



January 11, 2019

Dear Members and Associates,

[Registration is now open](#) for our Spring 2019 Member Meeting hosted by Pittsburgh Public Schools in Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania. The meeting will be held at The Westin Convention Center, Pittsburgh from May 1-3. The theme for this meeting is *The Power of Social and Emotional Learning: "A good head and a good heart are always a formidable combination" (Nelson Mandela)*.

Why social and emotional learning? Looking strictly at academics, research has found that supporting students social and emotional development produces an 11-percentage-point gain in grades and test scores, increases student graduation rates, and postsecondary enrollment and completion. More broadly, according to Pedro Noguera, UCLA professor and director of the Center for the Transformation of Schools, "Whenever we broaden the lens through which we view children to go beyond strict academics...we're forced to grapple with issues of equity...When you consider the importance of social-emotional learning, you shift the focus away from simply holding kids and teachers accountable for narrow achievement gains, and you start asking questions like 'What do we need to do to support this child so that he can learn?' 'What do we need to do to support this school so that it has the ability to serve the needs of its students?'" At this meeting, we will work together to answer some of these questions and to share how we are addressing social emotional learning in our districts.

Call for Presentations: *The Power of Social and Emotional Learning: "A good head and a good heart are always a formidable combination" (Nelson Mandela)*

This call for presentations invites a variety of potential presenters (leaders, teaching and learning staff, professional learning communities, families & communities) to focus on social and emotional learning, including what has worked and existing barriers. We need to learn from each other's successes and challenges, so please do not think that your district needs to have everything figured out to present! Engage your colleagues in finding solutions by [submitting your presentation here](#).

The following questions may help you as you develop your presentation proposal:

Leadership

- What are some things that your district is doing well in relation to implementing SEL standards that you would like to share with other districts? What have been the most pressing challenges that your district faces in relation to SEL and how are you addressing them?
- How does your district leadership collaborate across departments within the district to share the work of providing SEL standards?
- How have you supported students' access to SEL standards at different ages?
- How have you staffed to support your efforts implementing SEL standards?
- How do you provide social and emotional supports to your own staff as they address student and district issues?
- In what ways has the district used data on disciplinary actions to improve SEL?

Systems Change

- How are SEL standards and tiered supports part of your MTSS system?
- How have you created systems where SEL standards are supported throughout the district?

- How has a focus on SEL standards affected the disproportionate representation of culturally and linguistically diverse student populations in terms of classification, segregated placements, or discipline?
- If you are a district with a focus on school autonomy, how do you implement systemic implementation of SEL standards?
- What practices and/or systems have worked for you? Restorative Justice? Positive Behavioral Interventions and Supports (PBIS)?
- How have you used SEL standards to appropriately identify and/or guard against inappropriate identification of students with trauma, behavioral, or mental health issues?
- Has your district done away with or greatly reduced the practice of restraint and seclusion? How did you do this? How can you help your colleagues move their own districts toward eliminating these practices?
- Has the implementation of SEL standards and supports had any influence on breaking the school-to-prison pipeline?

Teaching and Learning

- How does your district implemented SEL standards? Do you have curricula to support? How did you make decisions on what to use? What lessons did you learn that might help your colleagues?
- Has the district used the tenets of UDL to develop instruction for social emotional standards?
- How have SEL standards influenced the use of functional behavioral assessments (FBAs), behavior interventions plans (BIPs), and/or manifestation determination reviews (MDRs)?
- Have you provided training to staff on de-escalation? What can you share with your colleagues as to what has worked?
- Has implementing the SEL standards created a sense of belonging for students with and without disabilities? Is this the case for students with cognitive disabilities? Emotional and behavioral disabilities? English language learners?

Family and Community Engagement

- How has your district helped families to share in the belief that a focus on SEL is an important aspect of their child's education?
- How have you included students and/or families in the implementation of SEL standards? Have you developed any supports for families of students who are English learners?
- Has your district had success partnering with community mental health facilities? How has this worked?

When developing your proposals please keep in mind how the information you present might help your colleagues develop their own district's social and emotional learning standards and instruction. Also, think through developing proposals that adhere to the tenets of universal design for learning in that, where appropriate, there are multiple points of access for participants to engage, for you to present your information, and for participants to express their understanding. Should your proposal be accepted, please use these [Tips for Developing an Effective Presentation](#) for some ideas on how to develop a strong session.

We look forward to seeing you in Pittsburgh. Please click on the links below for registration and travel policy information and to read the preliminary agenda, session descriptions, and frequently asked questions. If you have any questions, please contact Pilar Miranda, Member and Partner Manager, at 617-618-2447 or PMiranda@edc.org.

- [Registration and Travel](#): Information to register for the Spring 2019 Meeting and for travel information. You can also access frequently asked questions here: [FAQs](#).
- [Agenda](#): Preliminary Spring 2019 Meeting agenda
- [Session Descriptions](#): Spring 2019 Meeting sessions

I look forward to seeing you all in May!
Lauren