

A Classroom Framework for Supporting Student Well-Being

Shayna Pond, Brandy Hackett, Keiana Cross, Jennifer Alt
Published by *K20 Center*

This work is licensed under a Creative Commons CC BY-SA 4.0 License

Time Frame 45 minutes

Essential Question(s)

What are the benefits of students' feeling safe in the classroom?

Summary

A Classroom Framework for Supporting Student Well-Being focuses on creating a common language for safety, connections, and coping strategies in the classroom. Participants will reflect on their teaching practices with an eye towards transforming their classrooms into safe and nurturing spaces.

Learning Goals

- Analyze how the Applied Educational Neuroscience framework can transform teaching practice into more effective trauma-informed classroom strategies.
- Reflect on how to integrate the Framework into the classroom.

Attachments

- Participant Notebook—A Classroom Framework for Supporting Student Well-Being.docx
- Participant Notebook—A Classroom Framework for Supporting Student Well-Being.pdf
- Presenter Slides—A Classroom Framework for Supporting Student Well-Being.pptx

Materials

- Participant Notebook (attached and linked; one per participant)
- Presentation Slides (attached)
- Chart Paper
- Sticky Note Pads
- Pens

25 minutes

Preparation

Prepare in advance by writing the four questions below on different pieces of chart paper. Post each piece of chart paper in different areas or stations around the room. Have several sticky note pads and pens available near each station for written participant responses.

- What are the benefits of students' feeling safe in the classroom?
- What experience have you had as a student in the classroom that made you feel safe?
- What do you currently do to help your students feel safe?
- Is providing a safe classroom different for a remote learning class?

10 minutes

Engage

Use the attached **Presenter Slides** to follow along with the lesson. Begin with **slide 3.** Read aloud the essential question: *What are the benefits of students' feeling safe in the classroom?* Then, move to **slide 4** and read aloud the learning objectives:

- Analyze how the Applied Educational Neuroscience framework can transform teaching practice into more effective trauma-informed classroom strategies.
- Reflect on how to integrate the framework into the classroom.

Display **slide 5**. Introduce participants to the Chalk Talk strategy. As a whole group, begin a discussion using the Chalk Talk strategy with the four question prompts prepared (listed below). Ask each participant to contribute by placing a sticky note with their responses to each question on its respective chart paper. You can also have participants contribute on a shared document if you prefer.

- What are the benefits of students' feeling safe in the classroom?
- What experience have you had as a student in the classroom that made you feel safe?
- What do you currently try to do to help your students feel safe?
- Is providing a safe classroom different for a remote learning class?

Modification for Distance Learning

In a distance learning or virtual learning setting, you can create a Padlet board for this discussion. For details on how to do so, see the K20 Center's Padlet Tech Tool card. Create four prompts in your Padlet board that match the discussion questions above.

Alternatively, you can create a copy of the following Google Slides link and share your copy with participants: Student Well-Being Chalk Talk. If you choose to do so, have participants add their comments to the prompts with virtual "sticky notes" provided on each slide.

After the discussion, highlight some key words and responses that elicit themes that align with the Pillars of the Applied Educational Neuroscience framework:

1. The educator's own moods and reactions to their environment (educator brain and body state).
2. A co-regulated brain and body that feel calm and alert (co-regulation).
3. Emotional attunement between students and caregivers (attachment/touch points).
4. Understanding one's own brain anatomy and mental behaviors (teaching neuroanatomy).

Teacher's Note: The Framework of Applied Educational Neuroscience

For more information about each of the four pillars listed above, see the attached Participant Notebook.

15 minutes

Explore

Display **slide 6**. Invite participants to explore a curated bank of resources related to the Applied Educational Neuroscience framework. Distribute digital copies of the attached and linked **Participant Notebook.** Consider using the link on the slide to do so: k20.ou.edu/fsswbpn

Provide 10-15 minutes for participants to explore the resources on pages 1-3 of the Participant Notebook.

Next, ask participants to take notes in the Note Catcher space next to each resource about what they have explored. Let them know ahead of time that they will be asked to describe something they found that is helpful to them. Remind participants that they should be prepared to share with the whole group (or a small group if there are too many participants to share out).

If time permits, invite participants to engage in a group discussion. Move to **slide 7.** Have each participant (or small group) take five minutes to report their findings from the resource exploration to the whole group. Be sure to point out the space provided on each Note Catcher to add ideas as others share out.

Presenter's Note: I Think/We Think Instructional Strategy

This exploration is structured using the I Think/We Think instructional strategy. In this strategy, participants first take notes on their own ideas about how to use the resources in the classroom. They then take notes on what others think as they follow the discussion.

15 minutes

Explain

Display **slide 8**. Direct participants to the one-page overview of the Applied Educational Neuroscience framework on page 4 in their Participant Notebooks. Briefly introduce each pillar before watching the video linked in the notebook (and on **slide 9**): "Applied Educational Neuroscience: Framework Overview."

Embedded video

https://youtube.com/watch?v=gdDPRG5Necw

Direct participants to page 5 of the notebook and invite them to take notes as they watch the video. Ask participants to think about how resources from the Explore phase might fit into these categories.

Following the video, move to **slide 10** and ask participants to share teaching practices that could be adopted to support each pillar. At this point, consider editing the slide to add participants' contributions to the chart as they share ideas about practices that would fit in each category of the framework. If you are facilitating face-to-face, you can also make a physical chart on an overhead projector or whiteboard space, hand-writing responses.

Modification for Distance Learning

In a distance learning or virtual learning setting, you can have participants raise their hands in Zoom (or a similar video call client) or send their ideas in the chat channel. Be sure to copy these ideas into the chart.

10 minutes

Extend

Finally, move to **slide 11.** Have participants spend a few minutes making a goal for what they will take into their classrooms based on what they have learned. Direct them to page 6 of their Participant Notebook. Walk through the question prompts with them and invite any questions before providing time for them to reflect individually.

- What will you do to support student well-being in your classroom?
- Why will this activity or strategy support student well-being? In what way does it connect to the framework?
- How and when will you implement this goal? (During what part of your day, week, etc. will you be using this strategy?)
- Who or what will you look to if you have difficulty?

5 minutes

Evaluate

If time permits, ask participants to share what they have learned.

Research Rationale

The framework of Applied Educational Neuroscience addresses brain and body development, awareness, and ways that trauma and adversity affect development through an educator's lens as we explore the four pillars: attachment/touch points, co-regulation, educator brain and body state, and teaching students and staff about their own neuroanatomy. These four pillars support a relational and brain-aligned discipline lens that addresses the behaviors, communication, relationships, sensations, feelings, and thoughts of all students and staff.

This new lens for discipline is preventative, brain-aligned, and relational. This lens includes educators' procedures, routines, bell work, morning meetings, and rituals throughout the day. This work begins with staff and adult brain and body regulation. Research shows that many of the achievement gaps that we see are a result of adversity gaps that can be lessened through repetitive patterned regulatory and connective experiences (Hambrick, Brawner, & Perry, 2019; Desautels, 2015b; Desautels, 2019). *We need to teach the behaviors we want to see unfold.*

This framework is a process, not scripted, and focuses on the blending of pillars as we address emotional and behavioral challenges arising from adversities and traumas in our classrooms and schools.

Resources

- Desautels, L. (2015b). Energy and calm: Brain breaks and focused-attention practices. *Scholarship and Professional Work – Education*. 107. https://digitalcommons.butler.edu/coe_papers/107
- Desautels, L. (2019). The role of emotion co-regulation in discipline. [Web log post]. https://www.edutopia.org/article/role-emotion-co-regulation-discipline
- Hambrick, E. P., Brawner, T. W., & Perry, B. D. (2019). Timing of early-life stress and the development of brain-related capacities. *Frontiers in Behavioral Neuroscience*, *13*, 183. https://doi.org/10.3389/fnbeh.2019.00183
- K20 Center. (n.d.). Chalk talk. Strategies. https://learn.k20center.ou.edu/strategy/197
- K20 Center. (n.d.). I think/we think. Strategies. https://learn.k20center.ou.edu/strategy/141
- K20 Center. (n.d.). Padlet. Tech Tools. https://learn.k20center.ou.edu/tech-tool/1077
- Perry, Bruce D. (2014, December 11). Social and emotional development in early childhood. [Video]. https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=gdDPRG5Necw