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CASEL, with More Than 40 Partners, Releases Guidance for Reopening School
New Roadmap to Help Educators and Communities Cultivate Social, Emotional, and Academic Competencies and Supportive Learning Environments

CHICAGO, IL – On Thursday, The Collaborative for Academic, Social, and Emotional Learning (CASEL) and more than 40 expert partners will release detailed recommendations for how to reopen schools most effectively this fall in: [**Reunite, Renew, and Thrive: Social and Emotional Learning \(SEL\) Roadmap for Reopening School.**](#)

As educators across the country prepare to welcome students and adults back to school, they face the layered impact of school closures, the COVID-19 pandemic, and racial inequities exacerbated by the pandemic and amplified by the nationwide mobilization for racial justice. The return to school this year will be unlike any other in our history. This moment will call on all members of our school communities to deepen our social and emotional competencies and create equitable learning environments where all students and adults process, heal, and thrive.

“This is a moment of incredible complexity for students, families, and educators alike. We need to accelerate our work to transform schools into places where all students feel seen, heard, and valued,” says CASEL President and CEO Karen Niemi. “We believe that supportive learning environments can empower our students to overcome the challenges they face and help them create more just, equitable, and loving communities.”

To aid in this transition, CASEL collaborated with leading organizations to illuminate a way forward through [**Reunite, Renew, and Thrive: Social and Emotional Learning \(SEL\) Roadmap for Reopening School.**](#) The Roadmap presents guidance from CASEL experts as well as education experts; state, district, and school leaders; teachers; counselors; philanthropists; and civil rights advocates (full list found [here](#)).

As one collaborator Karen Pittman, President and CEO of the Forum for Youth Investment, states, “As we sit down and really try to figure out what is going to be a long haul of reopening slowly...we’re going to need such a different approach to the traditional ‘show up and sit in your seat.’ We need all partners at the table together.”

The Roadmap will support the reopening of schools with a particular focus on equity and SEL. The recommendations are divided into four major sections, each with its own action steps and user-friendly tools to help operationalize the guidance:

1. **Take time to cultivate and deepen relationships, build partnerships, and plan for SEL.** Prioritize relationships that haven’t been established, engage in two-way communication, and build coalitions to effectively plan for supportive and equitable learning environments that promote social, emotional, and academic learning for all students.
2. **Design opportunities where adults can connect, heal, and build their capacity to support students.** Help adults feel connected, empowered, supported, and valued by cultivating

collective self-care and well-being, providing ongoing professional learning, and creating space for adults to process and learn from their experiences.

3. **Create safe, supportive, and equitable learning environments that promote all students' social and emotional development.** Ensure all students feel a sense of belonging; have consistent opportunities to learn about, reflect on, and practice SEL; examine the impact of the pandemic and systemic racism on their lives and communities; and access needed support through school or community partners.
4. **Use data as an opportunity to share power, deepen relationships, and continuously improve support for students, families, and staff.** Partner with students, families, staff, and community partners to learn about students and adults' ongoing needs and strengths, and continuously improve SEL and transition efforts.

SEL is the process through which children and adults understand and manage emotions, set and achieve positive goals, feel and show empathy for others, establish and maintain positive relationships, and make responsible decisions.

CASEL is the nonprofit that founded the field of SEL. Today, it collaborates with leading experts and districts, schools, and states nationwide to drive research, guide practice, and inform policy.

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