



Georgia receives grant to develop social-emotional learning standards

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July 15, 2016 – Georgia has been selected, along with seven other states, to participate in the [Collaborating States Initiative](#) funded by the [Collaborative for Academic, Social, and Emotional Learning](#) (CASEL). This grant will allow Georgia to develop social-emotional learning standards, develop a strategy for professional learning, and update the [Georgia Student Health Survey](#) to include social and emotional learning.

“Focusing on social and emotional learning is absolutely essential as we work to ensure safe, healthy, and positive learning environments for Georgia’s students,” State School Superintendent Richard Woods said. “Developing K-12 social-emotional standards will ensure a smoother transition for early learners and complement Georgia’s existing school climate efforts.”

K-12 social-emotional learning (SEL) standards will catalyze Georgia’s current emphasis on SEL and make it a more sustainable element of a high-quality education. The [Department of Early Care and Learning](#) offers SEL standards for birth through age five; until now, the K-12 standards have not explicitly included SEL. With school climate currently at the forefront in Georgia – as many schools take on Positive Behavior Interventions and Supports (PBIS) and improve their learning climates – developing K-12 SEL standards will allow Georgia to build on that promise. Professional learning opportunities, also developed through the grant, will equip teachers and leaders to integrate SEL directly into instruction.

“Social and emotional learning are essential to academic learning,” said Dr. Caitlin McMunn Dooley, GaDOE’s Deputy Superintendent for Curriculum and Instruction. “When adults emotionally engage with students, students learn more. The classroom is a happier place, and students learn essential skills for growing up and getting along. This grant will allow us to promote positive learning climates for every student in Georgia’s public schools – we’re extremely grateful to CASEL for their partnership and for this opportunity.”

In 2015, when newly elected State School Superintendent Woods developed the GaDOE’s [strategic plan](#), school climate took center stage as one of the pillars. The GaDOE is part of a vibrant, statewide collaborative effort to improve social and emotional supports as part of the Get Georgia Reading Campaign. Research on the interdependence of climate, SEL, and academic learning – including third grade reading outcomes – confirm this is the right direction for our state.

The Robert Wood Johnson Foundation is supporting the implementation of CASEL’S two-year Collaborating States Initiative, a partnership of states working together to support deeper learning and educational practice related to SEL. Georgia is included in the Phase I Community of Practice along with seven other states: California, Massachusetts, Minnesota, Nevada, Pennsylvania, Tennessee, and Washington.