

Lessons from the COVID-19 pandemic: Evidence-based resources for professional development facilitators

Social and emotional learning, grades 6–12

Facilitator guide

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Introduction

This professional development learning module offers evidence-based resources to help middle and high school teachers strengthen their instructional activities to promote social and emotional learning (SEL) and well-being among teachers and students.

The shift to hybrid and remote learning environments due to the COVID-19 pandemic isolated youth from one another and limited their one-on-one contact with teachers. This caused stress for many students while providing others, who may have previously struggled with in-person learning, new opportunities to thrive (REL Southwest, 2021a). At the same time, unprecedented societal changes and conversations that directed attention to issues of racial equity, cultural responsiveness, and social justice affected students in different ways (REL Southwest 2021a). As a result, as teachers reenter classrooms for in-person instruction, they will encounter many students with learning needs that may have affected their social and emotional well-being. This training module is intended to support educators in recognizing students' social, emotional, and academic needs and developing strategies to address them.

In response to the COVID-19 pandemic, educational researchers from the nation's 10 Regional Educational Laboratories (RELs), which conduct applied research and training to promote an evidence-based education system, collaborated to compile resources and guidance to support educators in moving to virtual instruction. The information contained within this module pulls from these evidence-based resources, posted on the REL COVID-19 web page (<https://ies.ed.gov/ncee/edlabs/projects/covid-19/>), to support middle grade and high school teachers in exploring research-based practices for supporting SEL instruction.

The REL COVID-19 web page contains a wealth of information on SEL, with nearly 30 evidence-based resources available, including blogs, FAQs, an infographic, videos, and webinars. Researchers from REL Northwest synthesized website content to distill key findings and recommendations from across the 10 RELs. This professional development module is intended to support district facilitators in delivering this information to an audience of middle grade and high school educators as a 90-minute professional development experience. For flexibility, the module may be broken into sections and/or may be extended into a longer session(s). The module's content is summarized below:

- ***Module background and context.*** This section orients participants to the module with an overview of the agenda, outcomes, and goals, and offers definitions and background information about SEL. The timing of this portion of the module is designed for participants, such as colleagues, who know one another. If the facilitator is working with a group of people unfamiliar with one another, they may want to extend this time and add activities to help participants get to know each other and the background each brings to the conversation.
- ***SEL and teachers.*** This section helps participants understand the importance of having teachers consider their own SEL needs before they begin working with students. It features evidence-based practices to support teachers in building their understanding of SEL and how to apply its concepts to themselves.
- ***SEL and students.*** This section introduces participants to the need to consider SEL when working with students. It highlights evidence-based practices that can be used to support students' SEL needs.

The module showcases five evidence-based practices educators may apply to promote SEL instruction for students while also considering their own needs and mental well-being. A self-guided activity is offered to help participants explore each of the practices, for a total of six activities (five for SEL and students and one for SEL and teachers). In the 90-minute timeframe, each participant will have time to engage directly in two activities: the first designed to help

them apply SEL to address their own professional understandings and needs, and the second to support them in addressing the SEL needs of their students. While facilitators have flexibility in structuring the training, it is recommended that they address the SEL needs of both teachers and students. For the latter activity, facilitators may seek to have all participants complete the same activity or group them based on their interest in a particular practice. If facilitators prefer, they can extend the module delivery time to allow participants to go deeper into a single activity, or to work through two or more of the activities.

Learning outcomes

By the end of this module, middle school and high school educators will be able to describe and practice key evidence-based strategies to support SEL for themselves and their middle school and high school students.

Process for identifying resources and activities

Information for this module was drawn from a review of 26 research studies, webinars, infographics, and blogs developed by REL researchers and posted on the REL COVID-19 web page (<https://ies.ed.gov/ncee/edlabs/projects/covid-19/>). REL Northwest reviewed these resources developed by other RELs to select content and activities that middle school and high school teachers might adopt to strengthen their SEL instruction. The team categorized content into evidence-based SEL practices addressing either students or teachers, and crafted activities to align with the content of these practices. When designing module format and components, the team considered the time limitations of the professional development experience and the need for discrete activities in which teachers could engage.

Module-at-a-glance

The following section offers a structure for delivering a 90-minute professional development experience. It includes suggested times for each segment, a topical description, and summary of the key activities to be addressed. Key concepts are color-coded by focus in case facilitators wish to break the module into shorter sessions.

<i>Timing</i>	<i>Segment</i>	<i>Key activities</i>
10 minutes	Welcome and module background	Reflection and metacognition (<i>What concerns do you have about your students' social and emotional health as they return to school?</i>) Introduce the module Module purposes & overview
10 minutes	Definitions and context	Define terms and provide context
13 minutes	Social and emotional learning: Teachers	What SEL looks like for teachers and why it matters Small-group discussion
3 minutes	Evidence-based practices	Presentation of key SEL evidence-based practices to support teachers
5 minutes	Report-out from small groups	Small groups share one evidence-based practice they plan to use
2 minutes	Social and emotional learning: Students	What SEL looks like for students and why it matters
10 minutes	Evidence-based practices	Presentation of key SEL evidence-based practices to support students
22 minutes	Small groups use an evidence-based practice	Participants engage with one of the key evidence-based practices in small groups
10 minutes	Report-out from small groups	Participants share their small group work with the larger group
5 minutes	Thank you and feedback	Evaluation

When using the slide deck, keep in mind that the notes included on the facilitator slides are both directional and scripted. Feel free to use the script in whatever way works best for you, as long as you are true to the research described in the Facilitator Guide. *Directions for facilitators are included in the slides in italics; suggested scripts for reading are in "quotation marks."*

Step-by-step facilitation guide: Preparation

The following section lists steps that facilitators should take to prepare to offer a professional development experience. Addressing these prior to the event will help to ensure that the session proceeds smoothly and will lessen disruptions. Allow at least two hours of preparation to customize the materials and activities.

Tasks to complete prior to the session

The facilitator should plan to complete the following tasks to prepare for the session.

- Create any feedback survey you wish to conduct at the end of the session (optional).
- Customize the slide deck, available on the REL Northwest website [LINK TO BE INSERTED]
 - Insert the names and titles of presenters on slide 3. Note that while presenters' names will be added to the deck, the facilitator should clarify during opening remarks that these individuals are not affiliated with the REL program or IES.
 - Insert links to polls and feedback surveys as needed.
 - Add slides to customize introductions and icebreakers, breaks, or other directions as needed.
 - Create a PDF version of the slides with no slide notes as a handout for participants by selecting "File --> Export --> Create PDF/XPS Document" in PowerPoint (optional).
- Ensure the customized slide deck is saved and accessible on the computer you will use for projection or sharing.
- Make physical and/or digital copies of the agenda and activity handouts included in the appendices and posted on the REL Northwest website.

Communications with participants

The facilitator should reach out to participants prior to the session to advise them of what they will need to bring to the event, using the instructions in the face-to-face or virtual columns depending upon how the professional development will be delivered.

<i>Face-to-face delivery</i>	<i>Virtual delivery</i>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● A device, such as a laptop or a mobile phone ● Logistical directions for the event, including locations and start and end times ● Links to all needed files and web pages 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Updated platform connection to make the breakout room options as smooth as possible ● Logistical directions for the event, including connection information and start and end times ● Links to all needed files and web pages

Materials

The facilitator should plan to bring the following materials to the event, using the instructions included for the face-to-face or virtual columns depending upon how the professional development will be delivered.

<i>Face-to-face delivery</i>	<i>Virtual delivery</i>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Laptop • Projection screen • Physical or digital copies of handout packets • Flipchart display paper • Markers and sticky notes 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Zip file of professional development handouts (PDFs) • Link to files • Link to electronic whiteboard document, such as Google Docs, Padlet, or other collaborative application

Session setup

The facilitator should take the following steps the day of the event to ensure they are prepared for participants to arrive, using the instructions included for the face-to-face or virtual columns depending upon how the professional development will be delivered.

<i>Face-to-face delivery</i>	<i>Virtual delivery</i>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Connect slides to the projector • Open webpages you may want to show • Pull up the videos and move past any ads so they are ready to share • Distribute handout packets or have them readily available 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Prepare participant email list and send zip file containing handouts the morning of the training • Create a slide to explain how to use features of your webinar platform, including the chat or Q&A box, breakout rooms, polling, and whiteboards • Pull up the videos and move past any ads so they are ready to share

Appendix A: Participant agenda

This agenda is available for you to customize, copy, and paste into any email messages or handouts you may want to provide.

- 10 min Welcome and introductions
Participants will introduce themselves and review the content for the session.
- 10 min Definitions and context
Review of key definitions and how they are used.
- 20 min Social and emotional learning: Teacher perspectives
Overview of what social and emotional learning looks like for teachers and why it matters. Includes descriptions of evidence-based practices and a small-group activity.
- 45 min Social and emotional learning: Student perspectives
Description of how social and emotional learning can be addressed for students and why it matters. Includes descriptions of evidence-based practices and a small-group activity to practice skills.
- 5 min Closing
Discussion of next steps to apply learnings.

Appendix B: SEL and teachers handout

Use the following handout for the breakout session on teacher social and emotional health and well-being.

Activity: Evidence-based SEL practices to support teacher well-being

Time: 13 minutes

Purpose: This activity engages educators in identifying their own social and emotional needs and exploring promising practices to help them meet those needs.

Instructions: Getting started

1. Choose a timekeeper to keep track of the time to ensure that your group completes the activity.
2. Choose someone to report the highlights of your discussions when you return to the large group.
3. Read the following section, up to the “reflection” section in the gold bar below. This should take about one minute.

Activity: Exploring concerns and evidence-based practices

Teachers’ mental well-being matters both for teacher effectiveness and student performance. In *Reflecting on Teacher Wellbeing During the COVID-19 Pandemic*, Tameka Porter of REL Pacific describes teacher well-being as “the reaction to the individual and collective physical, environmental, and social events that shape how educators respond to their students and colleagues.” Research shows that “...teacher wellbeing can be linked to both teacher effectiveness and student performance.”¹

REL Pacific (2020b) also points out that the pandemic and its impacts on both teachers and students can provide educators an “opportunity to reflect on how to foster teacher wellbeing practices that encourage teachers to build and strengthen caring relationships with one another and with their students and prioritize designing and sustaining classrooms where everyone feels emotionally and physically safe and supported.”

Research suggests that educators can take steps in their daily practice in relatively little time to make changes that will have a positive impact on their social and emotional well-being and mental health.² Research also indicates that developing and nurturing peer-to-peer relationships

¹ Becker, E. S., Goetz, T., Morger, V., & Ranellucci, J. (2014). The importance of teachers' emotions and instructional behavior for their students' emotions— experience sampling analysis. *Teaching and Teacher Education*, 43, 15–26 as cited in REL Pacific. (2020, June 22). *Reflecting on teacher wellbeing during the Covid-19 pandemic*. https://ies.ed.gov/ncee/edlabs/regions/pacific/blogs/blog28_reflecting-on-teacher-wellbeing-during-COVID-19-pandemic.asp.

² This definition and description of culture was taken from REL Pacific. (2020a, May). *Key considerations for promoting culturally relevant SEL during COVID-19*. https://ies.ed.gov/ncee/edlabs/regions/pacific/blogs/blog26_key-considerations-for-promoting-SEL-during-covid-19.asp

through collaborative professional development supports teacher well-being and the “processing of our own SEL” as educators.³

Research offers the following evidence-based practices:

Daily practices

- Practice self-reflection and check in regularly with yourself and others.
- Protect personal time (away from work) and establish healthy boundaries in the workplace.
- Express yourself in fun, creative ways.
- Take five “mini-vacations” a day, in which you do something fun for yourself.
- Be mindful and meditative.⁴

Connecting with colleagues through personalized professional learning

- Call on your colleagues and identify reflective learning partners.
- Co-develop professional learning plans.
- Engage with groups and activities that instill personal pride and professional identity.⁵

Reflection

1. With your small group, create a shared online document or use sticky notes and chart paper to answer the following question (5 minutes):

What concerns do you have about your own social and emotional needs as you return to school?

2. Explore evidence-based practices for supporting teacher well-being from the practices listed above. With your small group, choose one or two evidence-based practices that might work for you. Be explicit about how they would help to address the concerns you have about your own social and emotional needs (9 minutes).

³ REL Midwest. (2020, April). *Research-based resources, considerations, and strategies for remote learning*.

⁴ These evidence-based practices can be found in REL Appalachia. (2020, November). *Addressing trauma in educational settings: Module 2: Implementation of practices and strategies to support students and educators* [Presentation]. https://ies.ed.gov/ncee/edlabs/regions/appalachia/events/event_12-21-20_addressing-trauma-in-educational-settings_module-2.asp

⁵ These evidence-based practices can be found in REL Midwest. (2020, April). *Research-based resources, considerations, and strategies for remote learning* [Slide 18]. <https://ies.ed.gov/ncee/edlabs/regions/midwest/pdf/eventslides/remote-learning-slides-508.pdf>

Appendix C: Addressing SEL for students handouts

This appendix includes the handout for the breakout activities on SEL for students. Each of the activities featured below relate to a specific practice that participants may wish to explore in greater depth. Facilitators may wish to have all participants engage in one of the five practices or group them based on their interests. Participants should be reminded that they may continue to explore each of the practices following the professional development experience to expand their understanding and skills related to SEL.

The five practices in this Addressing SEL for Students section include:

- 1. Understand available social and emotional support services for students (e.g., counseling) within your building and district.**
This activity takes participants through initial steps to identify services and supports available for students in their school building or community.
- 2. Elevate student voice to promote student SEL.**
This activity explores potential ways to elevate student voice, which is an important strategy in meeting students' social and emotional needs.
- 3. Infuse cultural responsiveness into classrooms and curriculum to help students feel respected, valued, and connected to others.**
This activity begins a preliminary conversation around specific ways to recognize, respect, and appreciate diversity, which is one way to infuse cultural responsiveness into classrooms and curriculum.
- 4. Acknowledge that student behavior is communication.**
This activity focuses on the responses to behavior and what behavior may be telling us. Participants will work through a scenario.
- 5. Connect with families and communities.**
This activity highlights some questions that can help us focus on ways to support families and communities in being more involved in meeting social and emotional needs.

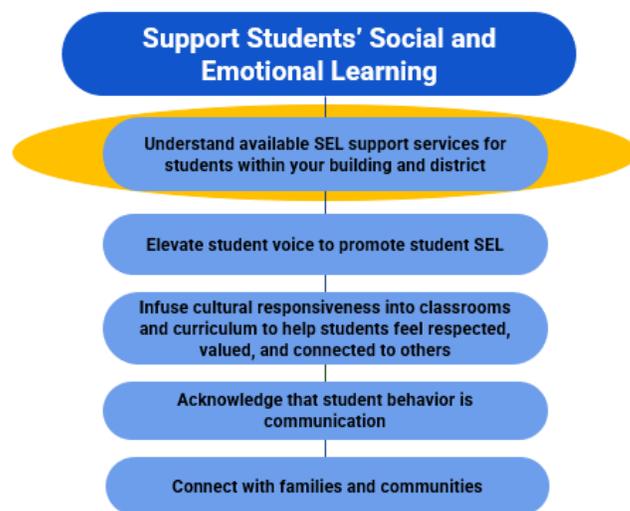
Addressing SEL for students: Understand available social and emotional support services for students (e.g., counseling) within your building and district

Time: 20 minutes (Two minutes are provided for breaking into groups)

Purpose: This activity takes participants through initial steps to identify services and supports available for students in their school building or community.

Small-group activities

Evidence-Based Practices to Support SEL for Students



Instructions: Getting started

Setup (2 minutes).

1. Choose a timekeeper to keep track of the time to ensure that your group completes the activity.
2. Choose someone to report the highlights of your discussions when you return to the large group.
3. Read the following section, up to the “reflection” section in the gold bar below. This should take about one minute.

Activity: Resource mapping

In the presentation *Addressing Trauma in Educational Settings* (2020, November), REL Appalachia introduced the process of resource mapping to help educators identify and prepare to share the SEL resources that are available to their students. The National Center for School Mental Health describes resource mapping as “an active, ongoing process to identify, visually represent, and share information about internal and external supports and services; it is used to inform effective use of resources. Including information about eligibility and details can help improve student follow-through and coordination of care. Because schools often collaborate with multiple agencies (e.g., health, juvenile services, social services, behavioral health) and

programs, understanding the services provided by each agency/program reduces duplication and inappropriate use of services.”⁶

While resource mapping is generally done at the systems level—such as the school or district—it can be helpful at the classroom level as well. The mapping process helps educators know what resources are available to share with their students. In a classroom, this might mean posting numbers for local mental health or suicide prevention hotlines and sharing how students can contact school mental health support. Mapping can also help educators feel more confident in the processes for contacting agencies and programs when students need assistance. This can be accomplished by looking at resources in their own classroom or in the classrooms of other instructors teaching similar subjects. Resources may also be accessible to teachers through their own community contacts. The activity that follows begins the process of scanning for the information needed to complete a resource map.

Reflection

- Using a flipchart or shared online document, collectively brainstorm answers to the following questions while filling out the chart below (7 minutes). This will get you started on identifying some of the resources available to your students and thinking about how you might share them. Once you have worked with colleagues to identify some of these resources and a plan for how to share them, you may decide to continue resource mapping on your own or as a team to develop a plan to keep your list of resources updated and relevant to student needs.

List the resources in the appropriate column and then discuss and write down how you can share the resource with students.

What resources do you have in your room or space to support SEL? (This could be reading materials, posters with key contact information for support, a quiet space for students, etc.)	What resources are available in the building or district to support SEL?	What resources are available in the community?	How can I share this resource with my students in my classroom?

* Note: As you think about available services and supports, you might think specifically about mental health services in your school or community, as well as other social services that be accessible.

⁶ The complete process of resource mapping at the systems level can be found here: National Center for School Mental Health (NCSMH). (2020). *School mental health quality guide: Impact*. NCSMH, University of Maryland School of Medicine. <http://www.schoolmentalhealth.org/media/SOM/Microsites/NCSMH/Documents/Quality-Guides/Needs-Assessment-&-Resource-Mapping-2.3.20.pdf> as cited in REL Appalachia. (2020, November). *Addressing trauma in educational settings: Module 2: Implementation of practices and strategies to support students and educators*. [Presentation], https://ies.ed.gov/ncee/edlabs/regions/appalachia/events/event_12-21-20_addressing-trauma-in-educational-settings_module-2.asp.

2. Share your responses in the small group. Think about what you have available and note what others have identified that might be useful in your own classroom. (6 minutes).
3. Reflect with a partner on concrete next steps you might take to identify additional resources and plans to share with your students (5 minutes).

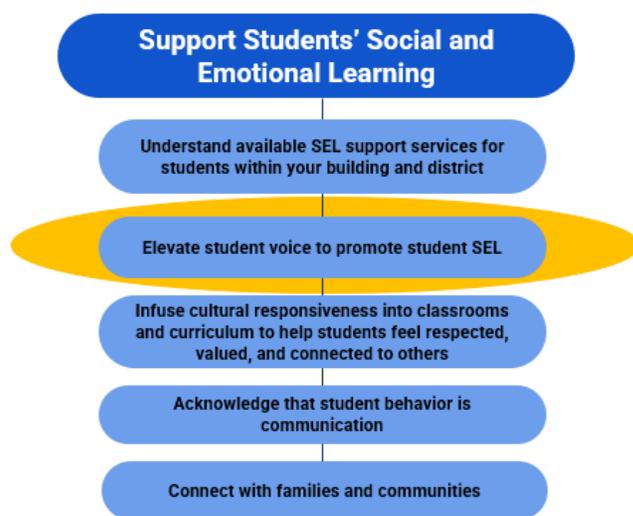
Addressing SEL for students: Elevate student voice to promote student SEL

Time: 20 minutes (Two minutes are provided for breaking into groups)

Purpose: This activity engages participants in exploring ways to elevate student voice, which is an important strategy in meeting students’ social and emotional needs. As we discuss, there are many practices to elevate student voice. For this activity, participants watch a video that shares what a student advocacy group in Kentucky found in their interviews and surveys of students in 2020. The activity models using authentic student voice to inform practice and provides participants time to reflect on how they can elevate student voice in their learning environments.

Small-group activities

Evidence-Based Practices to Support SEL for Students



Instructions: Getting started

Setup (2 minutes).

1. Choose a timekeeper to keep track of the time to ensure that your group completes the activity.
2. Choose someone to report discussion highlights when you return to the large group.
3. Read the following section, up to the “reflection” section in the gold bar below. This should take about one minute.

Activity: Brainstorming student voice expressions

Research suggests five categories in which student voice may be present within educational settings.

1. **Expression.** Volunteering opinions, creating art, celebrating, complaining, praising, objecting.
2. **Consultation.** Being asked for their opinion, providing feedback, serving on a focus group, completing a survey.

3. **Participation.** Attending meetings or events in which decisions are made, frequent inclusion when issues are framed and actions planned.
4. **Partnership.** Formalized role in decisionmaking, standard operations require (not just invite) student involvement, adults are trained in how to collaborate with youth partners.
5. **Leadership/Activism.** Identifying problems, generating solutions, organizing responses, educating for change both inside and outside school contexts. (Co-)planning, making decisions and accepting significant responsibility for outcomes, (co-)guiding group processes, (co-)conducting activities.⁷

In their 2020 webinar *Strategies for educators to support the social and emotional needs of students impacted by the COVID-19 pandemic and the demand for racial justice: Plans for reopening schools*, REL West shared several recommendations from a student survey conducted by the Prichard Committee Student Voice Team to encourage the inclusion of student voice:

- Make learning collaborative and co-create with students.
- Be intentional about creating space and opportunities for healthy interactions.
- Create virtual dialogues.
- Create surveys with meaningful sharing.
- Give students options for engagement and completing work.⁸

In the activity below, you will be asked to review the five categories that research suggests can support student voice and watch a short video clip about the student survey. With your colleagues, you will have time to brainstorm ways you can elevate student voices.

Reflection

1. Watch the video clip on *Student Perspective on Strategies to Support SEL Needs*.⁹ In this video clip (starting at the 19:43 mark), members of the Prichard Committee for Academic Excellence Student Voice Team provide an example of how the use of a survey elevated student voice. Take note of which student voice category the team says this is an example. You can watch this on your individual device or huddle in groups of two or three to watch on one device. <https://youtu.be/-I1TmvSpG44?t=1183> (watch the clip from the 19:43-25:00-minute mark) (approx. 5 minutes).
2. Discuss in your small group one of the five ways student voice manifests itself as described above and brainstorm an example that could fall under this category of what a teacher might do to promote student voice. To support your work, we have provided some examples by placing the recommendations from the Prichard Committee Student

⁷ Toshalis, E., & Nakkula, M. J. (2012). *Motivation, engagement, and student voice*. Boston, MA: Jobs for the Future. <https://studentsatthecenterhub.org/resource/motivation-engagement-and-student-voice/> as cited in Pate, C., & Case, K. (2020, July 29). *Strategies for educators to support the social and emotional needs of students impacted by the COVID-19 pandemic and the demand for racial justice: Plans for reopening schools* [Webinar]. Regional Educational Laboratory West, Institute of Education Sciences, U.S. Department of Education. <https://ies.ed.gov/ncee/edlabs/regions/west/Events/Details/361#w2>

⁸ Pate, C., & Case, K. (2020, July 29). *Strategies for educators to support the social and emotional needs of students impacted by the COVID-19 pandemic and the demand for racial justice: Plans for reopening schools* [Webinar]. Regional Educational Laboratory West, Institute of Education Sciences, U.S. Department of Education. <https://ies.ed.gov/ncee/edlabs/regions/west/Events/Details/361#w2>.

⁹ This video clip, which features students in Kentucky, comes from a REL West webinar (2020, July 29). *Strategies for educators to support the social and emotional needs of students impacted by the COVID-19 pandemic and the demand for racial justice: Plans for reopening schools* [Webinar] in *Supporting the social and emotional needs of educators and students*. <https://ies.ed.gov/ncee/edlabs/regions/west/Events/Details/361#w2>. The video can be found in full here <https://youtu.be/-I1TmvSpG44>

Voice Team into the category they support. Note that some fall under two or more categories. You may find that examples you have can support several categories of student voice (13 minutes).

Category	Manifestation
Expression	Example: Be intentional about creating space and opportunities for healthy interactions. (Class begins with students sharing whatever is on their minds.)
Consultation	Example: Create virtual dialogues.
Participation	Example: Be intentional about creating space and opportunities for healthy interactions.
Partnership	Example: Making learning collaborative and co-create with students. Example: Give students options for engagement and completing work.
Activism/Leadership	Example: Create surveys with meaningful sharing. (Student committee organizing and conducting a survey. Presenting recommendations.)

Addressing SEL for students: Infuse cultural responsiveness into classrooms and curriculum to help students feel respected, valued, and connected to others

Time: 20 minutes (Two minutes are provided for breaking into groups)

Purpose: This activity begins a preliminary conversation around specific ways to recognize, respect, and appreciate diversity.

Small-group activities

Evidence-Based Practices to Support SEL for Students



Instructions: Getting started

Setup (2 minutes)

1. Choose a timekeeper to keep track of the time to ensure that your group completes the activity.
2. Choose someone to report discussion highlights when you return to the large group.
3. Read the following section, up to the “Reflection” section in the gold bar below. This should take about one minute.

Activity: Recognizing, respecting, and appreciating diversity

Based on a review of evidence-based practices, researchers at REL Pacific found that students' cultural backgrounds shape their social and emotional needs. Understanding students' cultures and the strengths they bring to the learning environment can help in crafting culturally relevant activities that promote students' social, emotional, and academic well-being.¹⁰

¹⁰ REL Pacific. (2020a, May 19). *Key considerations for promoting culturally relevant SEL during COVID-19*. https://ies.ed.gov/ncee/edlabs/regions/pacific/blogs/blog26_key-considerations-for-promoting-SEL-during-covid-19.asp

To understand students' cultures, educators should create environments where students feel welcomed and can share their culture. One of the ways we can recognize, respect, and appreciate diversity is to ensure that students see themselves and their culture celebrated and honored in classroom materials. This can begin with a cultural/gender inventory of classroom materials to determine what cultural expressions are absent. Then teachers can search for appropriate resources that include students' different experiences and cultures.¹¹

We realize that you may not be in your classroom right now to look at the materials, and that this activity could take a long time to complete. We have designed this activity so that you can think about something in your classroom and work with colleagues to start the process together. The goal is to practice asking some questions about your classroom's existing materials to help you prepare to do a more robust inventory in your classroom when you can look more carefully at your resources.

Reflection

1. Choose a timekeeper to keep track of the time to ensure that your group completes all the activities.
2. Individually, write down or think about three things you use regularly in your classroom that you think might communicate something about the culture of your classroom. For example, a poster, a book in your lending library, a photograph (2 minutes).
3. In your small group, ask each person to share one of the things they identified (7 minutes).
4. As a group, choose one of the items shared and ask the teacher to describe it. Make a list of the items on a shared paper or online document (5 minutes).
5. Discuss what is represented in the items and what might be missing from the items (9 minutes).
 - a. What representations of your student populations do you see in the materials?
 - b. What experiences or perspectives are absent from the materials?
 - c. What additional experiences or perspectives might it be helpful to include in your learning materials?

¹¹ REL Pacific. (2020a, May 19). *Key considerations for promoting culturally relevant SEL during COVID-19*. https://ies.ed.gov/ncee/edlabs/regions/pacific/blogs/blog26_key-considerations-for-promoting-SEL-during-covid-19.asp

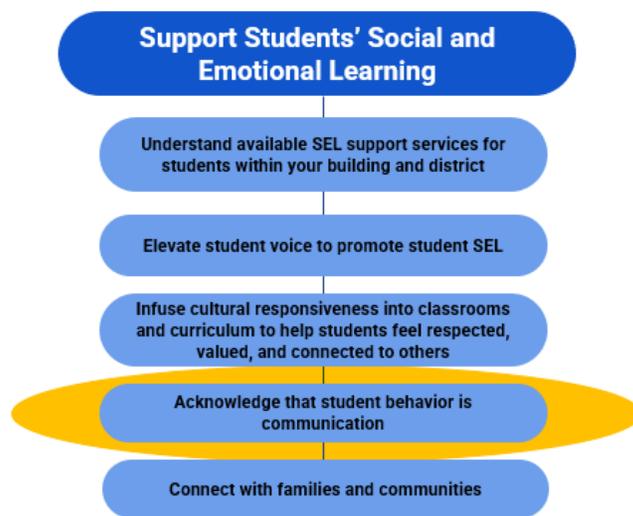
Addressing SEL for students: Acknowledge that student behavior is communication

Time: 20 minutes (Two minutes are provided for breaking into groups)

Purpose: This activity focuses on responses to behavior and what the behavior may be telling us. Participants will work through a scenario that supports thinking about common responses to disruptive behavior and how we can reframe our responses to best support students' social and emotional needs.

Small-group activities

Evidence-Based Practices to Support SEL for Students



Instructions: Getting started

Setup (2 minutes).

1. Choose a timekeeper to keep track of the time to ensure that your group completes the activity.
2. Choose someone to report discussion highlights when you return to the large group.
3. Read the following section, up to the “reflection” questions in the gold bar below. This should take about one minute.

Activity: Behavior scenario responses

The REL West 2020 webinar *Strategies for educators to support the social and emotional needs of students impacted by the COVID-19 pandemic and the demand for racial justice* shared research about how educators can reframe their responses to what are often seen as disruptive behaviors. Research from Pate (2020) and Perry (2017) offers that “[f]ight, flight, or freeze responses may look like defiance, noncompliance, or task avoidance.” The research suggests that teachers can

impact situations by reframing how they react or respond to student behaviors.¹² This activity provides an opportunity to practice responding to behavior in different ways.

This activity asks you to think about behavior, especially disruptive behavior, as communicating the social and emotional needs of students and to rethink what we might categorize as “defiance, noncompliance, or task avoidance,” in light of the “fight, flight, or freeze responses” we often see when people are stressed or worried. The goal is to practice how you might reframe a situation by adapting how you “respond vs. react” to the behavior.

For this activity, teachers will read the following scenario and work in small groups.

Scenario: (2 minutes)

A currently controversial topic is being discussed in class and students are engaged with high energy. Some students choose to engage by raising their hands before speaking while others speak openly and freely when compelled. The teacher positively acknowledges students engaged with raised hands and negatively reprimands those speaking without permission, first with a warning then by sending them to the office for disruption. As a result, student engagement and energy decreases, with a clear divide between those who are speaking and those who feel silenced.

Reflection

1. Discuss what might be happening in the scenario. Remember that research suggests that what we might often categorize as disruptive behavior may be a student’s way of communicating (7 minutes).
 - a. What expectations might the teacher have for student behavior?
 - b. What might the students be trying to communicate?
 - c. What might be happening for the teacher as they try to communicate?
 - d. What might be happening for the students as they try to communicate?
2. Using a flipchart or shared online document in your small group, discuss and document alternative responses the teacher might have made to address the situation. In doing so, think about both how the teacher might have structured the activity differently and employed non-verbal behaviors (e.g., body language, tone) to support engagement (9 minutes).

¹² Pate, C. M. (2020). Strategies for trauma informed distance learning. Center to Improve SEL and School Safety, WestEd. https://selcenter.wested.org/wp-content/uploads/sites/3/2020/05/SEL_Center_Strategies_for_Trauma_Informed_Distance_Learning_Brief.pdf

Perry, B. (2017). *The 3 Rs: Reaching the learning brain*. <https://beaconhouse.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2019/09/The-Three-Rs.pdf>

This activity was developed using the above resources in REL West (2020b, July 29). *Strategies for educators to support the social and emotional needs of students impacted by the COVID-19 pandemic and the demand for racial justice: Plans for reopening schools* [Webinar] in *Supporting the social and emotional needs of educators and students*. <https://ies.ed.gov/ncee/edlabs/regions/west/Events/Details/361#w2>

Addressing SEL for students: Connect with families and communities

Time: 20 minutes (Two minutes are provided for breaking into groups)

Purpose: This activity highlights some questions that can help us focus on ways to support families and communities in being more involved in meeting social and emotional needs.

Small-group activities

Evidence-Based Practices to Support SEL for Students



Instructions: Getting started

Setup (2 minutes).

1. Choose a timekeeper to keep track of the time to ensure that your group completes the activity.
2. Choose someone to report discussion highlights when you return to the large group.
3. Read the following section, up to the “self-reflection” section in the gold bar below. This should take about one minute.

Activity title: Involving family and the community in SEL action

Research shared by REL West in the 2020 webinar *Strategies for educators to support the social and emotional needs of students impacted by the COVID 19 pandemic and the demand for racial justice* suggested that “[w]hen schools build partnerships with families that respond to their concerns and honor their contributions, they are successful in sustaining connections that are aimed at improving student achievement.”¹³ In addition, research indicates that there is a strong

¹³ Henderson, A. T., & Mapp, K. L. (2002). *A new wave of evidence: The impact of school, family, and the community connections on student achievement*. SEDL. <https://www.sedl.org/connections/resources/evidence.pdf> as cited in REL West. (2020b, July 29). *Strategies for educators to support the social and emotional needs of students impacted by the COVID-19 pandemic and the demand for racial justice: Plans for reopening schools* [Webinar] in *Supporting the social and emotional needs of educators and students*. <https://ies.ed.gov/ncee/edlabs/regions/west/Events/Details/361#w2>

correlation between school, family, and community involvement and student social, emotional, and academic success, which can be achieved by creating supportive learning conditions.¹⁴

Supporting families and the community includes:

- Avoid deficit perspectives of low-income families and families of color about their children's education.
- See families as the experts and leaders.
- Trust families and students.
- Provide families with the space to share their challenges and the conditions to co-create solutions with education systems to address those challenges.¹⁵

The questions below provide a frame to assist teachers in building the capacity to involve family and the community in actions to support social and emotional learning. Each question scaffolds a concept built upon the previous questions.

Self-reflection

1. Watch this video about Restorative Practices (from the 5:00 to the 8:30 mark) and its connection to community support: *Creating coherent safe and supportive environments through SEL, trauma informed practices, and restorative practices alignment* <https://vimeo.com/467850824>¹⁶ (approximately 3.5 minutes).
2. Individually answer these questions (6 minutes):
 - a. How am I attending to students' well-being through community support? How am I involving students and their families in co-creating responses to their needs?
 - b. What specific ways can I engage the expertise and leadership of my students' families?
 - c. What are some ways I can provide families space to share their challenges with their child's schooling experiences and collaborate to address those challenges?
 - d. What are ways I have seen trust developed?
3. Using a flipchart or shared online document, discuss individual responses to the questions with your small group (8 minutes).

¹⁴ REL West. (2020b, July 29). *Strategies for educators to support the social and emotional needs of students impacted by the COVID-19 pandemic and the demand for racial justice: Plans for reopening schools* [Webinar] in *Supporting the social and emotional needs of educators and students*. <https://ies.ed.gov/ncee/edlabs/regions/west/Events/Details/361#w2>

¹⁵ This activity was developed using resources in REL West (2020b, July 29). *Strategies for educators to support the social and emotional needs of students impacted by the COVID-19 pandemic and the demand for racial justice: Plans for reopening schools* [Webinar] in *Supporting the social and emotional needs of educators and students*. <https://ies.ed.gov/ncee/edlabs/regions/west/Events/Details/361#w2>

¹⁶ WestEd. (2020). *Creating coherent safe and supportive environments through SEL, trauma informed practices, and restorative practices alignment* [Video]. <https://vimeo.com/467850824>. This video is also found in REL West (2020, July 29). *Strategies for educators to support the social and emotional needs of students impacted by the COVID-19 pandemic and the demand for racial justice: Plans for reopening schools* [Webinar] in *Supporting the social and emotional needs of educators and students*. <https://ies.ed.gov/ncee/edlabs/regions/west/Events/Details/361#w2>

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