



STATE OF NEW JERSEY DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION

A Memo from the New Jersey Department of Education

Date: January 14, 2026

To: Local Educational Agency Leads, Administrators of Approved Private Schools for Students with Disabilities, Administrators of Nonpublic Schools

Route To: Principals, Assistant Principals, Directors, Supervisors, School Counselors, School Psychologists, School Social Workers, Health and Physical Education Teachers, and other school staff responsible for leading social and emotional learning efforts

From: Kathy Ehling, Assistant Commissioner
Division of Educational Services

Social and Emotional Learning (SEL) Course for School Leaders

In August 2025, the New Jersey Department of Education, in collaboration with the Social Emotional and Character Development Lab at Rutgers University, announced the release of a new online course, ***Brick by Brick: A Leader's Guide to Building SEL in Schools***. This no-cost, asynchronous course is designed to empower school leaders with the foundational knowledge and tools to effectively implement social and emotional learning (SEL) practices within their schools or districts.

SEL is a critical component for schools in fostering learning environments where all students and staff can thrive. Additionally, SEL equips students with essential life skills such as goal setting, emotional regulation, building healthy relationships, and making responsible decisions. Integrating SEL into the curriculum and the broader school environment fosters a supportive atmosphere that enhances academic achievement, reduces behavioral issues, and strengthens connections among students and staff. By prioritizing SEL, school leaders can support students to navigate challenges both in and out of the classroom, laying the foundation for long-term well-being and success.

Course Overview

- **Audience:** Current and aspiring New Jersey school leaders.
- **Format:** No-cost, asynchronous online course.
- **Content:** Five core content modules each approximately 1.5 hours in length.
 - Each module features diverse learning activities, such as *readings*, *videos*, *reflections*, and *quizzes*, to reinforce concepts and gauge understanding.
 - Participants will also gain access to practical *resources and templates* to successfully champion SEL efforts.
- **Proof of Completion:** Upon course completion, participants will receive a *certificate and digital badge* recognizing their leadership commitment to advancing SEL.

Registration Information

- Visit the [NJDOE's SEL Website](#);
- Scroll down to the *Brick by Brick* course section;
- Click on the blue drop down bar titled, "Accessing the Course"; and
- Follow the listed directions for first-time users.

Contact Information

For questions, please contact the Office of Student Support Services at
SafeSupportiveSchools@doe.nj.gov.

c: Members, State Board of Education
NJDOE Staff
Statewide Parent Advocacy Network
Garden State Coalition of Schools
NJ LEE Group