



Stronger Connections Collaborative

February 26, 2026



Welcome – please **SIGN IN** so I can send resources after the meeting!



Logistics

Before we get started,

-  This meeting is being recorded so we can share key takeaways and support those who couldn't attend live.
-  Please stay muted unless you're speaking to help reduce background noise.
-  If you have a question or comment, feel free to unmute yourself or type it in the chat — we want to hear from you!
-  AI notetakers are NOT permitted during the session.

Thanks for helping us create a respectful and engaging space for everyone.

**Webinar:
Improving Attendance and
Engagement in Schools**

Presented by



**Attendance
Works**

Advancing Student Success By Reducing Chronic Absence

**April 7, 2026
12:30-2 p.m.**

Save the Date



Agenda

Inclusive Welcome

Resource Spotlight

Pass the Mic

Technical Assistance / Announcements

Intentional Close



**“If you don’t like the road
you’re walking, start paving
another one.”**

Dolly Parton

Say hello in the chat...

Name

Role

**School
District**



Inclusive Welcome

Resilience Reflection

- Mindful activity to help us become aware of biases; combines self-resilience and positive self-talk to decrease negativity bias
- Helps deal with stress and supports mental health



- I HAVE _____ (reflect on a **support** in your life)
- I CAN _____ (express things that you **can do**)
- I AM _____ (express **positive** or productive words)

Resource Link: [WS/FCS 3 Signature Practices Playbook](#)

Resilience Reflection



SELF-AWARENESS

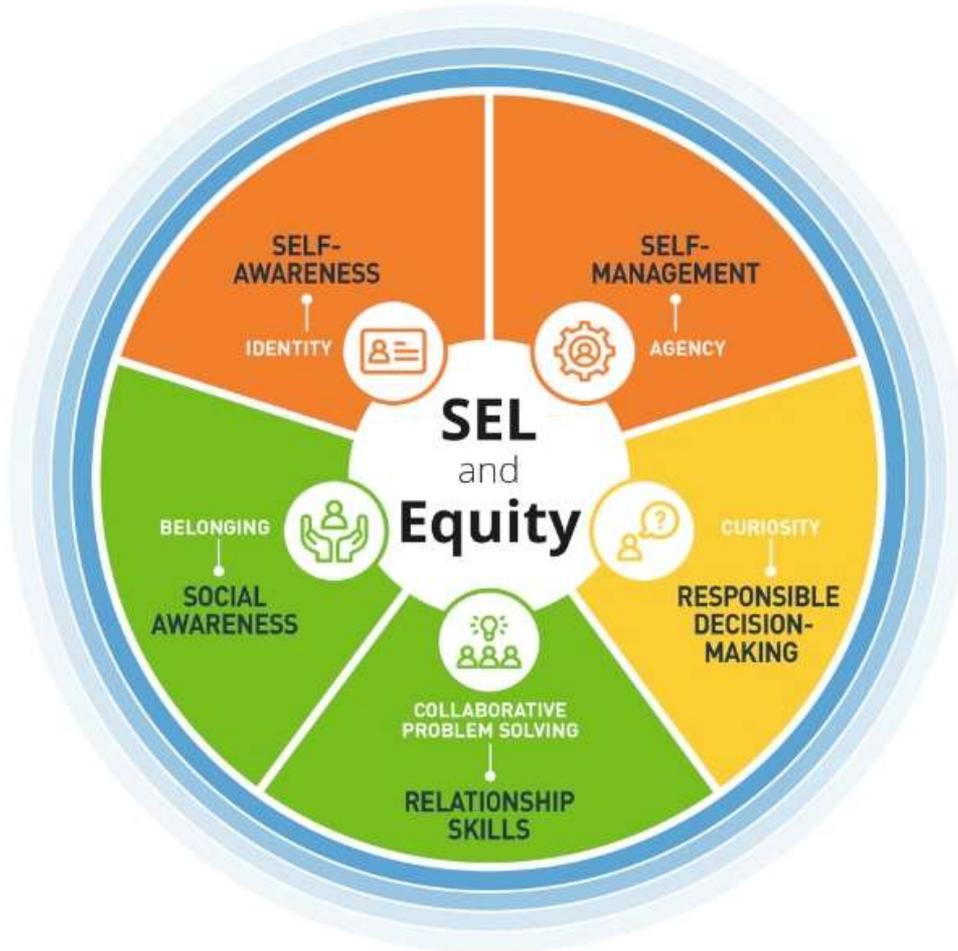


SELF-
MANAGEMENT



RESPONSIBLE
DECISION-MAKING

CASEL Resources



- [CASEL](#) – Collaborative for Academic, Social, and Emotional Learning
- [5 SEL Competencies](#) & Focal Constructs
- [3 Signature Practices](#)
- [School](#) and [District](#) SEL Implementation
- [How does SEL Support Equity?](#)



Resource Spotlight

Forming Effective Teams

CASEL Guidance on Forming Teams



Assembling the
Team



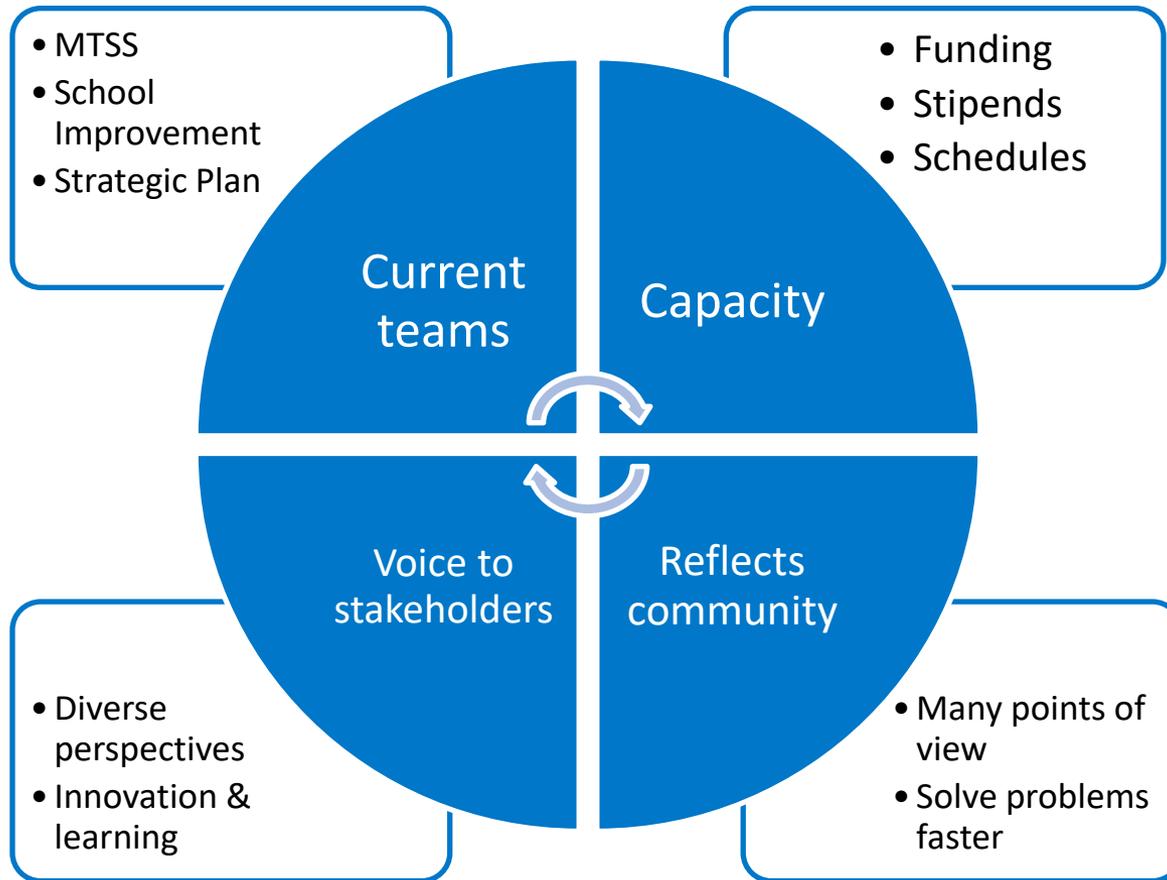
Defining Roles
and
Responsibilities



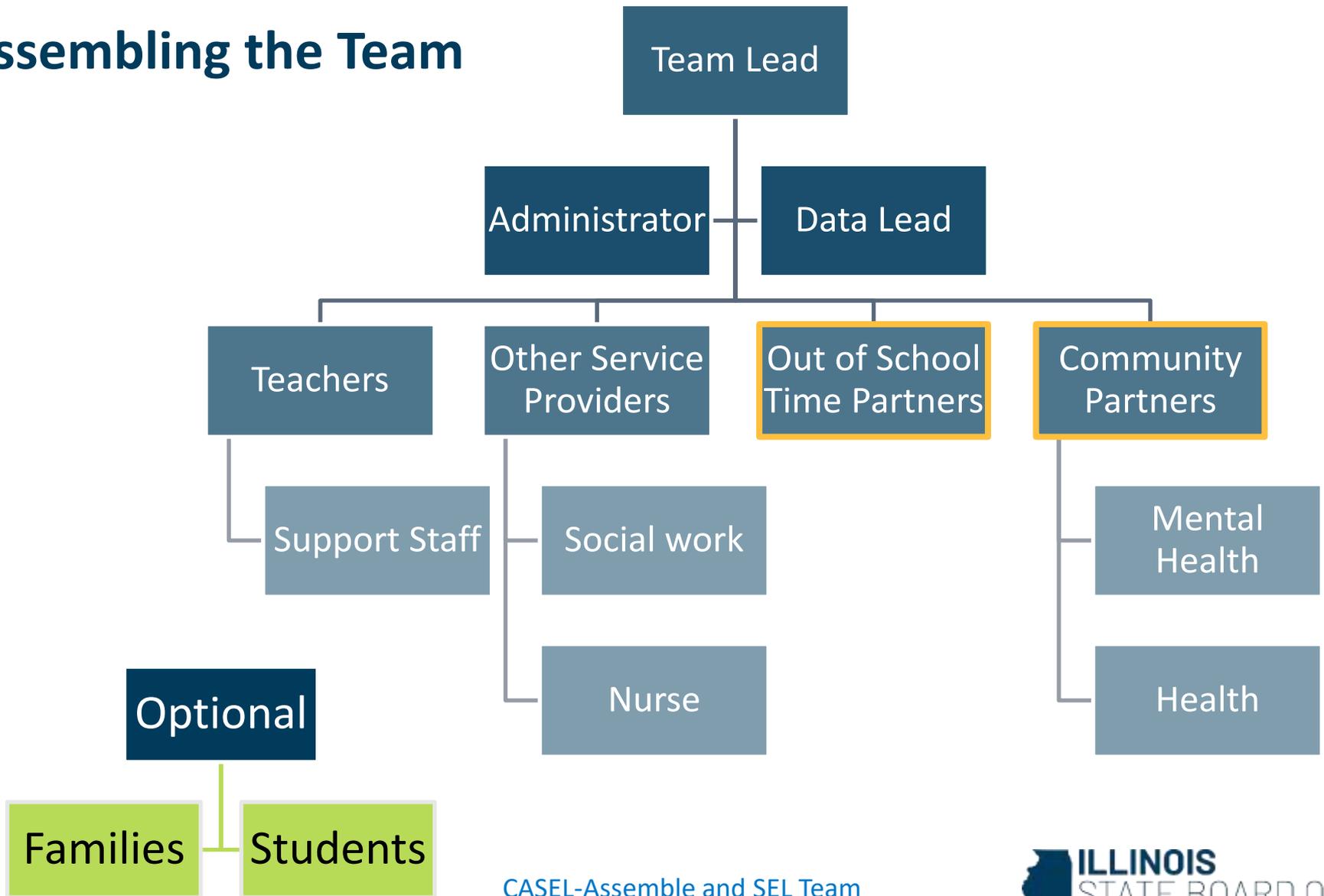
Building a
Strong Dynamic



Assembling the Team

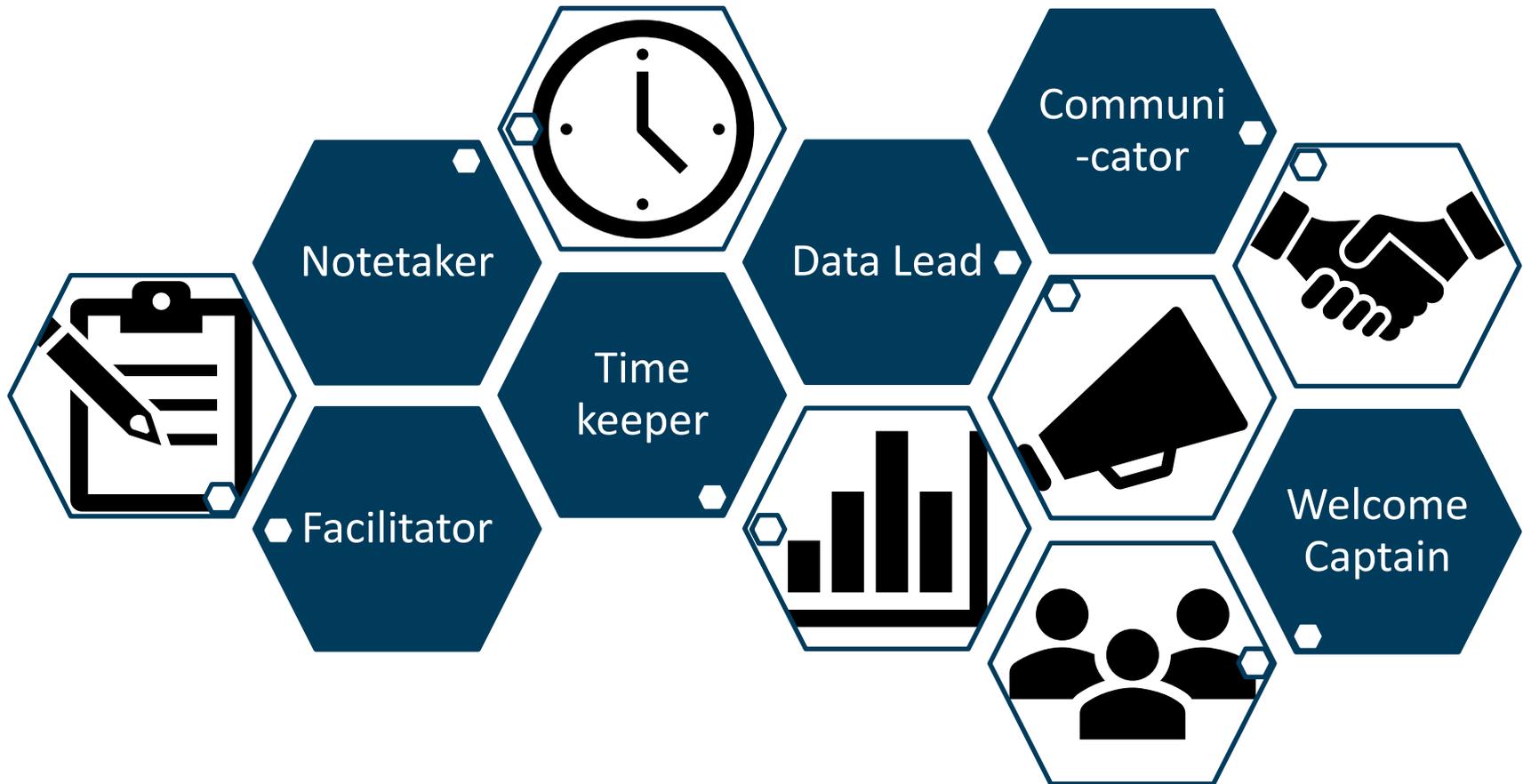


Assembling the Team



[CASEL-Assemble and SEL Team](#)

Defining Roles and Responsibilities



[CASEL-Define Team Roles](#)

Build a Strong Team Dynamic

Regular Meeting Schedule

- Monthly
- Whole year

Develop Team Working Agreement

- Review and revise as needed

Relationship-Building Routines

- CASEL 3 Signature Practices

Productive Meetings

- Consistent Agenda

Democratic Decision Making

- Team vote
- Whole staff
- All stakeholders

Developing Team Working Agreements

- Take time on the front end
- Sustainable division of responsibility
- More productive meetings
- Improve team culture
- Value differences, opinion, inclusion
- Review and revise as team evolves



Avoid Common Pitfalls



Lack of shared
vision or goals

Fear of conflict

Absence of trust

Initiative
overload

Lack of
accountability

Communication
breakdown

Breakout Room Discussion

Structure

- New team
- Existing team

Members

- Diverse
- Stakeholder voice

Teams

Strengths

- Effectiveness
- Results?

Growth

- New strategies
- What's next?

Breakout rooms...

**Brainstorm ideas
for your focus
area**

**Record
your ideas**

**Share out ideas in
the large
group/add to chat**



Social Emotional Learning Hubs

- Direct support for social emotional learning and universal mental health screening.
- Provide coaching, professional development, training, and capacity building to districts and regional offices in their area.
- Assist school-community leadership teams to implement data-driven strategies to address student trauma and mental health needs and build resilient communities.

Resilience Supportive Schools Illinois

- **Free** and voluntary support that uses school-specific data to connect educators with evidence-informed tools and resources to improve the mental health and well-being of their school-communities. Choose a focus:
 - Trauma-responsiveness
 - Social and Emotional Learning
 - Mental Health
 - Cultural Responsiveness



Pass the Mic

Share Your Success



SHARE - Stronger Connections Success!

Complete the [Stronger Connections Share Success Form](#) to sign up today!



Technical Assistance / Updates

SCG Year 2 (FY 2026) Reporting

[Quarterly Metric Reports – Year 2](#) **New link!**

FY 2025 Stronger Connections Grant - Year 2 (FY26) - Quarterly Metric Reports

This form is collecting information for FY 2026 (Year 2 of the FY 2025 grant activity)

Submission of this report quarterly is a requirement of grant.

- Quarter 1 – July through September; **Due Oct. 20, 2025**
- Quarter 2 – October through December; **Due Jan. 20, 2026**
- Quarter 3 – January through March; **Due April 20, 2026**
- Quarter 4 – April through June; **Due July 20, 2026**

Grantee Manual – Updates for Year 2 (FY 2026)

Stronger Connections Grant Manual



New document on SC website

Updated reporting requirements

New quarterly metric form link

Grant timeline details

Reporting guidance and expectations

Dates to Remember...



Quarter 3 Metric Report – due **April 20, 2026**



Next Stronger Connections Collaborative Meeting
– **March 26, 2026**



Questions?



Intentional Close

Stronger Connections Contacts



Email: StrongerConnections@isbe.net



[ISBE Stronger Connections Grant webpage](#)



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Thank you