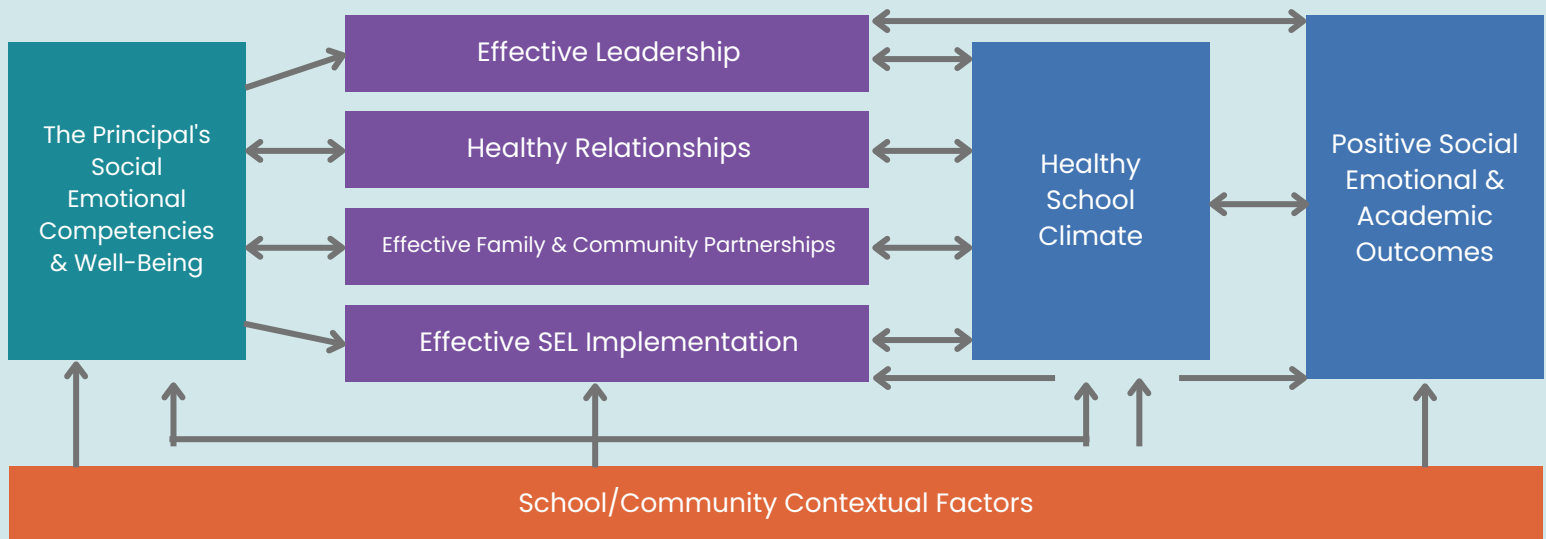
MODELING SOCIAL EMOTIONAL LEARNING

The SEL schoolwide indicators are a great way to help school leaders and communities establish a vision for schoolwide SEL, particularly if they currently have nothing in place. But what can a school leader do immediately to start building an SEL culture within their school and across learning environments?

One answer is modeling. Modeling by school leaders helps create a positive school environment that can support staff in building SEL skills and mindsets. Principals can “lead from the center” by embodying SEL in their daily interactions.

The “prosocial school leader” model emphasizes that the principal’s own social emotional competencies and well-being are an integral driver in establishing a schoolwide culture supportive of SEL.

The Prosocial School Leader



SOURCE: [Principals' social and emotional competence: A key factor for creating caring schools.](#)

Developed by Mahfouz, Greenberg, Weissberg, Chi, and Turksma, the prosocial school leader model parallels the concept of the prosocial classroom as outlined by Jennings and Greenberg.

CASEL has a resource that can help get things started. Modeling is an important function of implementation, and principals and other school leaders can begin with very simple activities that will get the ball rolling in their buildings.

Eight Ways School Leaders Can Model SEL Competencies Across Learning Environments

Leader Behavior

CHECK-INS	CASEL 5 & NYSED SEL BENCHMARK ALIGNMENT CASEL: SOCIAL AWARENESS, RELATIONSHIP SKILLS NYSED: BENCHMARK 2	IN-PERSON
		Before any meeting begins – group or individual – start with small talk. Follow up if you heard about something discussed earlier in the week or day. Ask people how they are doing before jumping into the task or agenda at hand.
		REMOTE/ASYNCHRONOUS
		As with in-person meetings, informal protocols and rituals can set the tone for a meeting, such as a team connector or a general “thermometer” of the room before getting down to the agenda. “What is the Zoom threshold level today for you all?” or “What was your favorite online interaction today?”
		WHAT A TEACHER CAN DO TO MIRROR THIS BEHAVIOR
		Standing at the door is a gold mine of information, whether meeting with students or family members. You learn so much just by seeing someone’s face and body language and just asking them how it’s going. In the online forum, doing a simple Kahoot! “How are you feeling today?” can elicit numerous responses from students and families before beginning a meeting or a lesson online.

Leader Behavior

CHECK-IN CALENDAR	CASEL 5 & NYSED SEL BENCHMARK ALIGNMENT CASEL: SOCIAL AWARENESS, RELATIONSHIP SKILLS, RESPONSIBLE DECISION-MAKING NYSED: BENCHMARK 2 BENCHMARK 3	IN-PERSON
		This is not a formal meeting. Rather, this is a personal reminder to get out of the office and walk over to the staff and ask them how they are doing. No academic or behavioral feedback, just checking in and seeing how the day is going. Similar check-ins with different parents, even just a phone call, goes a long way to show that you care.
		REMOTE/ASYNCHRONOUS
		The same schedule can be followed. A simple text or email that is not work-related goes a long way to model social emotional competencies.
		WHAT A TEACHER CAN DO TO MIRROR THIS BEHAVIOR
		Teachers can do the same things with their students and families. A simple schedule that ensures that everyone is touched at some point during the week shows that you care about everyone’s well-being beyond what happens in the classroom.

Eight Ways School Leaders Can Model SEL Competencies Across Learning Environments

Leader Behavior

STAFF MEETING AGENDA	CASEL 5 & NYSED SEL BENCHMARK ALIGNMENT CASEL: SOCIAL AWARENESS, RELATIONSHIP SKILLS, RESPONSIBLE DECISION- MAKING NYSED: BENCHMARK 2 BENCHMARK 3	IN-PERSON
		<p>Start a staff meeting with small talk or a team connector question that does not require people to get up or do something uncomfortable. Provide agendas ahead of time so that teachers know that there is transparency and no surprises coming. Establish clear plans if something serious is coming up in order to put people's fears and anxieties at ease. It will help create a sense that you're all "in it together."</p>
		REMOTE/ASYNCHRONOUS
		<p>The way Teams or Zoom are set up, agendas and plans can also be shared well ahead of time. Meetings should begin with the same thing. Online gives more opportunities – such as asking everyone to come to the meeting wearing something silly or telling people to wear their favorite pajamas or to come with the biggest mug they have in the house – something that connects everyone and builds camaraderie before getting to an agenda.</p>
		WHAT A TEACHER CAN DO TO MIRROR THIS BEHAVIOR
		<p>Teachers can easily mirror these behaviors with their students. When a leader provides a meeting structure that is designed to provide opening ideas, teaching moves, and community-building for the classroom, it provides staff the opportunity to discern what works for them in an organic way. This makes it easy for teachers to translate the practices across learning environments with their students and families.</p>

Leader Behavior

VERBAL APPRECIATION	CASEL 5 & NYSED SEL BENCHMARK ALIGNMENT CASEL: SELF-AWARENESS, SOCIAL AWARENESS, RELATIONSHIP SKILLS, RESPONSIBLE DECISION- MAKING NYSED: BENCHMARK 1 BENCHMARK 2 BENCHMARK 3	IN-PERSON
		<p>Kindness goes a long way. Understanding that most of the time "it's not about you" is actually true makes it easier to develop kindness and support for your staff. Teamwork is essential and showing appreciation for that team builds community and encourages people to become connected.</p>
		REMOTE/ASYNCHRONOUS
		<p>Simple virtual communications, shout outs during meetings on Zoom, text messages, even a simple email, will always make someone feel special.</p>
		WHAT A TEACHER CAN DO TO MIRROR THIS BEHAVIOR
		<p>This is an easy behavior to replicate. When a teacher calls home and tells a family member or parent something positive, the world is a wonderful place. This can be done in person and virtually.</p>

Eight Ways School Leaders Can Model SEL Competencies Across Learning Environments

Leader Behavior	BE VISIBLE	<p>CASEL 5 & NYSED SEL BENCHMARK ALIGNMENT</p> <p>CASEL: SELF-AWARENESS, SELF-MANAGEMENT, RESPONSIBLE DECISION-MAKING</p> <p>NYSED: BENCHMARK 1 BENCHMARK 3</p>	IN-PERSON
			Get out of your office. Walk around. Talk to people and do not focus on work talk. Dive in if someone needs assistance. Being hands on also shows that you are willing to be a part of the team - not above it.
			REMOTE/ASYNCHRONOUS
			This can also be replicated in virtual sessions. Pop into a Zoom and be a student. Help with maneuvering different breakout groups in a classroom. Keep it friendly and non-evaluative.
			WHAT A TEACHER CAN DO TO MIRROR THIS BEHAVIOR
			Teachers can also be visible beyond their classrooms in each setting. Just doing a building walk and saying hello to students in their specials or at lunch builds community.

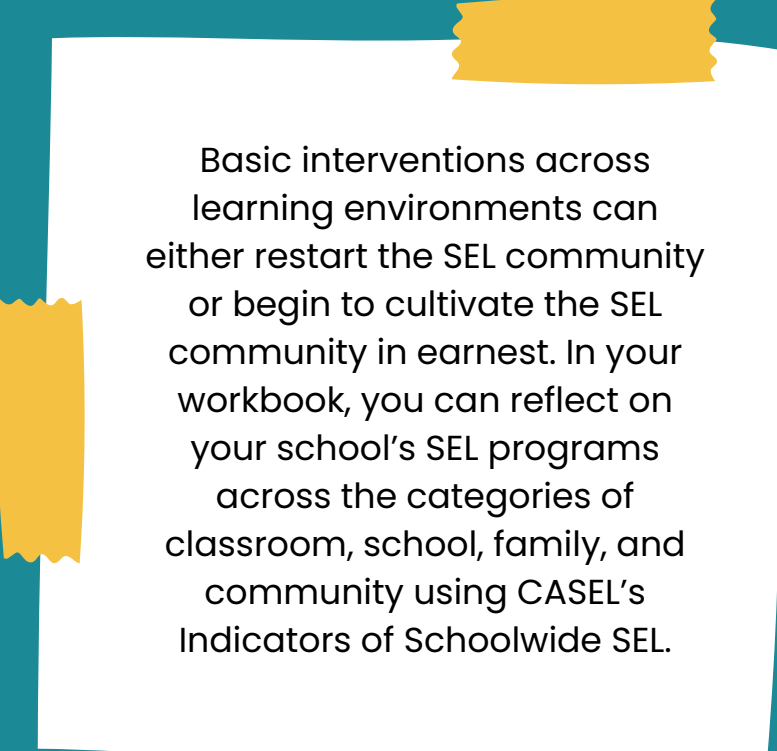
Leader Behavior	IDENTIFY POSITIVE PRACTICES/ EVENTS	<p>CASEL 5 & NYSED SEL BENCHMARK ALIGNMENT</p> <p>CASEL: SOCIAL AWARENESS, RELATIONSHIP SKILLS, RESPONSIBLE DECISION-MAKING</p> <p>NYSED: BENCHMARK 2 BENCHMARK 3</p>	IN-PERSON
			Pointing out exemplars is a great way to build camaraderie and culture. Every teacher has a strong suit, and noticing that strength and identifying them as a "resident expert" not only builds their personal capacity, it signals to staff that you are watching and you appreciate their hard work.
			REMOTE/ASYNCHRONOUS
			The same behaviors can be replicated in a virtual setting. Create a folder of experts and best practices where other staff find resources to build upon. This is vital to teacher life and builds creativity and expression.
			WHAT A TEACHER CAN DO TO MIRROR THIS BEHAVIOR
			Teachers can easily replicate this during group work - stopping students from working to recognize an exemplar or a different way of thinking is quite empowering to the community.

Eight Ways School Leaders Can Model SEL Competencies Across Learning Environments

Leader Behavior	LISTEN	<p>CASEL 5 & NYSED SEL BENCHMARK ALIGNMENT</p> <p>CASEL: SOCIAL AWARENESS, RELATIONSHIP SKILLS, RESPONSIBLE DECISION-MAKING</p> <p>NYSED: BENCHMARK 2 BENCHMARK 3</p>	IN-PERSON
			At the end of the day, everyone, from the students to the parents to the school leader, wants to be heard and seen. Listening to someone - informally or formally - lets your staff know that you hear them and see them. Coming back to earlier comments from other meetings also demonstrates that what was said is of importance and valued.
			REMOTE/ASYNCHRONOUS
			The easiest way to show someone that you are listening to them in a virtual environment is to be present. Do not answer an email or look at a text during a zoom. Restate and respond, and follow up. The same behaviors can be followed online or on the phone as in person. Limit the distractions and pay close attention.
			WHAT A TEACHER CAN DO TO MIRROR THIS BEHAVIOR
			Teachers can also replicate these same behaviors. Limiting distractions and ensuring that everyone is present is an important behavior to model for students as they grow into adulthood.

Leader Behavior	ACKNOWLEDGE BIRTHDAYS, HOLIDAYS, IMPORTANT STAFF EVENTS	<p>CASEL 5 & NYSED SEL BENCHMARK ALIGNMENT</p> <p>CASEL: SOCIAL AWARENESS, RELATIONSHIP SKILLS, RESPONSIBLE DECISION-MAKING</p> <p>NYSED: BENCHMARK 2 BENCHMARK 3</p>	IN-PERSON
			The school is a vibrant community that should feel like family. Celebrating milestones, birthdays, and other important events brings the team together.
			REMOTE/ASYNCHRONOUS
			Virtual events can also be held to celebrate these milestones. Bringing people together to celebrate, even in the virtual world, acknowledges that the team members have full lives and families and what happens to them is important to the community at large.
			WHAT A TEACHER CAN DO TO MIRROR THIS BEHAVIOR
			Teachers can also replicate this in the classroom by recognizing students and their accomplishments. Birthdays and other events are easily identifiable and can be implemented with ease.

Now It's Your Turn!



Basic interventions across learning environments can either restart the SEL community or begin to cultivate the SEL community in earnest. In your workbook, you can reflect on your school's SEL programs across the categories of classroom, school, family, and community using CASEL's Indicators of Schoolwide SEL.

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About Us

The TALE Academy

The TALE Academy is a series of virtual learning experiences available to all New York State educators and offers a rich array of resources on topics related to teaching across learning environments (TALE). The TALE Academy is built upon the work New York State educators carried out during emergency remote teaching (ERT) throughout the COVID-19 pandemic and extends it toward the future. TALE invites educators to think beyond online learning to consider a broader perspective on teaching and learning that encompasses teaching across multiple environments (in-person, remote, and hybrid).

The Teaching in Remote/Hybrid Learning Environments (TRLE) Project

The TALE Academy is part of a broader New York State Education Department (NYSED) initiative known as Teaching in Remote/Hybrid Learning Environments (TRLE). In July 2020, NYSED was awarded funding through the United States Department of Education's Education Stabilization Fund-Rethink K-12 Education Models Grant to implement TRLE – a three-year project to build the capacity of teachers and educational leaders to effectively implement remote/hybrid learning for all students. Launched in the depths of the pandemic, the first phase of the TRLE project focused on getting resources to the field through partnerships with Boards of Cooperative Educational Services (BOCES) and school districts across the state. The second phase, which began in February 2022, focused on aggregating lessons learned and emerging teaching and learning strategies to address a broader field of practice: teaching across learning environments.

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