



Board of Education Study Session

October 12, 2021

Academic Excellence
Safe, Positive Culture & Climate

Learn Today, Lead Tomorrow

Academic Excellence and Safe, Positive Climate & Culture

Time	Study Session Overview
5:00 – 5:30	Introductions, Overview, and Essential Questions
5:30 – 6:00	Collaborative Discussion <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>● Mental Health
6:00 – 7:00	Collaborative Discussion <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>● Social Emotional Learning
7:00 – 7:30	Next Steps Monitoring Reports

Our Vision

The Douglas County School District strives to ***maximize the potential of every student to pursue his or her chosen endeavor in society***, including but not limited to ***post secondary education, career, or military service***.

Our Mission

The mission of the Douglas County School District is to provide an ***educational foundation*** that allows each student to ***reach*** his or her ***individual potential***.

Douglas County Schools



Board Ends	Collaborative Parent, Family, and Community Relations					
	Academic Excellence		Financial Well-Being	Safe, Positive Culture and Climate		Outstanding Educators and Staff
District Strategic Plan Themes District Strategic Plan	Strategic Theme: Aligned curriculum with flexible instructional delivery	Strategic Theme: Post-graduation guidance and preparation	Strategic Theme: Equitable distribution of resources	Strategic Theme: Health, safety and social emotional supports for students	Strategic Theme: Positive and supportive culture	Strategic Theme: Recruitment, retention and development of high-quality employees
Priority Student Outcomes	Prepare All Students for Post Graduate Success Improve Academic Achievement and Growth for All Students		Promote Student Engagement and Wellbeing All Students Have Equitable Access to a High Quality Education			
Big Rocks	Professional Learning Communities - Priority Learning Outcomes					
	Literacy - Reading			Social Emotional Learning		
School & Dept. Plans	School & Department Goals					4

BOE Ends - Goals Alignment

Academic Excellence

- All students have equitable access to a Douglas County public school that promotes growth in their cognitive, physical, **social** and **emotional needs** and builds on their strengths.
- Academic expectations are clearly articulated and supported with an appropriate curriculum that includes content, scope and sequence.
- Every student has equitable opportunity to acquire the knowledge and skills that will ensure performance at his/her highest individual potential.
- Students graduate with acquired content and cultural knowledge, workforce readiness, **interpersonal skills**, civic responsibility, global awareness, independent living and an understanding of the **essentials for health and wellness**.

Safe, Positive Culture and Climate

- A purposeful focus on creating a **caring, safe, fun, supportive, and positive learning** and working **environment** for all students, district employees, parents, and community is manifest throughout the district.
- There is clear evidence and a common understanding of the shared belief that all students can succeed when given a safe and caring learning environment. To that end:
 - District employees, parents, and community work collaboratively, proactively and responsibly to ensure the psychological wellbeing of all students.

Big Rock Priorities and Strategic Plan Objectives



Create and implement an inclusive PK-12+ curriculum aligned to Colorado Academic Standards (including enabling systems).

Create district-wide aligned instructional frameworks to implement data-informed, flexible instructional practice (including enabling systems).

Increase physical, social-emotional, behavioral, and mental health competency through prevention and intervention efforts.

Establish an inclusive culture to ensure all students feel safe and valued.

Strategic Theme

Health, Safety, and Social Emotional Supports for Students

Objective 2: Increase physical, social-emotional, behavioral, and mental health competency through prevention and intervention efforts.

PHASE 1

Strategic Initiative 2a

Ensure consistent implementation of the Multi Tiered System of Supports (MTSS) framework to include **implementation of a comprehensive social-emotional learning (SEL) framework**, trauma-informed practices, and restorative practices.



Douglas County School District - **Strategic Plan Framework**

Priority Student Outcomes

Promote Student Engagement and Wellbeing	Prepare All Students for Post-Graduation Success
Improve Academic Achievement and Growth for All Students	All Students Have Equitable Access to a High-Quality Education

Essential Questions

- What does Mental Health and Social Emotional Learning look like in the Douglas County School District?
- Social Emotional Learning - What is it and what are the benefits?
- Does SEL have any impact on level of academic achievement?
- Why are there challenges with Social Emotional Learning in our schools?
- What professional development and training is available for our staff?
- What are next steps at the District and school level?

Youth Mental Health

“State of Emergency” Declared

- "Right now, Colorado's children uniquely need our help," Jena Hausmann, CEO of Children's Hospital Colorado said. "It has been devastating to see suicide become the leading cause of death for Colorado's children."
 - *While we know that wearing a mask isn't always comfortable, there is no persuasive evidence that masks affect the mental health of children and teens.*
- Emergency departments are full with children who have suicidal concerns and major mental health concerns
- David Brumbaugh, MD, Chief Medical Officer for Children's Colorado said, "Our kids have run out of resilience – their tanks are empty."
 - *Mental Health crisis prior to 2020, before COVID*

Contributing Factors to Youth Needs

- Feelings of hopelessness, which is one predictor of suicidal ideation
- Chronic stress
- Feelings of burnout
- Social isolation
- Social Media
- History of trauma
- Tobacco use
- Substance use

5-17 Yr Old Suicide Related Emergency Department (ED) Visits

Total Annual ED Visits Related to Suicidal Ideation

	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020*	2021*
Number of Visits	967	1111	1110	1020	1096	1136

Total Annual ED Visits Related to Suicide Attempts

	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020*	2021*
Number of Visits	212	268	265	279	396	335

Source: Tri-County Health, Douglas County Data

Data from the Tri-County Health Department for deaths by suicide are listed in the table. This data provides information on people who indicate that they are permanent residents of Douglas County. It is important to note that the 10 to 18 age group includes both citizens in the county that are not DCSD students and school-aged youth that attend DCSD schools.

AGE	2020 TOTAL	2019 TOTAL	2018 TOTAL
10-18	5	3	7
19-24	1	5	7
25-44	14	21	18
45-64	19	21	20
65+	6	6	8
Total	45	56	60

Douglas County Coroner Deaths by Suicide

AGE	2020 MALE	2020 FEMALE	2020 TOTAL	2019 MALE	2019 FEMALE	2019 TOTAL	2018 MALE	2018 FEMALE	2018 TOTAL
Under <input type="checkbox"/>									
10 to 19	2	3	5	3	1	4	6	2	8
20 to 29	4	1	5	8	3	11	8	2	10
30 to 39	7	2	9	6	1	7	6	1	7
40 to 49	5	3	8	10	5	15	8	2	10
50 to 59	9	4	13	6	3	9	9	6	15
60 to 69	5	2	7	5	1	6	4	2	6
70 to 79		1	1	1		1	2		2
80 to 89	1	1	2	2		2	1		1
90 to 99							1		1
TOTAL	33	17	50	41	14	55	45	15	60

Suicide Risk Assessments by School

Year	Aug	Sept	Oct	Nov	Dec	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Totals
13-14	27	53	41	44	30	44	114	62	62	53	536
14-15	43	60	68	84	41	52	69	57	73	63	610
15-16	61	100	94	81	51	93	98	86	93	78	835
16-17	84	137	118	128	76	123	184	166	155	142	1313
17-18	101	182	163	141	119	128	196	175	154	155	1514
18-19	112	197	191	200	174	139	219	168	188	161	1749
19-20	165	248	186	189	157	200	261	148	56	28	1554
20-21	43	157	93	116	72	145	155	206	221	152	1360
21-22	132	274									

DCSD Suicide Prevention Efforts

- Universal SEL
- Sources of Strength
- Signs of Suicide
- Individual and Group Mental Health Sessions
- School Suicide Risk Assessments
- Youth Community Response Team
- Suicide Awareness Trainings

DCSD Suicide Assessment Process

- Connections based
- Builds protective factors at the point of assessment
- Contributes to building a safe and trusting school community
- Safety planning with student and parents/guardians
- Provide parents with safety information and resources
- Collaborate with outside providers

DCSD Mental Health Intervention Supports and Resources

All schools have trained mental health professionals that conduct suicide assessments whether students are learning remotely or in person. The assessment process used is connections-based, building protective factors at the point of assessment as a key protective factor for youth is having at least one supportive adult in their life. At the completion of the assessment the student has another positive adult connection at school and is able to collaborate with the school and their parents on safety planning. With any suicide assessment or intervention, staff work closely with parents to develop a plan to keep the student safe when at home and remind parents and guardians of the importance of:

- Calling 911 or law enforcement if needed
- Removing the means to suicide
- Providing adult supervision until the student's safety is established
- Providing crisis line information (see forms) on Parent Tip Sheet
 - [Tip Sheet for Parents](#)
 - [Tip Sheet for Parents - Spanish Version](#)
- Coordinating care with outside providers (if applicable)

Why Social Emotional Learning (SEL)?

The Whole-Child Philosophy

“Maslow before Bloom”

“To reach a child’s mind you first must capture the heart.”

“When kids feel right, they act right.”

Hiam Ginott

The idea that educators should meet their students’ basic needs for safety and belonging before turning to challenging academic tasks is one that guides the work of many schools and districts.

Research indicates that failure to integrate social and emotional practices is a mistake that will further amplify mental health issues and traumatic stressors students experience.

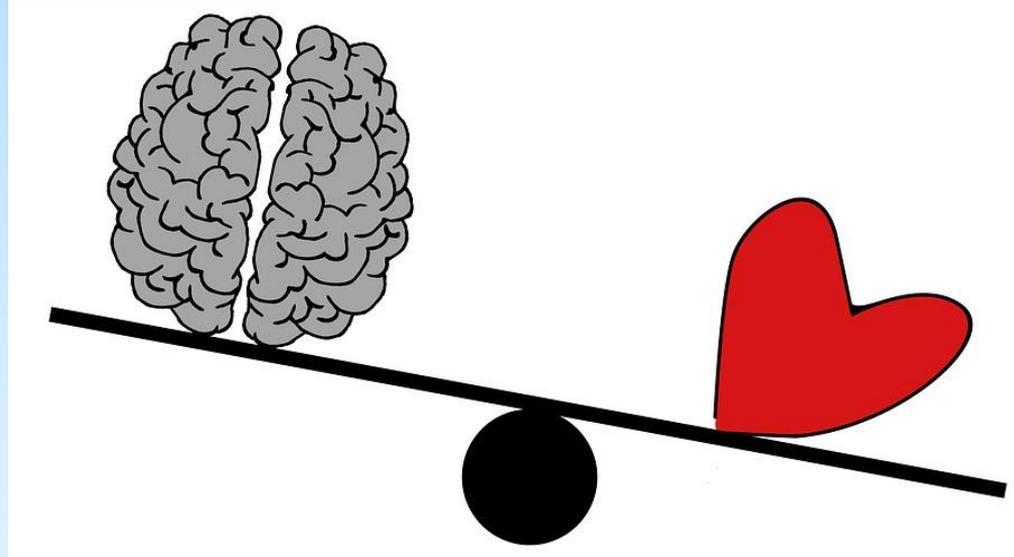
What we ALL want for ALL of our children/students:

- Academic engagement and success
- Healthy relationships
- Employment Opportunities - collaborative/teamwork skills
- Positive mindset and optimistic outlook
- Grit, tenacity, perseverance
- Emotional coping strategies and self-management
- Strong sense of self
- Personal responsibility
- Engaged and productive citizens

IQ vs. EQ

“Success”

- Contentment
- Employment
- Relationships
- Intimacy
- Financial Wellness
- Happiness



What We Mean When We Talk About Social/Emotional Learning Competencies

- Ability to recognize one's feelings and to be able to regulate and control one's emotions
- Stress management and other coping skills
- How to negotiate/navigate conflict productively with others
- How to set limits and boundaries
- Active listening/How to express oneself appropriately
- Appropriately seek help and support from others/offer support to others
- Collaboration skills
- Ability to delay gratification and reign in one's impulses
- Persevere through challenges
- Resilience/Grit/Courage
- Self-motivation and goal-setting
- Make safe choices/Responsible decision-making/Refusal skills
- Establish positive and healthy relationships
- To show remorse and make amends
- Positive self-image/Self-confidence/Optimistic outlook
- Ability to express gratitude, offer forgiveness, show empathy
- Understanding the impact of one's behavior on others

SEL Benefits:

Decades of research studies demonstrates the following benefits of SEL:

- Improvement in students' social and emotional skills, attitudes, relationships, academic performance, and perceptions of classroom and school climate.
- Decline in students' anxiety, behavior problems, and substance use.
- Long-term improvements in students' skills, attitudes, prosocial behavior and academic performance.
- Wise financial investment according to cost-benefit research.

Over and over the professional literature is **crystal clear** - even though teachers feel pressured to cover material, complete the curriculum, and prepare students for standardized assessments, these are not the things that matter most in terms of **student achievement**. Student learning is significantly enhanced in classrooms, schools, and districts that focus on **climate, culture, social and emotional competencies, and supportive relationships**. When these things are tended to, incredible amounts of energy are released for learning. (Jones & Jones)

Science Links SEL to Student Gains: Landmark Study Documented Multiple Benefits of SEL

Science Links SEL to Student Gains:

2011 meta-analysis of 213 studies involving school-based, universal SEL programs including over 270,000 students in K-12 revealed:

- ✓ Social-emotional skills
- ✓ Improved attitudes and beliefs about self, others, and school
- ✓ Positive classroom engagement & pro-social behavior
- ✓ **11 percentile-point gain on standardized achievement tests**

Reduced Risks for Failure:

- Conduct problems
- Emotional distress
- Low self-concept

Source: Durlak, J.A., Weissberg, R.P., Dymnicki, A.B., Taylor, R.D., & Schellinger, K. (2011) The impact of enhancing students' social and emotional learning: A meta-analysis of school-based universal interventions. Child Development: 82 (1), 405-432.

Benefits of SEL: Linked to Young Adult Outcomes

Statistically significant associations exist between measured **social-emotional skills in kindergarten and young adult outcomes** across multiple domains:

Kindergartners who were stronger in SEL competence were **more likely** to:

- ✓ graduate from high school
- ✓ complete a college degree
- ✓ obtain stable employment in young adulthood

And **less likely** to be:

- ✗ living in public housing
- ✗ receiving public assistance
- ✗ involved with law enforcement
- ✗ in a detention facility

Source: Damon E. Jones, Mark Greenberg, and Max Crowley. *Early Social-Emotional Functioning and Public Health: The Relationship Between Kindergarten Social Competence and Future Wellness*. *American Journal of Public Health*: November 2015, Vol. 105, No. 11, pp. 2283-2290.

Impact of SEL: Long-Lasting and Global

A 2017 research study finds that SEL programs benefit children for months and even years.

82

different programs reviewed
(38 outside U.S.)

97,000+

Students, kindergarten
through middle school

6 mo – 18 yrs

after programs completed

SEL Students Benefit in Many Areas

- ✓ Academic performance
- ✓ SEL skills
- ✓ Positive attitudes
- ✓ Positive social behaviors

- Conduct problems
- Emotional distress
- Drug use

Higher social and emotional competencies among SEL students at the end of the initial intervention was the best predictor of long-term benefits.

Benefits were the same regardless of socioeconomic background, students' race, or school location.

Source: Child Development (July 2017). "Promoting Positive Youth Development Through School-Based Social and Emotional Learning Interventions: A Meta-Analysis of Follow-Up Effects"

Employers: Value SEL

92%

Of surveyed executives say skills such as **problem-solving and communicating clearly** are equally or more important than technical skills. Source: National Bureau of Economic Research, 2015

The Top 10 skills identified by the World Economic Forum all **involve social and emotional competence.**



1. **Complex problem solving**
2. **Critical thinking**
3. **Creativity**
4. **People management**
5. **Coordinating with others**
6. **Emotional intelligence**
7. **Judgment and decision-making**
8. **Service orientation**
9. **Negotiation**
10. **Cognitive flexibility**

And research shows that social and emotional skills and attitudes also contribute to the other skills such as critical thinking. Source: Future of Jobs Report, World Economic Forum

Employers: Value SEL

65%

Of surveyed executives say they'd rather colleges build up students' life skills.

High Point University survey, 2018



7 top characteristics of success at the company are all SEL-related skills, such as communicating and listening well; possessing insights into others; and having empathy.



Priorities: Conflict resolution, leadership, and civic engagement



Wanted: Employees Who Can Shake Hands, Make Small Talk
Bank of America teaches empathy in-house; Subaru pays for soft-skills training *(Dec. 10, 2018)*

Integration of Colorado Essential Skills and CO Standards

In addition to the requirement that students meet those content standards, students must also (to the extent practicable) develop and demonstrate skills essential for success in professional life.

The updates to the 2018 version of the Essential Skills were based on the [2020 Colorado Talent Pipeline Report](#)

Colorado graduates have the necessary attitudes, skills, and knowledge (Colorado Academic Standards) that can be applied in an interdependent, interdisciplinary way, and leveraged in a variety of situations both locally and globally. Colorado graduates are:

COMMUNICATOR

Media Literacy	Digital Literacy
Data Literacy	Interpersonal Communication

PROBLEM SOLVER

Critical Thinking and Analysis	Collaboration & Teamwork
Creativity & Innovation	Adaptability & Flexibility

COMMUNITY MEMBER

Civic Engagement	Global & Cultural Awareness
Social Awareness	

EMPOWERED INDIVIDUAL

Self Awareness	Self Management
Perseverance & Resilience	Self Advocacy & Initiative
Career Awareness	

Source - [Colorado Department of Education](#)

Integration of Colorado Essential Skills and CO Standards



The Comprehensive Health Colorado Academic Standards focus on 3 categories:

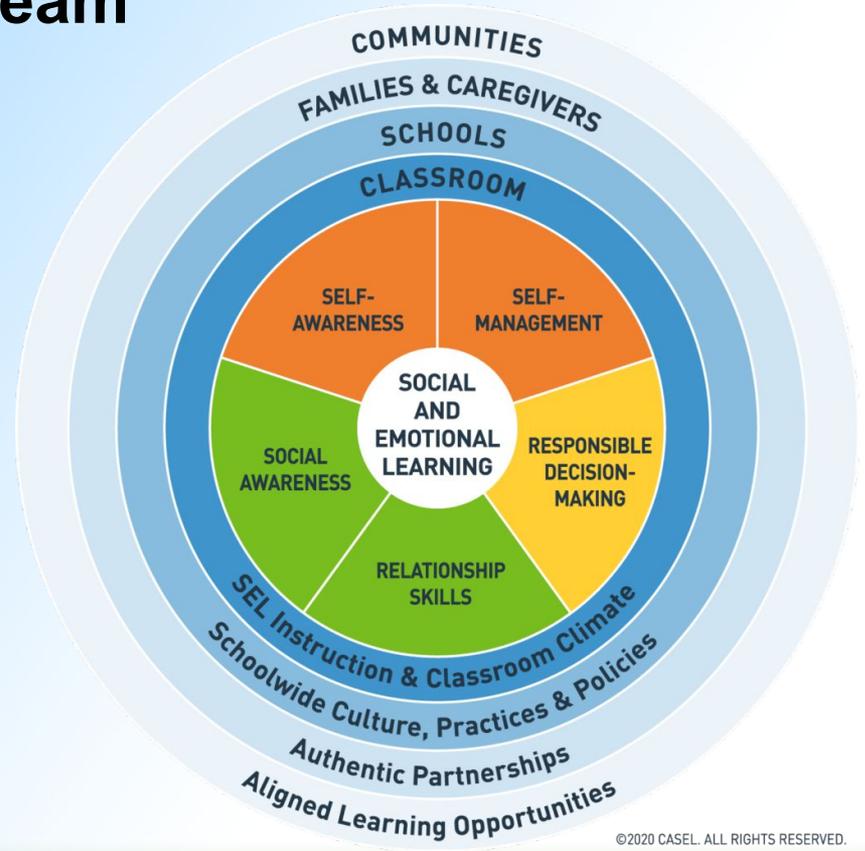
- Physical and Personal Wellness
- Social and Emotional Wellness
- Prevention and Risk Management

[DCSD Social Emotional Wellness Standards Year at a Glance](#)

[Colorado Social Emotional Wellness Standards](#)

Health, Prevention, and SEL Team

SEL is....the process through which young people and adults acquire and effectively apply the knowledge, attitudes, and skills necessary to understand and manage emotions, set and achieve positive goals, feel and show empathy for others, establish and maintain positive relationships, and make responsible decisions.



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DCSD Prevention Supports and Resources

Social Emotional Skills

- Recognize and manage emotions
- Develop care and concern for others
- Establish positive relationships
- Make responsible decisions
- Handle challenging situations constructively
- Resolve conflicts respectfully
- Manage stress
- Make ethical and safe choices
- Examines internal and external influences on mental and social health
- Identifies common mental and emotional health problems and their effect on physical health

Sources of Strength

Leader In Me

Second Step

Mind Up

Introduction to Mindfulness

CREW and IB Learner Profile

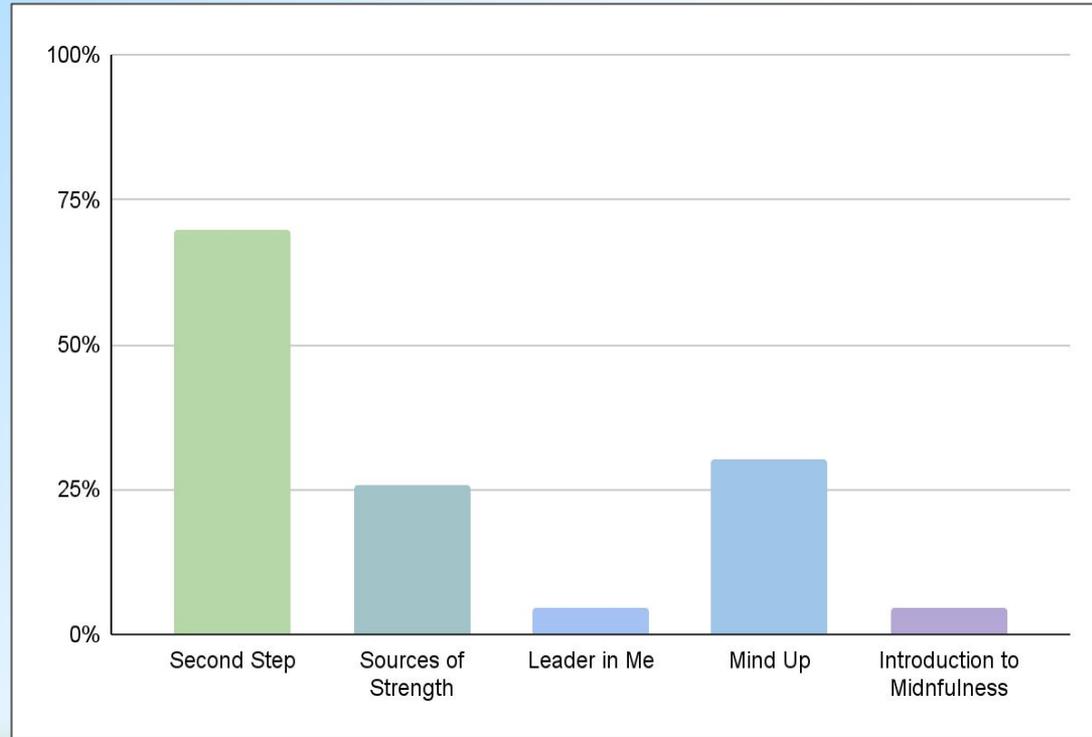
Others

DCSD Prevention Supports and Resources

What supplemental programs are currently in our schools?

- Elementary Schools
- Middle Schools
- High Schools

The school perspective and experience...



Counseling Supports and Resources

Then

2017 - 2018

- Total SBB Funded Counselors in = **77.82 FTE**
- (**No** FTE allocated to elementary)
- Counselor to Student Ratios
 - Elementary - N/A
 - Secondary - 1:350

Now

2021-2022

- Total SBB Funded Counselors in = **161.9 FTE**
- (**47** FTE allocated to elementary)
- Counselor to Student Ratios
 - Elementary - 1 per school
 - Secondary - 1:250

Professional Development and Staff Training

Since August 2021, the Health, Prevention and SEL team has done 43 PD classes around comprehensive Social Emotional Learning including:

- Sources of Strength
- Compassion Fatigue
- Restorative Practices
- Trauma-Informed Practice
- Mindfulness
- Signs of Suicide
- Stop the Bleed
- SEL Competencies and Priority Learning Outcomes in the Colorado Academic Standards
- Healthy Schools Workshops

Next Steps

Administer Targeted Instruments

- Healthy Kids Colorado Survey
- University of Colorado Climate Survey
- Pilot Student Screener

Ongoing Professional Development for Leaders and Staff

Continue to Integrate SEL Work with other Big Rocks and Initiatives

- Professional Learning Communities
 - Priority Learning Outcomes

Systemic Approaches and Sharing of Best-Practices

A large group of graduates in blue gowns and caps are seen from behind, throwing their caps into the air. The caps are scattered across a clear blue sky. The scene is bright and celebratory.

Questions?

Learn Today, Lead Tomorrow