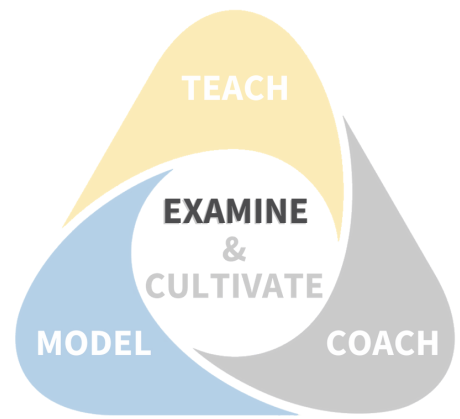# TRANSFORMING EDUCATION'S
SEL Integration Approach
Companion Guide

EXAMINE the ways in which your identities, mindsets, emotions, and actions encourage or inhibit an equitable and inclusive learning environment.

TEACH

EXAMINE & CULTIVATE

MODEL   COACH

RESEARCH SHOWS

By regularly examining the ways in which identities, values, and mindsets influence one's actions, educators can more effectively serve their students and foster their social-emotional development.[1] This deep examination allows educators to identify the ways in which they show up in the classroom environment and consider the ways in which they foster inclusivity and belonging for all students, and particularly students of color. In fact, we know from research that educators who strengthen their self- and social awareness are better able to create a classroom ethos that is welcoming, inclusive, and more equitably serves all members of the school community.[2]

The BELE Framework states that "schools and classrooms can be places where students are affirmed, seen and known well; provided with tools and opportunities to learn; and supported to develop their agency, pursue their dreams and contribute to the collective well-being of our world."[3] Creating such an environment begins with deep examination of the ways in which educators contribute to equitable and inclusive learning environments. To do this, educators must investigate their own privilege and power as it relates to students in their classroom.[4] Educators should also work to uncover their own biases in order to affirm the strengths of every student in their classroom, implement culturally responsive teaching practices, and dismantle policies and systems that perpetuate inequity.[5] This examination should take place among school leaders, teachers, and school staff in order to create a culture that is inclusive and affirming to all students.[6]

QUESTIONS TO CONSIDER

- How do you practice vigilant self-awareness as an educator and an individual that holds multiple identities and experiences?

- What strategies do you personally use to check in on your own wellness? What can you do to work from a place of abundance rather than scarcity?

- Consider the different types of media you consume (TV, books, music, etc). On a daily basis:
  a. Whose voices do you have access to?
  b. Whose voices are missing?
  c. Whose opinions do you seek and why?

- How do your answers to the questions above inform your work?

READ

[Social-Emotional Learning Starts with Adults](#)

[Using Data to Advance Racial Equity](#)

LISTEN

[Unconscious Bias in Schools](#)

PRACTICE

[SEL for Educators Toolkit](#)

[Guide for Racial Justice & Abolitionist SEL](#)

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transforming education

TRANSFORMING EDUCATION'S
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> *"... teaching holds a mirror to the soul. If I am willing to look in that mirror, and not run from what I see, I have a chance to gain self-knowledge—and knowing myself is as crucial to good teaching as knowing my students and my subject."*

PARKER J. PALMER
The Courage to Teach: Exploring the Inner Landscape of a Teacher's Life

LOOK FORS

Educators who examine their own identities and actions...

Focus on their own social-emotional development by:
- Engaging in readings, reflections, and dialogues to explore their own identities and how these identities impact their work.
- Considering how their life experiences, and specifically their interactions with educational systems, might influence their approaches and actions.
- Examining the ways in which their privilege, power, and implicit biases impact their work.
- Noticing what sparks certain emotions, how they experience emotions in the body, and the ways in which their responses to emotions impact others.
- Considering how healthy habits, or a lack thereof, affect their presence and practice.

Bring an intentional approach and supportive mindset to their work by:
- Approaching situations with compassionate curiosity through listening with empathy, asking questions to further understanding, and viewing behavior as a form of communication.
- Orienting towards optimism and considering the ways in which they share and celebrate successes, acknowledge the effort and accomplishments of others, and express gratitude.
- Establishing balance and boundaries through the practices of asking for help and learning to say no.
- Welcoming others into their classrooms to observe and engage in discussions about their practice.
- Advocating for themselves and seeking out resources to further understanding, develop skills, or ask for support.

Take action within the systems & structures in which they work by:
- Unpacking the ways in which their practice upholds or dismantles systems of oppression, inequities, and the dominant cultural norms.
- Working with others to collect, interpret, and act on holistic data in purposeful and self-reflective ways.
- Advocating for colleagues, students, and families within unjust, inequitable systems.
- Navigating existing policies and working to transform the structures which are oppressive, inequitable, and/or exclusive.

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