

The background of the slide is a composite image. The top left shows a line of yellow school buses with "SCHOOL BUS" written on the front. The bottom left shows a classroom with blue walls, desks, chairs, and colorful balloons. A large white diagonal shape separates the image from the text on the right.

Addressing the Whole Child in a Virtual Learning Environment

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Learning Objectives

- Model the Collaborative for Academic, Social and Emotional Learning (CASEL) Signature Practices to support the whole child in a virtual learning environment.
- Establish overarching themes critical to social/emotional health and academic success in a virtual learning environment:
 - a) Continuity in the virtual learning environment
 - b) Collaboration: Voice and Choice
 - c) Engaging student experiences
- Discuss optimistic considerations for long-term sustainability.

Modeling the Three Social and Emotional Learning (SEL) Signature Practices

1. Welcoming Inclusion Activities
2. Engaging Strategies
3. Optimistic Closure



Welcoming Inclusion Activity

- **Teaching Gratitude:** Who are you grateful for today? Why?
- **Movement Breaks:** Let's take a stretch break!
- **Individual Check-ins:** How are you doing? No. How are you really doing? What is a simple way we can check-in with students?
- **Moments of Accomplishment:** Does anyone have anything we can celebrate? Creating a classroom culture that cheers one another on is vital to school and classroom culture (even online)!
- **Moments of Reflection:** What is one major impact you've had on educators, students and our state during your time on the Kentucky Board of Education?

What Does the Research Say?

Among Kentucky middle and high schoolers...

1 in 5

reported serious
psychological
distress in 2021

Nearly

1 in 7

seriously considered
attempting suicide
in 2021

1 in 14

attempted suicide in
the past year

More than

1 in 3

high school students
reported having
poor mental health
most of the time
or always during the
pandemic

Data Collected from 2021 Kentucky Incentives for Prevention Survey

- “In Kentucky in 2021, middle and high school students in grades 6, 8, 10 and 12 reported an increase in serious psychological distress,” (Kentucky Incentives for Prevention Survey).
- “Increases in mental health challenges were particularly prominent among 6th graders, who reported an increase in deliberate self-harm, suicide ideation and suicide attempts,” (Kentucky Incentives for Prevention Survey).
- Emotional disorders, including anxiety and depression, are the most common mental disorders experienced by young people, followed by behavioral disorders (NHS Digital, 2020).
- Emotional and behavioral problems, if left unaddressed, often persist into adulthood.
- Longitudinal research has shown that young people who experience persistent emotional and behavioral problems during adolescence are at greater risk of negative outcomes throughout their adult life, including increased risk of depression and anxiety during adulthood.
- Sources: Early Intervention Foundation and CASEL

Overarching Theme

Examples of Continuity in the Social and Academic Virtual Classroom

Goal: Create a learning environment that honors student voice, choice and co-ownership.

- Co-develop procedures and behavioral expectations with students
- Create expectations for participation
- Go over netiquette through a trauma-informed lens.
- Create consistent routines such as mental health check-ins, movement breaks, etc. (like the three SEL signature practices)
- Address discipline issues fast and restoratively
- Have a plan/protocol if you witness something harmful in the virtual environment. Emergency plans should be developed to ensure student safety. Consider home visits, if possible, in your context. Build in positive home visits too!

Overarching Theme

Collaboration: Effective Collaboration Through the Solicitation of "Voice and Choice" Among All Stakeholders

Goal: Engage multiple stakeholders to create supportive virtual learning environments.

- [Utilize Virtual Relationship Mapping Tool](#)- At least one trusted adult- identify kids who don't have a trusted adult and be intentional about pairing; doesn't have to be a certified teacher- consider adults who lead extracurricular activities; other adults in the building
- Partner with families to maximize virtual learning success; utilize surveys and phone calls home; create family engagement learning opportunities so families can learn from one another
- Engage teachers and other educators in codeveloping practices and policies that will help families navigate virtual learning.
- Assess progress several times per year with students and families. How is this going for you? What do we need to change?
- Personalize learning to meet individual student needs.

Overarching Theme

Engaging and Meaningful Online Student Learning Experiences

Goal: Create unique and engaging student experiences in a virtual learning environment.

- Focus on strengthening peer relationships through breakout rooms (educators visit periodically); create a virtual social hour (virtual lunch, team building like Minecraft or Roblox, etc. to build culture).
- Flip the Classroom!
- Have fun with tech tools that can create interest and engagement (ex: Nearpod, Padlet and Kahoot). Include polls and games and incorporate student interests.
- Schedule one-on-ones based on individual needs or interventions; have office hours so students can drop-in.
- Create unique in-person activities like field trips (you'll hear more about this from Principal, Danny Clemens from the Bullitt Virtual Learning Academy (BLVA)).

SEL for Young Students

- “While social and emotional development is often deeply woven into the fabric of preschool settings, it has traditionally occurred organically through everyday classroom interactions such as the communication and enforcement of classroom rules and expectations, adult modeling and norm-setting, and classroom and behavior management strategies” (Jones et al., 2021).
- “Virtual learning requires students to draw from a different skill set than what is used in face-to-face settings, such as self-regulation for navigating online learning, or balancing learning and life at home” (Kamei & Harriott, 2021).
- [Danielson Framework for Teaching](#)

Preschool and Kindergarten SEL
Lessons/Activities

Greater focus on stage-salient skills like attention control, inhibitory control and understanding social cues; and in preschool lessons in particular, a greater focus on foundational emotional skills like emotional knowledge and expression and emotional and behavioral regulation

More frequent use of children's books/stories, songs/music, teacher-led puppet demonstrations and kinesthetic/movement activities

Jones, S., Brush, K., Ramirez, T., Mao, Z., Marenus, M., Wettje, S., Finney, K., Raisch, N., Podoloff, N., Kahn, J., Barnes, S., Stickle, L., Brion-Meisels, G., McIntyre, J., Cuartas, J. & Bailey, R. (2021). Navigating SEL from the inside out: Looking inside and across 33 leading SEL programs: Practical resources for schools and OST providers (2nd Ed.). Harvard.

Elementary School SEL (Grades 1-5)
Lessons/Activities

Gradually increasing focus with age on (a) the values and perspectives domains and (b) skills like critical thinking, empathy/perspective taking and ethical values

Greater focus on more complex skills like planning, conflict resolution, performance values and cognitive flexibility

Greater focus on the identity domain in upper elementary (grades 4-5)

More frequent use of discussion, worksheets and writing activities; and in upper elementary specifically, more didactic instruction

Considerations for Schools/Districts Working with Caregivers/Families of Students in a Virtual Setting

- Coaching session for caregivers/families
- Continuity in resources (including tier 1 and 2 mental health supports)
- Protocols for accessing mental health supports
- Virtual office hours for caregivers/families
- Proactively recruit virtual students for extracurricular activities

Families of Young Children Navigating Virtual Learning

- Start with questions: Is this the right setting for my child? What evidence do I have that this setting is best?
- What can I expect a day in the life of my child will be as he/she/they navigate virtual school?
- What programs/platforms does my child need to be able to navigate?
- How can I connect with other families that are navigating this virtual setting?
- How do I get in touch with the school counselor or other school personnel?

Engaging Activity

Michael's Story

- *Michael (pseudonym) is a 15-year-old only child; struggled socially in school;*
- *Dealt with bullying throughout school;*
- *Struggled with maintaining friendships;*
- *Due to anxiety, exhibited somatic symptoms that have periodically kept him from school;*
- *Experienced panic attacks;*
- *Traditional school is not only anxiety provoking socially, but learning has become difficult because Michael is constantly worried about what will happen between classes, at lunch, and before and after school; and*
- *Let's quickly discuss Michael. How would a virtual environment help him?*

Jessica's Story

- *Jessica is an 18-year-old with three siblings;*
- *She lives in a single-parent household;*
- *Mother works two jobs including nights;*
- *Jessica is supporting her siblings by getting them up for school, cooking for them, clothing them, getting them on the bus, etc.;*
- *She works to help provide for the family as well but desperately wants to get her high school diploma;*
- *Her attendance and grades have suffered due to work and extra responsibilities at home; and*
- *How would a virtual environment help Jessica?*

Optimistic Considerations and Closure

- Ensure KRS [158.4416](#) *Trauma-informed approach to education provides* students with access to the same services provided to all students, especially as it relates to community mental health providers. Consider actionable steps to support students in a tiered approach that allows for individualized support. (**This should be a comprehensive team approach.*)
- Consider the need for ongoing access to high-quality professional learning (HQPL) on suicide prevention training, trauma-informed care and social-emotional learning.
- Create intentional connections between the virtual learning environment and the expectations provided in [KRS 158.1413](#), "Essential workplace ethics instruction program," and [KRS 158.6451](#), "Legislative declaration on goals for Commonwealth's schools," to ensure access to the critical skills needed for long-term success.

SEL RESOURCES



District Resource Center

Guidance and resources for implementing SEL districtwide

drc.casel.org



Guide to Schoolwide SEL

Guidance for implementing SEL throughout a school

schoolguide.casel.org



School Workshop Series

Live and on-demand workshop on implementing SEL

casel.org/events-webinars



SEL Assessment Guide

Guidance on assessment and how to choose a measure

measuringssel.casel.org



Guide to SEL Programs

Process for selecting a program, including an evidence-based list

pg.casel.org



SEL Roadmap to Reopening

Aid schools in supporting students and adults during the pandemic

casel.org/roadmap-to-reopen-schools/zzzzz



Our Children Are Leaders

SEL awareness building campaign for parents and caregivers

leadingwithsel.org



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