

SEL Innovation Awards for Teachers

2018 Recipients and Project Descriptions

The SEL Innovation Awards for Teachers sought proposals from individual educators and teams of educators seeking to improve systems that foster social and emotional skills in fresh, inventive or innovative ways. Examples include novel interventions or instructional practices focused on improving competencies such as resilience, learning mindsets, compassion, self-management and sense of belonging. Though all proposals were welcome, the fund prioritized proposals that specifically support one or more of the following student populations:

- Students from indigenous communities
- New arrivals (such as refugees) or immigrants
- English learners
- LGBTQI students

We received 639 applications from more than 45 states. Through a competitive process, 90 teachers were selected. See below for the complete list of teacher recipients, organized by state and district, followed by a brief description of each teacher's SEL project in their own words beginning on page 4. Or click on a name to go directly to that teacher's project description. You can also find out more about the SEL Innovation Awards for Districts by visiting education-first.com/social-emotional-learning-innovation-fund.

Teacher	District	State
Jessica Williams	Anchorage School District	AK
Edna Lynn Roberts	Choctaw County Board of Education	AL
Katherine Engel	Amphitheater Unified Public Schools	AZ
Devahi Balachandran	Amphitheater Unified Public Schools	AZ
Sharon Denny	Paradise Valley Unified School District	AZ
Sergio Hernandez	Evergreen School District	CA
Tina Walker Simmons	Hesperia Unified School District	CA
Jane Raphael	Los Angeles Unified School District	CA
Laronda L. Williams-Catchings	Los Angeles Unified School District	CA
Nathan Liu	Los Angeles Unified School District	CA
Jennifer Kelly-DeWitt	Oakland Unified School District	CA
Jessica Kershner	Oakland Unified School District	CA
Sofia Duenas	Para Los Niños Charter School District	CA
Angela Quinlan	San Bernardino School District	CA
Irene Bond	San Carlos Charter Learning Center	CA
Joanna Wood	Denver Public Schools	CO
Melissa Gentile	Bridgeport Board of Education	CT
Alicia Lorenzo	Meriden Public Schools	CT
Cathy Ostar	Newtown Public Schools	CT
Lapeta Solomon	Capital City Public Charter School	DC
Dr. Dayana Philippi	Collier County	FL
Lisa Harris	School District of Palm Beach County	FL
Claudia Fitzwater	Drew Charter School	GA
Erin Dedwylder	Leeward (Hawai'i Department of Education)	HI
Jon Munn	Nampa School District	ID

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Nancy Kirby	Chicago Pubic Schools	IL
Shawana Ridley	Chicago Public Schools	IL
David Jablonsky	Chicago Public Schools	IL
Mary Haddad	Chicago Public Schools	IL
Justin Ladas	Hinsdale High School District 86	IL
Robin Sizemore	School City of Hammond	IN
Christine Caffey-Riggs	Lawrence Public School USD 497	KS
Erica Pastor	Boston Public Schools	MA
Nicole Da Silva	Boston Public Schools	MA
Heron Russell	Boston Public Schools	MA
Katharine Atkins-Pattenson	Boston Public Schools	MA
Amy M Gonzalez	Cambridge Public Schools	MA
Katharine Hinkle	Innovation Academy Charter School	MA
Christi Cartwright	Lawrence Public Schools	MA
Samantha Curtis	Lawrence Public Schools	MA
Chelsey Pollock	Revere Public Schools	MA
Nancy Holter	Baltimore City Public Schools	MD
Gabriel Pickus	Baltimore City Public Schools	MD
Danielle Dunn	Howard County Public Schools	MD
Kristin Pasculle	Prince Georges County Public Schools	MD
Jennifer Holden	Queen Anne's County Public Schools	MD
Kim Proctor	RSU #57	ME
Amy Posey	Goodrich Area Schools	MI
Erin Dooley	St Paul Public Schools, ISD 625	MN
Melody Kaplan	Rockwood School District	MO
Dixie Mohler	Biloxi Public Schools	MS
Emilie Young	Guilford County Schools	NC
Cynthia McNeil	Union County Public Schools	NC
Sarai Douglas	Lincoln Public Schools	NE
Jaime MacEwen	Cumberland Regional High School District	NJ
LeAnne Kenny	Phillipsburg School District	NJ
Jacquelyn Sanchez	Amy Biehl High School	NM
Sarah McMaster	Horizon Academy West	NM
Lisa Vasquez	Ruidoso Municipal Schools	NM
Stephan Molder	Washoe County School District	NV
Maritza Santana	NYC Public Schools - District 10	NY
Melida Gonzalez	NYC Public Schools - District 28	NY
Alhassan Susso	NYC Public Schools - District 7	NY
Daniel Jerome	NYC Public Schools - District 8	NY
Susan Murphy	Rochester Childfirst Network	NY
Ellen Sugrue-Dolan	Putnam Northern Westchester Board of Cooperative Educational Services	NY
Molly Suarez	Akron Public Schools	OH

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Dana Davis	Akron Public Schools	OH
Catherine Keppers	Findlay City Schools	OH
Claudia Bestor	North Olmsted City Schools	OH
Carrie Snyder-Renfro	Oklahoma City Public Schools	OK
Irma Patton	North Marion School District	OR
Samantha Woodburn	Philadelphia School District	PA
Brandon Lane	The Metropolitan Regional Career and Technical Center	RI
Stacy Jones	W. M. Davies Career and Technical High School	RI
Holli Hamner	Greenville County Schools	SC
Amanda Adcock	Metro Nashville Public School	TN
Jarred Amato	Metro Nashville Public Schools	TN
Katie Raymond	Austin Independent School District	TX
James Peerson	Dallas Independent School District	TX
Abigail M Saunders	KIPP Austin Public Schools	TX
Noah Siegler	KIPP Austin Public Schools	TX
Dana Wrann	San Antonio Independent School District	TX
Bettany Valsin	Uplift Education	TX
Jenni Johnson	Utah Schools for the Deaf and the Blind	UT
Nisha Sensharma	Arlington Public Schools	VA
Kara Menfi	Charlottesville City Schools	VA
Mary Muroski	Chittenden Valley School District	VT
Rosalia Burson	Tacoma Public Schools	WA
Lassity Sullivan	Whitewater Unified School District	WI

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Jessica Williams • South Anchorage High School • Anchorage School District • Anchorage, AK

The grant funds will go toward growing the spirit of peer mentorship and student leadership in the city of Anchorage, the state of Alaska and nationally. We will use funding for technology to enable the South Anchorage Peer Mentors to host and participate in webinars, to work with schools and districts who desire support starting their own programs and to team up with similar school groups around the nation to share best practices in student leadership and peer mentoring. We will also use funding to support transportation costs and teacher/advisor substitute time for local and state-wide face-to-face collaboration with schools who are starting their own peer mentorship programs and who desire our support. We are proud of the peer mentorship program we have built over many years at South Anchorage High School, and we are excited to share our SEL work with others and to learn from and work with other successful programs around the nation.

Edna Lynn Roberts • Southern Choctaw High School • Choctaw County Board of Education • Gilbertown, AL

Our multi-disabilities class is set up to help our special needs students learn to be self-sufficient and independent, responsible citizens with social skills to help them with everyday living. Through our state-mandated curriculum, we have successfully applied financial-based learning methods through teaching not only through interaction with general education but through learning how to raise food by planting seeds, nurturing plants and harvesting vegetables for the table. I have observed a change in the students' sense of emotional well-being and acceptance into society. The addition of a greenhouse would help greatly with our vegetable farming by expanding the growing season into the cold weather months.

Katherine Engel • Amphitheater High School • Amphitheater Public Schools • Tucson, AZ

The project "Grammar in the Greenhouse" is a powerful tool of students' social and emotional learning. When a class comes to the greenhouse, all students find a job to their liking, allowing them to feel comfortable and shine in a new environment. They become more agreeable to collaboration and mutual understanding; they are eager to help and share. Students enthusiastically deliver fresh garden produce to their teachers. They learn real-life applications of a variety of skills, including urban gardening, sustainability, food safety, healthy nutrition, financial planning, marketing, mentorship and plant and animal sciences, and get to use their new language skills in authentic communication.

Devahi Balachandran • Amphitheater High School • Amphitheater Public Schools • Tucson, AZ

Amphitheater High School is a Title 1 school in Tucson, AZ. Over 10% of students are English learners, including a large population of refugees/SLIFE (Students with Limited or Interrupted Formal Education). Most face social and emotional struggles with the pressures of fitting into an American education system. Our project includes collaboration with a local museum for art therapy activities, creating student-led multilingual dictionaries for mathematics support, cooperative games and real-world activities. We will promote participation, engagement and safe risk-taking in the mathematics classroom. We aim to reduce students' anxiety, support healing from trauma and promote prosocial behavior and self-awareness.

Sharon Denny • Desert Cove Elementary School • Paradise Valley Unified School District • Phoenix, AZ

Our teachers and staff are our front line. As we continue to build a trauma-sensitive school, the weight of teaching and carrying the stories of students becomes heavy. Research shows that investing in staff is critical to this work. Our project involves focusing on staff, providing training on SEL competencies, stress, compassion fatigue and self-care. We want to

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equip our staff with knowledge and practical skills to use throughout the school year as we do this rewarding, challenging work. Desert Cove is grateful to receive this award that will allow us to be our best for our students.

Sergio Hernandez • Katherine Smith Elementary • Evergreen School District • San Jose, CA

Katherine Smith Elementary has two primary SEL goals. First, empower upper-grade students to work alongside teachers to reflect on the skills and strategies they've learned in communication, de-escalation, conflict resolution and 12 self-regulating tools and to plan how to provide support and reflection to primary grade students. This process will be student-driven, where students become the leaders and are equipped with the tools and strategies needed to be the problem-solvers in real life. Our second goal is to provide parents with the same skills and strategies so that they will be successful in maintaining and developing student's social and emotional well-being at home.

Tina Walker Simmons • Hollyvale Elementary • Hesperia Unified School District • Victorville, CA

All students are capable of recognizing social and emotional problems around them. They can also be the most powerful change initiators. With guidance and mentors, students are able to come to a positive solution/resolution for issues affecting them. After identifying social and emotional issues within their own school community, students will then use Project Based Learning (Buck Institute Model) to create a written, publishable product to address those same issues. The focus is on student perception of social and emotional issues directly related to their world. Students will have a voice in their community, and they will learn the power of written language. The project's ultimate goal is meaningful student learning through hands-on experience while interfacing with real-world audiences.

Jane Raphael • Wonderland Elementary • Los Angeles Unified • Los Angeles, CA

Wonderland Elementary aims to provide quality public education that nurtures the whole child for the diverse ethnic and socio-economic landscape of Los Angeles through its magnet program. The SEL Innovation Awards for Teachers will support our Korean immigrant population. Wonderland uses Way of Council to create a culture of communication, collaboration, problem solving and reflection through the power of one's voice. It develops life-long skills by reflecting upon the other's points of view and creating positive changes to conflict. The award will help fund materials and translations into the Korean language to create a more inclusive community.

Laronda L. Williams-Catchings • 92nd Street STEAM Academy • Los Angeles Unified • Los Angeles, CA

The name of our project is "A Seat At The Table." The project will involve all stakeholders of the learning community. Once a month, the school will sponsor a luncheon for selected students and their caretakers. During this time we will have roundtable discussions that cover topics such as incarcerated parents, deported parents, bullying and overcoming school anxiety. Students will be referred to the group discussion by parents, teachers, administration or SSPT or they may self-elect to attend. The discussions will be conducted in the "Circle of Communication" model with lunch and special guest speakers.

Nathan Liu • Los Angeles School of Global Studies • Los Angeles Unified • Los Angeles, CA

Our project will create an intentional coordinated curriculum for our English learner, new arrival, immigrant and refugee students that focuses on empathy building, creating safe and reflective classrooms, inclusion and listening to the stories of our students. We have a large ELL and newly-arrived immigrant population that continues to grow every year. Since these students start off taking low-level introductory language and content classes, they often feel isolated and disconnected from our student body. This project aims to support, connect and include this population. For example, we

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would like for teachers working with this population to meet together as a cohort to create interdisciplinary projects and curriculum that focus on identity, understanding and student voice. Through common planning time, this cohort will develop projects and plan activities that assist our newcomers in accessing curriculum.

Jennifer Kelly-DeWitt • Oakland International High School • Oakland Unified School District • Oakland, CA

At Oakland International High School, all of our students are recently arrived immigrants and refugees from more than 30 different countries. Social and emotional skills are essential to our students' ability to adapt to their new homes and their new lives. They will learn about Community Membership words and strategies as they build their collaboration, personal responsibility and persistence skills. At the end of the year, students will present to their peers, in English, about how they grew as a community member over the course of the year, identifying the SEL skills they gained through their work in their classes.

Jessica Kershner • Acorn Woodland Elementary • Oakland Unified School District • Oakland, CA

Social and emotional learning—and self-regulation skills in particular—are a fundamental part of the preschool experience. I teach a special education inclusion class, in which a focus on these skills is critical to student success. Through the introduction of dance and use of sensory materials, we will help students develop preventative strategies and equip them with a toolkit to use when they are overwhelmed or dysregulated. The dance instruction will be supported by Luna Dance Institute, whose staff will provide dance classes for the children, as well as professional development for teachers in order to deepen and sustain this practice.

Sofia Duenas • Gratts Primary Center • Para Los Niños Charter School District • Los Angeles, CA

In this project, students will demonstrate their learning of social and emotional strategies through the creation of animations and the leading of parent workshops. Each month a group of students will make an animated video about a situation at home or school in which they can implement a social and emotional strategy they have discussed in their daily community circles. Students will lead monthly workshops for parents and the greater school community, showing their animation, demonstrating social and emotional skill proficiency and bridging the school-home gap by engaging parents around the social and emotional skill building they do at school.

Angela Quinlan • Pacific High School • San Bernardino School District • San Bernardino, CA

Junior and senior Bio Med students will develop an informational blog, providing access to all Pacific High School Bio Med freshmen and sophomore students. Choosing a medium of a blog will provide a safe and accessible source of continuous support that encourages students to be honest, reflective and mature risk-takers. The resource will include discussion topics and tips to help newer Bio Med students navigate through the first years of high school successfully, while providing segments on challenges and choices, highlights and successes, and upcoming events that inform and encourage involvement.

Irene Bond • San Carlos Charter Learning Center • San Carlos Charter Learning Center • San Carlos, CA

Our K-8 public school is the oldest charter school in California. We recently identified a need to increase our support for LGBTQI learners on campus. Our goal is to make resources, services and interventions universally available to all learners and community members, while becoming part of the background by incorporating tools and resources seamlessly into every subject matter and the school culture. Our main objectives are as follows: Bring in professional trainers to train staff and educators on creating a gender inclusive school; hold a Family Information Night about our Gender Inclusion Program; help educators teach overarching curriculum concepts, define these concepts and secure relevant resources.

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Joanna Wood • North High School • Denver Public Schools • Denver, CO

We will strengthen Denver North High School's collaborative restorative approach platform in order to support students in the development of the skills needed to limit future verbal and physical altercations. A safety officer and a school counselor will facilitate an eight-week group intervention twice a year for students who have been involved in conflicts with peers. The group will focus on coping, communication and conflict resolution skills. Students who have been involved in peer conflict will have the option to join this group. In the group, students will work to replace combative behaviors with proactive communication skills.

Melissa Gentile • Central High School • Bridgeport Board of Education • Bridgeport, CT

The Central High School Ambassador program was created to help build social and emotional intelligence amongst the students and staff, while helping to build a positive school climate and a peer mentoring program to support any struggling student. Our CHS Ambassadors are natural student leaders who can act as a peer mentor to incoming students or take part in training to be able to model social and emotional skills and practices in our school and classrooms. These students will work together on building community through the use of circles, RULER/social and emotional intelligence skills and restorative practices while taking part in collaborative activities.

Alicia Lorenzo • Hanover Elementary School • Meriden Board of Education • Meriden, CT

The goal of our project is to have ELL students develop a growth mindset attitude in which intellectual and cognitive flexibility becomes an established behavior. We will focus on student awareness of self through small and whole group instruction. Students will create a growth mindset journal for self-reflection. Students will learn that the brain is not static and can be changed through personal growth habits. Guest speakers from the community will share their positive life experiences and the obstacles that they have overcome. We will include a parent component in order to foster and expand the growth mindset experience throughout the family.

Cathy Ostar • Newtown High School • Newtown Public Schools • Newtown, CT

Our project is to teach mindfulness to the students and teachers in our alternative high school program, TAP. Through mindfulness, we will help TAP students develop self-awareness and self-management skills so they can recognize emotions and understand how emotions influence thoughts, decisions and behaviors. As they learn to regulate their emotions, students will develop the focus, self-confidence and resilience to rise above challenges in school, at home and after graduation. During the project, TAP educators will also learn how to teach mindfully. The shared experience of learning and practicing mindfulness together will strengthen the family-feel of the TAP program.

Lapeta Solomon • Capital City Public Charter School • DC Public Schools • Washington, DC

The purpose of this project is to continue to create a safe space for all students and staff regardless of identity. Capital City Public Charter School has already started this process through our annual teacher-led Equity Groups. We endeavor to continue this work by replicating a similar model that is inclusive of students. This opportunity will provide a safe space for expression and the building of compassion, awareness and community. Our teachers will participate in Gender Sensitivity training. The creation of a Gender Neutral Alliance will allow for a place to bond and build school cultural and awareness. The MS Gender Neutral Alliance culminating activity will be the designing and decorating of a float that will participate in the D.C. LGBTQI PRIDE parade in June 2019.

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Dr. Dayana Philippi • Lely High School • Collier County • Naples, FL

Often, parents of English Language Learners (ELLs) only receive phone calls home to inform them of academic concerns or negative incidents. What's more, novice teachers may be nervous about calling parents who themselves are limited English proficient (LEP), so teachers put it off. Through the EchoED program, we flip this pattern of under-acknowledgment and lopsided communication on its head and recognize students who demonstrate competencies in SEL. The project, which introduces SEL to the multilingual/multicultural community, helps educators and families connect and engaged in collaborative relationships by highlighting students' social and developmental growth through communications in the home language.

Lisa Harris • North Grade Elementary School • School District of Palm Beach County • Lake Worth, FL

Improv to Improve (i2i) seeks to bring improvisational exercises into classrooms as a means to teach social and emotional competencies to students. The implementation of these games in the classroom enables teachers to explicitly teach children an emotional vocabulary, how to appropriately respond to one's own emotional condition and be empathetic towards the feelings of others, and to hone speaking and listening skills. The games foster a positive community environment of learning and fun. They are aligned with social and emotional learning competencies, WIDA Standards for ESOL students and Common Core Standards for speaking and listening. And they're fun.

Claudia Fitzwater • Drew Charter School • Atlanta Public Schools • Atlanta, GA

This project looks into the history and efficacy of the in-school suspension classroom in our school, the stigma about it and the perceptions about students who do and do not frequent the room. Students in 4th and 5th grade will team up with teachers in Spanish, robotics and gifted education to find solutions that impact students regarding the relation between space, behaviors, collaboration and positive reinforcement. Students will be engaged in the Design Thinking Process to answer the following questions: How can we change the stigma related to the in-school suspension classroom and transform it into a zone of self-regulation and wellness? How can we collaborate to craft solutions that benefit different groups of students? Do we need a room?

Erin Dedwylder • James Campbell High School • Leeward (Hawai'i Department of Education) • Ewa Beach, HI

The Ewa Culture and Arts Project, a year-long student-driven project, spotlights diversity in the Ewa community on Oahu. This project supports students' development in skills directly correlated with SEL competencies and the ideals of Nā Hopena A'o, the unique values of the Hawaiian culture. The culminating Ewa Culture and the Arts Fair, which will be open to the community, celebrates diversity and empowers JCHS students by providing them an outlet to showcase important aspects of their heritage through art, literature, dance and music. Through exploration of the different art forms, attendees will grow in empathy and global awareness.

Jon Munn • Union High School • Nampa School District • Nampa, ID

The Social and Emotional Learning Award will allow Union High School to create a culture of empowerment and support for our LGBTQI students. The goal of this project is to: 1. Improve school attendance. 2. Improve academic growth. 3. Increase engagement in school activities. 4. Decrease bullying and anti-LGBTQI occurrences. Union High School will accomplish these goals by increasing access to community resources for our LGBTQI students, providing cultural competency training for our staff, and creating a school culture and environment that is supportive to LGBTQI students.

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Nancy Kirby • James Otis World Language Academy • Chicago Public Schools • Chicago, IL

The students in our classrooms are 3-5 years of age. The classrooms consist of typically developing students and students who have unique learning needs. Our project will provide multi-modal opportunities for students to engage in social and emotional learning. Our students will experience difference cultures and discover how we are all alike and different and begin to learn about their emotions, appropriate reactions to their emotions, empathy and understanding others' points of view. We will read stories, create emotional costumes (red for mad, yellow for happy, etc.), role play, have drama time and use musical expression to demonstrate feelings.

Shawana Ridley • Burnside Scholastic Academy • Chicago Public Schools • Chicago, IL

Burnside Scholastic Academy Middle School seeks to develop a philosophy of empowerment and confidence for young brown girls in a Title 1 school on Chicago's south side. Brown Girl Magic (BGM) has implemented projects that has helped our girls feel secure with themselves, learn to take action, make positive choices about their own lives and do positive things for others. Brown Girl Magic aims to encourage girls to grow up to lead full, valuable lives. Our motto speaks to our primary goal: The Most Important Thing A Girl Wears Is Her Confidence.

David Jablonsky • Multicultural Academy of Scholarship • Chicago Public Schools • Chicago, IL

Multicultural Academy of Scholarship (MAS) is seeking to develop and sustain their Peer Council, which they began last school year. This body uses restorative justice practices to address student behavior needs. In lieu of traditional forms of discipline, under this model, students consult with a peer who has violated the code of conduct, and through a conference, they reveal the root causes of the misbehavior, identify the damage done by the actions and generate an agreement to repair the relationship. The school will expand training and support for students and staff to specifically focus upon trauma sensitivity as current resources are inadequate.

Mary Haddad • Disney II Magnet Elementary • Chicago Public Schools • Chicago, IL

The SEL Innovation Award for Teachers will be used to support the Agents of Change programming at Disney II Magnet school and professional development for myself and colleagues. Cooperating teachers will facilitate contemporary art making activities for the entire school population through schoolwide initiatives and grade band projects that promote SEL skills and competencies and develop a sense of belonging within the school community. The afterschool Agents of Change will support the schools' African American students' SEL needs and their families and will aim to strengthen their school experience through the development of SEL competencies of teachers and school staff. The Agents of Change will use contemporary art as a vehicle to build SEL competencies and create projects that are civically engaged while developing a sense of belonging.

Justin Ladas • Transition Center • Hinsdale High School District 86 • Willowbrook, IL

The goal of this project is to support growth of the emotional intelligence (EI) of transition-aged students with disabilities as they navigate college classes while still enrolled in their local high school. We will be developing a student leadership cohort who will be taught skills in EI through a recreational therapy setting to create a peer leadership group for new and incoming students. Transition from high school to a college setting is fraught with many challenges. The stresses of navigating college can unwittingly impede students who otherwise have the intellectual abilities to succeed. The focus of the project this year is to better support our students not only with staff, but through a peer leadership model to enhance EI so students can be successful in post-secondary education settings.

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Robin Sizemore • Morton Elementary • School City of Hammond • Hammond, IN

Our school district has supported training students, teachers, paraprofessionals and administrators in yoga, breathing and mindfulness techniques. We are seeing an increase in the number of students with a variety of mental health conditions due to adverse childhood experiences and trauma. Helping students to learn and overcome these experiences that can result in two years of academic delay or more has caused staff members to struggle with compassion fatigue. Our project will provide staff with bi-weekly instruction from a group of psychologists who will educate our staff about cognitive behavioral therapy. The goal is to find ways to support ourselves and each other so we can continue to support students in a healthy way.

Christine Caffey-Riggs • Hillcrest Elementary School • Lawrence Public School USD 497 • Lawrence, KS

Hillcrest Elementary is located in Lawrence, Kansas and serves students from all over the world. We are currently working to redesign our school following the principals from the Kansas Can Vision. We are focusing on social and emotional learning as an essential skill in our classrooms. We are implementing *Conscious Discipline* by Dr. Becky Bailey. This program empowers teachers to use brain-based techniques to teach skills to students. This grant allows for our Social and Emotional Learning team of teacher leaders to attend the Summer Institute and learn more about Conscious Discipline from Dr. Bailey.

Erica Pastor • Multicultural Academy of Scholarship • Boston Public Schools • Boston, MA

Parents, students and community members of Orchard Gardens K-8 Pilot School will meet on a monthly basis to learn and share strategies for coping with various social and emotional issues. Parents will mentor other parents in support groups, as well as learn and practice strategies from staff from Boston Medical Center. Students, in a separate group, will role play, problem solve and share strategies for working on resilience, academic tenacity, growth mindsets, self-management, sense of belonging and other social and emotional skills. Teachers will provide supporting roles for all groups and will help build bridges between the social and emotional learning that families are working on at home and what students are working on in school.

Nicole Da Silva • Boston International High School • Boston Public Schools • Boston, MA

Boston International High School is a unique magnet school that serves recent immigrants from more than 40 different countries. Nicole Da Silva will teach SEL competencies through an innovative creative writing curriculum in her ESL classes. Throughout the school year, local authors will lead roundtable discussions on their writing through the lens of SEL competencies. Students will also build connections to the Boston writing community through field trips to writing events such as the Boston Teen Author Festival. The project will culminate in a class literary magazine with writing and artwork that will bring the student community together.

Heron Russell • Conley Elementary School • Boston Public Schools • Boston, MA

At the Conley School, interconnected challenges demand an integrated approach, weaving academic and social and emotional learning, and culturally responsive teaching. In partnership with *Responsive Classroom*, we endeavor to transform our classrooms to integrate academics and SEL. Culturally responsive pedagogy is critical to meet the needs of all students. Through training and partnerships, we will increase our capacity to address bias and to implement culturally responsive practices in order to implement Responsive Classroom with a lens of social justice. This grant allows us to weave these threads together, helping us to realize our vision of a community where all students can thrive.

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Katharine Atkins-Pattenson • Gardner Pilot Academy • Boston Public Schools • Boston, MA

I am partnering with Art Resource Collaborative for Kids (ARCK) to increase access to quality visual arts programming as a tool for social change for the 7th graders in my full inclusion, SEI Humanities classroom. ARCK's arts integration curriculum promotes social and emotional skills such as emotion management, collaboration, responsibility, empathy and critical thinking. ARCK also strives to use the visual arts and the artistic process as a way for students to develop their individual identities and explore their roles in their communities. Through themes of Leadership, Civic Engagement and Social Justice, students are empowered as learners, artists and leaders.

Amy M. Gonzalez • Rindge Avenue Upper School • Cambridge Public Schools • Cambridge, MA

I am working with Cambridge School Volunteers, a nonprofit organization, to help recruit community members who want to provide academic coaching and mentorship to middle schoolers during our "Aim High" intervention blocks. I believe if students form learning partnerships with community members, they will be encouraged to clarify their thinking and have their ideas be heard, which will lead to an increase in academic skills, self-awareness, and social capital (relationships). This grant will help make it possible to provide training and materials to volunteers in cultural competency development and culturally responsive teaching.

Katharine Hinkle • Innovation Academy Charter School • Tyngsboro, MA

We are seeking to pilot three virtual reality "relaxation stations" in different settings in our school. These stations will be equipped to allow students to immerse themselves in a relaxing setting with the option of doing short guided meditations. We are hoping to both decrease acute moments of anxiety that can lead to students missing class time as well as ubiquitous stress that can detract from the learning experience. Our hope is that these relaxation strategies will provide another tool that our students can utilize to increase their ability to attend school by identifying and regulating their emotions and managing anxiety.

Christi Cartwright • International High School • Lawrence Public Schools • Lawrence, MA

My project involves enabling students to create multimedia digital storytelling videos that detail their immigration journey to Lawrence, Massachusetts. The funds from the NoVo SEL Innovation Fund will be used to purchase Chromebooks, microphone headsets and a Vimeo subscription. These laptops will enable English Language Learners to improve their language and technical skills while at the same time fostering self-awareness and interpersonal skills as they conduct research, craft a presentations and collaborate with their peers. Students will develop empathy, appreciation for diversity and respect for others when viewing and discussing the projects of their peers.

Samantha Curtis • Lawrence High School, ENLACE Academy • Lawrence Public Schools • Lawrence, MA

ENLACE is an academy in Lawrence, Massachusetts, that serves students who are newcomer immigrants. With the grant funding, we are creating a SEL Committee to drive our work by supporting a team of educators in their cohort to integrate SEL into classrooms and plan restorative circles and other interventions. We will partner with Panorama Education to collect student and teacher data to inform these supports. Additionally, we are creating a daily 60-minute elective class focused on yoga and wellness to increase student mindfulness, physical activity and overall wellness topics.

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Chelsey Pollock • Seacoast High School • Revere Public Schools • Revere, MA

Our project aims to increase social and emotional support and skill development for our at-risk English Learners by implementing culturally and linguistically responsive restorative justice practices schoolwide. As part of our project, staff and student leaders will receive intensive training in restorative justice to infuse these practices into classroom climates. We will then combine this new knowledge with our existing expertise in engaging ELs to: 1) create an EL Advisory Circle to teach and reinforce social and emotional skills in a safe space and 2) redesign our peer/student-teacher mediation protocols to promote accessibility and inclusiveness for our ELs.

Nancy Holter • Patterson High School • Baltimore City Public Schools • Baltimore, MD

Art teacher Nancy Holter will engage Baltimore Patterson High School students in arts-integrated SEL instruction during Out-of-School Time, improving youth's learning environment and community connectedness. Fully 77% of Patterson's 1,103 students are from low-income households yet are otherwise remarkably diverse, representing 37 different countries and 20 languages (37.9% English language learner)—many are from refugee families persecuted for political, racial or religious reasons in Africa, Asia and the Middle East. Ms. Holter and the nonprofit partner Building Arts and Minds will reach newcomers, students with disabilities, gender-questioning youth, hard-to-reach youth and youth experiencing trauma and PTSD using the creative arts.

Gabriel Pickus • Franklin Square Elementary Middle School • Baltimore City Public Schools • Baltimore, MD

The teaching team at the Baltimore Wisdom Project (BWP) will expand its delivery of restorative mindfulness education at Franklin Square Elementary/Middle School, a public school in Baltimore City in Maryland. Since 2013, the BWP has taught mindfulness and restorative practices within several under-resourced public schools in Baltimore. The BWP is part of an international movement that locates mindfulness and restorative practices as effective tools for social and emotional learning. Ultimately, the BWP's expanded, holistic education aims to help decrease behavioral incidents at the school and uplift 3rd grade students' social and emotional learning.

Danielle Dunn • Hammond High School • Howard County Public Schools • Columbia, MD

This project description is forthcoming. Please check back soon!

Kristin Pasculle • International High School at Largo • Prince Georges County Public Schools • Upper Marlboro, MD

The Food Pantry at International High School at Largo is a service learning project that is powered and sustained by students. There will be a designated space in the school for refrigeration and storage of foods. Students will learn about everyday math skills and couponing and use some of the initial funding to stock the pantry. Students will run canned food drives throughout the year and seek partnerships with community resources in order to sustain the program for the long term.

Jennifer Holden • Sudlersville Elementary School • Queen Anne's County Public Schools • Sudlersville, MD

Through expert-led workshops and professional development for teachers, administrators and all school support staff, we will build trauma awareness and develop effective strategies that assist in behavioral remediation to help students navigate challenging issues successfully. We will also organize and mentor a group of fourth grade students to augment their social and emotional learning. This group will focus on executive function and self-regulation while valuing students' personal strengths and sharing those strengths with younger students through school service such as tutoring

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reading, math or science; assisting in the school media center; leading physical education activities; and co-teaching STEAM projects.

Kim Proctor • Waterboro Elementary School • RSU #57 • E. Waterboro, ME

Our dedicated staff will implement a trauma-informed, resilience-focused support system for students, families and staff to increase student engagement and learning through a two-pronged approach: First, school staff will attend professional development, establish tools for a positive culture and implement a social and emotional learning curriculum. Second, community outreach practices will focus on the home/school connection through positive interactions and communication. The project is strategically planned for a three year implementation. Creating supportive relationships with students and their families is at the heart of real change and the foundation for students to access and engage in learning.

Amy Posey • Goodrich High School • Goodrich Area Schools • Goodrich, MI

Goodrich High School will implement a Peer-to-Peer support program in 2018-2019. This program involves general education peers modeling typical academic and social behavior throughout the school day for students with disabilities. This peer support promotes independence and socialization skills and increases a sense of belonging within natural environments such as classrooms, the cafeteria and assemblies and at dances and sporting events. This grant will provide the necessary funding to transition these new skills into authentic teenage environments. It will also enable our school to motivate and celebrate our peer mentors for being leaders in our school and community.

Erin Dooley • Murray Middle School • St Paul Public Schools, ISD 625 • St. Paul, MN

Murray is a Restorative Practices pilot site, and we will be using Restorative Practices Circles to bring the SEL conversation to the students. Our particular approach is centered around daily Foundations circles where we develop pro-social skills and stronger communities, where all voices are invited to take part in creating the community. The project seeks to provide in-depth and on-going professional development on the theory and practice of bringing SEL to the staff. We are fortunate to be in close proximity to the University of Minnesota, which provides several learning opportunities per year, as well as offering on-site workshops.

Melody Kaplan • Crestview Middle School • Rockwood School District • Ellisville, MO

Crestview Middle School welcomed our very own therapy dog, Clayton, to our school this year. Clayton spends his time meeting the social and emotional needs of traditionally underserved populations in innovative ways. Clayton has three certified dog handlers working alongside him: our librarian, the counselor and Clayton's owner, a language arts teacher. Students benefit from Clayton being integrated into several aspects of daily learning whether that in be in the library greeting students or listening to reluctant readers in the classroom. He is also used in lessons to help complement our SEL curriculum and to comfort students in time of need.

Dixie Mohler • Biloxi Upper Elementary • Biloxi Public Schools • Biloxi, MS

My proposal centers around bringing a variety of students together from different cultural and ethnic backgrounds in an environment where they are free to express themselves socially and emotionally. This project will be completed in conjunction with the school's gardening club wherein students will work together to achieve a common goal of campus beautification.

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Emilie Young • Doris Henderson Newcomers School • Guilford County Schools • Greensboro, NC

Our program, a collaboration between Newcomers School in Greensboro, North Carolina and The Art Therapy Institute in Carrboro, North Carolina, explores the therapeutic power of visual arts as support for newly arrived immigrants and refugee students. We will work with eight groups of elementary and middle school ESL students for eight weeks at a time in the art classroom and draw upon the expertise of art therapists from The Art Therapy Institute to help students explore their emotions and express themselves in a safe environment. At the end of our program we will showcase student art created within our program in a community exhibition.

Cynthia McNeil • Walter Bickett Education Center • Union County Public Schools • Monroe, NC

In a school that practices Conscious Discipline, a day in the life of a preschooler involves greeting each other, wishing each other well, committing to keeping each other safe, breathing to help calm, regulating strong emotions, noticing kindness and more. As we remove barriers to share this practice with all families by providing training to Spanish-speaking families, childcare and a meal, we build capacity to support healthy social and emotional skills at home and school. Together we will connect, sing, dance, read and play. Families will leave with new information and a children's book to reinforce positive social emotional skills.

Sarai Douglas • Lincoln High School • Lincoln Public Schools • Lincoln, NE

Lincoln High School will utilize restorative practices to create a more cohesive and engaging learning environment for its high proportion of ELL students. This will include recruiting 20+ ELL students as peer mediators, as well as training for ELL teachers on the use of restorative circles in an academic setting so that they may begin and end each class with core discussion that will help students develop relationships and feel a sense of community and safety.

Jaime MacEwen • Cumberland Regional High School • Cumberland Regional School District • Bridgeton, NJ

The Freshman Seminar/Senior Mentoring Program at Cumberland Regional High School in Cumberland County, New Jersey partners at-risk freshmen with role model Senior Mentors to support the ninth-graders' transition to high school. Senior Mentors and freshmen work together during and outside of class time on character and leadership development, social and emotional learning, the promotion of positive school culture and healthy relationships, and progressing toward goals related to academic and social success. In addition to working together on research and presentation projects in the credit-bearing course, Senior Mentors provide support staying organized, effectively utilizing resources and managing stressors and challenges in healthy ways.

LeAnne Kenny • Phillipsburg Primary School • Phillipsburg School District • Phillipsburg, NJ

Our project is an afterschool club called the "Movers and Makers Club" for our 1st and 2nd graders. Each advisor will have a small group check-in/check-out time to talk about how everyone is feeling and offer support to those who need it. Our club will teach kids a variety of gross motor games and activities that promote teamwork, cooperation and communication. We will also teach a variety of creative fine motor activities to help enhance our school environment as well as provide opportunities for students to learn healthy leisure skills.

Jacquelyn Sanchez • Amy Biehl High School • Amy Biehl High School (state chartered) • Albuquerque, NM

Amy Biehl High School is excited to offer our LGBTQI students the opportunity to develop self-advocacy skills, create community amongst their peers and build self-confidence through experiential learning summits at the Santa Fe Mountain Center. LGBTQI youth face a variety of challenges because of how others respond to and judge their sexual

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orientation and/or gender identity. Negative experiences can lead to negative health outcomes including anxiety, stress and feelings of isolation. The Santa Fe Mountain Center allows students to interact with peers who are having the same experiences, build relationships and learn coping skills resulting in higher levels of social and emotional health.

Sarah McMaster • Horizon Academy West • Horizon Academy West • Albuquerque, NM

Researchers agree upon 5 key areas of competencies of SEL, and this project focuses on social awareness. We have found that increasing reading skills, especially fluency, with our emerging EL population allows us to better model and teach empathy and perseverance. The idea behind this project is to model, teach and share with our younger kinderbuddies how we build people and what successful students look like. Funding will be used for Chromebooks, novels and computer programs that will integrate social emotional learning through strengthened reading skills so that all students, including our EL learners, are not left behind.

Lisa Vasquez • Ruidoso High School • Ruidoso Municipal Schools • Ruidoso, NM

We want our students to graduate and successfully pursue their college and career goals with the ability to accurately recognize their own emotions, thoughts and values. Our goals for student participation in SEL activities and skills development are to create a safe, caring and well-managed learning environment that fosters positive decision-making and academic success to help improve college and career readiness skills in our students. Self-management and responsible decision making are essential to higher-order thinking skills. Awareness and relationship skills are important prerequisites to the development of employability skills, such as teamwork, collaboration and effective communication.

Stephan Molder • Proctor Hug High School • Washoe County School District • Reno, NV

Building better family and school partnerships will benefit student success in high school. We hope to increase family engagement which will improve outcomes for students both academically and socially. Evening family dinner events will be planned around building better relationships with families, students, teachers, administrators and school staff while focusing also on SEL competencies and standards. Local and national guest speakers and experts in the field of SEL will attend to present and help us practice these skills. At these events, we all plan to grow our SEL grit by practicing them outside of the classroom.

Maritza Santana • In Tech Academy MS/HS 368 • NYC DOE District 10 • New York, NY

Our SEL project will focus on our incoming 9th grade students. We have a large population of students from the Dominican Republic and Yemen who are not only adjusting to life at our high school but to life in a new country with varying social and emotional expectations. We will focus on a group of approximately 80 incoming 9th grade students and support them with a social and emotional learning curriculum which will allow them to work with a teacher during an advisory period. Using fun and engaging activities and trips, we will increase student resilience, compassion and acceptance and help them learn more about themselves, how they learn, how they respond to emotional upsets and what they are passionate about.

Melida Gonzalez • P.S. 160 Q. • NYC DOE District 28 • New York, NY

A Place Para Ti will support P.S. 160's population of English language learners by introducing and developing the social and relationship skills that they will need as they acclimate within a new environment. A.P.P.T creates a safe social, academic and emotional space for approximately 70 students. We will develop and mold partnerships with our most important stakeholders: parents and community members. We will develop a shared language that will become the

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foundation of P.S. 160 and empower our students to become responsible citizens as we strengthen skills which transfer both inside and outside of the school community.

Alhassan Susso • International Community High School • NYC DOE District 7 • New York, NY

Inspiring Teens' Future is designed to equip teenagers with the life skills necessary to succeed academically, socially, emotionally, professionally and economically. The program is built on five essential components: Mindset Development, Vision Setting, Interpersonal Communications, Leadership and Financial Management. By giving the students confidence through experiential learning, students are able to identify and manage their emotions, create a clear and compelling vision board, practice the art of communication, identify an issue in the community they would want to solve and create a financial portfolio plan.

Daniel Jerome • Bronx Studio School for Writers and Artists • NYC DOE District 8 • New York, NY

Upper-class students are trained as mentor-caretakers for English Language Learners and newly arrived middle school students. As caretakers, they will meet with their "younger siblings" once a week as a group in a casual setting, playing games and sports and participating in community building circles. Mentors will also support their "younger siblings" throughout the week by checking in with them, communicating with their teachers and offering academic and social support. Mentors will receive ongoing training and support through the school's advisory program.

Susan Murphy • Rochester Childfirst Network • Rochester Childfirst Network • Rochester, NY

The Pyramid Model will be implemented using a multi-layered approach that includes professional development, collegial circles, practice-based coaching and parent workshops that prepare and enhance adults' abilities to 1) build solid, trusting relationships; 2) teach evidence-based social and emotional skills to children with or without disabilities; and 3) extinguish or address persistent challenging behaviors so that children of all abilities learn how to respond to and interact with other children in a positive way. This year's primary focus will be on how these strategies and practices can be built into a classroom with children with disabilities.

Ellen Sugrue-Dolan • Tech Center • Putnam Northern Westchester Board of Cooperative Educational Services • Yorktown Heights, NY

Our project targets our large population of newly-arrived Central American immigrant high school students. Most of these students have been exposed to significant trauma in their home countries or in their journeys to the U.S. This project focuses on the power of the trauma narrative—or sharing one's story of suffering—as a healing tool. Students will read powerful narratives of authors who have had similar experiences, and then will be guided through the process of writing their own story. The project will culminate in an evening of sharing and celebration to highlight their resilience.

Molly Suarez • Seiberling Community Learning Center • Akron Public Schools • Akron, OH

Seiberling CLC strives for students to come to school, "Ready To Learn and Achieve Everyday." In order to learn and achieve, students need coping strategies for self-regulation. Through self-evaluation of various zones, students will learn to identify their feelings and level of alertness, use effective regulation tools, know when and how to use the tools, problem solve positive solutions and understand how their behaviors influence others thoughts and feelings. Class restoration circles will help promote communication and cognizance of others' perspectives. Parent workshops will provide information about the self-regulation strategies so parents can support/model strategies at home.

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Dana Davis • Glover Community Learning Center • Akron Public Schools • Akron, OH

Glover CLC's all-inclusive project, "The Big 3 Part II," is designed to engage and challenge students, staff and family/community members to embrace pro-active SEL strategies. Our goal is for SEL to become instinctive and embedded, thus impacting behaviors for years to come. School data suggests we have more SEL-focused work to do. "The Big 3 Part II" will embrace professional development, student and family diversity and equity in education through restorative justice practices, positive peer interactions and student/staff/parent relationship building activities while continuing to develop our three focus goals: *Treat Others Right*, *Maximize Your Potential* and *Make Smart Decisions*.

Catherine Keppers • Findlay High School • Findlay City Schools • Findlay, OH

Findlay High School's Gay-Straight Alliance (GSA) is a student-led club that supports LGBTQI identified students and their allies by working towards building an accepting community regardless of identity or orientation through education, support, social action and advocacy. The SEL grant will be targeted to areas of GSA curriculum including the development of student skills such as reflection, coping, communication and assertiveness. Additionally, grant funds will help provide a staff safe-space training which will create and identify allies, and also provide a general level of education and understanding that promotes safer classroom environments and inclusion for LGBTQI students.

Claudia Bestor • North Olmsted Middle School • North Olmsted City Schools • North Olmsted, OH

North Olmsted Middle School Community Groups consist of twelve grade-level students and one adult mentor from our school community. Each week during the school year, Community Groups engage in informal half-hour discussions about topics that concern our students' social and emotional development. Since Community Groups are personally responsive, mentors may explore topics that meet the specific needs and interests of the individual students in their groups, yet woven into all discussions are the concepts and language of CASEL's social and emotional competencies with the goal of creating a caring, inclusive climate devoted to the academic, social and emotional success of our students.

Carrie Snyder-Renfro • Oklahoma Centennial Mid-High School • Oklahoma City Public Schools • Oklahoma City, OK

The VOICE project is a student led initiative of the Gender Sexuality Alliance (GSA) student organization. The purpose of this project is to help all students find their voice through arts, literacy and comfort corners. Students will use project management to develop an event plan that will include an event showcase and monthly Lunch & Learn sessions that will include guest speakers who will share VOICE strategies for art, literacy, goal setting, entrepreneurship, anger management and more. Artifacts from these sessions will be featured in a VOICE showcase. Comfort corners will provide alternative class seating and SEL Maker Spaces in each classroom.

Irma Patton • North Marion Primary School • North Marion School District • Aurora, OR

The Early Morning English Language Development Class with a focus on social and emotional learning (SEL) will support 20 primary students who are English language learners, migrant or new arrivals. The goals of the project are to assist English language learners in increasing their English Language skills in reading, writing, listening and speaking using SEL curriculum as the focus for the class. The class will include a family involvement component with learning resources and enrichment opportunities, as well as a mentor program for high school ELLs as an integral part of the extended day learning experience.

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Samantha Woodburn • William W. Bodine High School for International Affairs • Philadelphia School District • Philadelphia, PA

Take the Lead Dance project is a nonprofit arts education foundation that aims to enrich the lives of youth in Philadelphia through a social dance experience. Highly qualified dance instructors visit students in their classrooms twice a week for 10 weeks, teaching them social dances such as bachata, merengue and even line dance. Students showcase what they've learned at the end of the 10-week experience with an assembly for their classmates, peers, teachers and families. Bodine High School for International Affairs is proud to welcome Take the Lead Dance Project into our school to work with our freshmen for the third year in a row – all thanks the generosity of the SEL Innovation Awards Grant.

Brandon Lane • The Met Justice • The Metropolitan Regional Career and Technical Center • Providence, RI

Our project, "Soup'd," will get student's "suped" by growing and harvesting the produce needed to serve a daily plant based soup at lunch. Soup'd participants grow their own vegetables in a greenhouse, sell their product for profit to the school's food service and work with the kitchen staff to serve a healthy plant based meal that meets USDA lunch reimbursement guidelines. Student efforts, methods and results will be documented in a cookbook to serve as a resource for scalable impact.

Stacy Jones • W.M. Davies Career & Technical High School • W.M. Davies Career & Technical High School • Lincoln, RI

Our project will build on last year's efforts: Implementation of social and emotional learning strategies combined with culturally sophisticated curricula aimed at increasing the academic rigor and student achievement in our 10th- and 11th-grade ELA classes, which contain a large number of identified and unidentified English learners. We will use looping with our 11th-grade students from last year to gather additional data regarding the effectiveness of SEL practices on student achievement, which will facilitate expansion of our cultural curriculum redesign to the 12th grade; offer coaching to teachers; and continue our technology efforts by creating or expanding digital portfolios for sophomores and seniors.

Holli Hamner • Sara Collins Elementary • Greenville County Schools • Greenville, SC

Sara Collins Elementary's Amazing Shake offers opportunities for students to develop manners, self-discipline, respect and professional conduct. All K-5th grade students practice proper handshakes, manners, conversational skills and composure. 5th graders participation in four rounds of competition:

- "Meet & Greet." All 5th graders meet and greet community professionals.
- "Think on your Feet." The top 20 complete surprise scenarios.
- "Hit the Street and Eat." The top 10 take a field trip into the community. They meet business and government leaders, eat at a restaurant and interview senior citizens.
- "The Final Feat." Two finalists complete a leadership challenge.

Amanda Adcock • Whites Creek High School • Metro Nashville Public School • Whites Creek, TN

With our year-long project-based learning experience, we seek to answer the driving question: "As teacher interns, how can we develop a plan using social and emotional learning, restorative practices and the CSEFEL model to create a solitary design format for Whites Creek High School?" This question focus will require Teaching as a Professional pathway students to work exclusively with not only feeder schools but also special population students within the school in hopes of reducing the stigma attached to children with disabilities of all kinds.

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Jarred Amato • Maplewood High School • Metro Nashville Public Schools • Nashville, TN

Project LIT Community is a national, grassroots literacy movement that empowers students as readers and leaders. We are committed to increasing access to high-quality, culturally relevant books and promoting a love of reading in schools and communities across the country. Over the past two years, Maplewood High School students and their English teacher, Dr. Jarred Amato, have seen their project expand to more than 400 chapters across 44 states. You can follow our journey at @projectlitcomm!

Katie Raymond • Anderson High School • Austin Independent School District • Austin, TX

Currently, student leaders at Anderson High School co-design and lead weekly homeroom lessons to explicitly teach SEL skills along with addressing student concerns such as healthy relationships, self-management, inclusion and mental health. In pursuit of an equitable campus with a common vocabulary and understanding of the purpose of SEL, we will expand the accessibility of our SEL leadership trainings to reach student leaders from all extracurricular activities. It is our belief that by teaching a common approach to community-building, student leaders may begin a diverse, solution-driven dialogue to address our campus' struggles and create a more unified approach to community.

James Peerson • George H. W. Bush Elementary • Dallas Independent School District • Addison, TX

Our goal is to develop a world music drumming program which provides a positive, structured environment for students to experience face-to-face interaction via shared musical experience. We will utilize an intuitive music making experience as the catalyst for developing students' understanding of themselves and others. The program is based on Dr. Will Schmid's (1998) writings on world music drumming. His program was piloted and shown to be successful in multiple cities, cultures and socio-economic environments. This project will utilize drum circle activities to facilitate student positive visual and aural communication via the music making process.

Abigail M. Saunders • Obras Elementary • KIPP Austin Public Schools • Austin, TX

We will develop a curriculum that responds to the needs of our students. We will have two Teaching Tolerance PDs that arm teachers with the strategies to teach students about their identity, community values and social justice. At Obras, the Choose Love curriculum helps students become connected, resilient and empowered individuals. However, it alone does not teach all of the skills students need. There is currently not one SEL curriculum available to target the needs of our student population. This project will help us acquire the skills to develop a curriculum that would elevate our current SEL practice.

Noah Siegler • Obras Elementary • KIPP Austin Public Schools • Austin, TX

Our elementary school will build an "Imagination Playground," an innovative playground system comprised of larger-than-life foam blocks that encourages learning, social development, teamwork, movement, language and fun. Every day on the "Imagination Playground," students will have a safe environment to take informed risks and practice creative problem solving. They will be grow as leaders and understand the power of collaboration. It is our hope that these simple foam pieces will be both literal and figurative building blocks, that what our students change on the playground today lays the foundation for what they can change in our world tomorrow.

Dana Wrann • Agnes Cotton Academy • San Antonio Independent School District • San Antonio, TX

Our project will focus on mindfulness activities, social emotional interventions and restorative teaching practices, including teaching with an equity lens to meet the needs of our students. This grant will help provide teachers with

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trauma informed and social and emotional teacher training as well as programming that supports mindful practices and social justice lessons. We hope that students will feel connected to their school and broader community, increase their leadership skills and have a sense of urgency to do their best in school, understanding that it directly relates to their quality of life and personal power.

Bettany Valsin • Uplift Luna Primary • Uplift Education • Dallas, TX

I will create an interactive folder that my scholars will use to capture their reflections based on the social and emotional learning that occurs through literature. I will be purchasing a research-based SEL literature bundle in order to guide students' discovery and understanding of these themes through discussing literature. These reflections will be viewed and responded to by the scholars' family and myself. The SEL themes within this folder will mirror the themes discussed through specific literature in the classroom. This project allows for connection between the teacher, family/parent and the student. Additionally, this project aims to use SEL as a way to strengthen the skill set of students at a young age and to help to break down language barriers experienced by ELL scholars and their families.

Jenni Johnson • Jean Massieu School of the Deaf • Utah Schools for the Deaf and the Blind • Salt Lake City, UT

Health, computer science and drama classes will partner with the social skills training provided by the school psychologist in order to create resources in the students' native language, American Sign Language. There is a great need within the community for accessible materials. Our students will create videos to inspire and instruct the community in a variety of social and emotional skills. As the program progresses to next year, a peer mentoring program will be established in order for the older students to gain further experience and understanding of the skills through teaching younger grades, using resources they have helped create.

Nisha Sensharma • Wakefield High School • Arlington Public Schools • Arlington, VA

We will develop a mindful learning curriculum that is integrated with our USVA Government curriculum. This curriculum addresses CASEL's core SEL competencies (self-awareness, social awareness, self-management and healthy relationship-building). Some lesson components include understanding the importance of healthy eating and sleeping, regulating emotions and coping with stress, developing a growth mindset, making responsible decisions and practicing effective study skills. We will implement and monitor the program in all our USVA Government classes and use our data to modify our curriculum as needed over the course of the year. We hope to see improved attendance, work completion, stress management and overall availability for learning through development of SEL competencies. We will conduct a more rigorous analysis over the summer in order to improve the curriculum and will disseminate our findings to the education community.

Kara Menfi • Charlottesville High School • Charlottesville City School District • Charlottesville, VA

The Multilingual Mentor Program is a new student-run, staff-supported peer advisory and mentorship program. This program was initiated and named by a small group of seniors who reflected upon their experiences as newly arrived ELLs (English language learners) and wanted to create a support program so that new students like them would have an easier transition than they did. Volunteer students at advanced level English receive training and lead group meetings with newcomers, creating a safe space for discussion in students' native languages, helping them to adapt and thrive in their new school culture.

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Mary Muroski • Charlotte Central School • Chittenden Valley School District • Charlotte, VT

The “Empower Youth Leadership Conference” brings together adolescents with diverse backgrounds to develop social, emotional and leadership skills in a supportive, community-based setting. We offer full-day conferences, three times during the school year, to students across the state. We focus on building the SEL skills of fragile learners while also recognizing and celebrating peer leaders within the group. Our collaboration with the Children's Legacy Partnership Foundation (a nonprofit organization that aims to provide comprehensive education to students in Uganda) via Skype sessions help student gain global perspective as they compare their world views with those of Ugandan students.

Rosalia Burson • Baker Middle School • Tacoma Public School • Tacoma, WA

Baker Middle School will develop and implement a restorative re-entry process for students who have been out of school due to exclusionary discipline. We anticipate this process will give students a voice in the corrective process, strengthen relationships, facilitate a higher level of engagement and accountability, decrease the incidence and duration of suspensions and expulsions and evolve the school culture to one in which all students can make mistakes and learn from those mistakes, consistently.

Lassity Sullivan • Lincoln Elementary • Whitewater United School District • Whitewater, WI

In a month-long summer school course, middle school students will design and build an app that will allow anyone to play a city-wide scavenger hunt on their mobile phones. The students will ride bikes gathering digital media that tells stories about their community. They will evaluate and adjust their work plans using a software sprint development model. Throughout the course, students will be given increasingly more control over how they plan their day. By the end, they will run the entire program as a group, without instructor support. The students will learn leadership, teamwork and compassion for themselves and others.