



## Social Emotional Learning (SEL) Talking Points

SEL should be opposed for the following reasons.

1. **The goal of SEL is to change the values, attitudes, and beliefs of students.** Its claim of improving academic outcomes, such as graduation rates is highly questionable and unverifiable.

For example, an SEL curriculum called BARR uses evidence which shows scarcely any improvement in academic outcomes despite massive commitments of time, money, and resources focused on emotions, feelings, and progress toward non-cognitive outcomes.<sup>1</sup> [See footnote.] [NOTE: [HF806](#) / [SF494](#) would provide grants to the BARR Center to deliver its curriculum to at least 30 Minnesota schools.]

2. **CASEL (Consortium for Academic & Social Emotional Learning) is the lead SEL organization. They are primarily** funded by the Bill Gates Foundation, the Zuckerberg Institute, and other global corporate entities.
3. **The Minnesota Department of Education (MDE) aligns its extensive SEL resources with CASEL.** Therefore, understanding CASEL is foundational to the developing Minnesota SEL standards and policies.
4. **The SEL promotional language masks the CRT agenda.** The five SEL Competencies are: self-awareness, self-management, social awareness, relationship skills, and responsible decision-making. They sound desirable, but SEL transforms education away from academic learning to the 'whole child'....their mind, body and spirit. SEL is designed to change the worldview of the student.

SEL proponents use our vocabulary, but they have their own dictionary. For example, "diverse individuals and communities" does not mean all. It means "some."

Always the question: **Through what lens is SEL data and information being interpreted?** (Answer: an 'Equity' lens.)

5. **The purpose of SEL is "Equity"** ("[SEL is a lever for equity.](#)")  
[EQUITY DEFINITION: Equal outcomes by identity group. It divides all people into racial and identity groups that are either oppressors or oppressed, believes that 'white privilege' is systemic to our legal structures, and that America is fundamentally racist and our institutions must be dismantled.]

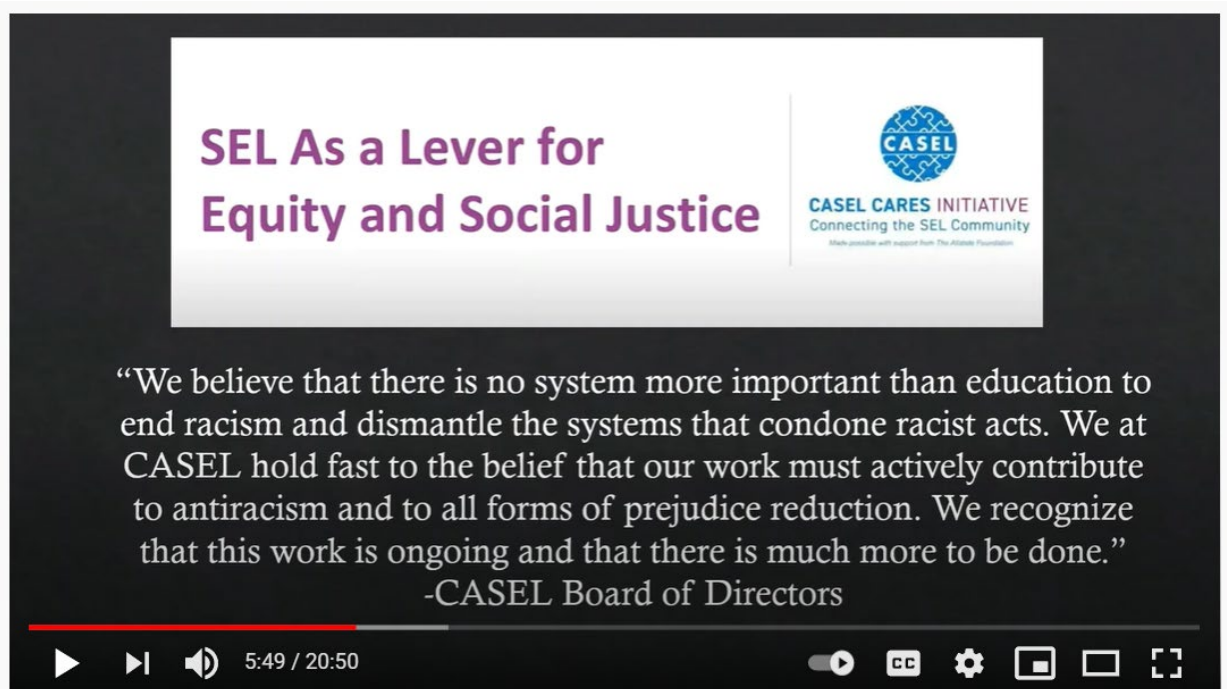
<https://casel.org/wp-content/uploads/2020/04/equity-and-SEL-.pdf>  
[How Does SEL Support Educational Equity and Excellence? - CASEL](#)

"District practices aim to explicitly position and communicate about SEL as a lever for equity by (1)

establishing values, commitments, or standards that **communicate districts’ priorities around equity** and the alignment of SEL to these priorities and (2) creating organizational structures and partnerships to **synergistically coordinate SEL and equity efforts.**” [CASEL-Gateway-Advancing-SEL-for-Equity-Excellence.pdf](#) (p. 8)

- CASEL: The purpose of social emotional learning is to “make explicit issues such as power, privilege, prejudice, discrimination, social justice, empowerment, and self-determination” **with the goal of developing “justice-oriented, global citizens.”** Who defines justice and what is it based upon? What is required of a global citizen? [Frameworks-Equity.pdf \(casel.org\)](#)
- In CASEL’s document, they define the five competencies through an “equity lens.”  
For example:

“SEL is relevant for all students in all schools and affirms diverse cultures and backgrounds. All students bring to school their identities, strengths, values, lived experiences, and culture. SEL does not seek to have students conform to the values and preferences of the dominant culture but uplifts and promotes understanding of the assets of diverse individuals and communities.” [SEL As a Lever for Equity | CASEL District Resource Center](#)



SEL 101

6. SEL is a massive data collection system on every student, data that follows them for the rest of their lives. SEL’s hunger for individual and personal data forms the basis of their claim that SEL is “data driven.” Most would infer it is measuring academic outcomes or knowledge, but SEL is measuring values, attitudes, and beliefs.

- Data collection is central to SEL. A data profile is created on every student for “mapping cultural values” to identify students’ “personal cultural values and preferences.”
  - Students are continually assessed by surveys, questionnaires, group projects, conversations, interviews, focus groups, observations. [Practitioner Guide Step 4: Review the assessment options - AWG \(casel.org\)](#)
  - “Teachers using anecdotal notes about how students speak with each other, or the way students demonstrate their social and emotional competencies in classroom discussions.” MDE, [SEL Implementation Guidance](#), Scroll to *Social and Emotional Learning Assessment Guidance (p. 12)*
  - Individual student data is measured against SEL values and goals.
  - Interventions are prescribed for continual ‘change’ and conformance to SEL goals.
  - There is a continual, expanding need for more SEL, echoing the Maoist Thought that every person is in continual need of “remolding.” SEL is being extended to teachers, administrators, families and the community.
7. SEL sold itself as effective individual intervention very early on for mental health and troubled students. In fact, **SEL involves every student.**
- “SEL is a strategy for systemic improvement, not just an intervention for at-risk students. While SEL reduces risky behaviors and improves mental health ([Taylor et al, 2017](#)), the impact is maximized when **systemic SEL becomes a coordinating framework that transforms all aspects of schooling — from how the central office is organized to how classroom instruction is delivered.**” [SEL As a Lever for Equity | CASEL District Resource Center](#)
  - **All students are designated into Tier 1 level trauma.** (Multi-tiered Systems of Support- MTSS). SEL as an individual intervention has become a whole school, whole community systemic transformative model.
  - **The goal is to integrate SEL throughout the school:**
    - Direct instruction
    - Integrated into *all* the academic content
    - Schoolwide systems policies, rules, enforcement, data collection
8. **SEL is mental health screening for all children.**  
Students are being continually emotionally questioned, assessed, and psychologically evaluated for their feelings, emotions, relationships, and perceived acceptance. SEL starts every child in Tier 1 of “trauma.”
- SEL instruction is trauma based and uses [Multi-Tiered System of Supports](#) (MTSS), “a framework for enhancing the implementation of **evidence-based practices to achieve important outcomes for every student...** MTSS helps to ensure students benefit from nurturing environments and **equitable access to** [NOTE: not ‘equal access to’] instruction and supports that are differentiated to meet their unique needs.”
9. **CASEL has adopted “Transformative SEL.”**

[Transformative SEL - CASEL](#) “Transformative SEL” is a form of SEL implementation where young people and adults build strong, respectful, and lasting relationships to engage in co-learning. It facilitates critical **examination of individual and contextual factors that contribute to inequities and collaborative solutions that lead to personal, community, and societal well-being.**”

- **Training young people to be social justice activists for transformational change based on the cultural Marxist principles of CRT.** [Equity & Social Emotional Learning: A Cultural Analysis](#)

“Educational equity means that ‘every student has access to the resources and educational rigor they need at the right moment in their education regardless of race, gender, ethnicity, language, disability, family background, or family income.’ Striving for educational equity **challenges us to examine biases and interrupt inequitable practices so we can create inclusive, multicultural school environments** that cultivate the interests and talents of children, youth, and adults from diverse backgrounds. Addressing the social, emotional, and academic needs of youth from these historically marginalized groups is a pressing matter...

“Consistent with the pursuit of educational equity, we recently offered the concept of transformative SEL **to reflect our interest in making explicit issues such as power, privilege, prejudice, discrimination, social justice, empowerment, and self-determination in the field of SEL.** Transformative SEL connotes a process whereby students and teachers build strong, respectful relationships founded on an appreciation of similarities and differences, learn **to critically examine root causes of inequity, and develop collaborative solutions to community and societal problems.**”

- [Transformative SEL: Toward SEL in Service of Educational Equity and Excellence \(2019\)](#). This article first introduced transformative SEL with a focus on race and ethnicity.
- [Equity and Social and Emotional Learning: A Cultural Analysis \(2018\)](#). This brief explored the alignment between equity and SEL, eventually informing the updated definition of SEL in 2020.
- [Transformative Social and Emotional Learning: In Pursuit of Educational Equity and Excellence](#). This article describes the focal constructs of identity, agency, belonging, collaborative problem-solving, and curiosity.

10. CASEL embeds **the spirituality of eastern religions through Mindfulness meditation** within the school day. [What Does “Mindfulness” Have To Do With Education?](#)

From: [Resources by Topic - CASEL District Resource Guide](#)

### **Mindfulness:**

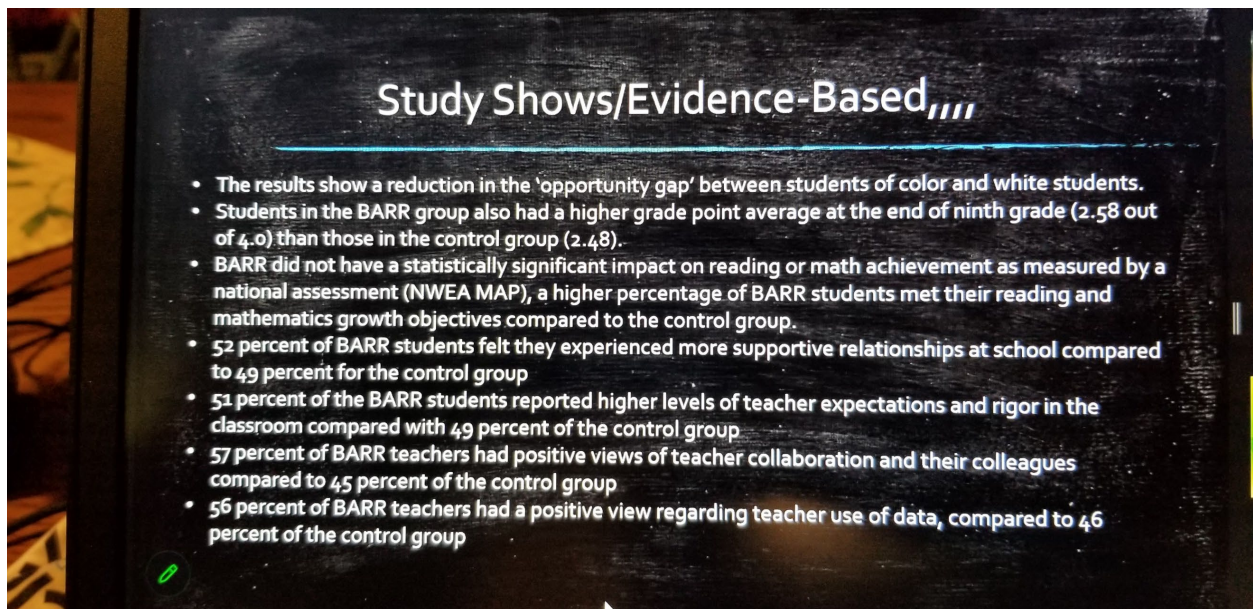
“Mindfulness means maintaining a moment-by-moment awareness of our thoughts, feelings, bodily sensations, and surrounding environment, through a gentle, nurturing lens.” (Greater Good Science Center). “By helping students become aware of and then embody the connection between their emotions, thoughts, and bodily sensations, students are better able to regulate their emotions, which then

impacts things such as their behavior, stress levels, relationships, and ability to focus.” (Lantieri & Zakrzewski, 2015).

11. **The UN and the World Economic Forum support SEL** as a means to implement the Sustainable Development Goals of Agenda 2030. [SEL for SDGs | Education for Emotional Resilience \(unesco.org\)](#)

- SEL architects fully understand that *“SDG’s are not necessarily a set of consistent objectives, but rather a series of potentially conflicting goals...from the perspective of the development agent, these conflicting objectives entail inconsistencies, and actions ,and antecedents, needed to attain the SDG’s. For example; eradicating poverty, a societal objective might entail at least in the short term, working the self to the point of compromising personal well-being.”*

In other words, the goal of implementing SDG goals such as climate change [WILL create cognitive dissonance](#) in children when it is required of them to forgo personal achievement, comfort or success. SEL is designed to “address” this dissonance and to ensure the child makes decisions in accordance with SDG objectives.



### Study Shows/Evidence-Based,,,,

- The results show a reduction in the 'opportunity gap' between students of color and white students.
- Students in the BARR group also had a higher grade point average at the end of ninth grade (2.58 out of 4.0) than those in the control group (2.48).
- BARR did not have a statistically significant impact on reading or math achievement as measured by a national assessment (NWEA MAP), a higher percentage of BARR students met their reading and mathematics growth objectives compared to the control group.
- 52 percent of BARR students felt they experienced more supportive relationships at school compared to 49 percent for the control group
- 51 percent of the BARR students reported higher levels of teacher expectations and rigor in the classroom compared with 49 percent of the control group
- 57 percent of BARR teachers had positive views of teacher collaboration and their colleagues compared to 45 percent of the control group
- 56 percent of BARR teachers had a positive view regarding teacher use of data, compared to 46 percent of the control group