



Kimberly Willis Green
Media Relations Manager
Office of Communications & Public Engagement
404-802-2836
kwgreen@atlantapublicschools.us

For Immediate Release

July 1, 2015

APS PARTNERS WITH CASEL TO IMPLEMENT DISTRICTWIDE SOCIAL AND EMOTIONAL LEARNING INITIATIVE

ATLANTA – Atlanta Public Schools is partnering with the Collaborative for Academic, Social and Emotional Learning (CASEL) to implement a districtwide evidenced-based social and emotional learning initiative that will enhance instructional models, integrating SEL into the core curriculum, and establish a caring, inclusive culture school-wide, supported by strong home-school-community partnerships.

Social and emotional learning (SEL) involves the processes through which children, adolescents and adults acquire and effectively apply the knowledge, attitudes and skills in five areas: self-awareness, self-management, social awareness, relationship skills, and responsible decision-making. Together, the ability for students and school-based staff to use these competencies when dealing with daily situations and challenges in the school community provides a foundation for better adjustment and academic performance, reflected by positive social behaviors, fewer conduct problems, less emotional distress and improved grades and test scores.

“Social-emotional learning skills are foundational to the academic success of our students, and our partnership with CASEL is critical to move this work forward,” said APS Superintendent Meria J. Carstarphen, Ed.D. “Research shows our students can master these SEL skills and develop their hearts, along with their smarts, to become better people than we could ever be.”

This summer, CASEL will provide professional development to instructional and non-instructional APS employees throughout the district for implementation of SEL initiative in APS elementary, middle and high schools. CASEL will also provide input into the development of pre-K through 12th grade SEL standards, school-level support, district data collection, and assist in establishing a communication plan to engage the community and district stakeholders. The pioneering APS SEL school sites will be announced in the fall.

“We’re thrilled to be collaborating with Atlanta Public Schools, and are excited by their vision and commitment to enhancing the social, emotional and academic growth of all students,” said CASEL Vice President of Programs and Practice Melissa Schlinger. “CASEL is looking forward to collaborating for many years to support Atlanta in their mission to provide high quality education for all students.”

-MORE-

About Atlanta Public Schools

Atlanta Public Schools is one of the largest school districts in the state of Georgia, serving approximately 50,000 students across 106 learning sites. The district is organized into nine K-12 clusters with 87 schools, 17 charter schools and two citywide single-gender academies, where students are offered rigorous instructional programs that foster success in school and life. For more information, visit www.atlantapublicschools.us.

About CASEL

The Collaborative for Academic, Social and Emotional Learning (CASEL), an independent not-for-profit organization founded in 1994, is a leading resource for advancing the practice of social and emotional learning (SEL). CASEL's mission is to establish SEL as an essential part of education from preschool through high school. The organization's main priorities and activities are 1) to advance scientific research on SEP, 2) to expand evidenced based SEL practice, and 3) to build the SEL field. For more information on CASEL, visit www.casel.org

###