

Preface

This book is for educators. Just about every educator we know is wondering, in this climate of No Child Left Behind (NCLB), how do we bring all children forward academically, socially, and emotionally? What kinds of teaching approaches and what methods of organizing and structuring of classroom environments are necessary so that no professional is left behind the advances in relevant knowledge and practice that have occurred in recent years?

This book is designed to provide answers based on existing best feasible practices. We use the word *feasible* because our emphasis has been on selecting approaches that have been used successfully in many places for a long time, both before and after NCLB. We show readers how to bring emotional intelligence (EI) or social-emotional learning (SEL) into classrooms in ways that enhance academic achievement, from elementary grades through Grade 12. The book is designed to illuminate the connection between soul, heart, and mind.

SEL/EI restores and reaffirms the value of teachers as creators of learning momentum and links education with the larger social world and set of social responsibilities that children will encounter as adults. Most chapters begin with stories . . . the words of master educators who have used SEL to improve both the character and the academic achievement of their students, designed to animate the enterprise of bringing SEL into classrooms. As you read, you will see how relatively small changes in classroom and school practices now can renew your sense of education as an inspirational profession.

After reading this book, you will be familiar with the field of SEL, its rationale, how it supports and enhances academic achievement and other areas of school improvement, and best practices in the field as exemplified through acclaimed SEL programs and approaches. Through the discussion of different forms of teacher preparation to carry out SEL, you will be able to identify areas in which your own SEL-related skills or those of colleagues might be further developed. Finally, you will have ample raw materials in sample activities provided to allow for the opportunity to bring what you are reading into practice “Monday morning,” and you should be well on your way to selecting an SEL/EI approach to bring into your classroom and school.