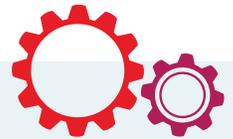


2021 SOCIAL AND EMOTIONAL LEARNING REPORT



We surveyed educators/teachers, administrators, and parents to better understand their opinions about the importance of social and emotional learning (SEL), the effects of COVID-19 on children's wellbeing, and how schools can support kids as they return for the 2021-22 school year. Here's what we learned.



What is SEL?

According to [CASEL](#) (Collaborative for Academic, Social, and Emotional Learning), social and emotional learning is the process through which all young people and adults acquire and apply the knowledge, skills, and attitudes to develop healthy identities, manage emotions and achieve personal and collective goals, feel and show empathy for others, establish and maintain supportive relationships, and make responsible and caring decisions.

About this report:

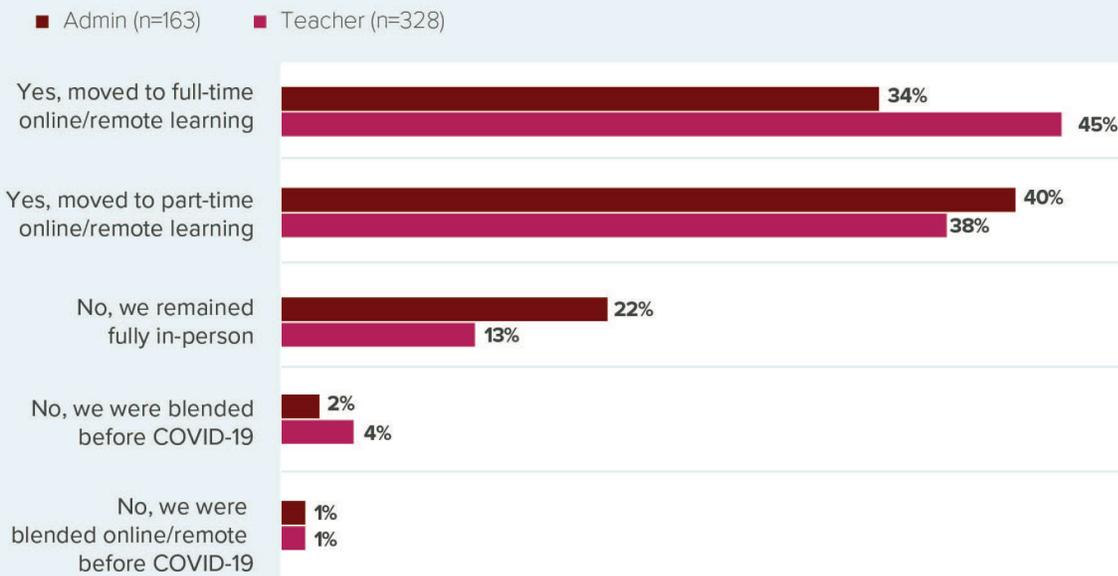
The findings in this report are based on responses to an online survey conducted by Hanover Research in July 2021, among a national sample of approximately 700 educators, administrators and parents. Results from the full survey have a margin of error of plus or minus 5% for educators/teachers, 8% for administrators and 7% for parents. This report follows a study we conducted in 2018.

The shift to online learning has had a significant impact on students' social and emotional well-being.



Figure 1

Thinking about the majority of the 2020-2021 school year, did your institution move to online/remote learning as a result of COVID-19?



Educators have seen more emotional distress and attendance problems with students.

- 53% of educators said COVID-19 and/or the shift to remote learning has caused their students emotional distress and created attendance problems.
 - Administrators and educators: Students have “given up” on school and show signs of depression, loneliness, and anxiety.
 - Educators: Student confidence has plummeted, and it is common for them to disengage from learning.

“ I had many students give up by the end of the year. Their grades were low so they didn’t bother to show up, try to improve their grade or do anything to help themselves.”

— EDUCATOR

COVID-19 has affected groups of students in different ways.

- Educators and administrators in low-income and urban school districts are more likely to report that student grades and test scores suffered during COVID-19.
 - Schools and districts in urban areas are more likely to have moved to full-time online/remote learning (51%) compared to those in suburban (39%) and rural (29%) areas.
 - Educators said the lack of physical connection with other students had the greatest impact on students’ wellbeing, with lack of connection to educators next in line.

“ Many students report depression, loneliness, lack of connection, and academics loss. We have had large increases in teen and child suicide attempts.”

— SCHOOL DISTRICT ADMINISTRATOR



Educators’ and parents’ awareness and prioritization of SEL continues to grow.

- Educators are much more knowledgeable about their school’s/district’s plans for teaching SEL skills today (91%) than they were in 2018 (77%).
- 56% of educators report that their school has begun implementing an SEL plan.
- Administrators report their institution is using standalone SEL programs (34%) far more than they did in 2018 (16%).

Virtually all educators report that it’s critical to develop key SEL skills in the classroom.

- According to educators, key SEL skills include:
 - o Self-awareness (with 99% of educators rating it as either somewhat or very important)
 - o Relationship skills (98% of educators)
 - o Self-management (97% of educators)
 - o Responsible decision-making (97% of educators)
 - o Social awareness (96% of educators)



Educators’ awareness of SEL has increased from

83% to 94%

since 2018



“ We will have more intentional and dedicated time to SEL lessons. There will be more explicit directives and training on how teachers can integrate it in their classroom content.”

— SCHOOL DISTRICT ADMINISTRATOR

“ I am working with our school social worker and counselor to make sure every student at every grade level K-8 receives consistent SEL lessons... throughout the 2021-22 school year.”

— EDUCATOR

SEL as students return to school in 2021-22

Figure 2: Parents

Prior to taking this survey, how familiar were you with the concept of social and emotional learning (SEL)?



- According to educators, SEL is important in helping improve negative behaviors, including:
 - o Bullying (95% of educators cite SEL as very or somewhat important)
 - o Lack of student motivation and engagement in learning (94%)
 - o School safety (93%)
 - o Poor teacher-student relationships (91%)
 - o Transitioning students from remote to in-person learning (91%).

Parental knowledge and advocacy of SEL has also grown since 2018.

- 62% of parents now feel teaching SEL is very important, compared to 55% three years ago.
- Parents also believe that SEL is not emphasized as much as it should be (81%), that it has become even more important since the beginning of the pandemic (82%), and that it is helpful for children learning online (80%).

Educators see a need for increased SEL in a post-pandemic world.

- Educators and administrators anticipate that returning to in-person learning will pose challenges for students.
 - o Educators believe that SEL will help provide short-term benefits such as reduced behavioral problems (96%), improved grades (91%), and less emotional distress (95%).
 - o The vast majority of educators (84%) believe that incorporating SEL into the core curriculum has become more important since the pandemic.
 - o Educators report that students are fearful of COVID-19 and social interaction, and that they will need extra time and attention to relearn social skills.
- As a result, many administrators are planning for an expanded focus on SEL in the upcoming school year.
 - o Some received training this summer in preparation, while others planned to devote more time and money to it.
 - o Educators believe that students in urban and lower income schools/districts are significantly more likely to have additional SEL needs.
 - o However, those in urban and lower income districts were also significantly more likely to cite inadequate resources for instruction and support as the biggest challenge.

For more SEL resources from McGraw Hill, visit mheducation.com/sel-survey.