



## OVERVIEW



# Collaborating States Initiative

CASEL's Collaborating States Initiative (CSI) is designed to help state teams create statewide conditions where districts and schools are encouraged and equipped to engage in equity-focused, evidence-based, systemic social and emotional learning (SEL), which is how children and adults learn to understand and manage emotions, set goals, show empathy for others, establish positive relationships, and make responsible decisions.

## ABOUT THE CSI

---

In 2016, the Collaborative for Academic, Social, and Emotional Learning (CASEL) launched the [Collaborating States Initiative](#) (CSI) to help state education agencies create statewide conditions that encourage and equip educators to promote integrated, equity-focused, academic, social, and emotional learning.

The goal of the CSI is to help state staff move beyond a compliance focus to develop flexible policies, tools, and guidelines that encourage districts and schools to create customized conditions to support every student's development.

## SUPPORT FROM CASEL

---

### Technical Assistance

As part of the CSI, state teams engage in a community of practice with CASEL, national experts, and other state teams. States share resources and findings from state-specific research; disseminate information on best practices and evidence-based tools states develop for the field; and collaborate on common problems of practice.

State teams also develop customized plans for advancing SEL. State plans include one or more of the following priorities based on the CASEL CSI Theory of Action:

- **Build** foundational support and planning (e.g., creating a vision)
- **Strengthen** adult competencies and capacities (e.g., developing professional learning)
- **Promote** SEL for students (e.g., articulate student competencies; strategically integrate SEL into existing programs and practices)
- **Use data for continuous improvement** (e.g., create and share guidance)



## Tools and Resources

All states have access to the following tools, resources, and services offered by the CASEL CSI team.

- A [curated library](#) of more than 125 tools, resources, and state examples.
- Reports and briefs (e.g., CSI Emerging Insights [report](#), [District Recommendations for How States Can Support SEL](#), and Social and Emotional Learning in State [Strategic Plans](#)).
- Webinar series focused on similar problems of practice or specific content areas.
- Bi-monthly newsletter, sharing updates and resources from states and national partners.
- National meeting of state teams, including state leaders.
- Regional meetings that provide similarly located states to collaborate on their SEL policies and practices.
- Coaching for each state, which is organized around their customized state CSI goals.
- Connections to states working on similar goals or issues.
- Collaboration between state teams and CASEL on development of tools and resources.
- Connections to advisors, which include national experts on topics areas within SEL (e.g., equity and workforce development), as well as partnerships with national organizations.
- Opportunities to participate in other CASEL offerings (e.g., CASEL SEL Exchange, Cross-District Meeting, Equity Work Group, SEL Summer Institute).

## INDICATORS OF SUCCESS



figure 1

States have made tremendous progress on their SEL-related efforts (summarized in Figure 1)<sup>1</sup>:

In the past two years, the CSI team and its partners have scaled state-level SEL work from 8 states to more than 30 states and one U.S. territory, collectively representing more than 11,850 school districts, 67,000 schools, 2 million teachers and 35 million students, preschool to high school.

An SEL frameworks [brief](#) published in February 2019 found that 10 of the 14 states (>70%) used the CASEL framework for SEL, while four states had state-specific frameworks for SEL that aligned with the CASEL framework.

In September 2018, CASEL's most recent [scan](#) identified 21 states have implementation guidance documents or websites designed to support implementation of SEL.

States connected to the CSI were roughly five times more likely to have adopted SEL competencies and four times more likely to share SEL guidance than states not connected to the CSI.

To learn more about CASEL and the Collaborating States Initiative, please contact Nick Yoder at [Nyoder@casel.org](mailto:Nyoder@casel.org) or Linda Dusenbury at [Ldusenbury@casel.org](mailto:Ldusenbury@casel.org).

<sup>1</sup> Although 30 state teams and one territory are connected with the CSI, not all states are official members. Some are in the process of formally joining and have not yet completed their customized plan and others engage with the CASEL team to receive updates and resources.