



— THE PARENTS' GUIDE TO —

Social Emotional LEARNING



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Social Emotional Learning (SEL) 101

“Social and Emotional Learning.” It sounds so innocuous, so appropriate and positive. School officials and policy makers are asking: How could any parent oppose the development of social and emotional skills? But parents are growing more and more alarmed – and for very good reasons.

Social Emotional Learning, often referred to as SEL, has changed over time. Originally, the goal of SEL was to promote morally neutral soft-skills such as self-awareness, self-management, empathy, and goal setting.

In 2020, everything changed with the shift to “Transformative SEL.”

“Transformative SEL” is basically race and gender ideology embedded into what had previously been neutral student competencies. “Self-Awareness” encompasses “identity,” with “identity” defined now through the lens of “intersectionality.”¹ “Self-management” encompasses “agency,” with “agency” defined through “resistance” and “transformative/justice-oriented” citizenship.² “Transformative SEL” embraces the pedagogical philosophy of “culturally relevant/responsive” practices,

pioneered by professor Gloria Ladson-Billings, the woman who brought critical race theory to K-12 education.³

One cannot have a working knowledge of SEL without understanding the importance of CASEL, the Collaborative for Academic, Social and Emotional Learning. CASEL is the single most important entity in the field of SEL and by 2020, they had completely embraced Transformative SEL.

“What these [SEL] programs do,” says Jennifer McWilliams, a former teacher and SEL expert, “is use innocuous language like ‘social emotional learning,’ that sounds nice, to cover the Trojan Horse that it is for bringing in the Critical Race Theory ideology, gender identity / sexual orientation [instruction], and social justice education.”⁴

SEL proponents often disagree with this characterization. But parents need only look to CASEL’s website to see the evidence. For example, in its “Roadmap to Re-Opening,” CASEL defines “self-awareness” as “examining our implicit biases,” and “self-management” as “practicing anti-racism.”⁵ CASEL’s former

¹ <https://casel.s3.us-east-2.amazonaws.com/CASEL-Gateway-Transformative-SEL-Toward-Service-of-Ed-Equity.pdf>

² <https://casel.s3.us-east-2.amazonaws.com/CASEL-Gateway-Transformative-SEL-Toward-Service-of-Ed-Equity.pdf>

³ <https://www.unco.edu/education-behavioral-sciences/pdf/TowardaCRTEduca.pdf>

⁴ <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=FT6zxyEgmhE&t=68s>

⁵ <https://casel.org/casel-gateway-sel-roadmap-for-reopening/>

CEO, Karen Niemi, declared “we believe that our work in Social and Emotional Learning must actively contribute to anti-racism,” and that SEL can “help people move from anger, to agency, and then to action.”⁶

One can have an academic debate about whether it’s appropriate to equate “anti-racism” with “critical race theory.” But no less a prominent liberal intellectual than Yale’s David Bromwich has declared that “anti-racism” is an ideological doctrine.⁷ By positioning SEL as a champion of an ideological doctrine and a tool to channel “anger” into “activism,” CASEL has rendered its enterprise explicitly ideological, partisan, and political. As the SEL brand expands, some school districts are leveraging it to implement practices not explicitly endorsed by CASEL, such as gender identity and sexual orientation instruction in elementary schools.⁸

But they say it’s “evidence-based”?

Don’t believe them. Those claims are greatly exaggerated and the rare evidence of positive outcomes was a result of the old version of SEL. On the contrary, there is anecdotal reason to believe that this newer version of SEL is contributing to a decline in students’

social and emotional health. It’s too soon to know for sure.

Other reasons to ask questions and stay vigilant:

School surveys have become central to SEL implementation. These surveys ask students highly sensitive questions about their mood, their beliefs, their family, and even their sexuality.⁹ Parents are not always informed about the nature of these questions, nor do they have strong reason to trust that the answers will remain private. In 2022, hackers stole personal information of over 820,000 students in New York City Public Schools.¹⁰ If SEL encourages schools to create more robust and sensitive datasets on their students, we should expect further hacks and data privacy violations.

SEL effectively asks teachers to act as therapists.¹¹ Trained only with pop-psychology and one-day professional development sessions, it encourages them to probe into students’ psyches, to uncover and address “trauma.” There is a reason why medical ethics prohibits the practice of therapy by unlicensed and untrained individuals.

⁶ <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=UPWrnBA2274>

⁷ <https://www.thenation.com/article/culture/crt-debate-schools/>

⁸ <https://defendinged.org/incidents/west-hartford-publishes-elementary-social-justice-lessons-standards-and-mentor-texts-transgender-content-introduced-in-kindergarten/>

⁹ <https://www.aei.org/research-products/report/make-intrusive-school-surveys-opt-in-rather-than-opt-out/>

¹⁰ <https://www.nydailynews.com/new-york/education/ny-hack-illuminate-online-gradebook-compromised-personal-data-20220325-ahy3b3b3t5cjzajau63muqcnq-story.html>

¹¹ <https://www.aei.org/research-products/report/the-unexamined-rise-of-therapeutic-education-how-social-emotional-learning-extends-k-12-educations-reach-into-students-lives-and-expands-teachers-roles/>

Questions to ask your school about Social Emotional Learning

1. What is SEL? How do you define it? What is the purpose at this school?
2. What evidence is there that SEL is necessary?
3. Is the SEL program meant to positively influence academics? If so, how?
4. What are some examples of school districts that have implemented SEL that have had a positive impact on proficiency rates?
5. What's the budget for SEL?
6. How many staff have been hired to implement SEL?
7. Is there a review/trial period to assess the success/failure of SEL in our school?
8. Are you partnering with any companies, organizations or consultants to implement SEL?
9. How is it going to be implemented?
10. What are the goals you're trying to achieve? How will success be measured?
11. Do you follow the [CASEL framework](#)?
12. Do you approve or disapprove of [Transformative SEL](#)? (SEL to advance equity)
13. Is the plan to include SEL in all subjects in school? Will it be "interwoven" into all school activities? Or will lessons just be given in the homeroom/advisory period?
14. How many hours a week/month will students spend on SEL?
15. Do our district's SEL lessons include lessons on gender identity and/or race?
16. In what grades are SEL lessons taught?
17. What is the process for opting out of SEL?
18. Does the school have an SEL committee? If so, what are its responsibilities? How does a parent join the committee?
19. What training opportunities do you offer to teachers on SEL?
20. What information sessions do you offer parents on SEL?

SEL Incidents - If they say this isn't true, ask them about these REAL incidents

PENN HIGH SCHOOL GIVES TEACHERS SEL LESSON ON “RACISM AND ANTI-RACISM”; SHOWS “PYRAMID OF WHITE SUPREMACY” THAT LEADS TO GENOCIDE

PENN-HARRIS-MADISON SCHOOL CORPORATION – INDIANA 12/22/2021

Penn High School reportedly gave teachers a Social-Emotional Learning (SEL) lesson on “Racism and Anti-Racism” in the week of March 1, 2021. **The lesson included a [previously reported](#) “Pyramid of White Supremacy” that shows “costumes” and “MAGA” eventually lead to “Genocide.”** A concerned resident filed a Freedom of Information Act (FOIA) request and received the “Professional Development” presentation that the school gave to teachers.

The goal of the SEL lesson appears to be for teachers to implement the idea of “Anti-Racism” and ideologies inspired by critical race theory into their classrooms. A learning objective of the presentation is that “students will learn more about valuing and celebrating diversity by **exploring racism and anti-racism.**” The presentation included multiple quotes from [Ibram X. Kendi](#) whose books include *How to Be an Antiracist* and *Antiracist Baby*. He also created the [“Anti-Racist Reading List”](#) for the Chicago Public Library that includes the books *White Fragility* and *Things That Make White People Uncomfortable*. The

presentation includes the following quote from Kendi:

“Pain is usually essential to healing. When it comes to healing America of racism, we want to heal America without pain, *but without pain, there is no progress.*”

The presentation paraphrased *White Fragility* author Robin DiAngelo in claiming “racism is a system rather than just a slur; it is prejudice plus power.” The next slide is labeled “Pyramid of White Supremacy” that labels what appears to be perceived steps of racism leading up to “Genocide.” The bottom of the pyramid starts with topics like “remaining apolitical” and builds up to “All Lives Matter” and then to wearing “costumes” of “stereotypes.” Near the top in the “Calls for Violence” section is the phrase “MAGA” and also “ICE detention.” Just a few topics up is the top of the pyramid with the label “Genocide.”

The presentation asks teachers “What can we do to make a difference?” The question is then answered with “Anti-Racism.” Kendi is then paraphrased in saying that anti-racism is “taking a stand against all forms of bigotry

by seeing humanity in all racial groups.” The presentation also quotes Kendi accusing people who don’t agree with the idea of racial equity as racist:

“But there is no neutrality in the racism struggle ... One either allows racial inequities to preserve, as a racist, or confronts racial inequities, as an anti-racist. There is no in between safe space of ‘not racist.’ The claim of ‘not racist’ neutrality is a mask for racism.”

The presentation then discussed a [resolution](#) that the Penn-Harris-Madison School Corporation passed in 2020 “to bring about systematic and structural change to ensure diversity, inclusion, and equality.” The resolution states that the school district “shall implement all reforms necessary to eradicate racism and racial injustice” within its jurisdiction.



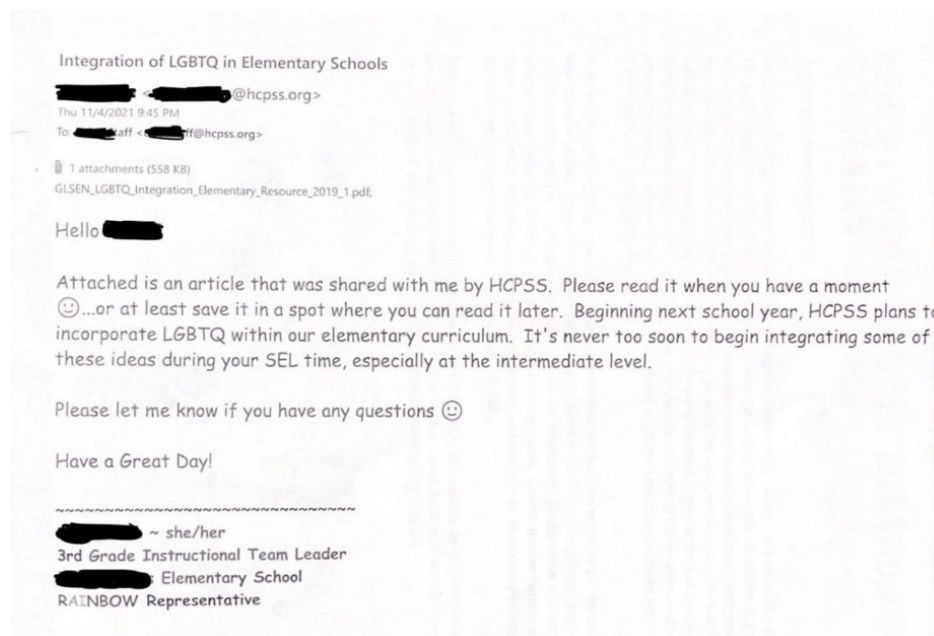
EMAILS REVEAL PLANS TO INTEGRATE LGBTQ CURRICULUM INTO ELEMENTARY SCHOOL DURING SEL LESSONS; \$25K GRANT SECURED TO SECURE “RAINBOW LIAISON AT EVERY SCHOOL” IN HOWARD COUNTY PUBLIC SCHOOLS



HOWARD COUNTY PUBLIC SCHOOL SYSTEM – MARYLAND 11/17/2021

A 3rd grade **elementary school** instructional team leader and “RAINBOW representative” in the Howard County Public School System sent an email to colleagues full of excitement about plans to “incorporate LGBTQ within our elementary curriculum.” She explicitly states that this would be integrated **during SEL time**.

We don’t know what article was attached to the email.

Below is another email from the principal with news of a “\$25K grant to be used for advocacy work for the LGBTQ+ community for this upcoming school year” and hopes of securing a “Rainbow Liaison at EVERY school within HCPSS.” She makes sure to clarify that this would be “a person separate from the DEIL,” which we assume means “diversity, equity and inclusion liaison.”



 Tue 6/8/2021 5:13 PM
To:  Staff

 5   



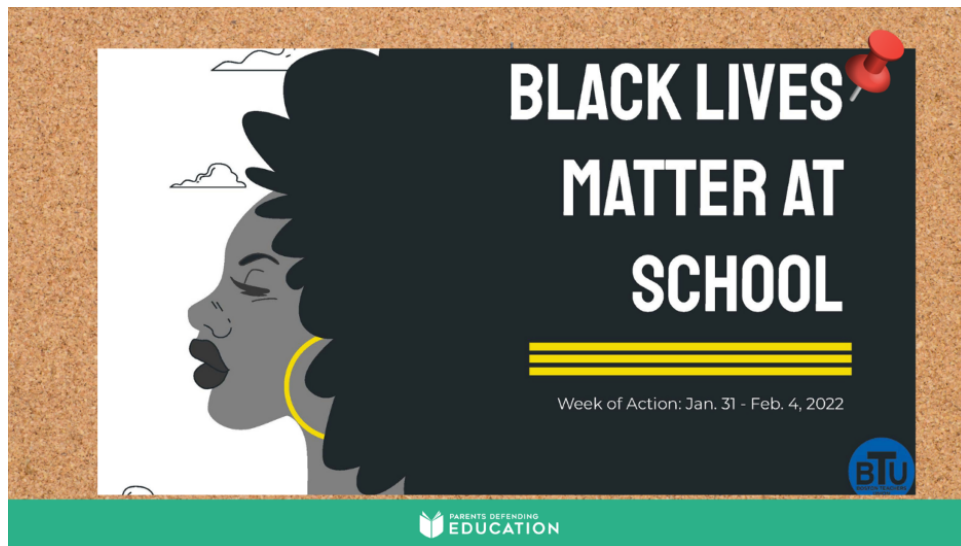
6.15.21 HCPSS Pride Don...
408 KB

Exciting news! See attached and below 🥳 Especially excited is this part that I highlighted. Please email me if you may be interested in this leadership role at .

Additionally, we have been awarded a \$25k grant to be used for advocacy work for the LGBTQ+ community for this upcoming school year. We hope to secure a **Rainbow Liaison at EVERY school** within HCPSS. More information about this will be coming at the end of summer, but for now we'd like to plant the seed so that you can **put word out to the staff at your school to see who might be interested in being a Rainbow Liaison**. This would be a person separate from your DEIL, possibly someone who is already heading up a Gender and Sexuality Alliance group, or a strong ally to the LGBTQ+ community who would be able to attend a quarterly meeting and disseminate information up to one time a month during the school year.

Thanks!

 Principal



'BLACK LIVES MATTER AT SCHOOL' IN K-12 CLASSROOMS NATIONWIDE IN 2022

02/04/2022

From Boston to Seattle school districts, schools, teachers' unions and educators around the country are teaching the controversial activist curriculum, lesson plans, activities and, even, official coloring book of "[Black Lives Matter at School](#)" starting January 31, according to a national review of schools by Parents Defending Education.

In 2013, activists launched the #BlackLivesMatter movement in response to the acquittal of George Zimmerman in the killing of Trayvon Martin. In the fall of 2016, teachers in Seattle Public Schools organized one of the first "Black Lives Matter at School" events, amid controversy over political activism in

the schools, particularly linked to a highly political organization.


The "[Black Lives Matter at School](#)" material often carries the official branding of the Black Lives Matter organization, which has been riddled with controversy over alleged misappropriation of funds and the purchase of multi-million-dollar homes by its founder.

To help parents, grandparents and others understand the reach of Black Lives Matter at School, Parents Defending Education has created a running list of school districts, schools and organizations promoting the program.

The review currently includes examples of participation from **two teachers union organizations** and schools in **12 school districts**.

Clayton County Public Schools

During the week of February 21-25, 2022, Clayton County Schools linked their BLM Week of Action to Social Emotional Learning or SEL.



CLAYTON COUNTY PUBLIC SCHOOLS
JONESBORO, GA

BLACK LIVES MATTER
A Week of Action
A Year of Purpose
A Lifetime of Practice
FEBRUARY 21-25, 2022
Join Us


MONDAY
SEL Alignment: Social Awareness
BLM Week Kick Off!
Learn about the BLM Movement
and what BLM Week means in CCPS!

TUESDAY
SEL Alignment: Relationship Skills
"BLACK LOVE" Letters: Submit letters
to teachers, parents, and students that
promote positivity, encouragement, and wellness!

WEDNESDAY
SEL Alignment: Responsible Decision Making
Taking Informed Action Town Hall Meeting Part I.
"The Prep Session"

THURSDAY
SEL Alignment: Self Awareness
The BLACKout!
Throughout history attire has been used
to show solidarity to cause and/or to a
people. We are asking all CCPS stakeholders
to wear t-shirts that represent Black Excellence,
HBCUs, Black History, and Positive Black Imagery.


FRIDAY
SEL Alignment: Self Management
"A Week of Practice, A Lifetime of Change":
Close out BLM Week of Action by telling us
how YOU can continue to ensure that
Black Lives Matter in CCPS.



Questions?
regina.wallace@clayton.k12.ga.us

Access additional information
about each day as well as
instructional resources

<https://tinyurl.com/5dvr3c6a>



Learn about SEL incidents and consultants in your state!

Click on this map or go to <https://defendinged.org/map/> and filter for SEL incidents.

