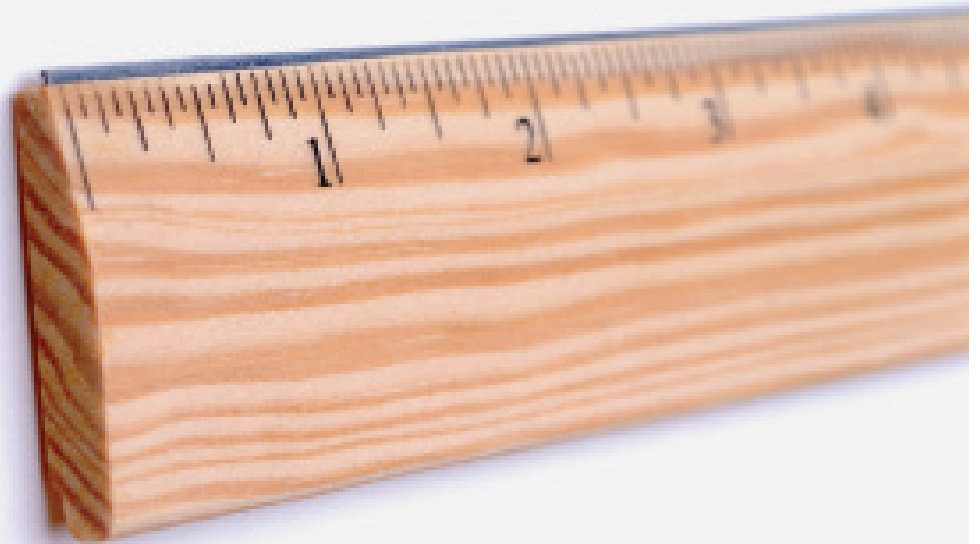


The RULER Approach to social and emotional learning



“Preventing social and behavioral problems is more effective and less costly than attempts at remediation once the damage has been done. The RULER Approach provides an integrative way of teaching healthy social and emotional responses within core curricula.”

EDWARD ZIGLER, PHD, STERLING PROFESSOR OF PSYCHOLOGY, EMERITUS, YALE UNIVERSITY

“To see students using words and communicating effectively in adversarial situations where they once used physical aggression and verbal abuse confirms that The RULER Approach has had a profound effect on children’s ability to self-regulate.”

BONNIE BROWN, SUPERINTENDENT, DISTRICT 75, NYC



RULER

Building Emotionally Literate Schools

Are your students interested? Bored? Stressed? Enthusiastic?

The idea that feelings matter—and matter a great deal in school—is at the foundation of The RULER Approach.



The RULER Approach is an outgrowth of decades of research on emotional intelligence conducted by the Health, Emotion, and Behavior Laboratory at Yale University demonstrating that emotional skills are integral to learning, making sound judgments, maintaining physical and mental health, and achieving success in school and beyond.

Our sustainable, evidence-based approach helps schools to develop emotional literacy in students and all of the stakeholders involved in their education, including school leaders, teachers, support staff, and family members.

The RULER Approach teaches 5 key emotional literacy skills:

- ▶ **Recognizing** emotions in facial expressions, vocal cues, and the body
- ▶ **Understanding** the causes and consequences of emotions
- ▶ **Labeling** the full range of emotions using a rich vocabulary
- ▶ **Expressing** emotions appropriately in different contexts
- ▶ **Regulating** emotions effectively to foster healthy relationships and achieve goals



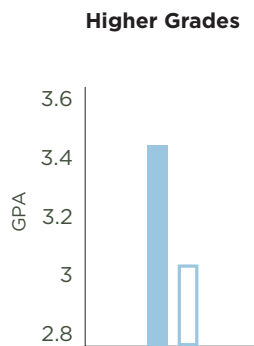
Evidence for RULER

Research suggests that developing RULER skills fosters a range of behaviors and attitudes essential to positive development and academic achievement.

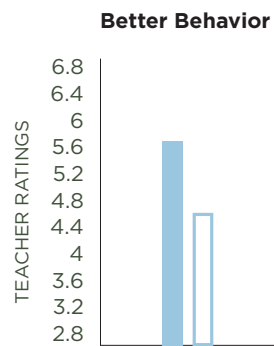
Incorporating The RULER Approach leads to:

- ▶ Enhanced motivation and study skills
- ▶ Higher academic scores in core content areas
- ▶ Decreased hyperactivity in the classroom
- ▶ Decreased anxiety and depression
- ▶ Increased empathy, social competence, and leadership skills
- ▶ Reductions in student referrals for inappropriate behavior, school suspensions, aggression and bullying
- ▶ Enhanced classroom climate, including greater respect between teachers and students, more positive relationships among students, and enhanced prosocial behavior

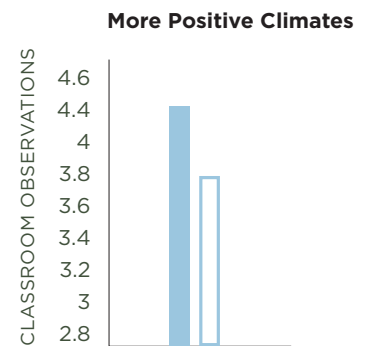
After one year of implementing The RULER Approach, **RULER** classrooms, as compared to **comparison** classrooms, had:



11% difference in end of year grades
(N = 15 middle school classrooms)



19% difference in adaptability (greater study, social, and leadership skills)
(N = 15 middle school classrooms)



12% difference in observed positive emotional climate
(N = 62 elementary schools)

Bringing The RULER Approach to your school

We offer a sustainable approach for developing RULER skills in school leaders, all educators, students, and families.

The RULER Approach helps schools and districts to:

- ▶ Obtain commitment from all stakeholders
- ▶ Infuse RULER skills into all aspects of the educational environment
- ▶ Dedicate time and resources to its implementation for lasting effects.



The RULER Approach builds capacity within schools and districts using a Train-the-Trainer approach, although some schools prefer our team to deliver all trainings. First, school leaders participate in their own training. Then individuals from each school within a district are selected as RULER Master Trainers. The training extends across two years and includes multiple day workshops each followed by web-based meetings. RULER Master Trainers gain advanced knowledge of the RULER skills and become

proficient at delivering all professional development offerings. They also learn how to both design a sustainable implementation plan and use data-driven tools for ongoing monitoring and evaluation. This comprehensive model ensures that all stakeholders receive the long-term benefits of The RULER Approach.

With full commitment and support in the initial two years, districts become self-sufficient by the third year. We continue to support each school and district with program enhancements, continuing education opportunities, and resources vis-à-vis distance learning channels including webinars, our interactive website, podcasts, online communities, and conferences.

Steps to implementing The RULER Approach

1. Commitment

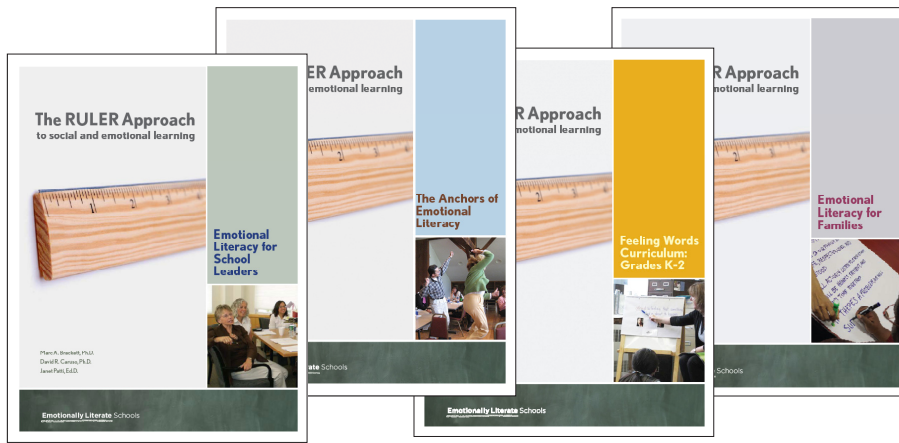
- ▶ Program developers introduce The RULER Approach to key stakeholders
- ▶ School leaders commit to the implementation plan and attend *Emotional Literacy for School Leaders* training and coaching sessions
- ▶ School leaders create a district-wide steering committee and school-based teams
- ▶ School leaders identify RULER Master Trainers at each school

2. Training and Capacity Building

- ▶ RULER Master Trainers begin enacting the Train-the-Trainer model
- ▶ Training and coaching for educators and support staff commences.
- ▶ Training for family members begins
- ▶ The Feeling Words Curriculum is launched

3. Sustainability

- ▶ School leaders, RULER Master Trainers, and teachers provide continuous training and support all stakeholders
- ▶ School-based teams track, evaluate, and refine RULER implementation plan to ensure lasting impact
- ▶ District-wide steering committee fully embeds RULER into their learning standards, behavior management policies, financial and strategic planning, and the district's vision and mission statements



Offerings

Emotional Literacy for School Leaders

Initial one-day workshop with follow-up coaching sessions and webinars. Helps school leaders to:

- ▶ Develop RULER skills to enhance relationships with and among teachers, students, parents, and board members
- ▶ Cultivate a collaborative, emotionally open school atmosphere to better manage change, effectively deal with conflict, increase motivation, and celebrate success
- ▶ Develop a long-term plan for sustaining the RULER Approach

Train-the-Trainer: The Anchors of Emotional Literacy

Multi-year interactive trainings for educators with ongoing support vis-à-vis individual coaching and webinars. Helps teachers, counselors, and support staff to:

- ▶ Hone their RULER skills to engage students in learning and increase academic achievement
- ▶ Leverage RULER skills to cope with stress, improve personal and professional relationships, and become more effective classroom leaders and decision makers
- ▶ Build the necessary foundation to integrate RULER skills into the curriculum

Train-the-Trainer: The Feeling Words Curriculum

Teaches RULER skills through a comprehensive, Feeling Words Curriculum. Offers a variety of instructional tools and activities to complement all learning styles. Integrates into standard academic curricula and connects directly to mandated learning standards. Includes training for educators, program manual, resource guides, and one-on-one coaching to support and reinforce skills learned at trainings. Helps educators to:

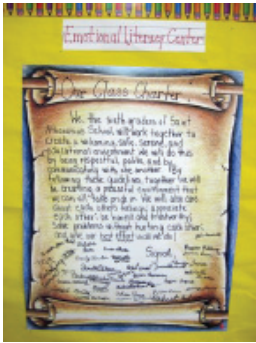
- ▶ Improve academic performance, including critical thinking, creativity, and writing skills
- ▶ Promote emotion skill-building and social competence, including both self- and social-awareness among students
- ▶ Enhance students' well-being, including stress management and relationship skills and problem-solving ability

Emotional Literacy for Families

Interactive workshop series that teaches adult family members to use RULER skills to build trust and empathy and foster open communication at home. Offers tools and tips for supporting student programs at home. Provides family members with new strategies for addressing behavioral issues at home.

The Anchors of Emotional Literacy

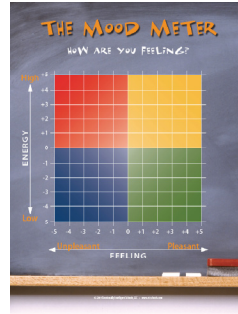
Our offerings help schools integrate anchor tools to develop the RULER Skills.



Charter

As a first step to implementing The RULER Approach, students and their teachers, school leaders and their staff, and families develop *Charters*—a joint mission statement for the learning and working environment they pledge to maintain. The focus is on how each stakeholder wants to feel,

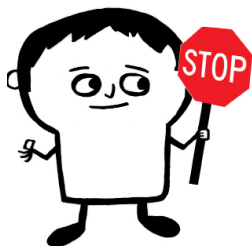
what needs to happen for those feelings to be present consistently, guidelines for handling uncomfortable feelings and conflict, and methods for creating and sustaining a positive climate.



Mood Meter

The *Mood Meter* helps individuals to identify their feelings accurately. Rooted in decades of research, it involves the use of multiple senses to build emotional awareness. The two axes of the Mood Meter correspond with two of the primary components

of emotions and moods—feeling (ranging from unpleasant to pleasant) and energy (ranging from low to high). Basic activities develop skills in recognizing and labeling feelings; advanced activities develop skills in understanding, expressing, and regulating emotions.



Meta-Moments

Emotions are adaptive when the information they provide is attended to, interpreted, understood, and managed effectively. *Meta-Moments* are a process that children and adults learn to help them expand the

“space in time” between an emotional trigger and a response. Strategies are developed to improve everyone’s reflective practices and problem solving skills so they can respond effectively to life’s many emotional experiences.



Blueprint

The *Blueprint* was designed to help students, teachers, school leaders, and family members problem-solve about past conflicts and disagreements, challenging real-time interactions, and upcoming difficulties effectively.

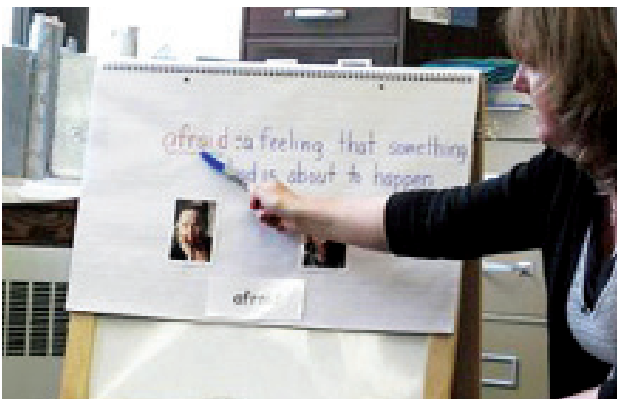
Students and adults work with each other and independently to actively consider each other’s feelings and perspectives to identify healthy solutions. The *Blueprint* builds empathy and perspective taking, defuses conflict, and helps schools reduce the amount of time spent off task.

The Feeling Words Curriculum

An integral part of our offerings is helping children to develop their RULER skills through building a sophisticated feelings vocabulary.

How often do students need to say something but cannot find the right words? When the right words are not available, there is a breakdown in communication. Students' feelings become confused, suppressed, or even displaced onto others. While there are thousands of words to describe emotional experiences, even most adults have difficulty discussing their emotions with others. The Feeling Words Curriculum empowers students to use a full range of words to describe emotions. We call this a *feelings vocabulary*. Each unit is designed to integrate a sophisticated emotion concept into core content areas using myriad pedagogical techniques that develop students' intellectual capacities and the ability to acquire and use the RULER skills. The curriculum incorporates self-reflection, analysis of academic material and current events, artistic expression, family interactions, classroom discussions, and problem solving. The ultimate goals are for students to:

- ▶ engage and succeed in their school work
- ▶ enhance their critical thinking, creativity, and writing skills
- ▶ enhance and hone their RULER skills
- ▶ manage stress and make healthy decisions
- ▶ develop empathy and advanced perspective-taking abilities
- ▶ build mutually supportive relationships and manage conflict in prosocial ways



As part of a RULER lesson, Garrett R., a middle school student at New Line Learning Schools, wrote this poem to describe his experience as a victim of bullying. After reading this poem in public, he received a standing ovation from his class, and the bullying ceased.

INSULTED

You're ugly
I know
I have been told this
You're silly
I know
I have realized this
You look like an alien
I know this has been pointed out to me
You have big eyes
I know I have looked in the mirror
You can't be a pilot
You're not smart enough

It is possible, I have considered this
With every insult you invent, it's strange but it's true
You point out my many failings and help me to improve

As you highlight my many weaknesses you also highlight my strengths
My openness leads to my kind personality
My silliness brings laughter to the world
My resemblance to movie aliens only highlights my intelligence
My big eyes portray my feelings and widen my view

I may not make it as a pilot, but I could be
You see, every insult you invent gives me a view into your mind
And although I have many problems, I feel sorry for you
Why oh why do I feel sorry for you?
Because your mind cannot break free
The wall of insults you build limits your mind and feelings
So soon if you don't stop, you'll turn inhuman
And have the biggest problem of all
Loneliness
Think about it

Testimonials

SCHOOL LEADERS

“Everyone is raving about RULER. Yesterday two teachers approached me—the most open teacher said that emotional literacy is having a life long impact on her way of seeing things; one of the most closed teachers said she is determined to develop her RULER skills.”

**KATHY MINARDI, HEAD,
AIDEN MONTESSORI, D.C.**

“Finally, everyone in our school has the same language and tools to discuss feelings, problem solve, and handle difficult situations”

**DR. ED FALE, SUPERINTENDENT,
VALLEY STREAM, NY**

“The program has provided teachers with a forum for discussing their emotions and brainstorming strategies, which has decreased burnout in my school.”

ROSA NIEVES, PRINCIPAL, D75, NYC



TEACHERS

“I saw a difference in behavior after the third day of reciting the Charter – the students felt safer and more open. It has alleviated a lot of behavior problems.”

4TH GRADE TEACHER

“I constantly refer to the Mood Meter in class. I think it helps to humanize me for the students, and helps them to engage in healthy discussion and reflection about their feelings.”

1ST GRADE TEACHER

“Meta-moments are just smart. It’s a simple and intelligent tool everyone can use to handle stress.”

11TH GRADE TEACHER

“One day when there was tension between me and my students, I used the Blueprint with my entire class. Both my students and I were better able to empathize with each other. It has helped my students to have a heightened awareness of others.”

7TH GRADE TEACHER

STUDENTS

“It’s a way for children to express their feelings without fear of being laughed at... you notice that other people have the same feelings as you... you see what other people have in common with you.”

5TH GRADE STUDENT

“I have learned how to control my feelings better. The program has helped me to think more positive things in life. It has made me a kinder person.”

9TH GRADE STUDENT

“It can help you understand yourself better. If you have a lot of feelings on your chest you can write them down during [program lessons] and revive yourself.”

4TH GRADE STUDENT

“The word that has helped me the most is enthusiastic because now I’m trying to be more enthusiastic about my school work.”

6TH GRADE STUDENT



Core Team

Ruler Group represents the collective expertise of psychologists, educators, and school leaders.

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