Breakout session 2

*Integrating trauma-sensitive approaches and social and emotional learning (SEL)—to create safe, supportive, and culturally responsive schools*

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What is social and emotional learning?

Source: Process by Rflor, partnership by Vectors Market, and Open Mindedness by Becris from the Noun Project.
Collaborative for Social, Emotional and Academic Learning

The 5 Key Competencies of Social Emotional Learning

- **Self-Awareness**: Recognize one's own feelings, interests, strengths, and limitations.
- **Self-Management**: Regulate emotions and manage daily stressors.
- **Social Awareness**: Take perspectives of others and appreciate similarities and differences.
- **Relationship Skills**: Exhibit prosocial behavior and demonstrate positive social skills in order to develop meaningful relationships.
- **Responsible Decision Making**: Make ethical decisions and strengthen the ability to develop appropriate solutions to identified problems.

Image source: Pasco County School District (adapted from www.CASEL.org)
What is trauma?

**Trauma**: An event, a series of events, or a set of circumstances that is experienced by an individual as physically or emotionally harmful or life threatening; overwhelms a person’s ability to cope; and has adverse effects on the individual’s functioning and mental, physical, social, emotional, or spiritual well-being.

It leaves people feeling **helpless, vulnerable, and out of control**.
Trauma and social and emotional development

Exposure to trauma may negatively affect the following:

- Our capacity to self-regulate.
- Our awareness of self and others.
- Our ability to engage socially and form relationships.
- Our ability to attend to information, accurately assess situations, and make decisions.

Image source: https://developingchild.harvard.edu/science/deep-dives/adult-capabilities/
<table>
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<tr>
<th>Why are schools addressing trauma?</th>
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<td>Unaddressed trauma negatively impacts learning and academic success.</td>
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<td>Schools risk misunderstanding, mislabeling, misdiagnosing, retraumatizing.</td>
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<td>Schools can help to prevent and mitigate the negative effects of trauma.</td>
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<td>Educator trauma negatively affects job performance and morale.</td>
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<td>Addressing trauma can positively effect students, families, staff, and schools.</td>
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A trauma-sensitive school is one in which all aspects of the educational environment—from workforce training to engagement with students and families to procedures and policies—are grounded in an understanding of trauma and its impact and are designed to promote resilience for all.

(American Institutes for Research, 2018)
Importance of integrating SEL and trauma sensitivity

Parallel implementation efforts risk:

• Incomplete understanding of each approach (terms used interchangeably).

• Fragmented implementation.

• Confusing or contradictory messages.

• Sense of competing priorities (for example, time and focus).

• Intervention/initiative fatigue.
Integrating SEL and trauma sensitivity: How do we get there?

- Shift mindsets
- Support adult SEL and well-being
- Build readiness
- Joint implementation
- Shared understanding & integrated vision
- Focus on equity

Source: Osher et al. (in press).
Develop a shared understanding and integrated vision

**Schoolwide Social and Emotional Learning (SEL)**
- Growth focus
- Student social and emotional skill building for resilience, mental health promotion, well-being, and academic success
- Adult skill building for modeling and culture building
- Embedded in instruction and environment

**Trauma Sensitive Schools (TSS)**
- Understanding of trauma and its effects on students and adults
- Application of clinical concepts to foster a healing-centered environment
- Reduction of harmful practices, procedures, and policies
- Lens to inform other practices and approaches (e.g., instruction, behavior management, discipline, student and family engagement, SEL)

**Shared Principles of SEL and TSS**
- Safety
- Relationships
- Empowerment
- Cultural responsiveness
- Well-being

Source: Osher et al. (in press).
Build readiness

**Motivation**
- Willingness or desire to implement an intervention.
- Willingness to engage in self-exploration (for example, of own biases, social-emotional competencies).
- Staff beliefs, attitudes, and concerns.

**General capacity**
- How well a school/district is currently functioning (for example, Is there a strong foundation on which to implement a new intervention?).

**Intervention-specific capacity**
- Knowledge or skills that are specific to SEL and TSS.

**Momentum**
- Build on existing buy-in, activities and climate
## Shift mindsets

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<th>Traditional perspective</th>
<th>Trauma-sensitive, SEL perspective</th>
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<td><strong>Judgmental</strong>: Understands behaviors as the result of individual deficits (what’s wrong with you?). Uses negative labels.</td>
<td><strong>Curious</strong>: Considers whether behaviors may be ways of coping with traumatic experiences. Negative labels replaced.</td>
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<td><strong>Power over/obedience</strong>: Views adult authority and control as critical to student success.</td>
<td><strong>Power with/collaboration</strong>: Encourages student and family choice and control.</td>
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<td><strong>Individual</strong>: Focus for change is on the individual. Solution is for youth to “fix” their behavior.</td>
<td><strong>Environmental</strong>: Takes a more holistic view and considers how external factors influence youth.</td>
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## Shift mindsets

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<td><strong>Punitive</strong>: Punitive discipline is the primary approach.</td>
<td><strong>Restorative</strong>: Positive, strengths-based approaches to discipline are used most often.</td>
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<td><strong>Siloed</strong>: Support for students exposed to trauma should be left to counseling professionals.</td>
<td><strong>Integrated</strong>: Assumes a shared responsibility for addressing trauma.</td>
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<td><strong>Operate from dominant culture</strong>: Adopts a “one-size-fits all” approach based on the perspective of the dominant culture.</td>
<td><strong>Cultural humility</strong>: Seeks to understand and convey respect for diverse cultural values and beliefs and integrates culturally responsive services.</td>
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<td><strong>Academics only</strong></td>
<td><strong>Academic and social and emotional learning</strong></td>
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Support adult SEL and well-being

- The **competencies** that adults need to manage stress and create a safe and supportive classroom environment

- The **skills** and **mindsets** that adults need to effectively embody, teach, model, and coach student SEL

- The overall **well-being** and **emotional state** of adults in school settings

Sources: Jennings & Greenberg (2009); Schonert-Reichl (2017); Schonert-Reichl, et al. (2017).
Research on educator social and emotional competencies

- Teacher social and emotional competencies strongly influence learning conditions and students’ motivation to learn (Jennings & Greenberg, 2009).

- Educator stress deeply affects their mental health and well-being, job satisfaction, job turnover, and student outcomes (Greenberg et al., 2016).

- Students learn SEL skills better when educators can effectively model these skills (Berman et al., 2018).

- Teachers who were mandated to teach SEL but did not cultivate their own practice worsened their students’ social and emotional skills. However, teachers who enhanced their own social and emotional skills improved not only their own well-being but also the social, emotional, and academic development of their students (Reyes et al., 2012).
Initiate a joint implementation process

Joint teaming to support adoption

Combined professional development and application

Integrated monitoring and evaluation
Defining equity

**Equity** is about fairness; it ensures that each person gets what they need. It is about taking deliberate actions to remove barriers and obstacles that hinder overall well-being: policies, practices, and procedures that are informed by cultural and linguistic competence to promote and facilitate positive outcomes for all.
Focus on equity

• Expand the equity lens to include a more robust conceptualization of what equity means and how to achieve it.

• Commit to culturally responsive practices.

• Commit to eliminating inequities fueled by various forms of communal and systemic traumas.

• Support student agency.

• Equip people individually and collectively to collectively break down the systems that perpetuate inequities and counter institutionalized privilege and prejudice.
Discussion question

What strategies are you using to integrate SEL, trauma sensitivity, and/or other related initiatives in your classroom, school, or district?
Breakout summary, thank you, and conclusion

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