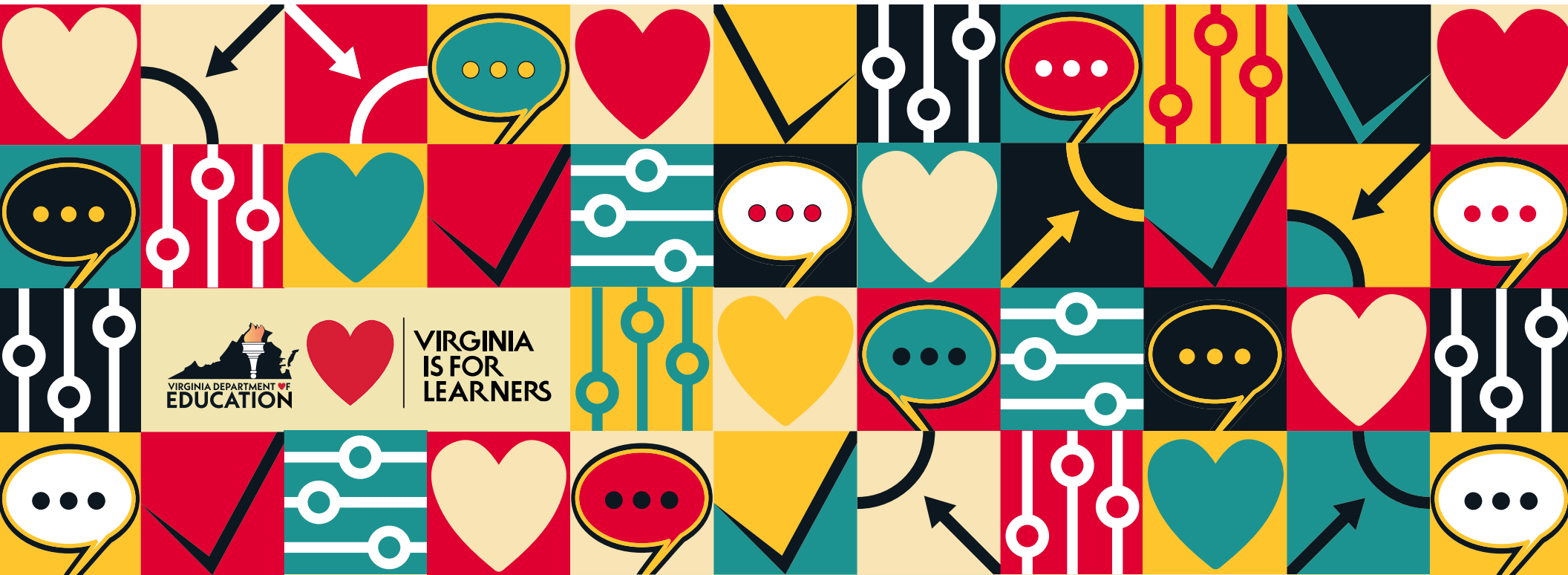


# A SHARED COMMITMENT:

BUILDING FOUNDATIONAL SUPPORT  
FOR SYSTEMIC **SOCIAL EMOTIONAL**  
**LEARNING** IN VIRGINIA



**The Virginia Department of Education (VDOE) would like to extend appreciation to the Virginia educators who generously contributed their time and expertise to the development of this document.**

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# ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

## Virginia Department of Education (VDOE) Social Emotional Learning (SEL) Implementation Team

### **Sarah Bazemore**

*School Counseling Specialist  
Office of Student Services  
Department of Special Education and Student Services*

### **Michael Bolling**

*Assistant Superintendent  
Department of Learning and Innovation*

### **Dr. Dawn Hendricks**

*Early Childhood Special Education Specialist  
Office of Early Childhood  
Department of School Readiness*

### **Dr. Samantha Hollins**

*Assistant Superintendent  
Department of Special Education and Student Services*

### **Tracy Lee**

*Family Engagement Coordinator  
Office of Facilities and Family Engagement  
Department of Special Education and Student Services*

### **Martha Montgomery**

*School Psychology Specialist  
Office of Student Services  
Department of Special Education and Student Services*

### **Jenné Nurse**

*Equity Coordinator  
Office of Equity and Community Engagement  
Department of Policy, Equity, and Communication*

### **Dr. Elizabeth Payne**

*Family Life Education Specialist  
Office of STEM and Innovation  
Department of Learning and Innovation*

### **Maribel Saimre**

*Director  
Office of Student Services  
Department of Special Education and Student Services*

### **Dr. Leslie Sale**

*Director  
Office of Policy  
Department of Policy, Equity, and Communication*

### **Leah Walker**

*Director  
Office of Equity and Community Engagement  
Department of Policy, Equity, and Communication*

### **Vanessa Wigand**

*Health and Physical & Driver Education Coordinator  
Office of STEM and Innovation  
Department of Learning and Innovation*

## Virginia Social Emotional Learning (SEL) Shared Commitment Contributors

The Virginia Department of Education (VDOE) Social Emotional Learning (SEL) Implementation Team extends thanks to colleagues who contributed to this document.

### **Jessica Costa**

*Specialist for English Learner Instruction  
Office of Humanities  
Department of Learning and Innovation*

### **Quyen Duong**

*Student Services Specialist  
Office of Student Services  
Department of Special Education and Student Services*

### **Michael Gregory**

*Virginia Tiered Systems of Supports (VTSS) Specialist  
Office of Student Services  
Department of Special Education and Student Services*

### **Daniel Irwin**

*Autism, Intellectual Disabilities, and Assistive Technology Specialist  
Office of Instructional Services  
Department of Special Education and Student Services*

### **Rebecca Kahila**

*School Safety & Discipline Specialist  
Office of Student Services  
Department of Special Education and Student Services*

### **Doranda Scott**

*School Discipline and Climate Specialist  
Office of Student Services  
Department of Special Education and Student Services*

## Virginia Social Emotional Learning (SEL) Shared Commitment Contributors

The Virginia Department of Education (VDOE) SEL Implementation Team would like to extend appreciation to the Virginia educators who generously contributed their time and expertise to the development of this document.

### **Jane Ball**

*School Social Worker  
Hanover County Public Schools*

### **Kathleen E. Cahoon-Newchok**

*Coordinator  
Title III, English as a Second Language  
Office of K-12 and Gifted Programs  
Department of Teaching and Learning  
Virginia Beach City Public Schools*

### **Staci Carr**

*Technical Assistance Coordinator  
Autism Center for Excellence (ACE)  
Virginia Commonwealth University (VCU)*

**Erika Daniel**

*Student Advancement Coordinator  
Newport News City Public Schools*

**Leah DeLew**

*Licensed School Psychologist  
Fairfax County Public Schools*

**Kim Dupre**

*Virginia Tiered Systems of Supports  
(VTSS) Systems Coach  
VTSS Research and Implementation Center  
(VTSS-RIC)  
Partnership for People with Disabilities  
School of Education  
Virginia Commonwealth University*

**Dr. Shameka Gerald**

*Director of Equity, Assessment & Strategic  
Operations  
Newport News City Public Schools*

**Dr. Royal Gurley**

*Assistant Superintendent  
Dinwiddie County Public Schools*

**Dr. Anna Hebb**

*Local Education Agency (LEA) Lead,  
VTSS Systems Coach  
Virginia Tiered Systems of Supports -  
Research and Implementation Center  
(VTSS-RIC)  
Partnership for People with Disabilities  
School of Education  
Virginia Commonwealth University*

**Tracy Kwock**

*Virginia Tiered Systems of Supports  
(VTSS) Systems Coach  
Project Coordinator  
Training and Technical Assistance Center  
(T/TAC)  
College of Education and Human  
Development  
Radford University*

**Kara McColloch**

*Virginia Tiered Systems of Supports  
(VTSS) Systems Coach  
Project Specialist  
Training and Technical Assistance Center  
(T/TAC)  
School of Education  
College of William and Mary*

**Elizabeth Mistretta**

*Assistant Principal  
Frederick County Public Schools*

**Angelyn Nichols**

*Professional Learning Specialist  
Virginia Beach City Public Schools*

**Cyndi Pitonyak**

*Retired Technical Assistance Provider  
Autism Center for Excellence (ACE)  
Virginia Commonwealth University (VCU)*

**Rashaad Pitt**

*Assistant Principal  
Richmond City Public Schools*

# INTRODUCTION

## VIRGINIA'S VISION FOR SOCIAL EMOTIONAL LEARNING (SEL)

Virginia's vision for social emotional learning (SEL) is to maximize the potential of all students and staff to become responsible, caring, and reflective members of our diverse society by advancing equity, uplifting student voice, and infusing SEL into every part of the school experience. To meet this vision, Virginia established a uniform definition of social emotional learning based on the Collaborative for Academic, Social, and Emotional Learning (CASEL) definition:

**Social emotional learning is the process through which all young people and adults acquire and apply the knowledge, skills, and attitudes to develop healthy identities, manage emotions, and achieve personal and collective goals, feel and show empathy for others, establish and maintain supportive relationships, and make responsible and caring decisions.**

A growing number of educators, family members, researchers, community leaders, and legislators are recognizing that focusing on a student's academic skills alone is not enough to ensure student success. This expanding definition of student readiness includes the development of both academic and social emotional skills. It is important to note that unlike most academic skills social emotional learning requires the commitment of an entire school community for true implementation to occur. These skills cannot be taught by a single instructor or isolated to a set block of time. Instead, they are layered into every aspect of a student's experience, from student/staff interactions, discipline practices, cafeteria procedures, morning routines, school assemblies, family events, and more.

Systemic SEL becomes the stitching that connects and strengthens the fabric of a school community; and just like any garment, the more stitches you apply, the stronger the fabric becomes. Therefore, SEL cannot be a stand-alone effort. This document explains the role SEL plays in advancing equity and the vital role specific school and community members' play in impactful implementation. Throughout the document are embedded videos featuring school and community leaders throughout Virginia discussing the importance of this shared commitment and what progress looks like at the school level. We hope these videos bring SEL to life and motivate further discussions in your school or division.



# **SEL FOUNDATIONAL SUPPORT TOPICS**

# SEL'S ROLE IN ADVANCING EQUITY

Social emotional learning recognizes that every student—across learning abilities, race, ethnicity, family income levels, home language, religion, gender identity, and other factors—should be afforded high-quality educational opportunities that best promote their healthy social, emotional, and academic development. Social and emotional learning (SEL) provides a foundation for safe and positive learning, and enhances students' ability to succeed in school, careers, and life.

Social emotional learning advances educational equity by:

- Supporting authentic school-family-community partnerships where students, educators, families, and community members collaborate to identify and create meaningful ways to address the needs of students in their community. This partnership works best when the perspectives of all are heard and valued.
- Fostering trust and collaborative relationships where educators are attuned to and appreciate their students' development, culture,

and unique strengths and prioritize creating environments where all students feel welcomed, included, and supported. SEL helps students and educators develop skills in active listening, perspective taking, and empathy to build and strengthen relationships and create deeper connections.

- Promoting rigorous and meaningful instruction that sets high standards and expectations for all students and engages students in their learning, so they can meet their educational goals and develop into engaged citizens.
- Applying ongoing evaluation of policies, practices, and outcomes to ensure that all students have access to supportive learning and high-quality educational opportunities and environments to achieve excellence in social, emotional, and academic outcomes. SEL implementation grounded in research and continuous improvement helps drive efforts toward optimal outcomes for all students.

Building SEL competencies occurs both explicitly through embedded curricular resources and implicitly through school culture and climate, including through interactions with peers and adults. In the long run, greater social and emotional competence can increase the likelihood of high school graduation, readiness for postsecondary education, career success, positive family and work relationships, better mental health, and engaged citizenship.





## WANT TO LEARN MORE?



### RESOURCES

[VDOE Quick Guide](#)

[Integrating a Focus on Equity into Social and Emotional Learning, Regional Educational Laboratory \(REL\)](#)

[How SEL Can Help Make Schools Feel More Inclusive, Edutopia](#)

[Addressing Race and Trauma in the Classroom](#)



### VIDEO

[A Discussion on SEL's Role in Advancing Equity](#)

# KEY CONSIDERATIONS FOR THE INCLUSION OF STUDENTS WITH DISABILITIES

Inclusive education ensures that students with disabilities are provided with the specially designed instruction, related services, and supports needed to succeed academically and socially.

Social emotional inclusion ensures that all students have the opportunity to develop authentic relationships with a broad range of peers. Effective social emotional inclusion is person-centered and emphasizes strengths and talents to promote awareness and reduce stigma, prejudice, and discrimination. Teams can purposefully foster relationships based on interests, connections, and activities by building upon connections that

already exist. By including students with disabilities in daily opportunities to work in small groups and pairs, students learn to support each other's learning.

For some students with disabilities, weaknesses in social emotional functioning are part of their disability. For those students, specific social emotional learning skills should be identified as part of their Individualized Education Program (IEP). Determining specific goals, evidence-based instructional strategies, curriculum modifications, and accommodations may help to inform their social emotional learning instruction.

**By including students with disabilities in daily opportunities to work in small groups and pairs, students learn to support each other's learning.**



## WANT TO LEARN MORE?



### RESOURCES

[VDOE Quick Guide](#)

[Supporting the Emotional Needs of Kids with Disabilities](#)

[K-12 Inclusive Practices Guide](#)



### VIDEO

[A Discussion on Key Considerations for the Inclusion of SWDs](#)

# KEY CONSIDERATIONS FOR THE INCLUSION OF ENGLISH LEARNERS

Inclusive education ensures that all students, including English Learners, are provided with explicit and targeted instruction within responsive programs that support their emotional, linguistic, and academic development. English Learners (ELs) are coming to Virginia

schools with a variety of experiences within formal and informal educational settings. Some ELs even enter the United States (US) or start US schools with a history of substantial interruptions and/or lack of access to formal education. Learning to navigate a new school

and new culture while simultaneously learning a new language can negatively impact a student's self-confidence, sense of belonging and safety, and ability to handle stress or worry.

School staff supporting EL students should prioritize the following through intentional routines and activities:

- **Establishing a sense of safety and belonging within their new learning communities;**
- **Allowing them to be productive and valued members of their communities;**
- **Valuing students' native languages and cultural identities through daily interactions and routines; and**
- **Honoring the students' backgrounds and considering their unique individual experiences.**

Research shows how students who have experienced trauma or extreme adversity (e.g., separated from families or victimized by physical and mental abuse during civil unrest and violence) will be challenged



to concentrate on academics that may feel very disconnected from their lives and presented in a language they are only beginning to understand. For students with these experiences, especially when they are joining a school system later in their academic careers, social emotional supports and learning are critical to the development of their positive identities as learners, their connections to academic content, and the development of their new language. Otherwise, schools miss the opportunity to authentically connect and engage ELs in ways that support their perseverance through the productive struggle of learning language, content, and the skills they need for success in college and careers.

The majority of frameworks for integrating SEL competency training are not explicit about the unique needs of English Learners (*Mapping the SEL Landscape*). However, Virginia's SEL Standards can guide teachers to foster the development of positive student identity, encourage students

to celebrate differences, and empower their voices by valuing and connecting with their experiences, backgrounds, and families. Additionally, Virginia's SEL Curriculum Frameworks promote culturally responsive and trauma-sensitive teaching practices in the educator notes embedded throughout. As teachers and leaders learn more about their students and families, including their linguistic and cultural identities, they have an opportunity to foster meaningful relationships and focus on creating supportive and responsive programs that develop the social emotional skills that students will need to be successful within Virginia's PreK-12 schools and beyond.

The VDOE recognizes the foundational nature of social emotional learning for students' linguistic and academic development and will continue to build additional resources and support connected to SEL standards and responsive instructional practices specifically for ELs.

## WANT TO LEARN MORE?



### RESOURCES

[VDOE Quick Guide](#)

[Creating New Futures for Newcomers: Lessons from Five Schools that Serve K-12 Immigrants, Refugees, and Asylees](#)

[Supporting Immigrants in Schools](#)

[Newcomer Toolkit](#)

[Social and Emotional Learning for English Learners](#)



### VIDEOS

[Key Considerations for the Inclusion of ELs](#)

[Webinar: Social-Emotional Learning Supports for ELs](#)

# SEL'S IMPACT ON SCHOOL SAFETY AND CLIMATE

School climate is defined by the “shared norms, beliefs, attitudes, experiences, and behaviors that shape the nature of the interactions between and among students, teachers and administrators” (Sugai et al., 2016). These shared understandings reflect the organizational, instructional, and interpersonal expectations and experiences that set the parameters for behavior within a school and serve as the context for how students, staff, parents, and the community report on the quality of the educational and social culture and climate of the school. The National Center on Safe, Supportive Learning Environments defines school safety as “schools and school-related activities where students are safe from violence, bullying, harassment, and substance use.” A schoolwide approach to social emotional learning (SEL) can create a school climate that promotes the health and safety of the school community.

Social emotional learning is directly related to improving school climate and school safety because it provides a framework for shaping the norms, beliefs, attitudes, experiences, and behaviors in the school community. Schools that foster social emotional growth value building relationships among staff, students, families, and communities so that everyone understands the vision, mission, and expectations of the school. With everyone in the school focused on developing social emotional skills, the school climate becomes optimal for learning and working conditions. Schoolwide SEL means schools create opportunities for students to learn and practice self-management, self-awareness, social awareness, relationships, and decision-making

skills. Schoolwide SEL promotes a sense of belonging, prioritizes positive interactions with adults in the school, fosters student’s self-efficacy to solve problems, and encourages students to help others, thus creating a supportive climate and safer school.

In a school where social emotional learning provides a framework for creating a positive school climate, students learn skills for navigating their lives. When students face obstacles for meeting behavioral expectations, and the staff responds with SEL-focused supports and interventions, students learn to trust the adults in the building and feel safe as they learn to navigate school and the changing world around them. Instruction, interventions, and supports with a

**“When everyone in the school focuses on developing social emotional skills, the school climate becomes optimal for learning and working conditions.”**

**The National Center on Safe, Supportive Learning Environments.**



foundation in SEL development create a common language and understanding among the school community. Whether the student is unaware of the impact of their behavior, has experienced trauma that triggers behaviors, lacks the social acuity to navigate certain situations, or has not developed effective decision-making skills, the school staff is able to respond to problem behaviors with consistent supports to teach rather than punish. Providing students with multiple opportunities to develop social

emotional skills is a powerful influence for wiring neural pathways necessary to build and sustain healthy development. SEL provides the common framework needed to ensure healthy development of the whole child in a safe school. Social emotional learning is not an easy fix for the challenges our schools face to provide all students with a safe, supportive environment, but when implemented with intention and fidelity, SEL can help to positively transform the way we reach and teach the whole child.

## WANT TO LEARN MORE?



### RESOURCES

[Model Guidance for Positive and Preventative Code of Student Conduct and Alternatives to Suspension](#)

[National Center on Safe Supportive Learning Environments](#)

[National School Climate Center](#)

[Restorative Practices and SEL Alignment](#)

[Reflecting on School Discipline and SEL Alignment](#)

[Developing Schoolwide Norms](#)

[Planning Procedures for Supportive Environments](#)



### VIDEO

[A Discussion on SEL's Impact on School Safety and Climate](#)

# SEL INTEGRATION WITHIN A VIRGINIA TIERED SYSTEMS OF SUPPORTS FRAMEWORK

The goal of Virginia Tiered Systems of Supports (VTSS) is to align academic, behavior, and social emotional wellness into a single decision-making framework. This framework holds a continuum of supports and evidenced-based practices with increasing levels of intensity to create effective learning environments for all students.

The essential elements of the VTSS framework are:

- **Aligned organizational structure;**
- **Data-informed decision-making;**
- **Evidence-based practices;**
- **Family, school, and community partnerships;**
- **Monitoring student progress; and**
- **Evaluation of outcomes and fidelity.**

The supports and evidenced-based practices of the VTSS framework are organized within three tiers and are designed to support the whole child. The data-based decision-making process within the framework helps



educators identify where students need support in order to meet them where they are and provide the support and instruction they need.

**Tier 1:** Universal practices that ensure that all students receive high-quality core instruction and experience safe and supportive learning environments.

**Tier 2:** Targeted or supplemental supports and interventions.

**Tier 3:** Intensive and individualized supports and interventions.

Social emotional learning is not something that should be implemented separately, but rather integrated and aligned within the VTSS framework. The data-based decision-making process that VTSS is built upon allows for the establishment of systems of support that can help facilitate the implementation of a variety of supports and interventions for academics, behavior, and social emotional learning as they are all factors for student success. Social emotional competence is essential for all learning and all learning is a social and emotional process.

Students are most successful academically when they:

- **Know themselves and can manage themselves;**
- **Take the perspectives of others and relate effectively with them; and**
- **Make sound choices about personal and social decisions (Durlak et al., 2015).**

Social emotional learning provides students with the foundational competencies that they need in order to:

- **Follow behavioral expectations;**
- **Reflect on and learn from mistakes;**
- **Navigate complex relationships; and**
- **Make responsible decisions (Durlak et al., 2015).**

Social emotional learning is an important part of universal practices within VTSS because it promotes positive academic and behavioral outcomes for all students.

## WANT TO LEARN MORE?



### RESOURCES

[VTSS Research and Implementation Center \(RIC\)](#)

[CASEL: Multi-Tiered Systems of Support \(MTSS\)](#)

[Connecting Schoolwide SEL with Other School-Based Frameworks](#)



### VIDEO

[A Discussion on SEL's Impact on School Safety and Climate](#)



The background is a light yellow color with various decorative elements: a dark blue rectangle in the top left, a teal square in the top center, a grid of red dots in the top right, a yellow circle with a red outline in the top right, a red square outline in the middle left, a grid of red dots in the bottom left, a teal square outline in the bottom center, a teal circle with a dark blue outline in the bottom left, a grid of red dots in the bottom left, a teal rainbow-like shape in the bottom center, a dark blue square outline in the bottom right, a red rectangle in the bottom right, and a red curved shape in the middle right. There are also diagonal red lines on the left and diagonal teal lines on the right.

**SHARED  
RESPONSIBILITY:**  
AN OVERVIEW OF  
SPECIFIC ROLES IN  
SEL IMPLEMENTATION

# THE ROLE OF FAMILIES IN SEL AND THE IMPORTANCE OF FAMILY ENGAGEMENT

Ensuring that families are involved in Social Emotional Learning (SEL) is vital to achieving positive student outcomes. Children spend approximately five times as many of their waking hours at home each year than they do at school (Casper, Lopez, and Weiss, 2018, p. 1). As the vast majority of children's waking hours are spent outside of school, family modeling and teaching of appropriate social emotional skills will considerably bolster the efforts of schools in teaching SEL standards.

In order for families to fully partner with schools in this work, schools need to do two important things:

1. Schools need to establish and maintain authentic relationships with every family of every student. If we want families to work with us in a truly collaborative way, we must do the work that is necessary to engage them. It is our responsibility as educators to build capacity with families and to help them to feel connected to us.
2. Provide families with information (and appropriate instruction, when necessary) on the SEL standards, so that they can effectively model and coach their children at home and in various other settings. Familiarity with the SEL standards will allow families to collaborate with schools in this important work.

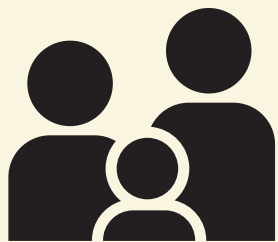


CASEL suggests the following ways to include families in the school's SEL efforts.

- Inviting families to contribute to SEL goals and shared agreements.
- Inviting families to participate in the planning, selection, implementation, and evaluation of SEL programming.
- Sending positive notes home to families about their student's academic or SEL growth.
- Asking families to share information about their child (e.g., how they learn best, what kinds of supports and approaches have been most helpful in the past).
- Inviting families to participate in SEL learning opportunities, family events, back-to-school night, etc.

- Including information in family newsletters about ways to practice SEL skills at home.
- Asking families about the best ways to communicate with them.
- Providing materials and experiences in multiple languages.
- Inviting family members to visit or volunteer in the classroom, observe SEL, and participate in a lesson or activity.

We know that children need strong social emotional skills at school, in the home, and in every setting in which they find themselves. Having families partner with schools through the instruction of SEL Guidance Standards simply makes sense. When families and schools partner together, students thrive. This is especially true when it comes to SEL instruction.



**When families and schools partner together, students thrive. This is especially true when it comes to SEL instruction.**

## WANT TO LEARN MORE?



### RESOURCES

[VDOE Quick Guide](#)

[Common Reactions and How to Respond \(PDF\)](#)

[Children Coping Resources](#)

[Joining Together to Create a Bold Vision for Next-Generation Family Engagement: Engaging Families to Transform Education](#)

[Family Engagement in SEL](#)

[CASEL: Family Partnerships](#)

[Strategies for Establishing School-Family Partnerships in support of SEL](#)

[SEL Discussion Series for Parents and Caregivers \(English\)](#)

[SEL Discussion Series for Parents and Caregivers \(Spanish\)](#)



### VIDEO

[A Discussion on the Role of Families in SEL Implementation](#)

# THE ROLE OF ADMINISTRATORS IN SCHOOLWIDE SEL

In our ever-evolving world of education, SEL is certainly at the core and forefront of developing and maintaining school environments that place students and the entire school community on a trajectory of lifelong achievement. According to a recent report, principals continue to believe SEL skills are teachable and should be a priority in schools (CASEL, 2019 Update on Principal's Perspective of SEL).

School administrators having a lens on the valuable work of SEL will allow students to thrive and acquire sustainable skills and abilities that transcend into their adulthood and promote healthier societal contributions. It is incumbent upon school administrators to mobilize resources and prioritize SEL supports, as this work inevitably can create a climate that promotes a safe and orderly learning environment as a whole.

The following are some essential considerations for school administrators as they reflect on their role in schoolwide SEL implementation.



- **How do structures, systems, and procedures support the goals and expectations for attaining successful and sustainable outcomes of SEL?**
- **Do we have dedicated time and space to engage the school community in SEL foundation learning and Adult SEL?**
- **In our communication to staff and family, do we regularly promote SEL as a school priority?**
- **Have we created structures that foster trust and collaboration among staff?**

**Effective school administrators ensure that SEL is well planned and implemented with fidelity. They understand that SEL is critical in creating and maintaining school communities where children can thrive as a whole.**

- **Do I explicitly model SEL in my interactions with staff, families, and students?**
- **Are we aligning existing programs, practices, and current efforts around school climate to promote SEL?**
- **Do we develop authentic family partnerships?**
- **Are we leveraging strategic and aligned community partnerships?**
- **Am I promoting the growth of SEL skills when handling discipline referrals?**
- **Do I model reflective practices with data and learning from mistakes to promote a continuous improvement culture?**

In summary, effective school administrators ensure that SEL is well planned and implemented with fidelity. They understand that SEL is critical in creating and maintaining school communities where children can thrive as a whole and ultimately, with intentionality, administrators embed SEL schoolwide to promote a positive school culture and climate for all students, staff, and families.

## WANT TO LEARN MORE?



### RESOURCES

[Build Awareness, Commitment and Ownership Create a Plan](#)

[Strengthen Adult SEL](#)

[School Guide Essentials](#)

[Practice for Continuous Improvement](#)

[The Principal's Role in SEL](#)



### VIDEO

[A Discussion on an Administrator's Role in SEL Implementation](#)

# THE ROLE OF TEACHERS IN SCHOOLWIDE SEL

Teachers play an important role in the successful implementation of SEL for students. Teachers can promote SEL for students in three broad areas:

- **Fostering Positive Teacher-Student Relationships;**
- **Establishing a Positive Classroom Environment; and**
- **Implementing SEL Instructional Practices.**

First, let's examine why the teacher-student relationship is essential in SEL implementation. Effective educators are those that intentionally study and learn about their students and school community; just as students are called on to learn content. We know that students enter school with a range of competencies, and how teachers nurture these relationships has important implications. Research has shown that students who learn from caring and responsive teachers were found to have a stronger work ethic and report a greater enjoyment of learning (Rimm-Kaufman, Baroody, Larsen, Curby, & Abry, 2015). Students are more likely to engage in challenging academic and social emotional learning concepts when they

have a strong and supportive relationship with their teacher. Students are less likely to open up about personal matters such as friendships, stress levels, or goals if they don't have a well-established connection with their teacher.

While a strong teacher-student relationship positively affects the classroom environment, it can't end there. Teachers should establish classroom norms and routines that promote respectful relationships between students. Allowing students to collaborate, discuss, and receive peer feedback is only successful when the classroom environment is safe, welcoming, and inclusive. This can be

accomplished through routines and regular opportunities for interactions that are taught and consistently used.

Finally, the most effective lessons provide explicit instruction as well as opportunities for practicing skills beyond the lesson and throughout the day, or through connections during academic lessons (Dusenbery et al, 2015). By weaving SEL instruction throughout academic instructional time, teachers can support and deepen learning.

**“Fundamentally as every teacher knows, this job of education is a human one. It is about relationships... When teachers are able to prioritize relationships and focus on the quality of their connections with kids, we see over and over again the teachers feeling more effective and the kids being more engaged, learning more and feeling more effective.”**

—Robert Pianta in *Creating Opportunities through Relationships (COR)*.



**Effective SEL instruction has four elements represented by the acronym SAFE:**

- **SEQUENCED**—connected and coordinated activities to foster skills development;
- **ACTIVE**—active forms of learning to help students master new skills;
- **FOCUSED**—containing activities that clearly emphasize developing personal and social skills; and
- **EXPLICIT**—targeting specific social and emotional skills (Durlak et al., 2010, 2011).

## WANT TO LEARN MORE?



### RESOURCES

[CASEL Guide for the Classroom](#)

[Planning Procedures for Supportive Classroom Environments](#)

[Teaching Tolerance Questions for Reflective Practice](#)

[Student Voices – Their Perspectives on How Schools Are and Should Be](#)



### VIDEOS

[Classroom Examples of Social and Emotional Learning](#)

[5 Keys to Social and Emotional Learning Success](#)

VDOE Webinars: Social Emotional Learning in Literacy:

[Elementary Webinar](#)

- [Elementary, presentation slides](#)

[Secondary Webinar](#)

- [Secondary, presentation slides](#)

# THE ROLE OF THE SCHOOL PSYCHOLOGIST IN SCHOOLWIDE SEL

School psychologists are trained in child development, understanding barriers to learning, data-based decision-making, consultation and collaboration, and cultural competence. These skills allow school psychologists, as school-based mental health providers, to offer critical leadership to and support for the implementation of Social Emotional Learning.

Some of the ways that school psychologists can be critical team members in this work include:

- **Being part of the division and school-level social emotional learning teams;**
- **Advocating for evidence-based and culturally competent social emotional learning practices that result in more equitable outcomes for all students;**
- **Creating and providing school and division-wide professional development on the importance of social emotional learning;**
- **Facilitating school teams' reviews of data at all tiers, evaluating research-based findings, and designing evidence-based social emotional learning interventions;**
- **Coordinating the delivery of services to students with social and emotional challenges;**
- **Designing and delivering social and emotional interventions and assisting in making modifications to curriculum;**
- **Supporting adult social emotional learning to equip educators in school wide SEL; and**
- **Consulting with educators implementing SEL.**

School psychologists can play a critical role at all levels of support for SEL. If school divisions are considering implementation of SEL, they need to examine current staffing ratios and the availability of staff resources to support implementation.

## WANT TO LEARN MORE?



### RESOURCES

[Who are School Psychologists \(NASP\)](#)

[Appropriate Behavioral, Social, and Emotional Supports to Meet the Needs of All Students \(NASP\)](#)

[NASP Practice Model Implementation Guide](#)



### VIDEO

[A Discussion on the School Psychologist's Role in SEL Implementation](#)



# THE ROLE OF THE SCHOOL SOCIAL WORKER IN SCHOOLWIDE SEL

School Social Workers often serve as a “bridge” within the school system. They assist in building connections between students, families, faculties, and communities. With training in children’s mental health and development, education law, community advocacy, and special education, school social workers are multi-faceted individuals who come well prepared to support their school divisions in the design, planning, and implementation of SEL programming. Your school social worker can:

- **Assist with the identification and implementation of evidence-based prevention programs that are culturally sensitive;**
- **Provide professional development programming to assist staff in SEL implementation;**
- **Participate in SEL teams and support schoolwide SEL implementation, data analysis, and improvement;**
- **Conduct school-based needs assessments to identify and target school specific SEL needs;**

- **Collaborate with teachers and school counselors to provide classroom-based instruction in SEL;**
- **Develop individual, group, and/or whole-class SEL interventions;**
- **Empower students to self-advocate by supporting student-led efforts for social change;**
- **Guide students through restorative practices to build social understanding, empathy, and community; and**
- **Connect with community stakeholders and families who can reinforce and support the school’s SEL efforts.**

The work of the School Social Workers can go beyond sociocultural histories and attendance; they can be key in helping to prioritize social emotional learning as invested partners and school leaders.

## WANT TO LEARN MORE?



### RESOURCES

[SSWAA: Promoting Social Emotional Learning Within School Social Work](#)

[School Social Work National Standards for SEL](#)



### VIDEO

[A Discussion on the School Social Worker’s Role in SEL Implementation](#)

# THE ROLE OF THE SCHOOL COUNSELOR IN SCHOOLWIDE SEL

School counselors are trained through a master's level program in child development, mental health, and psychology of human nature. With this educational background, school counselors play a critical role in supporting social emotional learning.

School counselors serve as advocates for students. They proactively educate students about SEL and support students with addressing social emotional issues that can serve as barriers to success in school and beyond.

School counselors also work collaboratively with other stakeholders to promote an equitable learning environment where all students feel respected and valued, which can help create the caring and just atmosphere needed for effective, schoolwide SEL implementation to occur.



As mental health professionals, school counselors can serve as leaders in schoolwide implementation efforts by:

- **Collaborating with classroom teachers to provide the school counseling curriculum to all students through direct instruction, team-teaching, or providing lesson plans for learning activities or units in classrooms aimed at social emotional development (ASCA, 2019);**
- **Serving or leading a Leadership Team on SEL implementation;**
- **Providing professional development to promote a deeper understanding of SEL and Adult SEL to both staff and families;**

- **Leading meetings that empower student voice (examples can include student focus groups, facilitation of courageous conversations, or restorative justice circles);**
- **Collecting and analyzing data on schoolwide SEL implementation efforts that includes identifying students who need additional support; and**
- **Providing small groups or individual counseling sessions to students to address social emotional needs requiring intensive support.**

As you plan for SEL development and the essential role of your school counselor(s) it is vital that non-counseling duties be re-examined to allow for school counselors to fully engage in and support SEL efforts.

**School counselors... educate students about SEL and support students with addressing social emotional issues that can serve as barriers to success in school and beyond.**

## WANT TO LEARN MORE?



### RESOURCES

[ASCA Position Statement on SEL](#)

[Three Ways School Counselors can Boost SEL \(Edutopia\).](#)

[Utilizing School Counselors to Promote SEL in the Classroom \(Transforming Education\).](#)

[Student Survey: How I feel about my classroom and school](#)



### VIDEO

[A Discussion on the School Counselor's Role in SEL Implementation](#)

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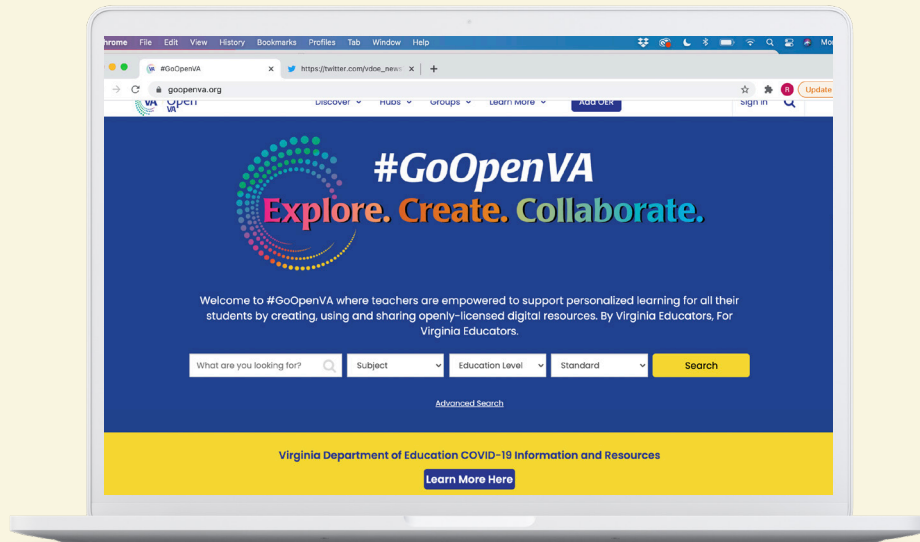
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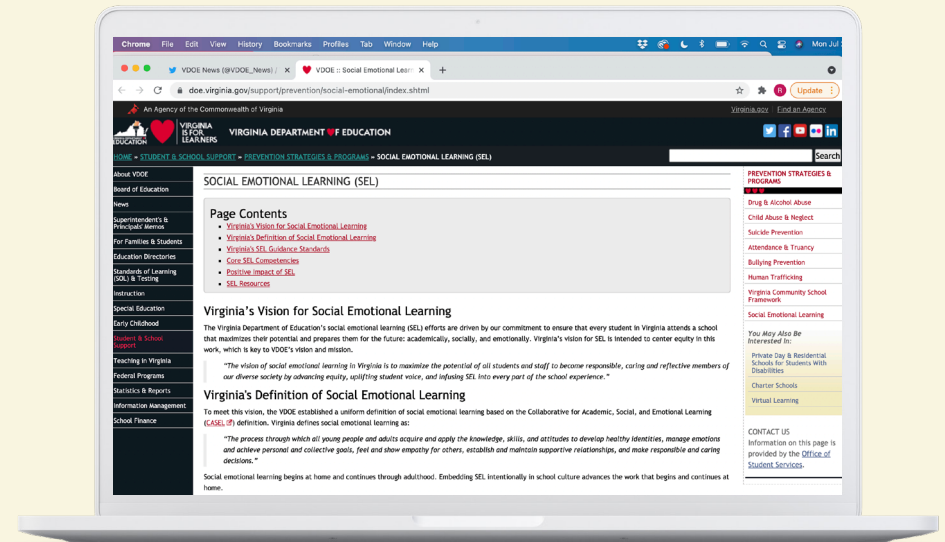
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# ADDITIONAL RESOURCES FOR SEL IMPLEMENTATION



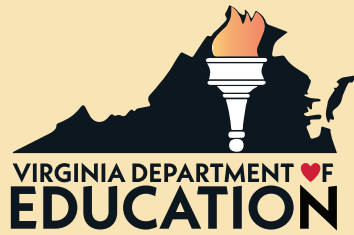
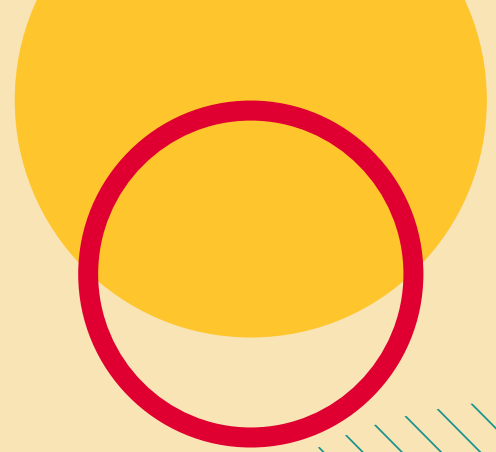
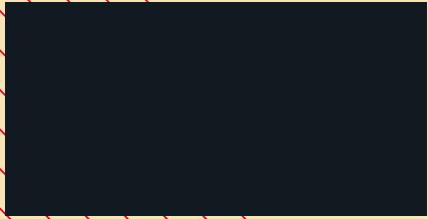
## SEL Resource Library in GoOpenVA:

A growing library of resources organized by grade bands and SEL Guidance Standards for implementation.



## VDOE SEL Webpage:

This webpage includes additional resources, professional development opportunities and planning guides to advance SEL implementation at the classroom, school, and division level.



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