

Boosting Social-Emotional Learning in Schools

In this article in *School Administrator*, Linda Darling-Hammond (Learning Policy Institute and Stanford University) says that social-emotional learning is a key factor in students' academic achievement and long-term life success. "When we help students to engage productively with one another, understand themselves and how they think, and better handle the stresses and challenges of their lives," says Darling-Hammond, "we prepare them for success now and in the future." She suggests four key tasks for school leaders:

Designing healthy learning environments – This includes a safe, supportive climate with high, consistent academic and behavioral expectations; reaching out to families and the community; running effective advisory groups; and, when possible, orchestrating multi-year student-teacher relationships.

Integrating social/emotional and academic learning – The best way to nurture a growth mindset and executive skills is getting students working on challenging, meaningful projects, allowing them to reflect on and revise their work in response to feedback, and building their skills at working in groups.

Supporting the adults who work with children – "Education is a very intense kind of work," says Darling-Hammond. "Educators must be able to relate well to a variety of students and other adults; manage relationships on an ongoing basis; remain calm in the face of emergencies; and be deliberate in situations that are unpredictable."

Making it an explicit mission – Social-emotional learning needs to be an explicit part of a district and school strategic plans and something that is articulated and modeled by superintendents and principals every day.

"What Makes Social-Emotional Learning So Important?" by Linda Darling-Hammond in *School Administrator*, September 2018 (Vol. 8, #75, p. 20-24), <http://my.aasa.org/AASA/Resources/SAMag/2018/Sep18/Darling-Hammond.aspx>; Darling-Hammond can be reached at ldh@learningpolicyinstitute.org.