



RULER

An Evidence-Based
Approach to
Social and
Emotional Learning

Yale Center for Emotional Intelligence

WHAT IS RULER?



RULER is an evidence-based approach to social and emotional learning (SEL) that supports entire school communities in:

- Understanding the value of emotions
- Building the skills of emotional intelligence
- Creating and maintaining positive school climates

EMOTIONS MATTER



RESEARCH SHOWS THAT EMOTIONS INFLUENCE:

- Attention, memory, and learning
- Decision making
- Creativity
- Mental and physical well-being
- Ability to form and maintain healthy relationships
- Academic and workplace performance

HOW DO YOU FEEL AT SCHOOL EACH DAY?

Tired, bored, and stressed were the top three responses for over 22,000 high school students nationwide.

Frustrated, overwhelmed, and stressed were the top responses from 6,000 educators and school leaders.

If this is how our school communities feel, what impact might that have on how leaders lead, teachers teach, and students learn and grow?



RULER helps students and educators spend more time feeling how they want to feel: *valued, connected, and inspired*. **RULER** teaches the skills of emotional intelligence—so people of all ages can thrive and build healthier, more equitable, innovative, and compassionate communities.

“RULER is as much about student well-being as it is about academic achievement...because one thing usually leads to the other.”

- Middle School Principal



“We want to ensure our graduates are not just the best students but also the best people they can be. RULER provides specific language and strategies around that process, positioning students for success in college and in life.”

- High School Principal

THE SKILLS OF EMOTIONAL INTELLIGENCE

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RECOGNIZING emotions in
oneself and others

UNDERSTANDING the causes
and consequences of emotions

LABELING emotions with
a nuanced vocabulary

EXPRESSING emotions in accordance
with cultural norms and social context

REGULATING emotions with
helpful strategies

Research shows that **RULER** skills help people of all ages to use emotions wisely, opening opportunities for us to succeed in school, at work, and in life. These skills are both personal and social, such that a network emerges with positive changes reinforced.

THE RULER TOOLS



CHARTER

Builds and sustains positive emotional climates by creating agreed-upon norms for how people want to feel and how they can help each other to experience those feelings.

MOOD METER

Enhances self- and social awareness and supports the development of a nuanced emotion vocabulary and a range of strategies for regulating emotion.

META- MOMENT

Provides a process for responding to emotional situations with strategies that align with one's *best self* and that support healthy relationships and personal well-being.

BLUEPRINT

Supports the development of empathy and conflict resolution skills by serving as a guide for reflecting on conflict and restoring affected communities.

HOW RULER CREATES CHANGE

STRATEGY

Adult personal & professional learning

Schoolwide tools & preK to 12 classroom content & OST resources

Online platform & coaching support

Monitoring & evaluation tools



STAKEHOLDERS

Administration & school board

Educators & staff

Families

Students



AIMS

Enhanced mindset ("emotions matter")

Deepened social & emotional skills

Healthier emotional climates in schools & homes

SEL-infused pedagogy, practices & schoolwide policies



IMPACT

Improved leader & teacher effectiveness & retention

Increased student engagement, attendance, & academic performance

Better quality relationships

Enhanced decision making; reduced drug, alcohol, discipline, & bullying problems

Less stress & anxiety; greater health & wellbeing

HOW RULER WORKS

STAFF PERSONAL & PROFESSIONAL LEARNING

RULER adoption begins when a small team from a school attends a training institute on the principles and tools of emotional intelligence.

Over time, with coaching support and online resources, all school staff participate in **RULER** skill-building activities so they can be role models and knowledgeable implementers of **RULER** for students and families.

CLASSROOM INSTRUCTION

RULER continues with student learning content, which follows the Understanding by Design framework and aligns with both social and emotional learning and academic standards. In early childhood and elementary school, **RULER** embeds into existing academic curricula. Middle and high school courses focus on the intersection of social, emotional, and cognitive aspects of early and late adolescence.

FAMILY ENGAGEMENT & EDUCATION

Content for families supports what students learn in school, using everyday and culturally responsive language for accessibility. School leaders, parent leaders, teachers, and students work to engage families.



“When all people in a school community embrace the idea that ‘emotions matter,’ when they become more skilled with their emotions and in their interactions, and when schools and homes become warmer, safer, and more supportive spaces—this is when educators, students, and their families thrive.”

- Marc Brackett, Ph.D.

Founding Director of the Yale Center for Emotional Intelligence &
Professor in the Child Study Center at Yale University



RULER

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