



Betty A. Rosa, Ed.D.
Interim Commissioner, NYSED



Arlene González -Sánchez, M.S., L.M.S.W.
Commissioner, OASAS

December 18, 2020

Dear Dedicated Professional,

schools after closure due to the COVID-19 pandemic and transitioned to in-person learning or a hybrid of the two, we know that social and emotional learning (SEL) has been and will continue to be critical to engaging students, supporting adults, rebuilding relationships, and creating a foundation for academic learning. There has been an unprecedented shift to a new type of learning experience with a lasting and profound impact on young people's academic, social, emotional, and life outcomes. The work to support students and staff becomes even more critical. As our research fuels our understanding of what works and what does not, our guidance evolves as well.

At the State level, the NY State Education Department (NYSED) and the Office of Addiction Services & Supports (OASAS) continue to work closely to address integrated supports for students that can address multiple outcomes for students such as mental health literacy, social-emotional learning, and trauma-informed approaches. Evidence-Based Program Guidance for Substance Use Prevention Education in Schools developed by our agencies to provide a resource rich with information

[trauma-informed approaches](#), [cyberbullying](#), [school violence](#), [substance use prevention](#) (including [trends](#) related to alcohol, Opioids, and vaping), and [problem gambling prevention](#), improved academic performance, and behavioral functioning. The multi-faceted evidence-based programs evaluated in the guidance reflect protective factors and risk factors that can be used to enhance a healthy lifestyle in individual/ peer group, family, community, and school domains.

The Evidence- Based Program Guidance for Substance Use Prevention Education in Schools can be used in conjunction with other initiatives such as Chapter 323 of the Laws of 2018 regarding access to substance abuse resources and referral information with a related [webpage](#) and [guidance](#) as resources.

Thank you for the essential work that you do each day to enrich the lives of the students of New York in so many ways!

Sincerely,

Betty A. Rosa
Interim Commissioner
New York State Education Department

Arlene González-Sánchez, M.S., L.M.S.W
Commissioner
New York State Office of Addiction Services & Supports