



Office of the State
Superintendent of Education



TOOLKIT: STRENGTHEN ADULT STAFF SEL

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OFFICE OF THE STATE SUPERINTENDENT OF EDUCATION (OSSE)

SOCIAL AND EMOTIONAL LEARNING (SEL) EDUCATOR TOOLKIT

This toolkit, a companion to DC’s K-Adult SEL Standards, offers foundational resources to guide educators as they support students’ behavioral, emotional, and intellectual development based on CASEL’s State Theory of Action

The toolkit describes a series of topics that collectively contribute to a systemic alignment between SEL policies and practices. Each section has a multitude of resources focused on a different area of SEL implementation.

HOW TO USE THIS TOOLKIT:

Each section of this toolkit contains resources such as videos, articles, briefs, and other tools for educators to use. The steps below serve as a guide to support educators in maximizing the utility of this resource.

1. Familiarize Yourself with the Toolkit Contents

- Begin by reviewing the toolkit’s contents to understand the range of resources available, including activities, lesson plans, assessment tools, and multimedia resources.
- Identify sections relevant to your specific educational setting, stakeholders, and DC SEL competencies of interest. See the *DC SEL Competency Alignment At-a-Glance Guide* in the appendices to easily identify which resources in this document align with each of the DC SEL competencies.

2. Access the Resources

- Each tool can be accessed in two ways: 1) By using the link found directly below the subsection heading within the text of the document, and 2) By searching the complete list of the section’s tools in the toolkit’s appendix.
- A variety of resources, such as guiding questions and sample protocols, are embedded directly into each subsection for easy reference.

3. Consider Integration Opportunities on Your Campus

- Review and consider how SEL principles can align with your current practices by identifying areas where SEL activities can be integrated authentically. For example, reading comprehension exercises that focus on empathy may be used in English classes, or exercises in self-management may be leveraged as part of planning a science experiment.

4. Adapt Resources to Fit Your Needs

- Use the toolkit’s guidelines to adapt activities to the needs, ages, and developmental stages of your learners. Modify the materials to ensure they are appropriate and engaging for your specific group.
- Be mindful of cultural and individual differences among your students and school community. Adjust language, examples, and activities to be inclusive and relatable.

5. Engage in Active Learning and Participation

- Encourage students’ active participation in all SEL activities. Use group discussions and cooperative learning strategies to foster engagement.
- Model SEL skills by demonstrating effective communication, empathy, and resilience in your interactions with students.

6. Reflect on SEL Progress

- Use the assessment tools provided in the toolkit to monitor students’ progress in developing SEL competencies. These assessments can guide future instruction and provide feedback on the effectiveness of SEL integration.
- Encourage students to reflect on their own growth in SEL skills through journals, discussions, and self-assessment checklists.
- As your school community’s SEL competency and capacity grows and evolves, revisit this toolkit to identify new resources that will strengthen SEL implementation in your classroom and your school.

STRENGTHENING ADULT STAFF SEL

RESOURCES

Promoting adult SEL fosters a supportive work environment where all staff feel empowered, connected, and capable of enhancing their own SEL skills. CASEL identifies three essential components for adult SEL: learning, collaboration, and modeling, which contribute to staff competence and well-being. Implementing adult SEL involves infusing SEL practices into various school settings and addressing key areas such as equal treatment, school culture, relationship building, professional learning, and teacher voice. A complete list of the section's tools can be found in Appendix. To access the tools and resources, click the "Toolkit Resources" and "Leadership Resource" links below.

[Toolkit Resources \(Appendix\)](#)

[Leadership Resource \(Appendix\)](#)

WHY SHOULD EDUCATIONAL LEADERS FOCUS ON ADULT SEL?

TOOLS: [Adult SEL: Learn](#) (CASEL); [Adult SEL: Connect and Collaborate](#) (CASEL); [Adult SEL: Model](#) (CASEL); [12 Strategies for Adult SEL Facilitation](#) (CASEL); [Process for Strengthening Adult SEL](#) (CASEL); [Professional Learning for SEL](#) (CASEL);

DC SEL Competency Alignment: Relationship Skills and Decision-Making and Agency

Any schoolwide SEL implementation plan must foster a supportive work environment. All staff, not only teachers, should feel a sense of belonging, support, and empowerment that positively influences their ability to collaborate effectively, build relational trust, and strengthen their own social and emotional skills.

CASEL has found that three components are integral to creating a supportive staff environment that cultivates adult social and emotional competence ([Grissom, et al., 2021](#); [Jones et al., 2013](#); [Oliveira et al., 2021](#)):

- **Learning:** Reflecting on their own social and emotional competencies and skills as well as providing adults opportunities to practice their own social and emotional skills;
- **Collaboration:** Educators are provided opportunities to connect and collaborate with each other; and
- **Modeling:** Adults actively model the SEL competencies, growth mindset, and SEL skills.

IMPLEMENTING ADULT SEL

TOOLS: [How to Grow Teacher Wellbeing in Your Schools](#) (Institute of Education Sciences); [Compassion & Adult SEL Series](#) (Pure Edge)

DC SEL Competency Alignment: Relationship Skills and Social & Cultural Awareness

Adult SEL is the development of the social and emotional competencies of the adults at a school. Educational leaders can infuse adult SEL into faculty meetings, department meetings, and other settings. Educator wellness is the impact of a school's organizational and individual systems (e.g., culture and climate, employee training and support, etc.) on staff social, emotional, physical, and mental well-being. This can influence staff tension which can create positive or negative working conditions and ultimately impact the teaching and learning environment for students.

The Institute of Education Sciences outlines five areas that educational leaders can focus on to support the well-being of teachers:

- **Equal Treatment:** Ensure equal treatment and support of all teachers, regardless of gender, race, ethnicity, age, gender, religion, working hours, role, or experience.
- **School Culture:** Create school environments that promote feelings of belonging, respect, value, and trust for both teachers and students.
- **Relationship Building:** Provide opportunities for teachers to develop personal and professional networks that enable them to learn from and connect with one another.
- **Professional Learning:** Manage the emotional labor of teaching.
- **Teacher Voice:** Provide opportunities for teachers to participate in decision-making to support their professional growth and connections to the learning environment.

WHOLE SCHOOL APPROACH TO EDUCATOR WELLNESS

TOOL: [OSSE Whole School Approach to Educator Wellness \(1-Pager\)](#)

DC SEL Competency Alignment: Relationship Skills and Decision-Making and Agency

A whole school approach to educator wellness identifies the interconnected system elements influencing educator well-being. Drawing from existing research, wellness models, and the experience of District of Columbia public and public charter schools, this approach supports OSSE, local education agencies (LEAs), schools, child development facilities, and education partners to:

- Center educator voices to authentically understand their thoughts and opinions to create work environments supportive of their well-being.
- Recognize and treat staff as whole educators.
- Reflect on, implement, and integrate tiered approaches to address educator wellness as a whole school approach.
- Acknowledge that educator wellness is impacted by the community and education environment in which educators work.

GUIDING QUESTIONS FOR IMPLEMENTATION

1. Do administrators, educators, and support staff have meaningful opportunities to reflect on and develop their own social, emotional, and cultural competencies?
2. Do schoolwide structures and systems prioritize staff well-being?
3. Does the SEL team and school leaders create opportunities for staff to build connections with one another and develop a sense of shared purpose?
4. Do school leaders and staff engage students as partners in problem-solving and decision-making? Are there structures for students to shape SEL initiatives, instructional practices, and school climate?
5. Do teachers and other staff regularly model social, emotional, and cultural competence in their communication and interactions with students, families, and colleagues?

APPENDIX

RESOURCES: STRENGTHENING ADULT STAFF SEL			
Title (External Hyperlink)	Type of Resource	Description	SEL Competency Alignment
Adult SEL: Learn Adult SEL: Connect and Collaborate Adult SEL: Model 12 Strategies for Adult SEL Facilitation Process for Strengthening Adult SEL Professional Learning for SEL	Online Guidance Resource with Tools	When fostering the learning of SEL and competencies, adult SEL provides direction to foster a community of adults who actively participate in their own SEL, strengthen relationships, and collaborate effectively with colleagues while modeling SEL through day-to-day interactions.	Self-Awareness, Self-Management, Relationship Skills, and Decision-Making and Agency
OSSE Whole School Approach to Educator Wellness	Online Guidance Resource	Guidance on supporting a whole school approach to educator wellness that identifies intersecting systems factors that impact educator well-being.	Relationship Skills and Decision-Making and Agency
How to Grow Teacher Wellbeing in Your Schools	Resource	Teachers’ social, emotional, and physical health is a shared responsibility and a critical component of student learning and overall community well-being. This colorful flyer helps to capture what teacher well-being encompasses. (Institute of Education Sciences)	Social and Cultural Awareness, Relationship Skills
Compassion & Adult SEL Series	Webinar/Video	This webinar discusses how administrators, along with faculty and staff, show compassion not only for students, but for themselves. (Pure Edge)	Social and Cultural Awareness, Relationship Skills
LEADERSHIP RESOURCE			
<p>The Panorama Adult SEL Toolkit—aligned to CASEL for SEL implementation—has helped campuses take a major step forward in supporting adult capacity for SEL. More than 30,000 educators and administrators have downloaded the toolkit, which is a key resource for helping LEA and campus leaders strengthen staff SEL skills and expertise.</p>			

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