



# Protect Ohio Children

## STOP Indoctrination in Schools

Written Testimony of Diane Stover  
Program Director, Protect Ohio Children  
Senate Education Committee  
Senate Bill 113

March 25, 2025

Chairman Brenner, Vice Chair Blessing, and members of the Committee: my name is Diane Stover and I am the Program Director of Protect Ohio Children Coalition (POCC). Our organization is affiliated with Ohio Value Voters which promotes the values of Faith, Life, Families, and Religious Freedom. The Protect Ohio Children Coalition is a state-wide grassroots volunteer organization that monitors schools and school boards across Ohio. When schools take steps to introduce indoctrination into the classrooms, POCC identifies and publicizes controversial materials being presented to children.

Our organization is in support of Senate Bill 113 and urges the committee to pass this bill to the Senate Floor for a vote.

In 2019, the Ohio Department of Education (ODE) developed a strategic plan with a vision to make the “Whole Child Social Emotional Learning Framework” a TOP priority for Ohio schools. The specific DOE vision, components, and principles of the plan are well documented. The ODE “plan” was advertised to the public *“to lift aspirations, create hope and excitement, guide development of state-level education policies and promote high-quality educational practices across the state.”* The [Collaborative for Social Emotional Learning \(CASEL\)](#) defined SEL as *“the process through which children acquire the skills to recognize and manage emotions, develop caring and concern for others, make decisions, establish positive relationships, handling challenging situations effectively.”*

The truth is, Whole Child Social Emotional Learning (SEL) was really a scam, a trojan horse, and a vehicle to bring Diversity, Equity, Inclusion (DEI) and an extremely harmful and perverse sexual agenda, into Ohio’s classrooms.

Since 2017 the [Protect Ohio Children Coalition](#) has been laser focused on exposing indoctrination in sex education and social emotional learning (SEL) programs in Ohio schools. The Protect Ohio Children Coalition has received anonymous tips from parents in over 200 school districts in all areas of the state and archived the information in a [heat-map](#) that shows the wide-spread indoctrination epidemic. SEL was implemented in a way that ingrains the curricula within all courses including math and even

physical education classes. SEL curricula in Ohio is fluid and digital and not readily available to parents as defined in [ORC 3313.60 Section G](#). The removal of Social Emotional Learning (SEL) is urgently needed and it should be eradicated in every school district.

Here is an [audit](#) of the anonymous tips we have received that specifically identifies SEL curricula. The information presented to us is merely the tip of the iceberg of Ohio SEL curricula. With the use of the Ohio Checkbook, we have also discovered multi-millions of dollars being spent for Social Emotional Learning (SEL). This question should be answered: how much have Ohio tax-payers spent on Social Emotional Learning?

Social Emotional Learning undermines parental rights, promotes data collection, impersonates mental health counseling, transitions students without parental consent, and is a gateway for Planned Parenthood and their allies.

Here's what AI says about SEL:

**ASK GROK (AI): What does CASEL mean when it promotes transformative SEL?**

*When the Collaborative for Academic, Social, and Emotional Learning (CASEL) promotes "Transformative Social and Emotional Learning" (Transformative SEL or T-SEL), it refers to a specific approach to SEL that goes beyond fostering individual skills like self-awareness or relationship building. Transformative SEL aims to leverage these skills to address broader **societal issues, particularly inequities, and to empower students and adults to create more just and equitable communities.***

*At its core, Transformative SEL builds on CASEL's five core competencies—self-awareness, self-management, social awareness, relationship skills, and responsible decision-making—but extends them with **an explicit focus on equity and social justice.** It emphasizes helping young people and adults critically **examine the root causes of inequity, such as systemic racism, power imbalances, or cultural biases, and work collaboratively to develop solutions that promote personal, community, and societal well-being.** This approach seeks to **redistribute power and foster environments where everyone feels a sense of belonging and agency.***

*Key elements of Transformative SEL include:*

- *Identity Development: Encouraging individuals to explore and **affirm their personal and social identities**, connecting their lived experiences to learning.*
- *Agency: **Empowering students and adults to take action and influence their lives and communities positively.***
- *Belonging: **Creating inclusive environments where all individuals feel respected, valued, and connected.***
- *Collaborative Problem-Solving: Building skills to **work together across differences to address challenges and inequities.***
- *Curiosity: Fostering a desire to understand diverse perspectives and pursue knowledge that challenges existing norms.*

CASEL frames Transformative SEL as **a way to advance educational equity** and excellence by integrating these principles into school systems through authentic partnerships among schools, families, and communities. It's not just about personal growth but **about transforming systems**—schools and beyond—to be **more democratic, fair, and inclusive**. This involves practices like co-learning between students and adults, culturally responsive instruction, and **civic engagement aimed at social change**.

In essence, when CASEL promotes Transformative SEL, it's advocating for an evolution of traditional SEL into a tool for systemic change, where emotional and social skills are harnessed to dismantle inequities and empower individuals to contribute to a more just world.

In concluding, Senate Bill 113 will not fully address Diversity, Equity and Inclusion (DEI) in Ohio's schools without the complete elimination and eradication of Social Emotional Learning (SEL) from Ohio classrooms.

Diane Stover, Program Director  
Protect Ohio Children Coalition

## 2019 Ohio Department of Education Whole Child Social Emotional Learning Framework

**Vision**

Ohio's aspirational state-level vision for preK-12 education:

In Ohio, **each child** is challenged to discover and learn, prepared to pursue a fulfilling post-high school path and empowered to become a resilient, lifelong learner who contributes to society.

**EQUITY:** Use of the phrase *each child* is intentional. It emphasizes the importance of equity, which is this plan's greatest imperative and number one principle.

**PARTNERSHIPS:** Challenging, preparing and empowering students is a community-wide effort. Partners represent the collective action needed to support each child and increase the likelihood of student success.

**QUALITY SCHOOLS:** This state-level vision is realized locally in each school. Many schools and districts have completed local strategic plans that seek a similar aim. This state-level vision ensures everyone is moving in the same direction and can help amplify the good work already underway across many districts.

**Plan Components**

With 134,000 full-time educators serving in 3,600 public schools and educating approximately 1.7 million schoolchildren, education in Ohio is a complex business. Partners identified the plan's multifaceted components based on potential impact on student success. The **whole child** is at the center of the plan.<sup>2</sup> **Three core principles, four learning domains and 10 priority strategies** work together to support the whole child. The state-level vision provides an aspirational guide for students, parents, partners and the education system. **One goal** represents the state's annual target.

**Supporting the Whole Child**

Ohio can only reach success by meeting the needs of the **whole child**. The time a child spends in school is precious and should ensure all aspects of a child's well-being are addressed, including the physical, social, emotional and intellectual aspects. Each plan component works harmoniously to support the whole-child approach; however, the three core principles are, perhaps, most critical. That is why they are highlighted across each plan component. Their constant reference ensures those who have a hand in preparing Ohio's children never lose sight of **equity, partnerships and quality schools**.

<sup>2</sup>Whole child is defined by actions taken to ensure that each child, in each school, in each community is healthy, safe, engaged, supported and challenged. This definition is adapted from the Association for Supervision and Curriculum Development.

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## Four Equal Learning Domains

Achieving Ohio's goal depends on a high-functioning, responsive preK-12 system that is attuned to external factors that affect student learning—including family and social trends and economic and job realities. As a first step in a long-term journey to create a responsive preK-12 system, Ohio partners identified four equal learning domains that contribute to the holistic success of each child. These include **foundational knowledge and skills**, **well-rounded content**, **leadership and reasoning skills** and **social-emotional learning**. The four equal learning domains challenge, prepare and empower students for success beyond high school by giving them tools to become resilient, lifelong learners.

### FOUNDATIONAL KNOWLEDGE AND SKILLS

—To be successful in Ohio's ever-changing economy, students must be equipped with foundational knowledge and skills that support lifelong learning. Each child must know how to critically read, write, work with numbers and leverage technology to maximize access to future learning experiences.

### WELL-ROUNDED CONTENT

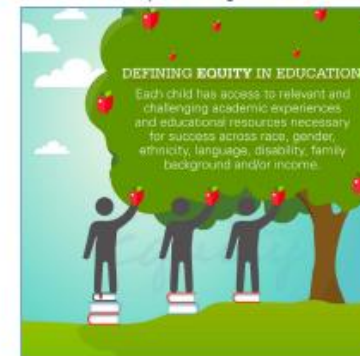
Beyond foundational knowledge and skills, students need exposure to a broader range of subjects and disciplines. These include social studies, science, world languages, arts, health, physical education and career-technical education fields, among others. The exploration of these disciplines helps students identify their passions and aspirations, as well as enables them to discover connections and relationships among ideas and concepts.



## Three Core Principles



**EQUITY:** Ohio's greatest education challenge remains equity in education achievement for each child. The path to equity begins with a deep understanding of the history of discrimination and bias and how it has come to impact current society. This plan renews Ohio's commitment to creating the learning conditions that ensure each child acquires the knowledge and skills across all four equal learning domains<sup>6</sup> to be successful.



**PARTNERSHIPS:** Everyone, not just those in schools, shares the responsibility of preparing children for successful futures. The most important partners are parents and caregivers, who have the greatest impact on a child's development. Other critical partners include educators, institutions of higher education, business, philanthropy, employers, libraries, social service organizations, community members, health care providers, behavioral health experts and many more. Put simply, partnerships transform the education experience.



**QUALITY SCHOOLS:** Schools are an important destination where many individuals and factors come together to serve the student, including school leaders, teachers, curriculum, instruction, **student supports**, data analysis and more. Research shows that school leaders have the greatest hand in defining a school's culture and climate, which significantly affect student learning.<sup>7</sup> A quality school is a place where parents, caregivers, community partners and others interact for the benefit of students. All schools—public and private—play important roles in building Ohio's future.

<sup>6</sup> Refer to page 12 for a detailed description of the four equal learning domains.

<sup>7</sup> Murnighan, A. J., Probst, D. L., & Beach, S. (2009). The effects of school culture and climate on student achievement. *International Journal of Leadership in Education*, 12(7), 73-86. doi:10.1080/13601360701570241