Equity at the center: using new federal funding to support the whole child

June 1, 2021
Meet your expert panel

Taisha Steele, EdS  
Senior Equity Advisor and 2020 VA School Counselor of the year

Stanley Rabinowitz, PhD  
Senior Technical Advisor

Anise Flowers, PhD  
Assessment Consultant
Agenda

• Flexibility to meet the needs of all learners
  --Taisha Steele

• Academic needs
  --Stanley Rabinowitz

• Social-emotional and behavioral needs
  --Anise Flowers

• Q&A
Flexibility to meet the needs of all learners
Some students arrive to school inherently disadvantaged

A commitment to equity eliminates the predictability of student outcomes based on race, gender, zip code, ability, socio-economic status, and/or languages spoken at home

Equity is adaptable, individually focused, and fair
Equity in education [continued]

Equity requires that students have access to high quality learning programs that enable them to maximize their potential.

When schools are mindful of different backgrounds and provide the right resources, all students are prepared to learn and help each other succeed.
Benefits of an equitable education

• Better **physical health**
• Better **social-emotional adjustment**
• Stronger **social atmosphere**
• **Higher** test scores
• College and career **readiness**
• Surrounding communities benefit from equity in schools through **social cohesion** and **economic growth**
COVID-19 has amplified existing inequities and inadequacies in many structures, especially in our education system.

The pandemic has also had a more harmful effect on communities and people of color, including many who were already faced with health challenges.

Students returning to school this fall will have many needs.

Congress has approved a substantial amount of funding through the American Rescue Plan to support safe and equitable reopening of schools.

States, districts, and schools now have significant federal resources available to implement strategies to meet the needs of students, including students most affected by the pandemic and for whom the pandemic exacerbated preexisting inequities.
Strategies to support the whole child

- **School Reopening**
  - Distance learning
  - Unfinished learning
  - Inclusion of cultures and values

- **Instructional Recovery (Academic)**
  - Assess
  - Use data to inform
  - Language development/mastery

- **Instructional Recovery (Social-Emotional Learning/Child Well-Being)**
  - Assess and teach SEL skills
  - Universal screening
  - Rating scales
Academic needs
The role of interim assessments in a balanced assessment system

- Progress monitoring
- Instructional feedback
- Mid-course recalibration
- Impact of COVID on students and subgroups
- Summative complement or substitute

Interims should not duplicate summative assessments (mini summatives)
Characteristics of a valid, equitable interim assessment

• **Aligned** to the breadth and depth of state content standards
• **Locally relevant**, tailor able to each school/district’s unique scope and sequence
• **Timely**, providing valid data at key points across the school year
• **Efficient**, meeting the value vs burden challenge, often using Computer Adaptive methodology
• **Actionable**, providing results that are understandable and relevant to students and teachers
• **Transparent**, the items tasks match what is taught
Characteristics of a valid, equitable interim assessment [continued]

- **User friendly**, allowing students and teachers to navigate the system easily
- **Measure achievement and growth**, both within and across school years
- **Flexible**, allowing mid-course corrections, especially important in a COVID environment
- **Technically sound**, reliable, valid, and unbiased for all student populations
- **Fair** to all student populations and subgroups – equally accessible to all cultures, ethnicities, multilingual learners and students with disabilities
What is Transcend?

Transcend is an interim assessment system designed to provide equitable, efficient, actionable achievement and growth data to district leaders, school leaders, and teachers.

It currently includes:

• **Fully aligned** calibrated, bias-free item bank (K-HS ELA and math)

• Intelligent Test Blueprint (ITB) matching local scope and sequence

• **Computer adaptive** navigation

• Suite of interactive reports at the content, domain, standards, and item levels

• Full set of accommodations and Spanish version
Item bank

- Aligned to State content standards
- Range of item types
- Reading items are largely passage-based
- Thoroughly reviewed by content and editorial specialists, bias/equity experts
- Items are intended to be efficient - focused on measuring the construct
Innovative concepts in reporting
Provide status and growth reports for the overall content area and underlying domains at the following levels:

District ~ School ~ Class ~ Student

Proficiency level aligned to the summative test for overall content area

Purpose is to provide data to determine if students are on track during the school year (big picture)
Social-emotional and behavioral needs
Understanding mental health needs and behavior screening
Identification of behavioral and emotional risk (BER)

- Maladaptive behaviors
- Emotional issues
- Thought patterns
- Delayed acquisition of pro-social coping skills

BER is associated with, or known precursors to, the development of mental health disorders which in turn, contribute to academic problems.
Universal behavior screening: rationale

• Prevention and early intervention
• Addressing underserved populations
• Behavior/emotions and academic performance
• Teacher referral vs screening
Why The **Coronavirus** Is Triggering Mental Health Issues:

- Despair
- Mindset switch from "living" to "survival"
- Triggers feelings of hopelessness
- Increased health anxiety
- Fear for loved ones lives
- Decreased financial security
- Decreased job security
- Promotes social withdrawal
- Loneliness

Quarantine makes it more difficult to distract oneself from existing mental health issues.

**Coronavirus isn't just threatening our physical health, but our mental health too. Look after it. Please share to raise awareness.**

@RealDepressionProject
Universal screening for behavioral and emotional risk in schools: BASC-3 BESS

- Systematic, efficient, and objective way to identify children who need intervention or more in-depth evaluation
- Obtain quick evaluation of all children within a grade or school
- Early identification
- Standardized way of identifying students
- Use to summarize status of groups in schools, classrooms
- Find students at risk for anxiety and depression
### BASC-3 Behavioral and Emotional Screening System (BESS)

Each item rated on a frequency scale.

Only takes 5-10 minutes to complete.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Form</th>
<th>Levels</th>
<th>Languages</th>
<th>Items</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Teacher</td>
<td>Preschool (age 3-5)</td>
<td>English</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Child/Adolescent (grade K-12)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Parent</td>
<td>Preschool (age 3-5)</td>
<td>English</td>
<td>29</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Child/Adolescent (grade K-12)</td>
<td>Spanish</td>
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<tr>
<td>Student</td>
<td>Child/Adolescent (grades 3-12)</td>
<td>English</td>
<td>28</td>
</tr>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Spanish</td>
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</table>
BASC-3 BESS

- Behavioral and emotional risk index (BERI)
  - Normal level of risk
  - Elevated level of risk
  - Extremely elevated level of risk

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Subindexes</th>
<th>Teacher</th>
<th>Parent</th>
<th>Student</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Externalizing Risk</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Internalizing Risk</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
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<tr>
<td>Adaptive Skills</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
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<tr>
<td>Self-regulation Risk</td>
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<td>X</td>
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<tr>
<td>Personal Adjustment Risk</td>
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Benefits of universal screening

Research studies have demonstrated:

- Ability to **predict outcomes**
- **Differential** identification
- Impact on **equity**
- Less gender **disproportionality**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>BESS Form</th>
<th>Ratio of Elevations Boys to Girls</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Teacher</td>
<td>2:1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Parent</td>
<td>2:1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Student</td>
<td>1:1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Special Ed Placement</td>
<td>3:1</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Screening and intervention

• Must be linked: identification must come first to be efficacious, but is not useful without interventions

• Early intervention is preventive and promotes resiliency which promotes improved lifelong outcomes

• Our science is clear that earlier intervention/prevention is more effective than later.
Social Emotional Learning
Social-emotional learning (SEL) is defined as the “process of acquiring knowledge, skills, attitudes, and beliefs to identify and manage emotions; to care about others; to make good decisions; to behave ethically and responsibly; to develop positive relationships and to avoid negative behaviors.”

(Elias & Moceri, 2016, p. 424).
CASEL SEL Competency Framework

www.casel.org
Social Skills and Academics

“Improving children’s social and interpersonal skills improves motivation to learn and engagement, which results in greater academic achievement.

Social skills are academic enablers!”

SSIS SEL System

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Screening</th>
<th>Intervention</th>
<th>Assessment</th>
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<tr>
<td>SSIS SEL Edition Screening/Progress Monitoring Scales</td>
<td>SSIS SEL ed. Classwide Intervention Program (CIP)</td>
<td>SSIS SEL Edition Rating Forms</td>
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Fully-aligned assessments that measure the same skills taught in the intervention program
SSIS SEL Edition
Screening/Progress Monitoring Scales

5-level SEL performance rubric with colors indicating levels of possible risk for social emotional difficulties.
SSIS SEL screening results

Risk Classifications

- Proficient – Green
- Emerging – Yellow
- At Risk - Red
We all Teach Social Emotional Skills!

Teachers, Peers, Coaches, & More

Social emotional skills have been part of a hidden or implicit curriculum in most schools for too long.

How can we efficiently and effectively teach key skills?
Listening to educators

9 out of 10 teachers believe social and emotional skills can be taught and that it benefits students.

4 in 5 teachers want more support to address students’ social and emotional development.

Bridgeland, Bruce, & Hariharan (2013)
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Skill</th>
<th>CASEL Domain</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>Listen to others</td>
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<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>Say please and thank you.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>Follow the rules.</td>
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<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>Pay attention to your work.</td>
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<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>Ask for help.</td>
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<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>Take turns when you talk.</td>
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<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td>Get along with others.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8</td>
<td>Stay calm with others.</td>
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<tr>
<td>9</td>
<td>Do the right thing.</td>
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<tr>
<td>10</td>
<td>Do nice things for others.</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Self-Management</td>
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<td>Relationship Skills</td>
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<td>Self-Management</td>
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<td>Responsible Decision Making</td>
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<td>Social Awareness</td>
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Identifying SEL strengths and skills that can become strengths in all students

Think Positive!

Improve desired behaviors so they become strong!
Q & A

Please use the Q&A section (vs chat) to submit your questions.
Thank you for joining us!

Watch your email for more information early next week:

• Webinar recording
• Funding resource guide
• [Link](#) Talk to our assessment team to help you navigate available resources