



**School Culture &
Climate Initiative**

School Support Network

February 16, 2022

Supporting, Connecting and Empowering Schools



Welcome!

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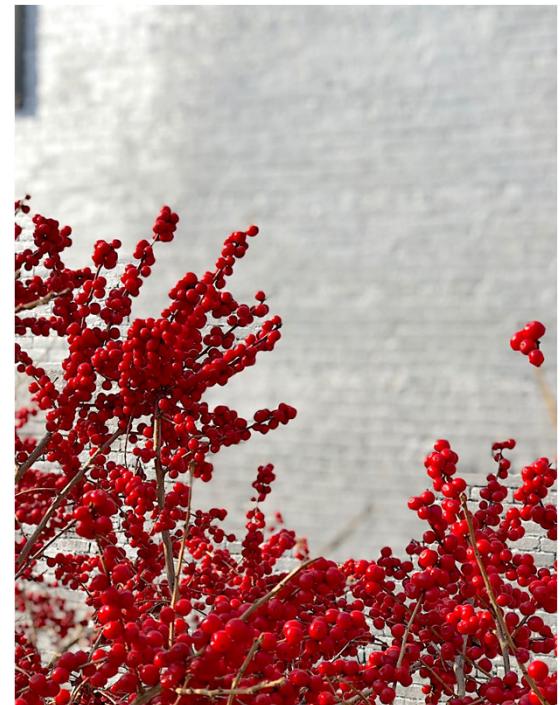
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And our wonderful team...

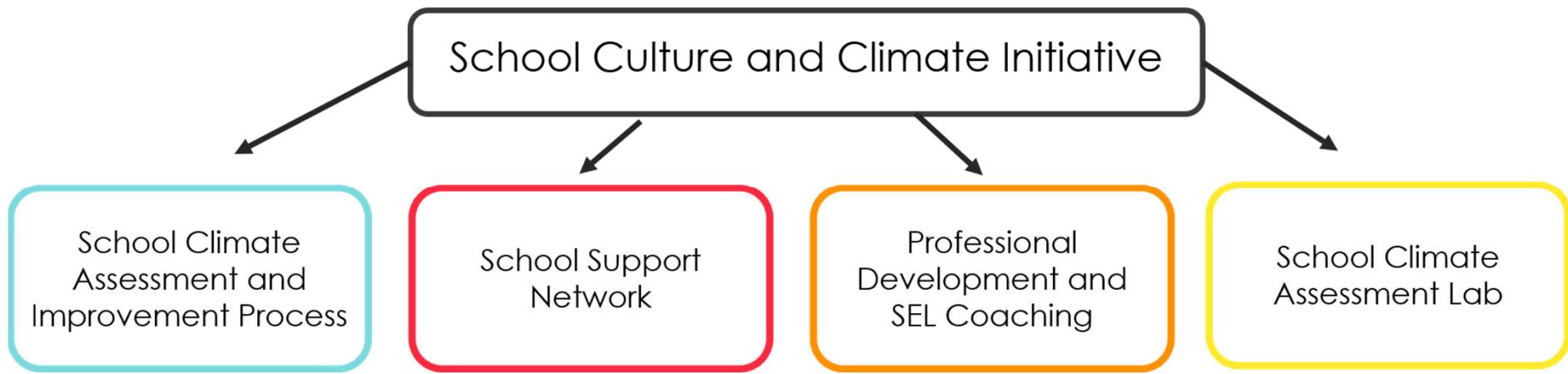
www.schoolcultureandclimate.org





School Culture and Climate Initiative

Based at the Center for Human and Social Development
at Saint Elizabeth University, Morristown, NJ





School Support Network (SSN)

The Idea...

- **Connection**
- Shared Professional Development – topic focused
- Spotlight Schools

The Details...

- Established in northern NJ 11 years ago
- Originally in-person now virtual with no geographic boundaries
- Over 12,000 professional development hours delivered and have connected thousands of educators

*The **SSN** is a project of the **School Culture and Climate Initiative***

Professional Learning Communities and Professional Learning Networks

- **School Support Network (like today)**
 - 90 minutes – monthly Professional Development
- **Coffee Chat**
 - 60 minutes – monthly
 - Connection – sharing successes, challenges, support and advice
- **Job-Alike Coffee Chats**
 - School Counselor
 - Administrator

SCAIP PLC

School Climate Assessment and Improvement Process

- For schools who are beginning, in the midst or have completed a 3 year school climate improvement process
- Process oriented

Educator Well-Being

- Building Within: Cultivating Well-being and Emotional Resilience in Educators" Workshop Series

Agenda

- Welcome and Introductions
- Workshop:
Preparing for the Masks to Come Off: Creating a culture of compassion and kindness that will help ALL through this latest transition
Facilitated by: Trish Heindel and Liz Warner
- SEL Day
- Resources available from the [School Culture and Climate Initiative](#)
- Grants for SEL and School Climate Work
- Dates for your calendar
- Evaluation

Settling in..



Please think about how you are feeling
today...

slido



Enter two words (only two words!) to describe how you are feeling today.

ⓘ Start presenting to display the poll results on this slide.

Introductions



Please take a
minute to
complete the poll.

Thank you!



Workshop

**Preparing for the Masks to Come Off: Creating
a culture of compassion and kindness that will
help ALL through this latest transition**

Facilitated by: Trish Heindel and Liz Warner,
Co-Directors of the School Culture and Climate

Big change is coming our way...

- BIG Change...Exacerbated by different personal experiences and mixed messaging
- What we are asking our brains to do is VERY hard...will focus on doing what we can now to prepare
- This session –
 - Video- reactions
 - Explore what does science say about our brains and change
 - Break-outs – anticipate reactions to the masks coming off
 - Identify and discuss opportunities to have this be a good experience
 - Tips for the next few weeks...



School Culture &
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Video

Dr. Maurice Elias breaks down debate over mask mandates

<https://abc7ny.com/video/embed/?pid=11544673>

Where we started...



Where we got to...



What helped adaptation to masks possible...

- Became normative
- Mandated for all adults and students
- Became typical to see in all settings besides in school
- Consistent communication about masks providing protection for self and others

Now more change for the brain...

As we navigate yet another significant change in our ongoing response to the COVID-19 pandemic, let's take a step back and look at what neuroscience tells us about how our brains respond to change.

Our brains are wired for survival

- Survival is increased by:
 - Predictability
 - Control
 - A sense of stability and slow pace
 - Certainty
 - Bias toward the negative; our brains are wired toward the negative

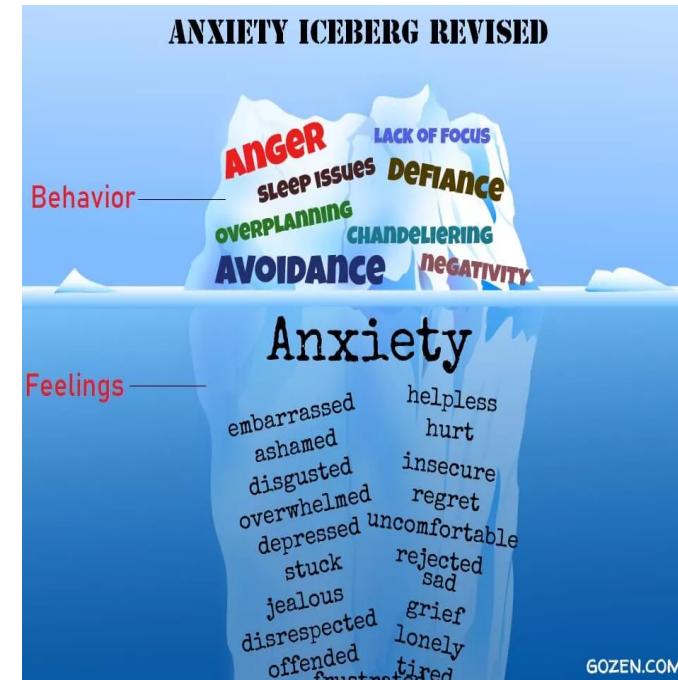
Threat switch in our brains

- Brace for fight or flight!
- Based on neuroscience we know that our brains perceive the following as threats:
 - Unpredictability
 - Uncertainty
 - Ambiguity
 - Volatility
 - Uncontrollability



Responding to and preparing for change...

- Acknowledge that the world offered more stability and predictability in the past
- Deeply understand what the brain threat response causes:
 - Acute stress reaction
 - Increased stress and anxiety
 - Altered perception of reality ("heightened antennae")
 - Decreased working memory functioning
 - Ruminating negative thoughts
- Proactive Responses
 - Any news is helpful; regular and positive communications
 - Be aware that stress & anxiety could be drivers of staff and student behavior



Discussion / Break-out 1

- What questions / reactions do you anticipate from students and/or staff?
- What challenges do you anticipate with the removal of the mask mandate?

Discussion / Break-out 2

- What opportunities do you see now to become better prepared?
 - For staff...
 - For students...
 - For parents...

Tips for the next couple of weeks...

Be ready for a complicated couple of weeks...

- Kindness and compassion can help (trauma-informed approach to everything)!
- Agree ahead of time a consistent approach to discipline and messaging
- Form a school/ district team (or task an existing team) with coordinating the effort
 - Draft responses to anticipated frequently asked questions teachers and staff may be asked
 - Coordinate the communication plan
- Plan some fun activities to help bring the anxiety down

Tips continued...

Talk about it!

- Encourage conversations..(in classrooms, at staff meetings and with each other)
 - How do people (staff, students and parents) anticipate feeling?
 - Do they have any concerns ~ are they worried or are they happy and excited or both?
 - How can they support friends, family members, colleagues and classmates...whatever each individual chooses?
 - Get specific...why someone might (or might not) choose to wear a mask- build empathy!
- Have students write (or draw or create!) about their feelings and experiences throughout
 - Can incorporate identifying things that have been hard, that have been good, that have been weird or silly

Tips continued...

Communication and managing expectations are key!

- Communicate with parents, with staff and school community
- One size does not fit all – each school/district is different
- Each individual's experience has been vastly different
- Support staff by helping them anticipate conversations and situations that may arise in their classroom



SEL4NJ.org

Please join!!



#SELday

The second annual International SEL Day is March 11, 2022!

Join us in celebrating International SEL Day on March 11, 2022. Sign up today with the following link [SEL Day Sign-up](#) to showcase, promote, advocate for and support SEL (broadly defined) in your school and community.

#SEL day



#SELday

If you create an artifact (which many NJ schools did last year for SEL Day!) it would be wonderful if you could send SEL4NJ a copy of your artifact (video, photos, blogs, podcasts, etc..) with the theme of your artifact included in the subject line.

Ideally one or two words...for example ***Kindness, Connection, Staff Morale, Student Voice, Respect***. We of course will be sure to tweet and share the artifact on SEL Day. We are excited to showcase and highlight the amazing SEL (broadly defined) work taking place in our NJ schools.

#SEL day

Upcoming Dates

Administrator Network Coffee Chat

9:30 a.m. - 10:30 a.m.
February 23

Coffee Chat

9:30 a.m. - 10:30 a.m.
March 2

School Counselor Network Coffee Chat

9:30 a.m. - 10:30 a.m.
March 9

SSN Meetings - 1:00 p.m. - 2:30 p.m.

March 16

Topic and Presenter TBD

April 27

Dr. Maurice Elias

May 4

Bergen County In-person
“Reconnecting With Your Strengths:
Revitalizing Connection”

What SCCI Can Offer

- **Data:**
 - [School Climate Assessment \(students, staff, parents\) with data analysis and in-person detailed data review](#)
 - Other assessment tools available including Equity, Social Inclusion, and Bullying Prevention
 - Student and staff surveys disaggregated by key sub-groups
- **SEL:**
 - [SEL teacher coaching \(all levels\) and professional development in all areas of SEL](#)
- **School Climate, SEL and DEI:**
 - Three-year all-inclusive, consultant supported, School Climate Assessment and Improvement Process with baseline and follow-up climate surveys for all in the school community
 - Including an integrated approach to DEI, SEL, and school climate improvement
- **Professional Learning Communities (PLCs):**
 - [Staff well-being PLCs/Parent PLCs](#)
 - PLCs available that bring schools together around similar jobs (school counselor/administrator) as well as shared professional development (School Support Network)
- **Professional Development:**
 - [Trauma-informed approaches, cultural competencies, equity, team building, SEL, and many more areas – designed specifically for your school/district](#)

Grant Funding Available

Current Grant Opportunities

2022 PSEG Grant Cycle

The PSEG Foundation is contributing \$100,000 to support the Sustainable Jersey Grants Program for public schools and school districts. Funding supports efforts to implement projects that help schools and school districts gain points needed for Sustainable Jersey for Schools certification and make progress toward a sustainable future. For more information, click [here](#).

Application Deadline: Friday, March 11, 2022 at 11:59 p.m.



Optimistic Close

(Emotions are contagious)



Please share in the chat something you are grateful for.



Evaluation



Please take a minute to complete the meeting evaluation to help us plan for future SSN meetings, coffee chats, and professional development opportunities.



Contact Details

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- Co-Director - Academy for Social-Emotional Learning in Schools
- Director - Center for Human and Social Development
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