

SEL4NJ Equity Statement

SEL4NJ's goal of encouraging emphasis on social and emotional learning and skills requires attention to equity. Equity means that all those subject to violence, other mistreatment or exclusion from opportunity are strongly protected and supported. Recent events have highlighted the ongoing effects of systemic racism and other forms of hate. While our core mission is to help create schools that are safe, supportive and caring, this mission requires addressing such injustice. Only by helping address injustice and inequities everywhere can schools be truly welcoming to all students and communities.

Similarly, social and emotional learning must be equity-informed. [Equity-informed SEL competencies](#) are:

Self-awareness, in terms of understanding cultural, racial, and social identities; awareness and ability to examine prejudices and implicit biases;

Social awareness of systemic racism and inequities;

Relationships skills including empathy to support those dealing with fear and trauma in the wake of acts of racism and violence; and building meaningful connections across differences;

Self-management by developing resilience and the ability to demonstrate social agency against injustices; and

Responsible decision-making by understanding how decisions impact collective well-being, and participating in collective action to promote inclusion and equity in classrooms, schools, and communities.

SEL4NJ Commitments and Actions Related to Equity

We will continuously reflect on identity, ability, privilege, and oppression, toward creating and promoting culturally sensitive SEL.

We will strive to ensure that all school stakeholders (students, staff, families) have the supports needed to access opportunity and achieve mastery.

We will seek to understand and meet local diverse needs through developing culturally-sensitive educational policies, programs and practices.

We acknowledge that the SEL components – Conditions (Culture and Climate), Competencies, and Character – may take different forms in a diverse landscape.

We acknowledge that dominant narratives have shaped SEL curricula, programming and approaches and may therefore have contributed to systems of oppression.

We will therefore solicit and amplify diverse perspectives and voices in SEL planning and decision-making, resulting in more equitably designed and delivered SEL efforts in New Jersey.