

# Promoting Academic Success through Social and Emotional Learning (SEL)

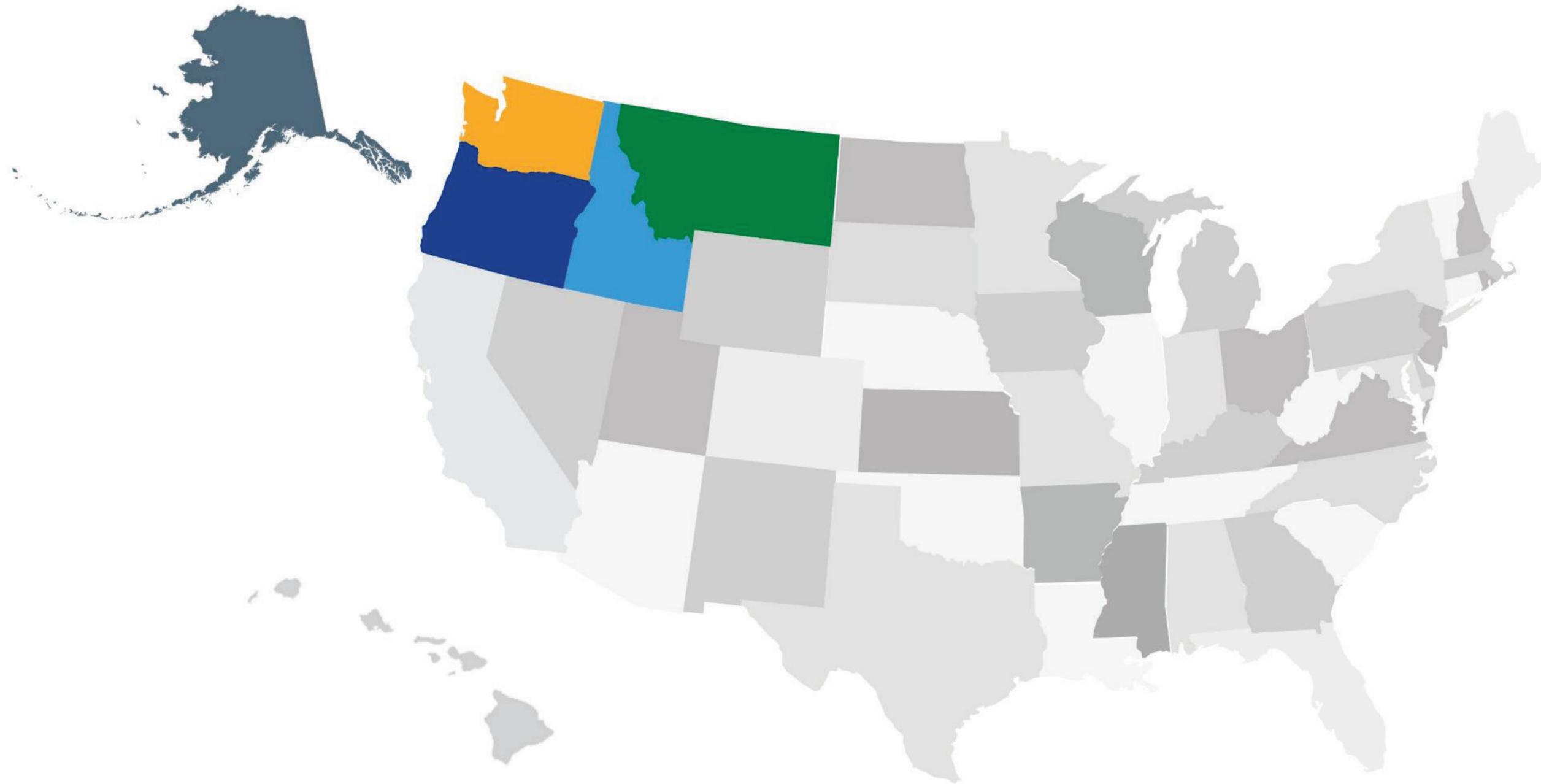
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# Regional Educational Laboratory (REL) Northwest



# Today's trainers



Sarah Pierce, NBCT  
Senior Advisor



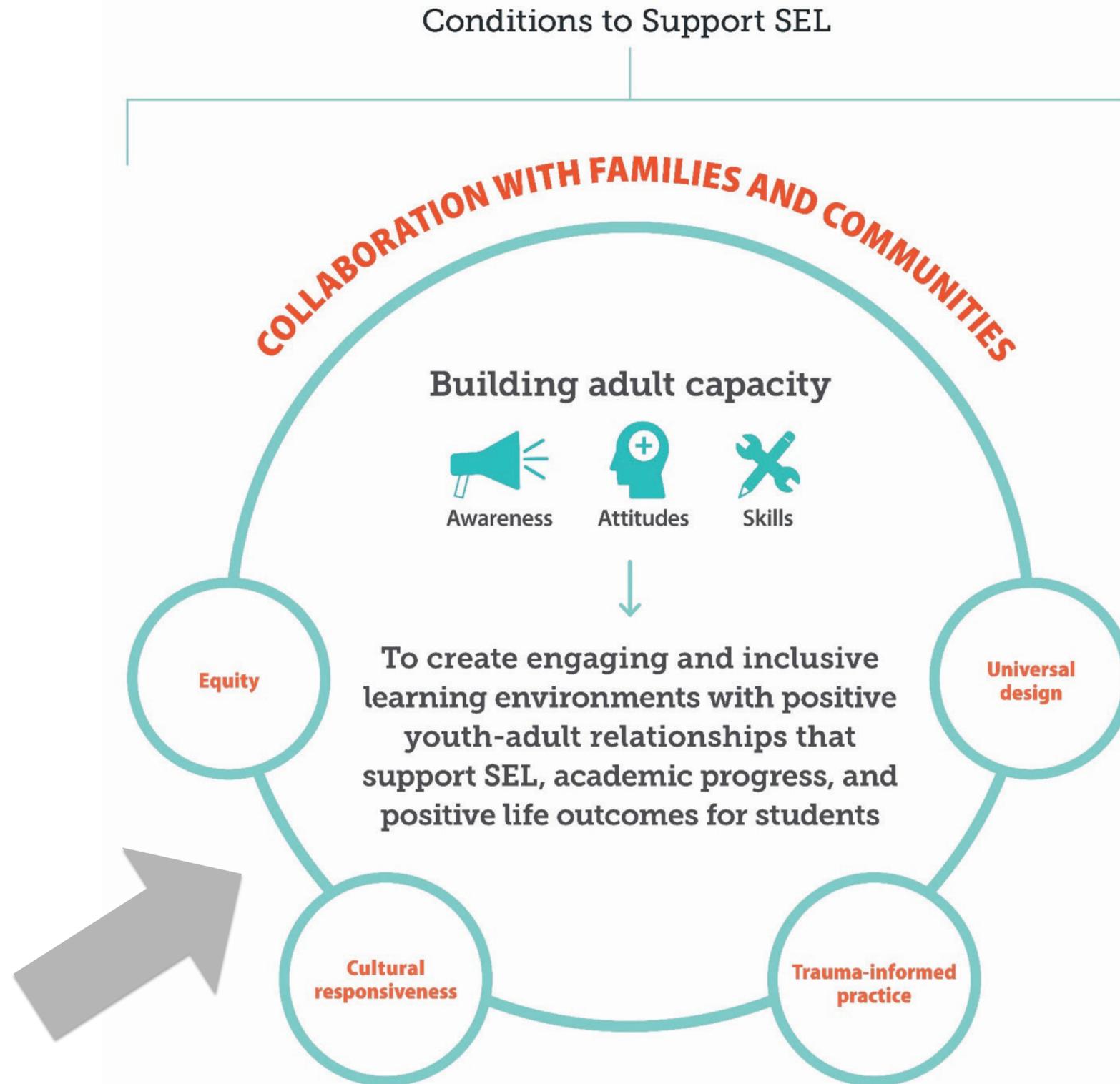
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**A communitywide vision for SEL in Washington**

# Washington SEL capacity-building training series calendar

**January 2021**

**Promoting Academic Success Through SEL**

**April 2021**

**Building SEL Into Multi-Tiered Systems of Support**

# Learning goals for today's session



Learn about research on how SEL supports academics



Apply the training information to your context

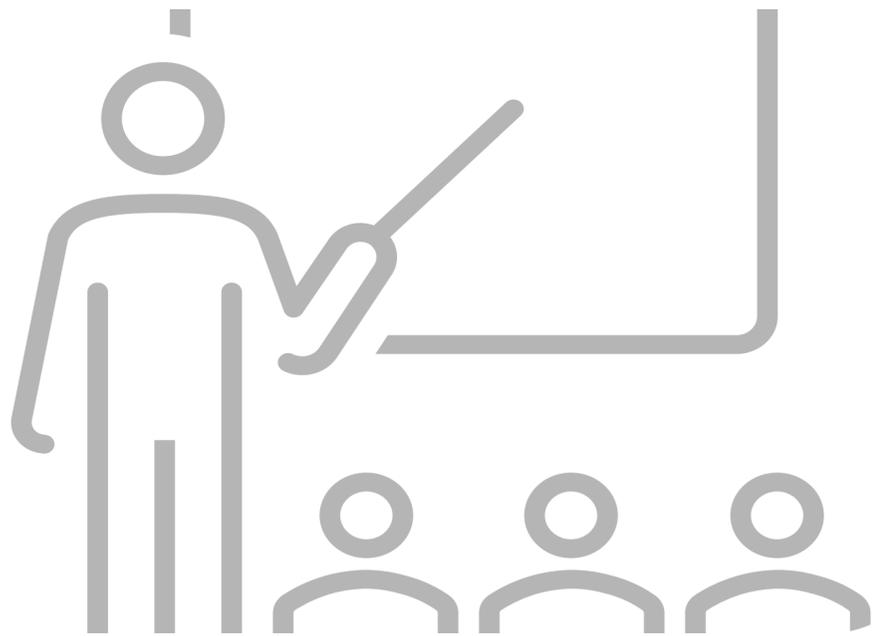
# Agenda

1. Welcome
2. Overview of SEL and academics
3. Student-centered instructional strategies
4. Strategies to promote conceptual understanding and motivation
5. Closing and next steps



What is SEL and how does it support academics?

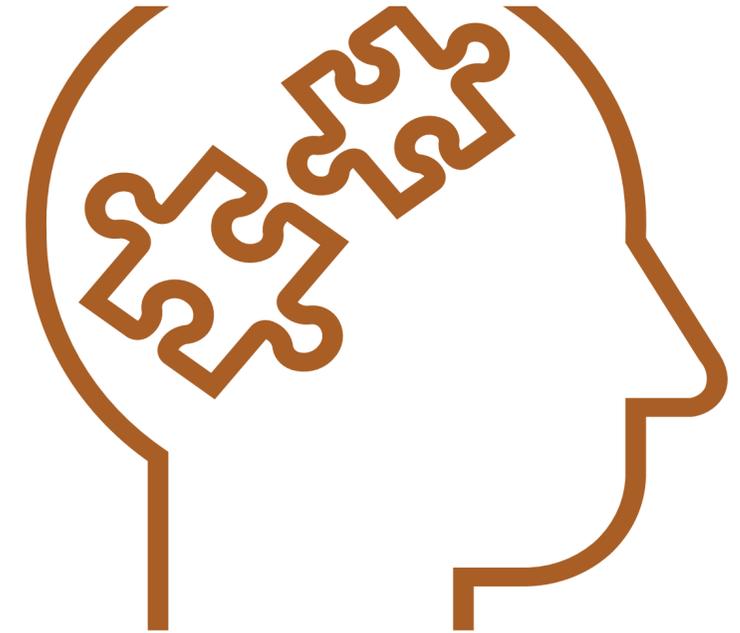
# Students learn, develop, and apply SEL competencies



Explicit skill instruction

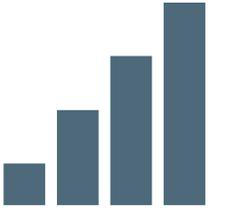


Incorporation of SEL in general teaching practices



Integration of SEL into academic teaching

# Poll: Connecting SEL with academics



**Reflect:** Think about a “bright spot” of SEL implementation in your setting.

**Poll question:** *How would you describe the relationship between SEL implementation and academic instruction?*

## Response options:

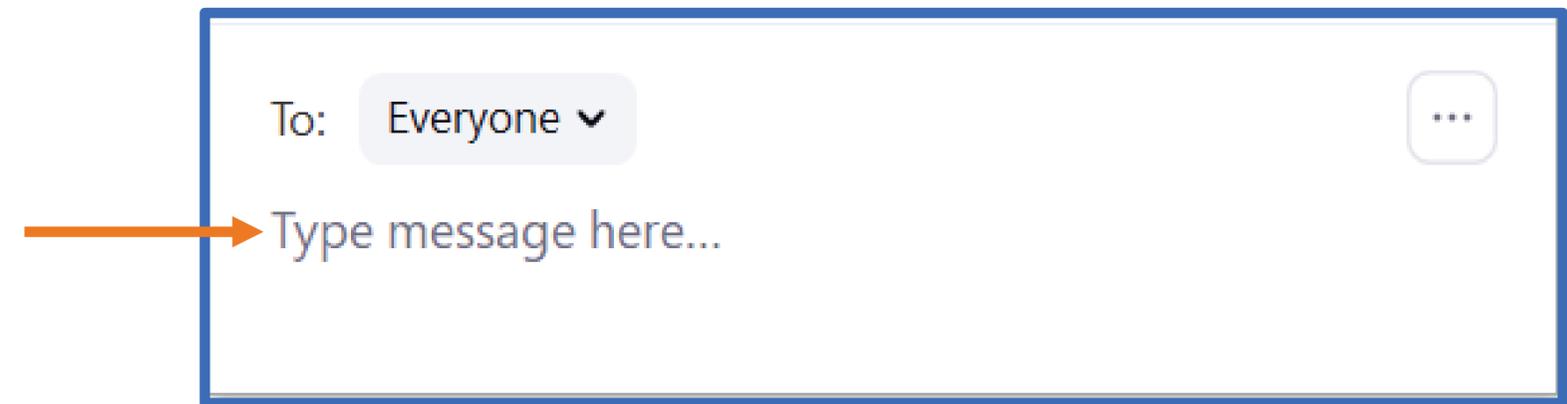
- SEL is explicit but **independent** of academic instruction
- SEL is **incorporated** through general teaching practices
- SEL is **integrated** with academic instruction



# Discussion

## Respond in the chat:

In your setting, how intentional are the connections between SEL and academic learning?



# Research on SEL and academics

- **SEL skillsets and mindsets are a key part of college and career readiness.** Studies demonstrate that SEL-related skillsets and mindsets are predictive of academic outcomes.
- **Universal SEL interventions show promise for promoting academic progress.** Recent research indicates positive effects for reading, math and, to a lesser degree, science.
- **Integration of SEL across the school day is important to provide opportunities for students to develop and practice SEL.** However, few programs specifically integrate SEL skills with academic content.

# SEL improves academic performance

In a meta-analysis of 213 school-based, universal SEL programs involving 270,034 kindergarten through high school students, Durlak and colleagues (2011) found that:

- **Students who participated in SEL programs significantly improved their SEL skills, attitudes, and behavior compared with controls.**

In a subset of studies with 135,396 students, the researchers found that:

- **SEL programs contributed to improved academic performance.** Students who participated in SEL programs demonstrated an 11 percentage-point gain in achievement, based on standardized assessments or grades.

# SEL supports mental health and school connectedness

## **SEL competence may be a protective factor for mental health difficulties.**

- A recent study of middle school students found that SEL mitigated adverse effects of emotional symptoms and reduced risky behaviors that threaten academic achievement.
- The findings were significant even for students with prior low academic performance.

## **Student social and emotional competence influences school connectedness and mental health.**

- In the same study, researchers found that higher school connectedness was linked to greater academic achievement.
- There were variances based on gender and prior academic attainment, and results did not predict later academic achievement.

# Educator perceptions of SEL and academics

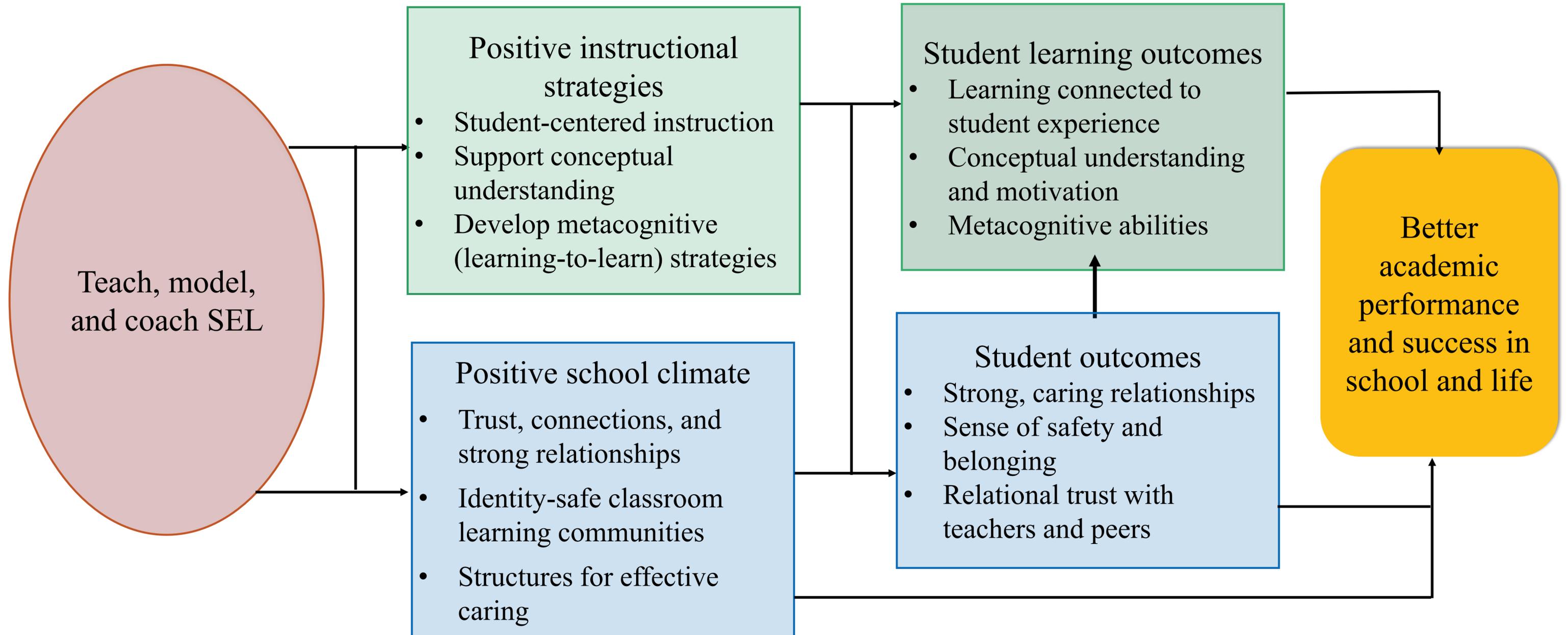
## **Teachers believe SEL can boost academic performance.**

- 77% of teachers think SEL can increase standardized test scores and academic achievement.
- 85% of teachers feel that their school is successful at developing key content knowledge when SEL is taught schoolwide, compared to 72% when SEL is ad hoc.

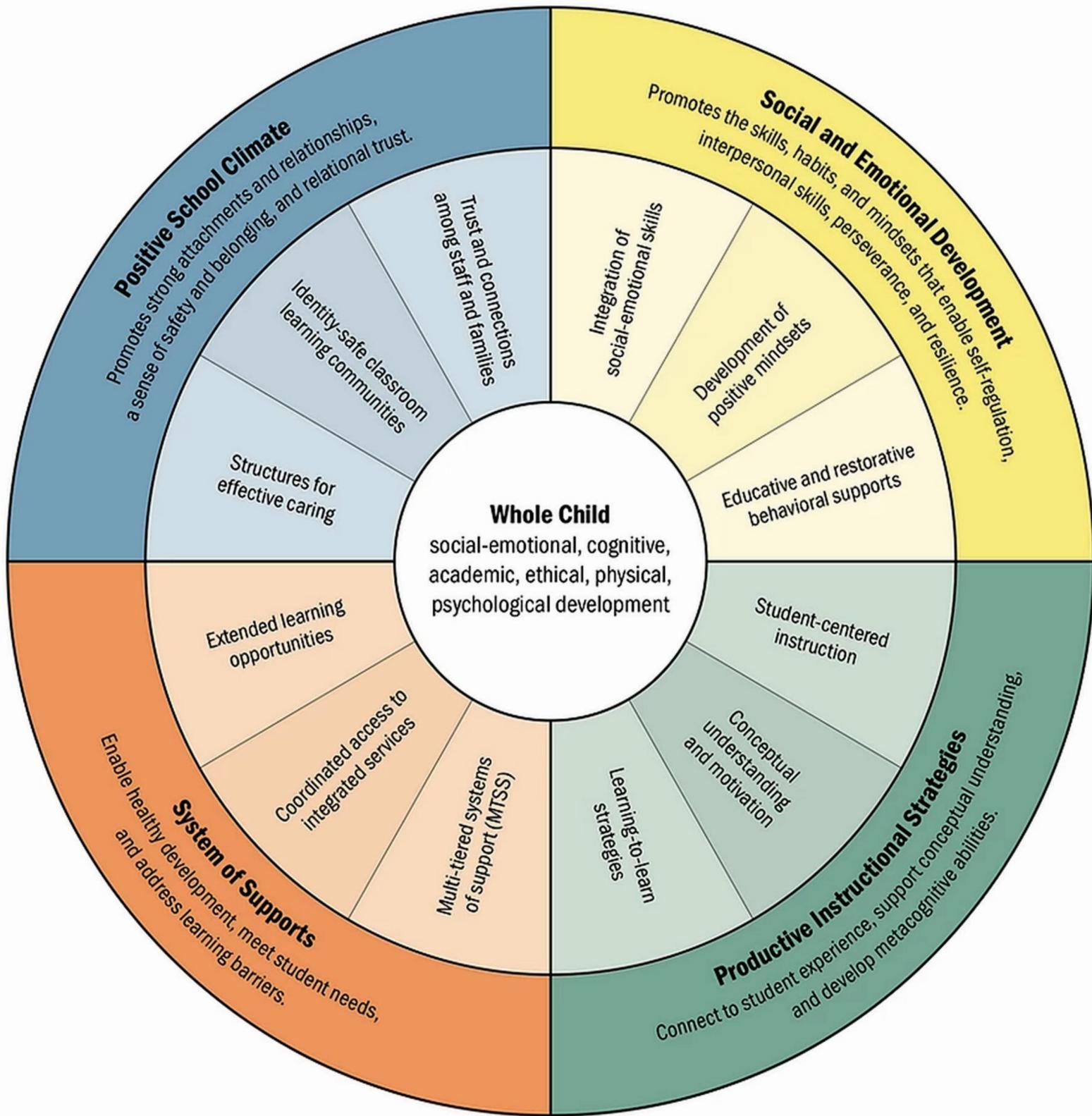
## **Teachers believe SEL prepares students for real-world situations.**

- 87% of teachers believe SEL prepares students for the workforce.
- 80% of teachers believe SEL supports students' ability to stay on track to graduate.

# Evidence-based SEL programming paths to success in school and in life



# Student-centered instructional strategies



## Productive instructional strategies support SEL

- Student-centered instruction
- Conceptual understanding and motivation
- Learning-to-learn strategies



# Connecting student-centered instruction to Washington SEL guidelines

## Washington SEL standards, benchmark, and indicators example

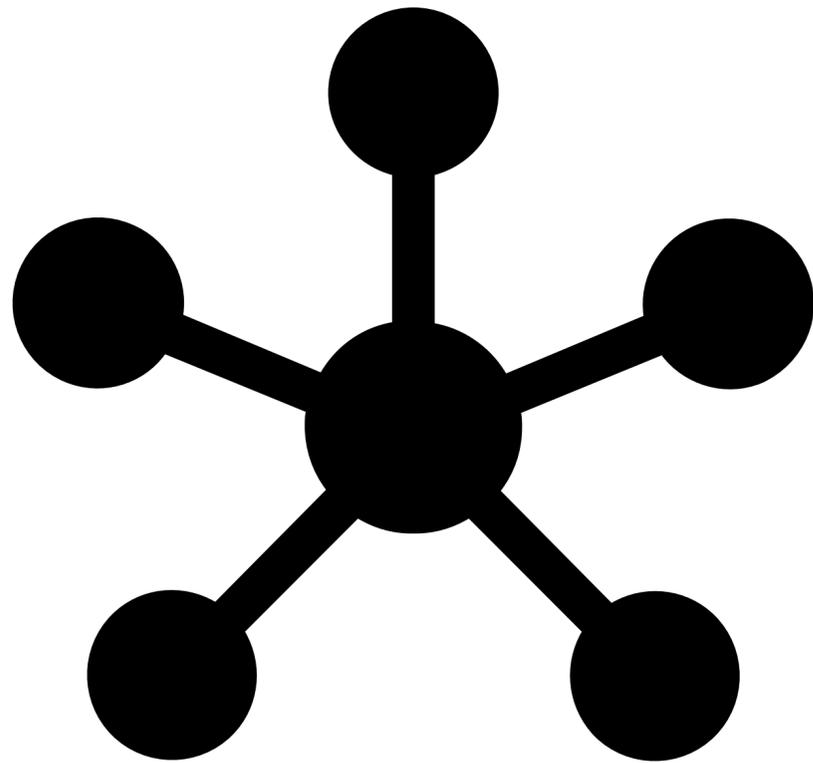
### Benchmark 1B:

Demonstrates awareness of personal and collective identity encompassing strengths, areas for growth, aspirations, and cultural and linguistic assets

## Indicators for late elementary

- I can identify how I use my personal interests and my unique voice to engage with people in my school and community (when supported by adults).
- I can identify and explore opportunities to develop personal strengths and assets (including unique cultural and language assets).

# Example: Cooperative Learning



**Teachers organize student groups and prepare them for cooperation in small groups.**

Cooperative learning builds student skills:

- Accountability to self and group
- Self and group reflections on process
- Community within the classroom
- Diversity in perspective
- Engagement for multiple learner skills and abilities

# Cooperative learning in SEL and academics

Students are organized into small groups and given specific roles to meet the task objectives. They are then asked to reflect on the group work process and strengths that each member brings to the work.



SEL is incorporated into academics

Students are introduced to skills necessary to complete a task. In groups, they identify the strengths and interests they will contribute to the group's success. Students rely on each others' skills and sense of inquiry to meet the content task objective.



SEL is integrated with academics

# Student-centered instructional strategies and SEL

- When connecting SEL and academic standards, recognize that students come with knowledge and skills.
- By supporting student-centered instructional strategies, you should see students recognize their strengths and opportunities for growth.
- Common language and expectations promote high-quality integration while facilitating universal and targeted supports.

# Research to practice breakout rooms



# Breakout discussion

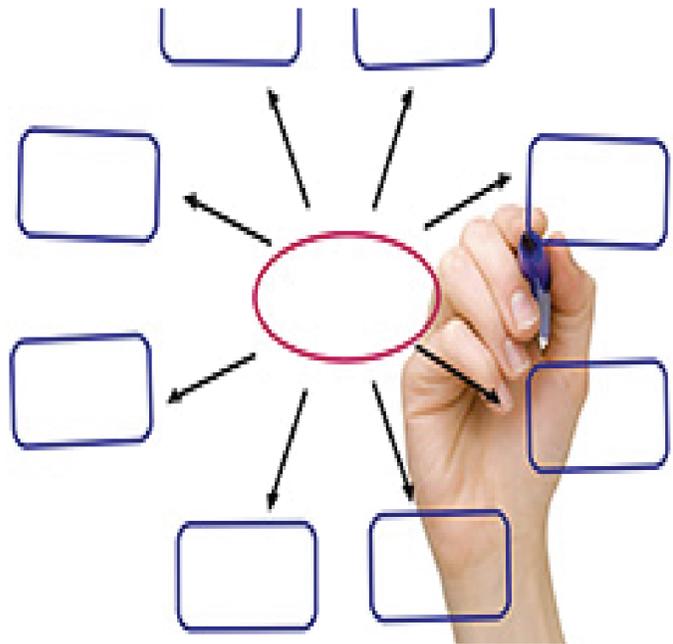


Reflecting on the information shared today:

1. What does student-centered instruction look like in your schools?
2. Where are there opportunities to better connect SEL and academics through these strategies?

# Strategies to promote conceptual understanding and motivation

# Conceptual understanding and motivation



Organize and represent knowledge conceptually

Inquiry-based curriculum that appropriately integrates explicit instruction

Develop metacognition, agency, and the capacity for strategic learning

Provide interest-based learning opportunities

# Connecting conceptual understanding and motivation to Washington SEL guidelines

## Washington SEL standards, benchmarks, and indicators example

### Benchmark 3A:

Demonstrates the skills to set, monitor, adapt, persevere, achieve, and evaluate goals

## Indicators for high school/adult

- I can demonstrate an understanding of learning barriers, identify components of goal-setting, and use strategies and adaptations that are compatible with my personal and social values.
- I can develop a variety of strategies to meet goals, taking into account cultural values and traditions and assessing how my attitude negatively or possibly affects meeting my goals.

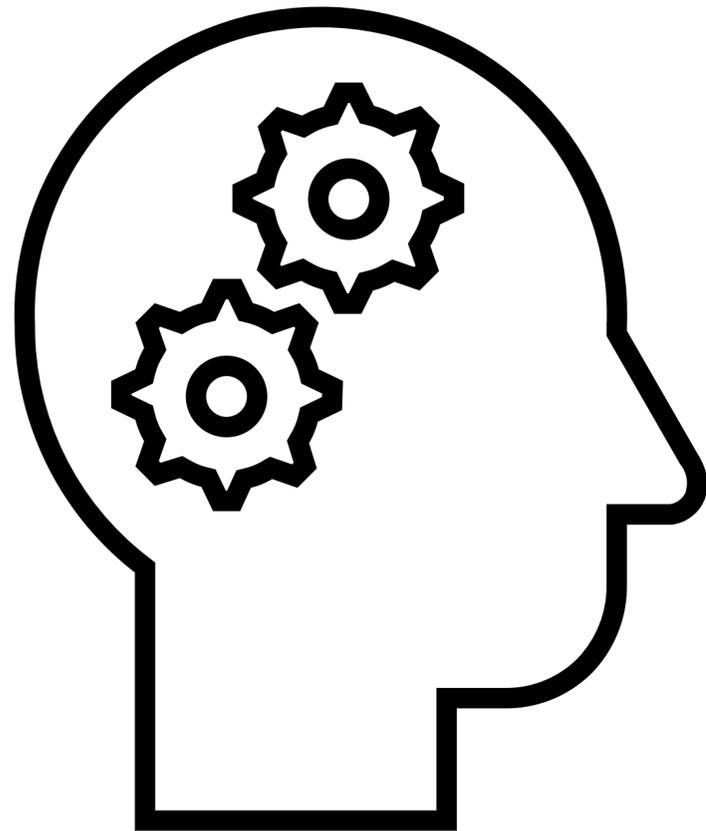
# Example: Metacognition

**Flavell (1979) described metacognition as “thinking about thinking.”**

Metacognitive knowledge helps students know what skills and strategies work best for them as a learner, as well as how and when to use those strategies.

Metacognitive regulations control thinking and learning skills such as planning, monitoring understanding, and evaluation.

As students become skilled in these strategies, they gain confidence, become more independent, and pursue additional inquiries.



# Scientific minds struggle

Across four high schools in a large, urban district, 402 diverse grade 9 and 10 students enrolled in science classes were asked “What kinds of people can be scientists?” and participated in a three-day lesson. Student grades pre- and post-lesson were used to denote academic success.

- Students were given one of three stories about famous scientists that either shared their intellectual struggles, shared personal struggles, or had no struggles at all.
- Students who read about scientists who struggled earned better grades in their science classes than students who read about scientists with no struggles.
- Results were even stronger for students who started off with lower grades.

(Lin-Siegler, Ahn, Chen, Fang, & Luna-Lucero, 2016)



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# Conceptual understanding and motivation strategies and SEL

- Students need to know that effective learning connects ideas and that a variety of strategies work for different learners in different contexts.
- By supporting conceptual understanding and motivation strategies, you should see students articulate a variety of ways to connect concepts across content areas. Students should also identify ways to overcome barriers in problem-solving and academic tasks. Students should be curious and identify their interests.
- Opportunities for responsibility and choice, self-assessment, self-reflection, and competence-building promote integration.

# Research to practice breakout rooms



# Breakout discussion



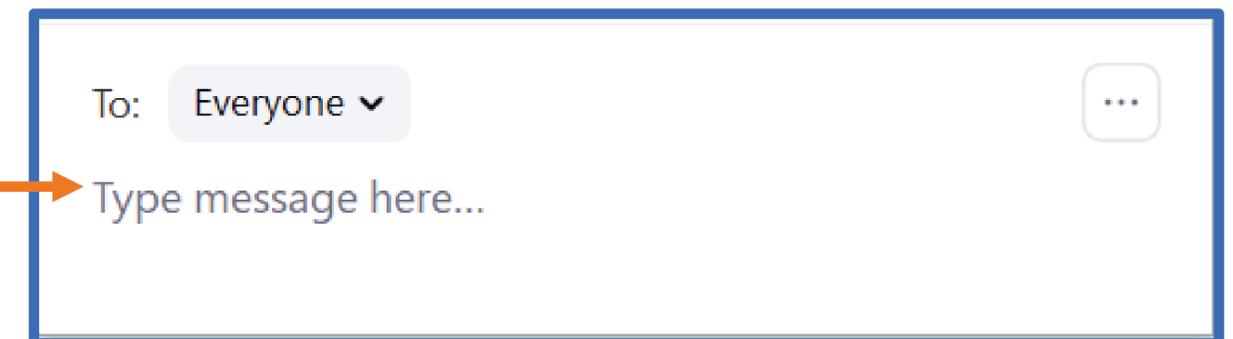
Reflecting on the information shared today:

1. What do strategies to promote conceptual understanding and motivation look like in your context?
2. Where are there opportunities to better connect SEL and academics through these strategies?

# Closing and next steps

# Discussion

- 1 REFLECT: Take a minute to reflect to yourself. What is a key takeaway or idea from the research or discussions to consider in your setting?
- 2 SHARE IN CHAT: What opportunities do you see to strengthen SEL and academic content? Enter one word or phrase in the chat.



# Contact us



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