



CASEL's Collaborating Districts Initiative (CDI)

As schools face the challenge of preparing students to participate in a complex, global community and workforce, successful systemic reform must involve building an array of academic, social, and emotional competencies among young people. Such an approach also fosters positive behaviors and environments conducive to learning.

Based on strong scientific evidence about the impact of social and emotional factors on students' success in school, career, and life, the Collaborative for Academic, Social, and Emotional Learning (CASEL) supports districts in developing the capacity to incorporate high-quality, evidence-based social and

emotional learning (SEL) as an essential component of school improvement. Currently, CASEL's Collaborating Districts Initiative (CDI) engages eight large school districts to plan, implement, and monitor systemic changes that will impact schools and classrooms in ways that influence students' social-emotional development and academic performance.

CASEL connects its partner districts together, documenting and collectively sharing lessons learned. We are generating knowledge that can inform similar efforts in our current collaborating districts and, ultimately, across the country.

Social and Emotional Learning is Critical

Social and emotional learning (SEL) involves the processes through which children and adults acquire and effectively apply the knowledge, attitudes, and skills necessary to understand and manage emotions, set and achieve positive goals, feel and show empathy for others, establish and maintain positive relationships, and make responsible decisions.

Through collaboration, CASEL, NoVo Foundation, and district leaders create systemic changes in a variety of district-level activities and procedures relevant to the implementation of social and emotional learning district-wide. CASEL's *inputs* to collaborating districts provide needed support for key district *activities* that are expected to achieve crucial district-level *outcomes*. These outcomes will leverage changes at the school and classroom level that lead to positive social, emotional, and academic outcomes for all students.

CASEL and NoVo Foundation expect the CDI to catalyze changes in a variety of district-level activities and procedures relevant to SEL implementation.

Social & Emotional Learning Core Competencies



Districts Receive

- *District systems development consultation* – each district receives a senior systems development advisor
- *Staff development consultation* – assistance developing coherent, sustainable professional development plans
- *Action research framework* – to continually gather information; reflect on the impact of policies, programs, and practices; and make decisions based on available data
- *Connections to evidence-based SEL program providers and other external partners* – to implement coordinated, sustainable SEL programming
- *Planning and implementation tools* – resources to help district leaders and staff organize their SEL efforts
- *Opportunity for grant funding from NoVo Foundation* – planning grant of \$125,000 and implementation grants up to \$750,000 over three years

Districts Commit To

- Assess the district's SEL-related needs and resources
- Develop a clear SEL vision and detailed long-term plans for SEL
- Develop and adopt SEL learning standards and assessments
- Adopt evidence-based SEL programs
- Design professional development programs to build internal capacity
- Integrate SEL with existing district initiatives
- Align budgets and staffing to support SEL
- Monitor SEL implementation process and outcomes
- Establish a plan for communicating with stakeholders about SEL
- Participate in a cross-district evaluation and learning community with other districts

Districts achieve

- Student success with positive academic and behavioral outcomes
- SEL school program implementation
- Integration of SEL with academic content and pedagogy
- Quality SEL-related professional development
- Systems for accountability and continuous improvement
- Stakeholders' commitment to SEL as a priority
- Positive system-wide and school-wide climate
- Strong student-parent-teacher relationships

Collaborating Districts

Of the eight collaborating districts, three have received implementation grants of up to \$750,000 over three years:

- Anchorage School District, AK
- Austin Independent School District, TX
- Cleveland Metropolitan School District, OH

The remaining five districts have received planning grants of \$125,000 and are eligible to apply for implementation grants in fall 2012:

- Chicago Public Schools, IL
- Metropolitan Nashville Public Schools, TN
- Oakland Unified School District, CA
- Sacramento City Unified School District, CA
- Washoe County School District, NV

All collaborating districts are among the 200 largest school districts in the country.

For more information

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CASEL's mission is to establish social and emotional learning as an essential part of education. We are committed to advancing the science of social and emotional learning (SEL); expanding integrated, evidence-based SEL practice; and strengthening the field and impact of SEL.

For more information on CASEL, the CDI, or SEL, please visit
www.casel.org

The CDI is funded with a grant from NoVo Foundation