



# TRAUMA, RESILIENCE, AND EQUITY IN THE AGE OF COVID-19 AND BLM



**EMBRACE  
CIVILITY**  
IN THE DIGITAL AGE

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# Resilience And Equity Strategies for the Virtual Classroom

# ASSUMPTION

As this series of videos has been created, many schools throughout the country are in various stages of opening, planning to open, closed down due to a COVID-19 outbreak, or will soon be closed down due to an outbreak

It is my assumption, given the evidence of the rapid emergence of spreader events as soon as schools opened, which will be followed by people spending more time indoors and cold and flu season, that the vast majority of schools will be delivering instruction virtually

# STANDARD TRAUMA INFORMED STRATEGIES



Safe Environment

Positive Expectations

Social Emotional Learning

Consistency

Positive Peer Connections

Mindfulness and Self Regulation

Positive Adult Connections

Cultural Competence

Restorative Interventions

Calming Places

Effective Response when Student Triggers

Continuous Improvement

# IMPOSSIBLE IN REOPENED SCHOOLS

Until it is truly safe, reopened schools will be trauma filled environments

Constant reminders  
of lack of safety

No anticipation of  
any consistency

Students unable  
to focus or learn

Teachers not able to  
physically comfort  
students or respond if  
student triggers

Students  
isolated from  
teachers and  
peers

Military-like strictness  
on movements

Students more likely  
to become distressed

Schools not able/willing to  
enforce safety measures

No calming  
spots

Consistent fear of staff and  
students that they could  
become infected

# FROM THIS TO THIS



## Rules

- Stay at your desk – always
- Don't touch anything
- Your teacher cannot help you tie your shoe, open your milk carton, hold your hand to write a letter – or comfort you if you are crying

# A SAD TEACHER REPORT

It was a very sad day. We were asked to come to the building to remove all personal items. Only 25 chairs and 25 desks will be allowed in the room. No bookshelves, no books, no manipulatives, or anything else the students could touch. The students will be in our rooms from 8:15-3:00, with a couple of recesses. They must eat at their desks, work at their desks, and may not move around the room. Many tears were shed and thousands of dollars of learning tools were thrown away. This is so wrong on so many levels!

# TRAUMATIC IMPACT OF REOPENED SCHOOLS

Students who were in reopened schools due that have now closed due to infections have likely suffered trauma

Memories of how they felt will be stored in their hippocampus

This has the potential of causing feelings of dread whenever they step into a school building forever into the future

## Predictable Future Risks

School avoidance

Drop-outs

School failure

Disruptive and violent behavior

Lack of trust in school personnel

Difficult relationships with schools when parents

# VIRTUAL LEARNING SPRING 2020 CHALLENGES

Students who were unable to access due to lack of connectivity

Student stress in families that were facing huge challenges

Multitude of different platforms, causing confusion

Teachers in learning mode

Lack of in-person connections that are so necessary to support students

Technical challenges

The outcomes of Spring 2020 were not impressive!

Boring worksheets

"Lack of motivation"

# RECOGNIZE THE REALITY

If student's physiological, safety, love and belonging, and esteem needs are not being met, they cannot learn



When effective learning can occur

What we have to focus on to support effective learning!

# RECOGNIZE THE REALITY



If students are under toxic stress, they have “flipped their lid” and their Thinking Center is not effectively connected



To support effective learning requires a primary focus on increasing student resilience so that their brain becomes reconnected

# EFFECTIVE DISTANCE LEARNING

What components are necessary to establish a virtual environment that is equitable and supports resilience?

Continuous Improvement

Growth Mindset

Safe Virtual Environment

Expectations

Effective Response when Student Triggers

Positive Adult Connections

Support for Emotional Well-being

Cultural Competence

Restorative Resolutions

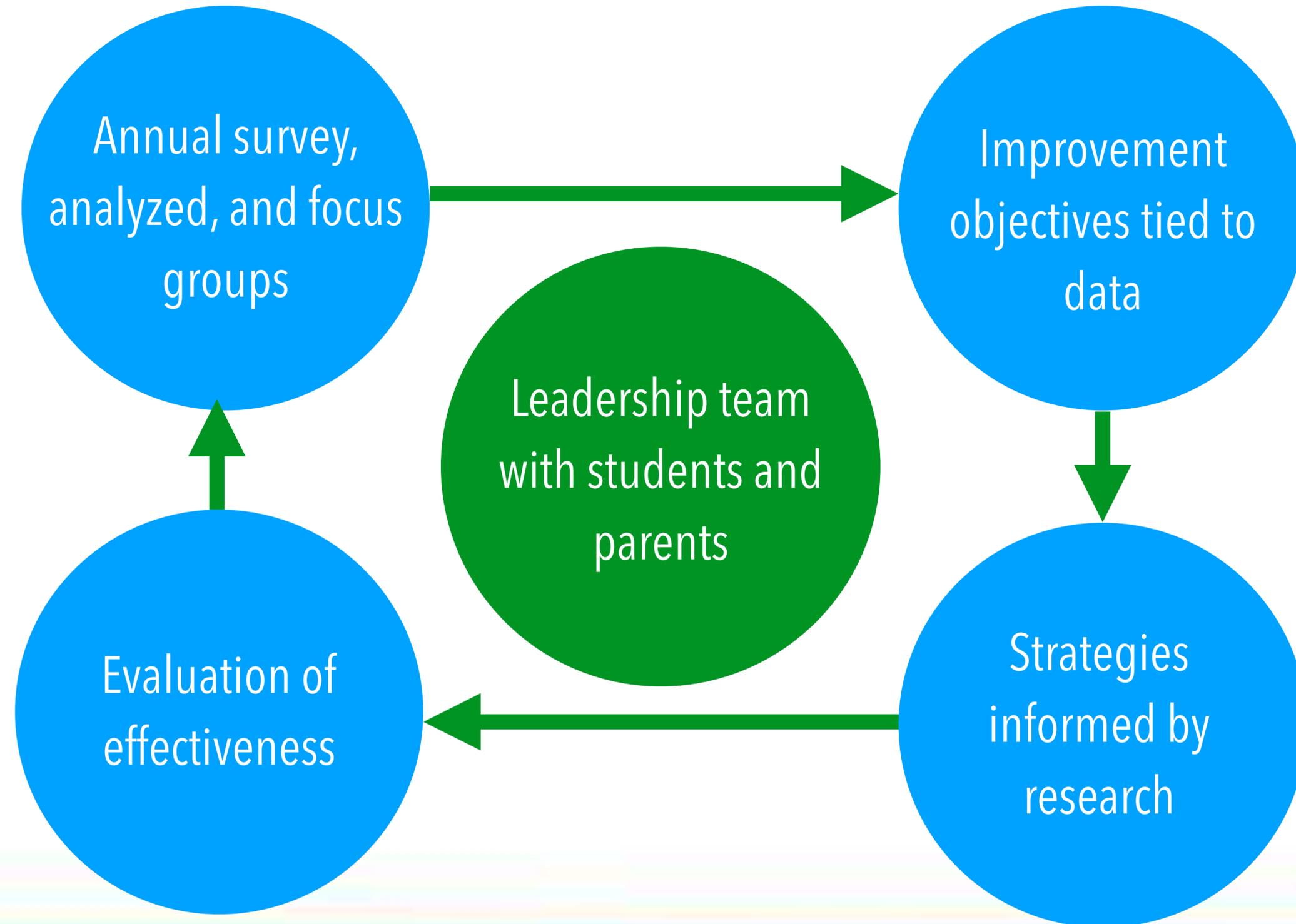
Positive Peer Connections

Focus on Intrinsic Motivation

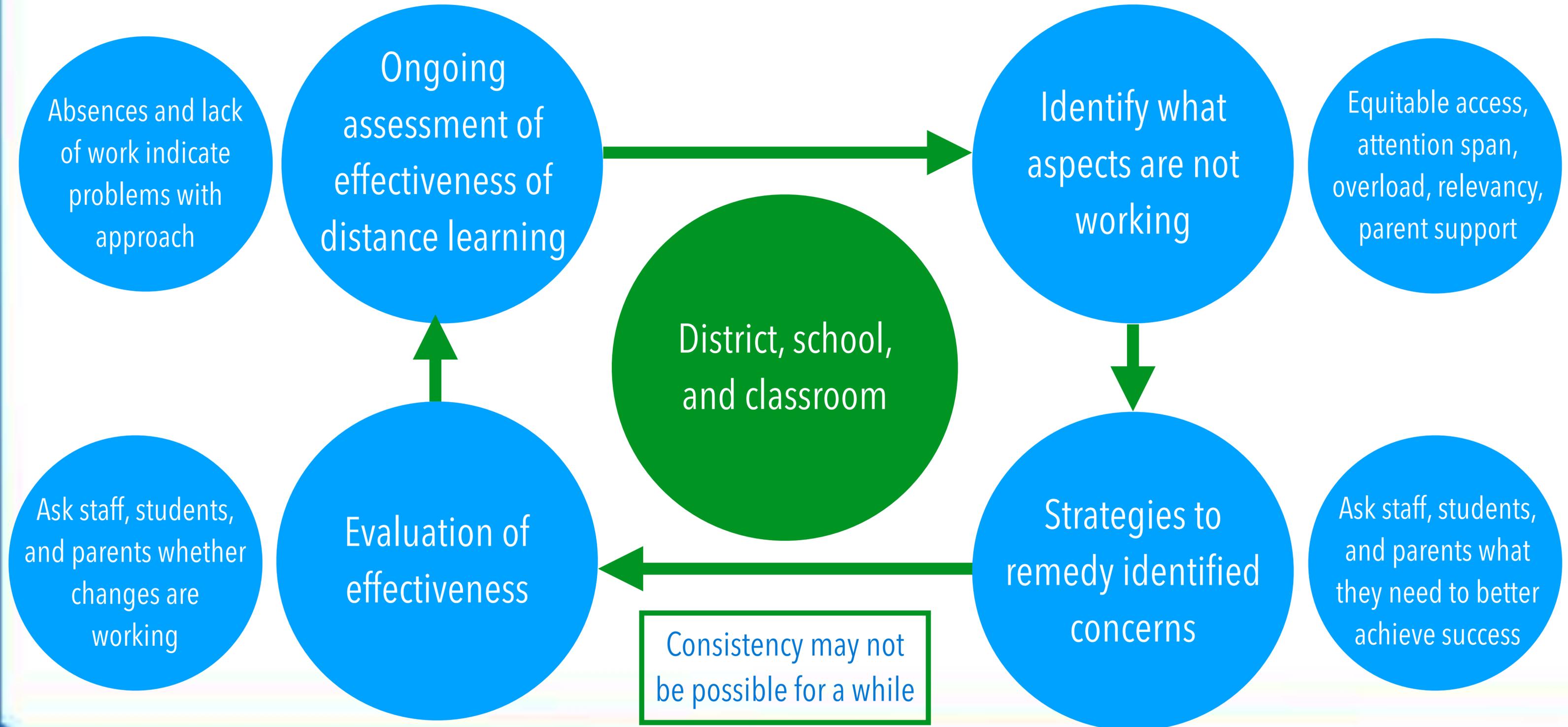
Mindfulness and Self Regulation

Consistency –  
hmm – may not be possible for a while

# TRADITIONAL CONTINUOUS IMPROVEMENT



# VIRTUAL CONTINUOUS IMPROVEMENT



# DID YOU ASK?

Students and parents are your best source of insight

## **Students and Parents**

Your middle and high school students and the parents of your elementary students are your best source of insight into how your distance learning program worked last year and your plans for this year

Did you ask them about last year?

Were students and parents on your planning committee for this year?

Do you have a plan of action to obtain feedback throughout this year?

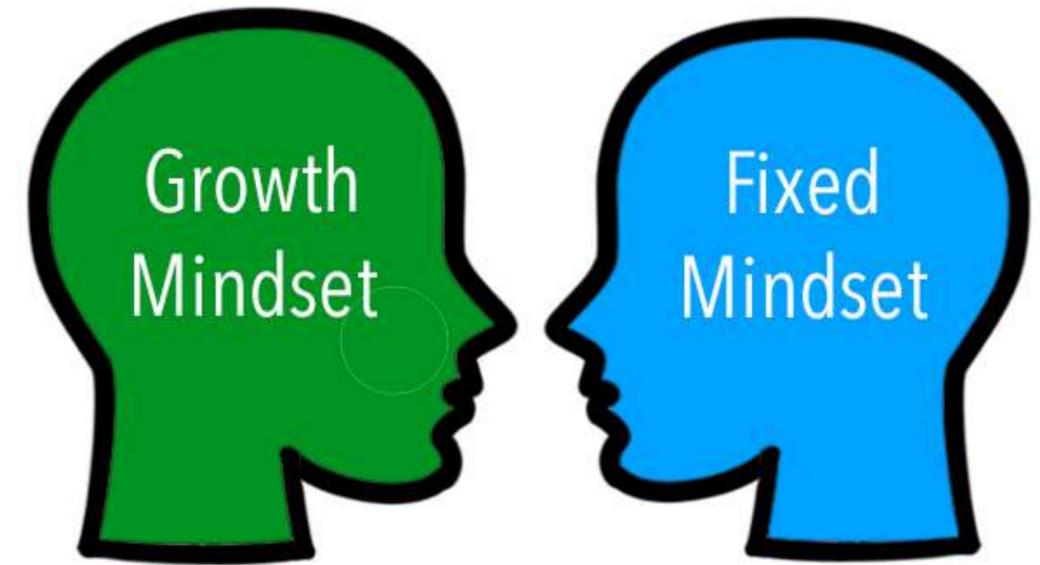
# HAVE A GROWTH MINDSET

Odds are that the initial strategies schools use to provide distance learning this fall are going to fail in some critical ways

Odds are that many students will also initially fail

How schools handle failure will be exceptionally important

The attitude of schools about failure and their efforts to remedy the concerns that become apparent will determine ultimate success



# RESPONSES TO TRAUMA

More likely in distance learning

## Flight

Run away,  
refuse to talk,  
avoidance

## Freeze

Disconnected,  
stop trying,  
unresponsive

Students experiencing trauma when  
in a distance learning environment  
are more likely to stop trying

**Indicators there are concerns related to  
your distance learning environment**

Absences

Not paying  
attention

Work not being  
completed

Perception students  
are "unmotivated"

Not responding

Perception families  
are "not supportive"

# WHAT IS NOT WORKING?

Do NOT ask: What is wrong with this student?

Do NOT: Accuse students or their families of being "unmotivated" or "not supportive"

Ask: Which challenges might this student and their family be having?

Ask: How might this student be facing barriers in gaining access?

Ask: How might the school's distance learning not be supporting these students?

## **One Student**

Concern may be related to challenges being experienced by this student and family or access challenges

## **Multiple Students**

Concern is most likely related to a distance learning environment that is not effectively supporting their learning

# SAFE VIRTUAL ENVIRONMENT

## Attention Span

Students should not be expected to maintain attention in a manner that is beyond what they are biologically capable of doing

## Privacy

Students should not be required to allow others to see where they live or even to appear via video

## Accessibility

All digital resources must be fully accessible

## Equity

Students have different levels of connectivity, access, and devices and different demands on their time and availability

## Personal Safety

Students should not be required or encouraged to share aspects of their personal lives via conferencing



# LIVE STREAMING OF TEACHER LECTURES

Live streaming of teacher lectures is a huge concern

Requires high bandwidth, so excludes students with limited access

Lectures are not effective instruction

Excludes students who cannot participate at a set time

Does not support effective discussions

Often requires student attention span that is not developmentally possible

Students' homes may be visible, which is an invasion of privacy

Challenging or impossible to provide individual support

# LIVE STREAMING HYBRID

"Worn out"

"Not sustainable"

"I'm drowning"

"Migraine after migraine"

Some districts are requiring teachers to both teach in person and livestream to their class online

"This is not going to work"

"Mentally and physically exhausted"

"Have never been this wiped out"

"Had a melt down yesterday"

"Criminal"

"Mass resignations are coming"

"Utter insanity"

"Can't continue"

"Failing"

This is Cruel and Unusual Punishment of teachers!!

SCHEDULE		
	Instruction Type	
8:30 - 9:00	Live	Morning Meeting 
9:00 - 9:40	Live	Reading and Writing 
9:40 - 10:00	Screen Break	Recess 
10:00 - 10:30	Live	Phonics 
10:30 - 10:50	Live	Class Recess 
10:50 - 11:45	Live	Math 
11:45 - 12:30	Screen Break	Lunch 
12:30 - 1:30	Live	ILT 
1:30 - 2:00	Live	Specials 
2:00 - 3:00	SeeSaw	Turn in Assignments through SeeSaw 

The schedule for elementary students has them watching Zoom lectures from 8:15 to 3:00

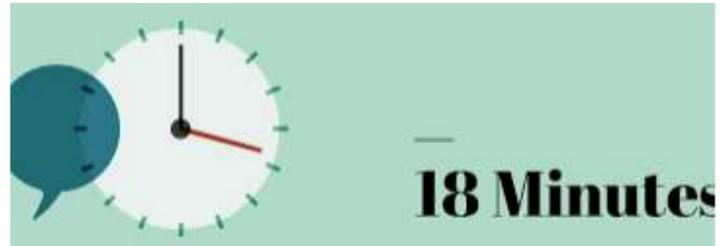
This is not developmentally supported

**Significant Zoom Fatigue**

Could lead to family discord because parents might expect their child to do what their child is biologically incapable of doing

# ATTENTION SPAN

**TED** Ideas worth spreading



The average attention span of adults for a video lecture is 18 minutes

## Probable Attention Spans

High school – 15 - 18 minutes

Middle school – 12 - 14 minutes

Intermediate – 9 - 11 minutes

Primary – 6 - 8 minutes



# EFFECTIVE DISTANCE LEARNING ENVIRONMENT

To reduce stress on students, families, and staff

## Keep It Simple and Accessible

- Use consistent tools throughout the school
- Ensure activities can be accomplished with low or no bandwidth (USB drives and phones)

## Provide Significant Technical Support

- Engage your high school technology class students to provide technical support

## Place Highest Priority on Full Access and Connections

- On demand delivery of content
- On demand digital connections
- Small group live discussions
- Individual contacts by teacher

# SELF DETERMINATION THEORY

## Connections

Positive connections with important others

Three Primary Motivations

## Competencies

Effective skills in areas of perceived importance

## Control

Personal autonomy and choice

# THE FLIPPED CLASSROOM

The Flipped Classroom model provides a great basis

## **Normal Instruction**

Content delivered at school through lectures

Students work on problems at home

## **Flip Model**

Content delivered through digital resources accessible from home

Students work on problems at school

## **Benefits of Flip Model**

- Content is available at any time
- Allows for greater individualized learning and support
- Deeper learning, because students are engaged in authentic application of content, under guidance of teacher

# THE VIRTUAL FLIPPED CLASSROOM

Take the Flipped Classroom Model virtual

## Content

- Content available at any time (no live streamed lectures)
- Content includes: teacher lecture videos, other videos, readings, images, slides, etc.

## Active Virtual Engagement

- Students work on authentic problems
- Full class discussions on on demand discussion boards or Google Docs
- Divide class into 4 small group cohorts (6-8 students) to hold live discussions – video to land line phone
- Teacher individual support

# THE HYBRID FLIPPED CLASSROOM

When schools reopen in hybrid, the Flipped Classroom approach can continue

## **Content**

- All content continues to be made available to all students online

## **Active Virtual and Classroom Engagement**

- Assuming class is divided in half for hybrid, bring 2 cohorts in at a time
- Cohorts can work on projects as a cohort or engage in large group work at school
- Virtual cohorts continue virtually

# SELF DETERMINATION VIRTUALLY

## Connections

Strong focus on personal connections and positive peer relationships

Motivating Self  
Determination  
Virtually

## Competencies

Authentic, inquiry and project based virtual learning

## Control

Personal choice in independent studies and projects

# POSITIVE CONNECTIONS WITH ADULTS

**The single most common factor for children who develop resilience is at least one stable and committed relationship with a supportive parent, caregiver, or other adult.**

These relationships provide the personalized responsiveness, scaffolding, and protection that buffer children from developmental disruption. They also build key capacities—such as the ability to plan, monitor, and regulate behavior—that enable children to respond adaptively to adversity and thrive. This combination of supportive relationships, adaptive skill-building, and positive experiences is the foundation of resilience.



Center on the Developing Child  
HARVARD UNIVERSITY

This is why active virtual engagement  
with students is so critical

# POSITIVE CONNECTIONS WITH ADULTS

## Only Possible Through Conversations

The best way to facilitate positive connections with adults is by establishing a distance learning approach that is focused on on demand digital discussions, small group live discussions, and individual conversations

## Elementary and Advisory

Make sure elementary teachers and advisory teachers have time for planned well-being support interactions with students



# REFLECTIVE LISTENING

What students need most at this time is to feel they have been heard!

## In Pain

Many are in pain

## No One To Listen

Many are experiencing trauma alone

## Families Distressed

Many are in families that are experiencing distress

## Reflective Listening

- Listen with your heart
- Reflect back both emotions and issue
- "It sounds like you are feeling \_\_\_ because \_\_\_"
- Stay in this mode until they have fully expressed themselves and are relaxed

# COLLABORATIVE PROBLEM SOLVING

Do NOT!

Tell students what you think they should do

Help Them to Think Things Through

Help them engage in problem solving to develop strategies they can use to resolve concerns

Think Things Through

Through Reflective Listening, you have identified concerns, then help them to:

- Decide their goals
- Identify strategies
- Consider their values and the probable outcomes of those strategies
- Pick the best strategy and create an action plan
- Determine how will they assess effectiveness

# FOCUS ON POSITIVE

Ensure 5:1 positive to negative interactions

Provide positive greetings

Praise their effort and process, not them or the outcome

Encourage them to use their strengths

Positively acknowledge their work effort

Help them to focus on the good

Encourage them to reach out to be kind to others

Identify and recognize their strengths

Express appreciation for their kindness

Create a digital community where students positively interact with each other

# STUDENT DEVELOPED GROUP EXPECTATIONS

Shift from top down staff-enunciated positive expectations to student-developed positive group expectations

High priority on giving students voice and control!

How do you want to be treated in our distance learning environment?

What commitments will you make for how you will treat others in this distance learning environment?

Make group expectations relevant to the current situation and distance learning environment

# GROUP UNDERSTANDINGS

## Recognitions

- Everyone is distressed
- Some students may have life circumstances that are more challenging than others
- Students may not want to share the personal challenges they are having
- Students' privacy should be respected

## When Something Wrong Happens

- When someone does not abide by group expectations, this is not because something is wrong with them—this is because something wrong is happening to them

## Remedy the Harm

- When someone violates group expectations, they will take steps to remedy the harm

# ADDRESS LONELINESS OF STUDENTS

Student loneliness in this time is a serious and significant concern

## Socially Isolated

Through next winter, it is likely to get worse

## Challenge for Teens

Teens are especially challenged because of importance of peers

## Digital Envy or Cyberbullying

Seeing images from other students are allowed to venture out when their parents will not leads to envy or they may be digitally excluded or cyberbullies



# ADDRESSING LONELINESS

## Team Work

Very positive ways to support students is to engage them in ongoing small group live discussions (6-8 student cohorts) and team work project based on demand learning activities

## Teach Virtual Team Work Skills

Teach students how to support each other on a team

- Collaboratively think things through to develop strategies and tasks that will accomplish desired outcome
- Positively comment on members' contributions
- Provide and accept constructive feedback
- Resolve conflict and mediate the conflict of others
- Express gratitude and appreciation

# ENCOURAGE KINDNESS

## Reach Out to Be Kind

Help students understand that the best thing they can do if they are feeling lonely is to Reach Out to Be Kind to someone else

## Establish a Student-Led Kindness Team

Create a student team that can lead the school community in digital kindness activities.

## Be Positively Powerful

The journaling strategy will encourage acts of kindness

## Reporting Acts of Kindness

Ask students to report who they were kind to, what they did, and how this made them feel



# AVOID THE DANGERS OF GROUP SHARING

Be careful of student sharing of concerns via virtual meetings!!!

## Sharing Danger

There are risks related to personal disclosure in a virtual environment

## Trust May Be Lacking

Given everything that students are going through, trust may be sorely lacking

## Inappropriate Pressure

Students may feel pressured by this practice to disclose when they do not wish to do so

## Recording and Disclosure Risks

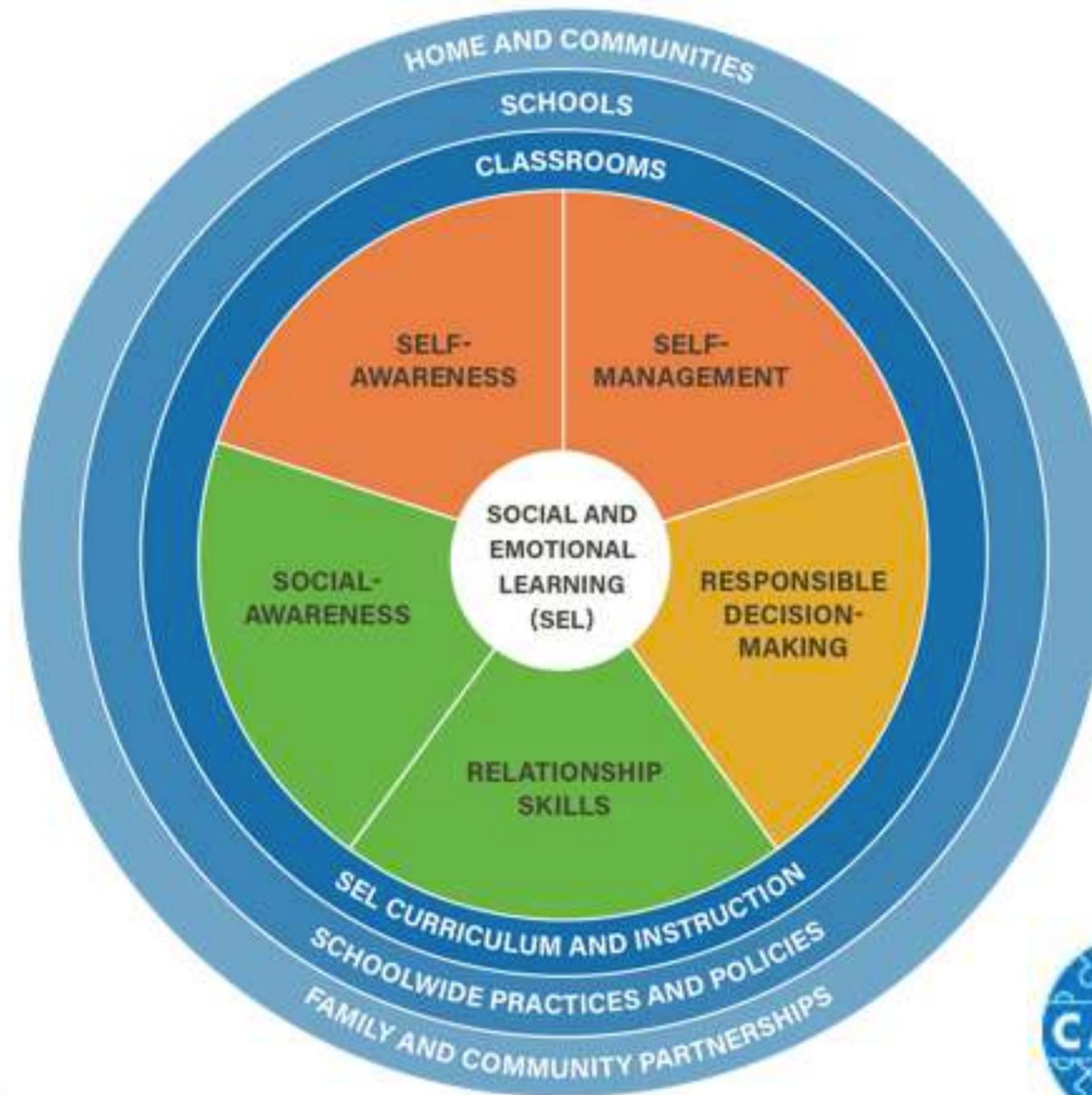
Peers could record and publicly share

## Build Trust in Cohorts

When 6-8 student cohorts have established trust, sharing may be possible

# SOCIAL-EMOTIONAL LEARNING

Provide SEL  
CASEL provides insight into  
SEL curriculum



Educating Hearts.  
Inspiring Minds.

# CHARACTER STRENGTHS LEARNING



**VIA YOUTH SURVEY**  
*For Ages 10-17*



**PROFESSIONALS (YOUTH)**

Activating Character

Strengths in the

Classroom

**Strongly Encouraged!**

You are strongly encouraged to implement the VIA Character Strengths approach as part of your Social Emotional Learning activities

This is also part of  
**Be Positively  
Powerful**

Students complete  
the survey

Positively acknowledge when  
students use strengths

Create an image  
illustrating their  
strengths

Pick a strengths for  
everyone to work on  
each week

When thinking things  
through, identify strategies  
that use strengths

Creativity Perspective  
Judgment Curiosity  
Honesty Bravery Fairness  
HUMOR Zest  
PERSEVERANCE Teamwork  
Love Kindness Leadership  
Social Intelligence Love of Learning  
Forgiveness HOPE PRUDENCE  
Appreciation of Beauty & Excellence Humility  
Spirituality SELF-REGULATION Gratitude

# CULTURAL COMPETENCE



## Valuing Diversity

Accepting and  
respecting differences

## Being Culturally Self Aware

Knowing who you are and where  
you fit in

## Understanding the Dynamics of Cultural Interactions

What can go wrong and how to  
respond

## Institutionalizing Cultural Knowledge and Adapting to Diversity

Design school environment to better serve  
diverse populations

# MINDFULNESS AND SELF REGULATION



## Mindfulness Practice

All students need to regularly be led in the practices of Mindfulness and Self-Regulation

## Children with Challenges

Students who have greater challenges and have triggered should create a Self Regulation Action Plan

## Self-Regulation Action Plan

- Identify common triggers
- Recognize when becoming triggered
- Know several strategies that can be helpful in Self-Regulating
- Whenever experienced triggering, evaluate the effectiveness of those strategies

# AVOID T.A.C.O.S.



Educator Should  
Avoid T.A.C.O.S.

T.A.C.O.S only increase  
triggering and  
disregulation

**T**hreats

**A**rguments

**C**oercion

**O**rders

**S**haming

# RESTORATIVE RESOLUTIONS

- Remind them they all agreed to be kind to others
- Ask: Is there a concern that you have that is interfering with your ability to abide by our group agreement of kindness?
- Engage in reflective listening to fully understand what is happening to them
- Invite them to engage in problem solving to both address underlying concerns and how to remedy the harm to any individual student and to the group
- If any individual was harmed, check with that student on their needs and make sure remedy is acceptable – engaging in reflective listening
- Positively acknowledge all positive efforts

# REFLECTION QUESTIONS

Please consider these questions

- What are the ways you can use this insight to improve on what you are currently doing?
- What barriers are present or what additional supports would be helpful for you to do so?
- What are the ways you think your school could use this insight to improve on what your school is currently doing?