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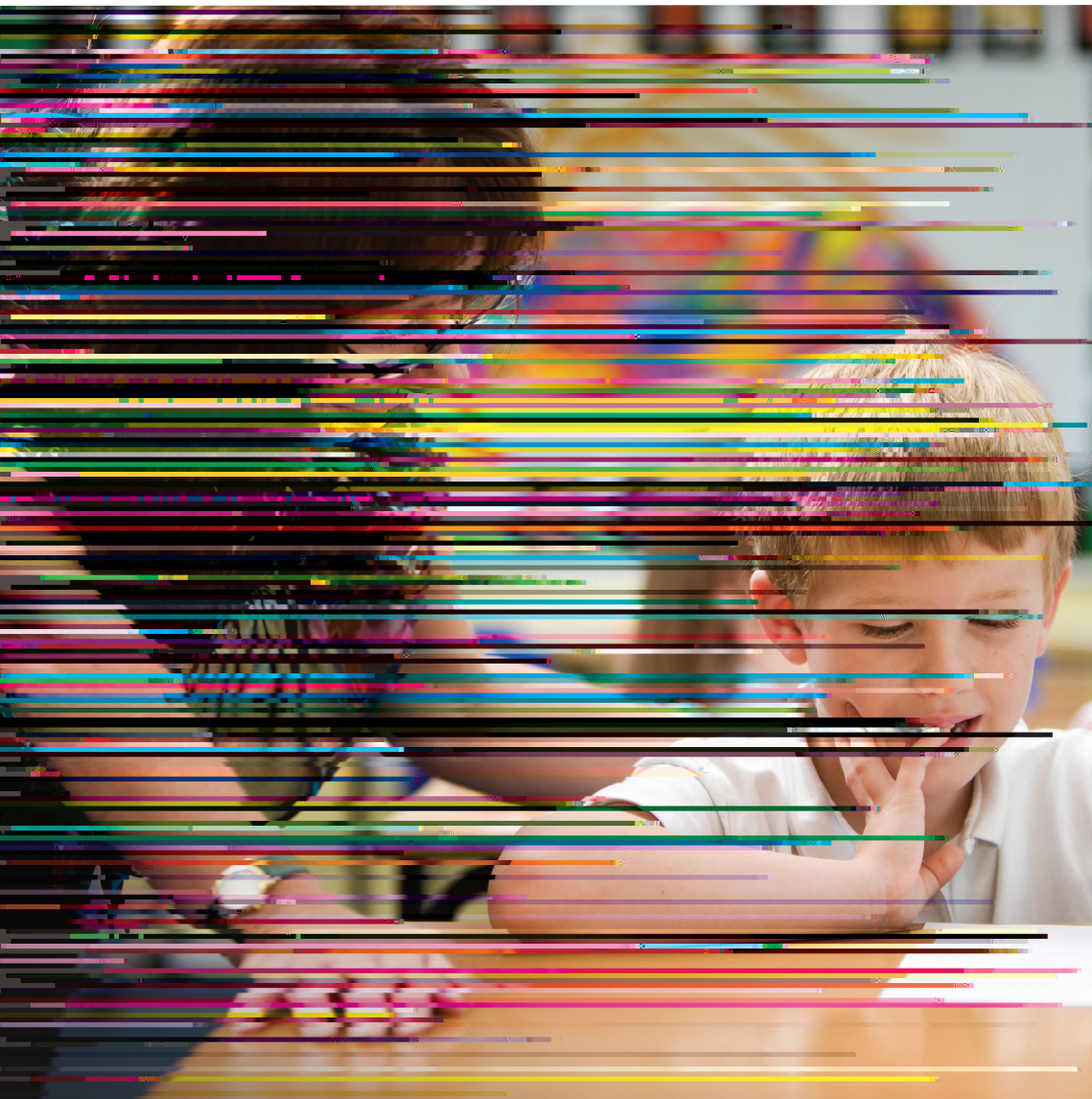
# Teaching the Whole Child

Instructional Practices That Support
Social-Emotional Learning in Three
Teacher Evaluation Frameworks

AUGUST 2013

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Educators, policymakers, and researchers agree that teachers have a significant impact on student learning (Chetty, Friedman, & Rockoff, 2011; Nye, Konstantopoulos, & Hedges, 2004). They also know that effective teachers do more than promote academic learning—they teach the whole child. Teachers help promote the social and emotional learning skills students need to be college and career ready, such as collaborating with others, monitoring their own behavior, and making responsible decisions. Social-emotional learning is critical to the introduction of college- and career-readiness standards, which increase the demands on students' ability to engage in deeper learning and shift the focus and rigor of instruction (National Governors Association Center for Best Practices [NGA Center] & Council of Chief State School Officers [CCSSO] 2010a; NGA Center & CCSSO, 2010b).

To bridge the connection between social-emotional learning and the work that educators are already doing, educators need access to tools, supports, and resources on social-emotional learning that are integrated existing teacher evaluation and professional development systems. Not only does this reinforce the importance of social-emotional learning, it avoids overburdening educators by layering on yet another separate initiative. Ensuring that our teacher evaluation systems privilege and reinforce the successful teaching of these competencies is, therefore, of critical importance

*"As a school committed to developing social/emotional competencies in children as part of a wider school climate improvement process, we have adopted SEL standards, developed an SEL curriculum, included various accountability measures in teacher evaluations to ensure consistency and authentic delivery schoolwide. In order for these approaches to be successful, it has been essential for us to provide adequate professional development and coaching for our teachers to ensure buy-in, depth of understanding, and breadth of knowledge."*

—Vanessa Camilleri,
  Director of Student Support Services, The Arts &
  Technology Academy Public Charter School

To aid this critical work, this Research-to-Practice Brief aims to do the following:

1. Identify the instructional practices that promote student social-emotional learning, which in turn are critical for student academic learning.

2. Showcase how three popular professional teaching frameworks embed practices that influence not only student academic learning but also student social and emotional competencies.

The brief begins by providing a definition of social-emotional learning and a discussion of why it is important.

# Understanding Social-Emotional Learning

## What Is Social-Emotional Learning?

Social-emotional learning (SEL) is the process of developing students' social-emotional competencies, that is, the knowledge, skills, attitudes, and behaviors that individuals need to make successful choices (Collaborative for Academic, Social, and Emotional Learning [CASEL], 2003). SEL promotes activities that develop children's ability to recognize and manage emotions, build relationships, solve interpersonal problems, and make effective and ethical decisions (Payton et al., 2000). Developing social and emotional skills is even more critical for students living in underresourced areas, both urban and rural. Students in urban areas and/or areas that are underresourced are surrounded by added stressors that make it difficult for them to learn. When students develop social-emotional competencies, they are more capable of seeking help when needed, managing their own emotions, and problem-solving difficult situations (Romasz, Kantor, & Elias, 2004).

According to CASEL (http://casel.org/why-it-matters/what-is-sel/skills-competencies/), there are five core social-emotional competencies, each

**Social-emotional learning** is the educational process that focuses on development of social-emotional competencies.

¡ **Social-emotional competencies** are the skills, behaviors, and attitudes students and adults need to effectively manage their affective, cognitive, and social behavior.

¡ **Safe and supportive learning environments** are the conditions that foster safety; a supportive academic, disciplinary, and physical environment; and respectful, trusting, and caring relationships throughout the school community.

¡ **Professional teaching frameworks** define common components of teachers' professional practice, which reflect multiple levels of teacher performance.

addressing multiple skills that students need to be successful in school and their future careers. The ve overarching competencies are as follows (see Table 1 for a list of skills related to each competency):

¡ **Self-awareness** is the ability to recognize one's own feelings, interests, and strengths, in addition to maintaining an accurate level of self-ef cacy. Students who are self-aware are capable of describing and understanding their own emotions. In addition, they are capable of recognizing their own strengths and

| Responsible decision making | ¡ Identify decisions one makes at school |
| | ¡ Discuss strategies used to resist peer pressure |
| | ¡ Re ect on how current choices affect future |
| | ¡ Identify problems when making decisions, and generate alternatives |
| | ¡ Implement problem-solving skills when making decisions, when appropriate |
| | ¡ Become self-re ective and self-evaluative |
| | ¡ Make decisions based on moral, personal, and ethical standards |
| | ¡ Make responsible decisions that affect the individual, school, and community |
| | ¡ Negotiate fairly |

## Why Is Social-Emotional Learning Important?

### Increase Students' Capacity to Learn

Social-emotional competencies not only prepare students to be able to participate in learning experiences, they also increase students' capacity to learn (Durlak et al., 2011). Student learning is enhanced when teachers integrate social-emotional competencies with academic learning (Elias, 2004). For example, when students develop social-emotional competencies, they are more motivated to learn and committed to school (as seen through improved attendance and graduation rates), and they are less likely to act out in class, get suspended, or be held back (Zins, Weissberg, Wang, & Walberg, 2004). Students receive multiple bene ts when teachers focus on SEL in their instruction. In a major review of SEL programs in schools, Durlak et al. (2011) found that students who participated in social-emotional programs (compared with students not in social-emotional programs) demonstrated the following:

- ¡ Increased academic achievement
- ¡ Increased social-emotional skills
- ¡ Improved attitudes toward self and others
- ¡ Improved positive social behaviors
- ¡ Decreased conduct problems and emotional distress

These results were consistent across grade level (elementary, middle, and high schools); location (urban, rural, and suburban); and school type (schools serving ethnically and racially diverse student populations).

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the ways emotions influence their classroom interactions (e.g., feeling challenged by boredeom or failure), or how to regulate stressful academic situations (Osher et al., 2008). In collaboration with families and the school community, teachers must explicity teach students the SEL skills that are necessary for learning academic content (Jones & Bouffard, 2012).

## Prepare to Meet College- and Career-Readiness Standards

Learning social-emotional competencies is particularly important with the introduction of college- and career-readiness standards such as the Common Core State Standards. To master the new academic standards, students will need to build the necessary SEL skills all students need to be successful (McTigue & Rimm-Kaufman, 2011; Osher et al., 2008). For example, the Common Core State Standards for Mathematics entail a new level of focus, coherence, and rigor (Student Achievement Partners, 2012b). When students become frustrated or confused by the content, they must learn how to persevere in meeting the new standards. If they do not know how to manage or regulate the emotions they have during school (e.g., joy, jealousy, frustration, relief), their mental resources will not be used for academic learning (Brackett, Rivers, Reyes, & Salovey,

(a) adopt or develop SEL standards, (b) explicitly include practices that promote or support SEL in educator evaluation systems, and (c) develop policies that focus on the implementation of practices that promote or support SEL.

2. **District Actions:** (a) implement SEL programs that focus on teaching speci c social-emotional competencies; (b) explicitly include practices that promote or support SEL in educator evaluation systems; (c) connect SEL to other district initiatives, including college- and career-readiness standards, school climate, and anti-bullying; and (d) create a process to continually assess the effectiveness of initiatives and programs designed to promote SEL.

3. **School Administrator Actions:** (a) implement an SEL learning program; (b) integrate SEL into academic learning and curricular resources; (c) provide teachers with professional learning experiences on SEL; (d) look for instructional practices that promote or support SEL; and (e) connect SEL to other school policies and procedures, such as school climate, school vision and mission, or service-learning programs.

4. **Teacher Actions:** (a) use speci c instructional strategies and classroom management techniques, including those that foster a supportive, caring classroom environment; (b) assess use of instructional strategies that support SEL in the classroom; (c) assess students' social-emotional competencies in the classroom; (d) ask for feedback from administrators, evaluators, or peers on SEL implementation; and (e) implement and/or advocate for SEL school and district policies.

Although there are multiple ways in which policymakers and education leaders can promote SEL, the goal of this brief is to understand which practices teachers currently use in their classrooms that impact student social-emotional development. This information will provide policymakers and education leaders with a framework to connect SEL to their teacher evaluation systems and professional learning opportunities. Additional information about SEL learning programs that impact student social-emotional competencies can be found online on CASEL's website (www.casel.org).

## SOCIAL-EMOTIONAL LEARNING STANDARDS

The importance of social-emotional learning (SEL) has become so essential for student success that states have begun adopting SEL standards, either as free-standing standards (e.g., Illinois, Kansas, Pennsylvania) or with a focus on SEL skills within their current standards (e.g., Washington, Vermont). Developing SEL standards has the potential to impact student learning. For example, research conducted in Alaska by Spier, Osher, Kendziora, and Cai (2009) at American Institutes for Research suggests that including SEL standards increases the likelihood that students will receive instruction in SEL and become better learners.

Illinois has developed SEL standards in accordance with Section 15(a) of Public Act 93-0495. Within the state's three SEL standards, there is a breakdown of the skills and competencies needed to develop the three overarching standards in 10 developmental stages. For example, Figure 1 demonstrates the development progression for Standard 1A, "Identify and manage one's emotions and behavior." In order to master the standard over the K–12 school experience, students need to demonstrate proficiency in specific skills and competencies. To see the developmental progression of all the SEL skills and competencies by grade level, refer to the Illinois State Board of Education SEL Standards (www.isbe.state.il.us/ils/social_emotional/descriptors.htm) (Illinois State Board of Education, n.d.).

**Figure 1. Example of Development Progression for One SEL Standard**



For simplicity, Figure 1 includes only 3 of the 10 developmental stages for Standard 1A.

Many other states have standards whose mastery requires students to have SEL skills (Kress et al., 2004). For example, the Grade 9–10 Common Core State Standard for English Language Arts Literacy RL.9-10.3 states, "Analyze how complex characters (e.g., those with multiple conflicting motivations) develop over the course of a text, interact with other characters, and advance the plot or develop the theme" (NGA & CCSSO, 2010a). In order to meet that standard, students need to understand a variety of emotions a character might have, how the character's context influences his or her emotions, and what defines effective interpersonal interactions.

For additional information about SEL standards across the country, see CASEL's policy guide, SEL in Your State (http://casel.org/policy-advocacy/sel-in-your-state/), and the College and Career Readiness and Success Center's issue brief, Improving College and Career Readiness by Incorporating Social and D.glish Leaor(wwwccrscCente2oucce/simrob- an-cCaree-Kreadines-

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After conducting an extensive review of existing research (see "Methods"), the Center on Great Teachers and Leaders identi ed 10 instructional practices that occurred most frequently across the six SEL programs and eight SEL scholars. These 10 practices are not exhaustive, but they represent general teaching practices that can be used in classrooms to support positive learning environments, social-emotional competencies, and academic learning. For each instructional practice, we provide a clear example from either an SEL program or an SEL practice that aligns with the Common Core State Standards. These examples can be modi ed to  t other grade-level and content areas, and they can generally be applied to multiple contexts.

In order to identify common instructional practices that promote students' social-emotional competencies, we reviewed existing literature that focused on the relationship between speci c instructional practices, positive learning environments, and student social-emotional competencies. In order to do this, we reviewed programs from the CASEL 2013 guide on research-based social-emotional programs. (For more information about how CASEL selected these programs, see 2013 CASEL Guide: Effective Social and Emotional Learning Programs, Preschool and Elementary Version http://casel.org/guide/.) In addition, eight SEL scholars (individual authors and groups of coauthors) were identi ed through an extensiv2( soci0 an)10( )]Undividual authors and groups. ActuggfoSEL schol

Teacher language refers to how the teachers talk to students. Teachers should encourage student effort and work, restating what the student did and what that student needs to do in order to improve. For example, teacher language should not be simply praise (e.g., "You did a great job") but should encourage students (e.g., "I see you worked hard on your math paper. When you really think about your work, and when

## RESPONSIBILITY AND CHOICE EXAMPLE

Using op-ed sections of local or national newspapers, middle school teachers model how to evaluate, and then generate, substantive arguments/claims that are supported by clear and relevant evidence from accurate, credible sources. Teachers demonstrate rubrics for small-group evaluation of online and print editorials about current topics of student interest; explain and provide opportunities for small-group debate teams to develop arguments and supporting claims/evidence around topics of interest; and design speci c feedback rubrics for culminating independent writing projects (e.g., editorials for the school newspaper about cell phone use, survey research projects for nutritional changes in school lunches).

Cooperative learning refers to a specific instructional task in which teachers have students work together toward a collective goal. Teachers ask students to do more than group work; students are actively working with their peers around content in a meaningful way. To implement cooperative learning effectively, teachers include five basic elements: (1) positive interdependence, (2) individual accountability, (3) promoting one another's successes, (4) applying interpersonal and social skills, and

communication skills. More speci cally, teachers ensure that students learn how to extend their own thinking and expand on the thinking of their classmates. Students need to be able to listen attentively and pick out the main ideas of what classmates

scholars that discussed competence building included Responsive Classroom, Raising

To systematically improve teaching and learning, states and districts are redesigning their teacher evaluation systems. Teacher evaluation reform offers states and districts an unprecedented opportunity to support teachers more systematically and to emphasize critical student needs, such as SEL. Policymakers and educators alike must understand how social-emotional competencies can be promoted through existing educator evaluation systems and tools, especially professional teaching frameworks. Thus, it is critical to determine how SEL ts into current professional teaching frameworks.

Teacher evaluation systems that are well designed include professional teaching frameworks that describe the behaviors, skills, and practices that represent effective teaching (Coggshall, Rasmussen, Colton, Milton, & Jacques, 2012). When used properly, the results provide teachers with fair, reliable, and accurate information about their practice (Pianta & Hamre, 2009a) and present a common vision and common language about what good teaching looks like in classrooms (Stuhlman, Hamre, Downer, & Pianta, 2010). In addition, evaluators use teacher scores from the professional teaching frameworks to provide instructional feedback as part of the evaluation process. Given the importance of professional teaching frameworks in teachers' work, creating an explicit link between the 10 SEL instructional practices outlined above and common teaching frameworks is a critical rst step to leveraging teacher evaluation systems to support SEL instruction in the classroom.

*R    a    N   :* Validation studies have demonstrated consistent correlations between observation data collected using professional teaching frameworks and student achievement (Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation, 2012); few studies, however, exist that look at their relationship to other student outcomes, including social and emotional outcomes (Pianta & Hamre, 2009b).

## COMMON PROFESSIONAL TEACHING FRAMEWORKS

### CLASS (www.teachstone.com)

Bob Pianta and his colleagues at the University of Virginia developed the Classroom Assessment Scoring System (CLASS) over a period of approximately 10 years. Originally developed as an early childhood classroom observation instrument, the CLASS integrates multiple conceptualizations of best practices, making it inclusive of a wide range of interactions between teachers and students. To date, few conceptualizations of instruction incorporate emotional, social, and academic interactions (Hamre & Pianta, 2010). CLASS-S is organized around three theoretically driven domains: emotional support, organizational support, and instructional support. Each of these domains is constructed with three to four dimensions (for a total of 11 dimensions) and assessed on a seven-point scale, from *low range* to *high range*. All domains are assessed through classroom observations. Although CLASS has not been explicitly used in teacher evaluations (other than a modified version in Georgia), it has been used in multiple school districts across the country as a professional development tool (e.g., Arlington, Virginia), as well as in the Measures of Effective Teaching Study by the Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation.

### Danielson's Framework for Teaching (www.teachscape.com)

Charlotte Danielson's Framework for Teaching was developed in 1996 out of the work she was doing with Educational Testing Services (ETS) and assessing preservice and novice teachers. Combining research-based best practices, the framework contains four domains that represent effective teacher practice. However, only two of the domains—Classroom Environment and Instruction—are observable in the classroom; the other two domains—Planning and Preparation, and Professional Responsibility—are generally not observable in typical classroom instruction. Each domain is made up of multiple components (22 components in all), and assessed on a four-point scale, from *basic* to *distinguished*. The Framework for Teaching has been adapted or adopted in multiple districts, including Cincinnati, Ohio, and is one of three potential frameworks from which districts in the state of Washington can choose as part of the district's teacher evaluation system.

### Marzano's Observational Protocol (www.marzanoevaluation.com/)

Marzano's Observational Protocol was built from his work on the Art and Science of Teaching Framework, which was developed over his 40 years of research on teaching and learning. His protocol includes four domains, and only one—Classroom Strategies and Behaviors—is observable in classrooms. The other three domains—Planning and Preparing, Reflecting on Teaching, and Collegiality and Professionalism—are not necessarily observable in the classroom. Each domain is made up of multiple elements (for a total of 60 elements) and assessed on a five-point scale, from *not using* to *innovating*. Marzano's Observational Protocol is one of the potential frameworks from which districts in the states of New York, Oklahoma, and Washington can choose as part of the district's teacher evaluation system.

Students' social-emotional competencies are not explicitly included in current educator evaluations, making it appear that they are not important for learning. To support school administrators and teachers in promoting a dual focus on social-emotional learning and academic learning, state education agencies and districts can create a crosswalk of how current reforms in educator evaluation

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|---|---|---|---|
| 7. Self-Reflection and Self-Assessment | ¡ Analysis and problem solving | | II.8. Reflecting on learning |
| 8. Balanced Instruction | ¡ Productivity<br>¡ Instructional learning formats<br>¡ Content understanding<br>¡ Analysis and problem solving | 3a. Communicating with students<br>3c. Engaging students in learning | II.1. Identifying critical information<br>II.2. Organizing students to interact with new knowledge<br>II.3. Reviewing new content<br>II.4. Chunking content into "digestible bites"<br>II.6. Elaborating new information<br>II.7. Recording and representing new knowledge<br>II.9. Reviewing content<br>II.12. Examining similarities and differences<br>II.18. Providing resources and guidance<br>III.3. Using academic games<br>III.5. Maintaining a lively pace<br>III.6. Using friendly controversy |
| 9. Academic Press and Expectations | ¡ Academic Positive cliTd/T1_2 1 C 1.605 0 Td( )TjEMC 3 | T1_2 1 C 1.605 0 Td( )TjEMC 3 | T1_2 1 C 1.605 0 Td( )TjEMC 3T |
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Developing social-emotional competencies provides a foundation for lifelong learning and facilitates student participation in learning activities needed to master state standards. However, most support and accountability systems fail to take into account (1) teachers develop social-emotional competencies in students and (2) teachers influence these competences. Although there is little research connecting current professional teaching frameworks with academic, social, and emotional learning, the existing research does demonstrate that these frameworks predict a variety of student outcomes. It matters what type of instruction a student receives for different social-emotional competencies. For example, the more instructional support (i.e., classroom activities that focus on higher-order thinking skills and deep understanding of content) a student receives in a classroom, the more self-aware that student will be (Yoder, 2013). Taken together, SEL and academic learning create a mutual supportive cycle of learning through effectively implemented instructional practices. The more teachers provide instructional activities in a positive learning environment, the more students will learn how their academic, social, and emotional skills support one another.

Although this Research-to-Practice Brief discusses one approach to connect social-emotional learning to other initiatives (connecting general teaching practices that promote SEL to current professional teaching frameworks), there are multiple ways to integrate SEL, including the following options:

- Create tools that help administrators quickly and easily see how the practices that support SEL can be supported and reinforced through existing teacher evaluation systems.

- Provide districts and schools with a sample student social-emotional competencies assessment to use for teachers' self-assessment or professional growth plan.

- Incorporate teaching practices that explicitly teach students' social and emotional competencies into teachers' self-assessment or professional growth plan (e.g., what did the teacher do to teach students to regulate their academic behavior?).

- Connect teacher efforts that contribute to student social-emotional competency development to other dimensions in professional teaching frameworks (e.g., school-family connections, leading SEL initiatives, etc.).

- Embed a focus on SEL in other education initiatives (e.g., school climate, anti-bullying, teacher preparation, principal accountability).

- Promote collaboration across districts and schools by encouraging administrators to share successful strategies around creating a school culture that supports SEL, such as incorporating SEL development activities into staff meetings, professional learning communities, and regular school events.

Provide professional learning opportunities that build educators' knowledge and skills around SEL development.

¡ Support teachers with professional learning about their own social-emotional competencies to better help them integrate the 10 identi ed practices into their classrooms.

¡ Develop or re ne state standards that incorporate SEL.

For additional information about the integration of SEL into the schooling experience, see "Selected Resources."

Preparing students for college and future careers requires educators to explicitly teach social-emotional competencies. Teachers and principals need support in integrating instructional practices into the classroom that provide students the opportunities to use these skills. Teacher evaluation is one existing resource that state education agencies and local districts can use to provide supports to educators. The recommendations and resources we have included are only some of the ways that SEL and safe and supportive classrooms can be integrated into other initiatives and developed in schools and classrooms. This brief is one point for states and districts to consider to better support educators as they teach the whole child. We eagerly anticipate learning about and sharing new, creative strategies developed by policymakers and practitioners in the  eld as states and districts make further strides in supporting SEL for all their students.

This brief references multiple centers and briefs, many of which include resources that will further support this work. These resources, along with others, are summarized as follows:

1. CASEL (www.casel.org), a leading SEL research and advocacy organization, conducts research on the bene ts of SEL to students' schooling experience. It also provides multiple resources on SEL implementation, including the following:

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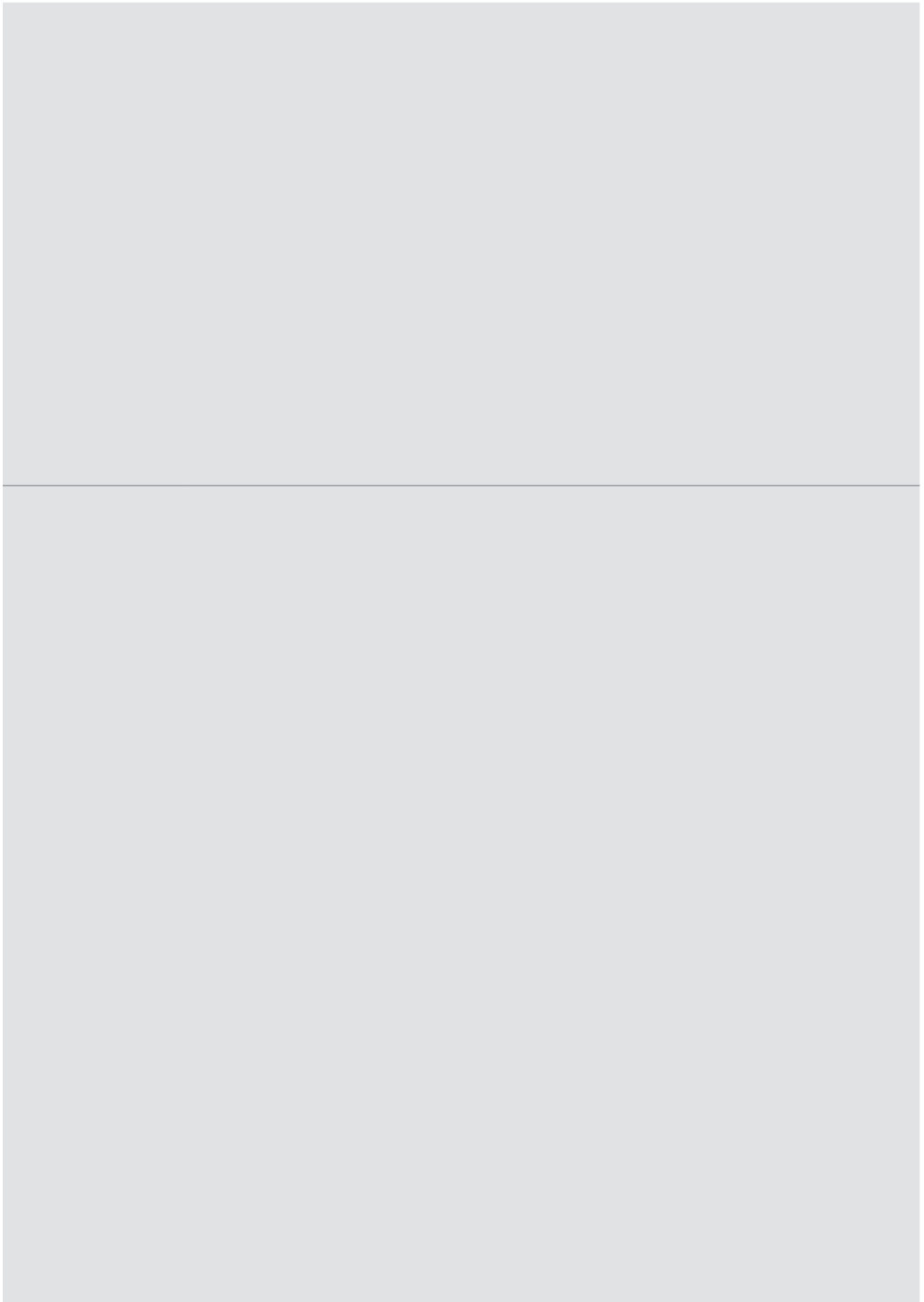Retrieved from http://www.metproject.org/downloads/MET_Gathering_Feedback_Practioner_Brief.pdf

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| RULER Approach | ¡ | Develop emotional literacy |
| | | Teach students to identify emotions, to understand why they have those emotions, and to express and regulate their emotions. |
| | ¡ | Charters |
| | | Create a collaborative mission statement with students that facilitates a positive learning environment. |
| | ¡ | Mood meter |
| | | Provide opportunities to reflect on current mood to determine if students are ready to learn. Reflect on two dimensions: Valence (unpleasant/pleasant) and arousal (high/low energy). |
| | ¡ | Meta-moments |
| | | Provide opportunities to get teacher and students to stop and think about their emotional triggers and the responses to those triggers. |
| | ¡ | Blueprint |
| | | Engage in effective problem solving about past, present, and future events. |
| | ¡ | Feeling words |
| | | Teach students a variety of emotion words throughout the units, including basic feelings (e.g., joy, anger), evaluative feelings (e.g., pride, shame), and societal words (e.g., empowerment). |
| | | Integrate feeling words into activities that discuss characters in reading and events/current topics in social studies. |
| Steps to Respect | ¡ | Provide opportunities for students to: |
| | | Interpret stories |
| | | Interpret photos and video vignettes |
| | | Respond to questions |
| | | Personally reflect |
| | | Speak and listen in group discussion |
| | | Work cooperatively in pairs and small groups |
| | | Write in a variety of forms |
| | | Evaluate situations and response strategies |
| | | Practice behavioral skills |
| | | Coach a partner in skill practice |

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