

by grade and aniculate what students should know and be able to do related to SEL.

Strong SEL standards or guidelines:

Are comprehensive, developmentally appropriate, and culturally responsive. Include benchmarks for what all students should know and be able to do from PreK through grade 12. Are rolled out with communication and professional learning that orients district and school staff to standards.

Use the Rubric to assess your current level of implementation of SEL standards.

SEL standards differ from academic standards in that they do not imply assessment measures or suggest accountability. It may be helpful to think and talk about them as "learning goals" or "competencies" instead of "standards." Standards can guide the selection of evidence-based programs and the creation of professional learning related to SEL. See examples of SEL standards from across the nation.

"To develop the standards, we simply asked, 'What is it you wish kids could graduate with? What are the skills you most depend on as an adult?' Those were all the standards we needed."

- Anchorage School District

Why does my district need SEL learning standards?

When clear SEL learning goals and explicit objectives for student learning are in place, district leaders, staff, parents, and community partners can consistently and intentionally create conditions that foster SEL. These goals or standards help establish a common language and developmentally appropriate benchmarks for SEL. Additionally, adopting these kinds of learning goals sends the message that SEL is a district priority and merits instructional focus.

"The decision to develop standards sooner rather than later had a significant impact on our ability to concretely connect social and emotional learning (SEL) to what occurs in schools on a daily basis. It served as the primary planning document and is the foundation for all of our training. In addition, having multiple stakeholders engaged in the process left us with a strong product that educators own and utilize to improve practice."

- Washoe County School District

When should my district adopt SEL learning standards?

Your district may want to begin adopting learning standards or goals:

- After district leaders, including the board of education, have become familiar with SEL and have identified it as a priority for district time and resources. This includes the introduction of SEL to at least some school staff, parents, and community partners.
- Before districtwide adoption of evidence-based programs, instructional practices, or assessments of student SEL competencies. Standards should guide how the district makes decisions about curricula, programming, professional learning, assessment, etc.

Who needs to be involved?

Ideally your district's SEL lead will oversee the process of developing or adopting SEL learning goals or standards. You will also want to involve key stakeholders, including those who will play a role in successful implementation, especially if they have not been previously involved in SEL planning. Consider including some stakeholders who have a solid knowledge of SEL, as well as those whose support your need to ensure the implementation of SEL.

Once you're ready to pilot your newly developed learning standards, you'll want to involve teachers and others who will be able to provide feedback on their implementation.



Focus Area 1 **Build Foundational Support** ing SEL standards or guidelines that are comprehensive, developmentally and Plan clude benchmarks for what all students should know and be able to do id integrating the SEL standards with academic standards and building Focus Area 2 e Rubric to assess your current level of implementation. **Strengthen Adult SEL Competencies and Capacity** ss, developing and implementing learning standards is a collaborative Focus Area 3 to develop the standards and gather feedback and input from teachers who Promote SEL for Students also be effective to adapt or adopt learning standards rather than creating Focus Area 4 **Reflect on Data for Continuous Improvement**

tee or work group.

First, identify who will lead the SEL standards-writing process. Ideally your district has a designated SEL lead who can direct the process of developing SEL goals. If that's not possible, select someone with a solid understanding of SEL principles who has been involved in district planning discussions, has access to district decision-makers, and has time to lead the process. This person should also be a strong communicator, organized project manager, and excellent consensus builder.

Next, actively recruit diverse stakeholders who will play key roles in successful implementation—those who will teach SEL, provide professional learning on SEL standards, or measure the impact of the SEL standards. Ideally these stakeholders will have at least a foundational level of SEL knowledge.

You may also want to:

- Engage any stakeholders who may challenge the adoption of SEL standards or who need a clearer understanding of how you plan to use them.
- Recruit a strong editor and writer as part of the group to ensure the resulting learning goals are clear, consistent, organized, and balanced.
- Prioritize finding and engaging educators in your district with experience teaching and integrating SEL (findings from a districtwide program and initiative inventory may help).
- Create a professional learning session to build baseline knowledge of SEL for committee members, if needed. More information about developing foundational SEL is available on the CASEL website.

To help ensure that your committee works smoothly while creating your district's SEL standards, it's a good idea to set some norms for their work. It is advisable to:

- Define and clarify the committee's goals, roles, and responsibilities. Conduct a brainstorming session at the first meeting or bring a draft of potential responsibilities and expectations for discussion and feedback. Here are some sample agendas:
 - Sample Agenda, Standards Steering Committee Introduction Meeting
 - Washoe County's 2 Day Standards Development Retreat
- Identify a realistic timeline for adopting SEL standards. Include time for writing, editing, gathering input and comments, revising based on feedback, and your district's policy-approval process for formal adoption of the standards.
- Confirm a regular meeting schedule.

- Provide resources and discussion to ensure that members of the committee have a shared understanding of SEL standards. Resources you may wish to use include:
 - The Case for Preschool through High School State Learning Standards for SEL
 - CASEL Brief: Key Features of High-Quality SEL Standards

2. Review SEL-related frameworks, standards, and learning goals from across your district and other districts and states.

Before launching a new set of standards, it is important to review and coordinate your district's various priorities and initiatives. Consider what else your district is already doing that impacts how students and teachers will engage with SEL standards:

- How does SEL support, align, or enhance those initiatives?
- What SEL framework best aligns with the team's vision of student development?
- Does your district have other frameworks or standards that intersect or relate to SEL, such as 21st Century Skills, Employability Skills Framework, competency-based or personalized learning?
- Do other standards already incorporate aspects of SEL, such as health or social studies standards?
- What framework do the PreK SEL standards use?

Next, determine whether your state has SEL standards. You can look up your own state using CASEL's State Scan Scorecard map. If your state has SEL standards, review those standards for alignment to your district's vision of SEL.

If your state hasn't established or communicated learning goals for SEL, you can review standards from other states and districts. For example, the Oregon Department of Education published these Transformative Social and Emotional Learning Standards in 2023. For more, see CASEL's examination of state SEL frameworks and standards.

Here are standards from some of the districts in CASEL's Collaborating Districts Initiative:

- Anchorage Public Schools
- Austin Independent School District
- Cleveland Metropolitan School District
- Dupage County School Districts
- Metropolitan Nashville Public Schools
- Oakland Unified School District (watch their videos that help teachers assess student growth equitably and in a strengths-based way here and here)
- Washoe County School District

For greater context and detail about the district process for developing and using SEL standards, you can take a closer look in these four case studies:

- Anchorage aligned SEL standards with district academic curricula and strengthened implementation through visibility, modeling, and debriefing.
- Austin has crosswalked SEL standards with multiple curriculum standards and uses them to guide the design of classroom instruction, professional learning, curriculum adoption, and assessments.
- Oakland developed standards over the course of a year with a group of teachers, central office administrators and staff, youth, and community members.

• Washoe County convened key stakeholders to draft standards during a two-day retreat.

3. Adapt or draft standards based on your district's vision and needs.

Based on your review and reflection, determine whether you will choose to adopt existing state standards, adapt standards used in other areas, or create new SEL standards. Decide which approach will best meet the needs of your district, align to other priorities, and reflect your district's overall vision for SEL.

If you do not have a compelling reason to draft completely new standards, it can be helpful (and even recommended) to adapt or adopt existing standards either from your state, other states, or other districts that have already implemented standards. If you choose to write your own SEL standards, see A Process for Developing and Articulating Learning Goals or Competencies for Social and Emotional Learning.

See how the Washoe County School District facilitated a workgroup to adapt SEL standards to their district in Case Study: Washoe County School District SEL Standards Development Process

Regardless of whether you choose to adapt existing goals and standards or create your own standards, ensure that your SEL goals:

- Are aligned with CASEL's five core competencies
- Are simple, clear, and concise statements about what students should know and be able to do in each of the five SEL core competencies.
- Include developmental benchmarks that are age-appropriate at each grade level or across grade groups (i.e., PreK-2, 3-5, 6-8, 9-10, and 11-12) and that demonstrate progression by building on the prior years' standards.
- Are culturally and linguistically relevant for all the students your district serves.
- Align effectively with existing state or district standards.
- Are aligned with any evidence-based SEL programs your district is already implementing.

4. Align drafted SEL standards with your district's academic standards and any instructional practice priorities (e.g., problem-based or project-based learning, cooperative learning).

This alignment ensures that your learning goals connect to current practices and priorities in your district, and can also help you:

- Outline how SEL standards integrate with ongoing academic instruction and support academic skill priorities.
- Address potential concerns among stakeholders and implementers that SEL is "something new" or will require extra work.
- Continue to communicate that developing SEL is not a "program" but a set of systemic educational practices.

You may also want to consider reviewing documents or programs in your district that already imply some expectations for students' SEL competencies. These could include report cards or progress reports with "behavior" or "civics" indicators, graduation profiles, PBIS or related behavioral expectations, or behavioral codes of conduct.

Connect the learning standards to any evidence-based practices or civics, character, or behavioral education programming currently used in your district. Determine if these are aligned with your chosen standards or if they may need to be changed.

5. Circulate your draft of SEL standards throughout the district and gather feedback.

Consult your communication plan to identify stakeholders to contact about your learning standards for students related to SEL. Consider engaging key influencers in your community who also serve the district's students, such as out-of-school time staff, clergy, doctors, libraries, and parks/recreation staff.

Along with the drafted standards and benchmarks, be sure to share:

- How SEL learning standards support district goals and priorities, and why the district wants and needs SEL learning standards. Emphasize that they intended to help create consistently and intentionality around SEL rather than measurements for accountability or assessment.
- Why SEL learning standards matter for student achievement.
- Alignment with academic or other standards, practices, or key curricula.
- Anticipated professional learning opportunities that will be available after adoption.
- What additional implementation steps may follow to support the achievement of the SEL learning goals.

Strive for face-to-face communication through meetings and professional learning sessions, especially if SEL is a newer concept in your district. If this isn't possible, use videos, webinars, newsletters, or any existing curriculum management system to help personalize the contact. Solicit feedback and questions from:

- Teachers and school leaders. You may want to facilitate focus groups that encourage teachers and school leaders to explore the standards deeply and offer feedback on how these will standards will impact teaching and learning.
- Families. Engage families in discussing whether the standards reflect their diverse cultures, backgrounds, and the goals that they have for their children. Also use their input to ensure standards are written in language that is engaging and meaningful. Consider whether standards should be translated into the primary home languages represented in your district.
- Students. You may want to elicit feedback through student focus groups or student leadership groups. It's important to gather diverse student perspectives, including students who are not traditionally engaged in leadership roles. Engage students in discussing whether the standards reflect their personal goals, their identities, and what they believe to be important. Also ensure the standards are written in language that is engaging and meaningful to students.
- Community partners. Identify how the standards align to work that community partners are engaged in and ways to create common language between school hours and out-of-school time.

Revise the standards as needed to incorporate stakeholder feedback.

6. Pilot the SEL standards before finalizing and formally adopting them districtwide.

We recommend that your district recruit teachers in different academic subjects and across grade levels to pilot or field test the SEL standards. Special education and ELL classrooms should also be included.

During the pilot, ask teachers to incorporate the SEL standards in their lessons plans. Help them prepare to create these lesson plans by reviewing how to build instructional practices to support SEL and share these resources. See Key Activity: Integration

After the pilot, ask teachers to assess the results of their lesson plans. Which current lessons and teaching practices fit

well with the standards? Which standards or subjects don't fit as well and why? Consider any changes to the standards that might be needed as a result of feedback from piloting teachers, and then finalize the standards.

7. Formally adopt the standards as district policy.

Request that your board of education or other governing bodies formally adopt the SEL standards.

Prepare a policy statement and complete your district's policy adoption or school board approval process. See an example of a policy from Oakland United School District.

8. Plan how your district will implement the new standards.

Depending on the size of your district and your resources, you may choose either to roll out the release in a small set of diverse classrooms or adopt broad implementation.

- If your district is still developing an implementation plan for SEL, you may want to roll out the standards in a small but diverse set of classrooms to inform your implementation process.
- If your district will use evidence-based practice(s) and currently adopted instructional strategies and you have resources available, you may not need to pilot the standards to determine how to handle broad implementation. Even in this case, you may choose gradual implementation involving certain sets of schools, grade levels, or geographic areas each semester or year until the entire district is using the SEL standards.
 - Example: Anchorage Standards Development Process Description

9. Introduce your district's SEL learning goals to stakeholders and implementers and make the standards available for use.

Even if you decide to pilot implementation before a full-scale release, be sure to notify all stakeholders in advance to give them a chance to ask questions and make recommendations.

Be sure to communicate with:

- Principals
- Teachers
- Parents
- Students
- Union leaders
- Department heads
- School board members

Here are some topics you should consider communicating about:

- How the standards were developed and how feedback was gathered and incorporated.
- How staff will be supported in implementing the standards (e.g., upcoming professional learning opportunities, webinars, curriculum adoption, etc.). If this is still under development, let staff know where to direct their

questions or suggestions as the plan develops.

• Expectations, including a timeline for use of the SEL standards by principals, teachers, and other relevant stakeholder groups.

Offer teachers the opportunity to develop SEL-integrated lesson plans or compare the SEL standards with existing curricula.

You'll also want to integrate SEL standards into your district's learning standards materials, especially in web portals and any curricular management system(s).

More specific guidance on how to implement SEL standards can be found in Key Activity: Evidence-Based Programs and Key Activity: Integration.

Here is an example of ways to communicate about SEL standards:

• Oakland released their SEL standards as a set of SEL competencies posters in English and Spanish with instructions on How to Use the SEL Competencies Posters

10. Review and revise SEL standards periodically.

After at least one semester of implementation, assess awareness and use of the SEL standards. Here are some ways to assess awareness:

- Use various methods (e.g., surveys, standards meetings, etc.) to gauge awareness and monitor the degree to which the standards are integrated into the planning and delivery of classroom instruction.
- Consider organizing an SEL Learning Walk to identify the application of standards in piloting classrooms. Here is an example protocol and observation tool from Anchorage Public Schools.

Revisit your district's SEL standards a few years after the initial adoption and plan time for revisions as needed. When revisiting standards:

- Gather feedback from teachers on the existing standards with questions such as:
 - Are the standards clear?
 - Are the standards effective?
 - What would you add to, change in, or remove from the standards and why?
 - What additional tools or training, if any, do you need to support implementation? (If possible, use focus groups for optimal feedback or surveys if focus groups are not an option.)
- Modify your district's SEL standards as needed to improve clarity, alignment to academic standards, curricula, and key district strategies.
- Amend the district's policy if needed and communicate the modifications broadly.

Focus Area 1 Build Foundational Support and Plan	d implement SEL standards.			
Focus Area 2 Strengthen Adult SEL Competencies and Capacity	l and planned to adopt SEL standards			
Focus Area 3 Promote SEL for Students				
Focus Area 4 Reflect on Data for Continuous Improvement	tion invited SEL program providers to share crosswalks to show the alignment between sin's SEL standards. This page includes information about each program, alignment onsultants.			
SOURCE: Wisconsin DPI TAGS SEL standards evidence-ba	sed programs			
	bl District Process for Developing SEL Standards dards, including useful artifacts from the 2 day retreat where they were written by a team ence professional learning planning			
	ol District Process for Developing SEL Standards dicator examples, contextual information on how they were developed and how they are			
SOURCE: Oakland Unified School District				
TAGS SEL standards board policie classroom level	es implementation support implementation plan PK-12			
	chool District Process for Developing SEL Standards information on how they are used and measured.			
SOURCE: Austin Independent School District				
TAGS SEL standards board policie elementary school grades PK-12	middle school grades high school grades			

Case Study: Anchorage Public Schools Process for Developing SEL Standards

SEL standards and a description of Anchorage's process of developing them, piloting their use, and bringing them to scale districtwide.

AGS SEL standards board policies implementation plan middle school grades high school grades elementary school grades PK-12 planning			
elementary school grades PK-12 planning			
ready-to-use tools			
ITLE			
esponsible Decision Making (video)			
ASEL and the Montgomery County Educational Service Center collaborated on this video to describe the competency of esponsible decision making. Children can make responsible decisions by developing the ability to analyze a situation, understand s ethical implications, and evaluate the consequences. Parents and educators can help students learn to think through all parts of roblem and encourage them to make decisions on their own.			
OURCE: CASEL and the Montgomery County			
sc			
AGS videos responsible decision making SEL competence communications			
elationship Skills (video)			
ASEL and the Montgomery County Educational Service Center collaborated on this video to describe the competency of elationship skills. Communication, cooperation and the ability to successfully resolve conflicts are key to successful relationships. ducators can help students develop these skills by working together in groups and discussing roles. Parents can support their hildren by spending time with them and encouraging communication.			
OURCE: CASEL and the Montgomery County SC			
AGS videos relationship skills SEL competence communications			
<u>ocial Awareness (video)</u>			



Self Management (video)

CASEL and the Montgomery County Educational Service Center collaborated on this video to describe the competency of self management. Students can learn to manage their feelings and turn them into positive actions. Adults can help by creating a calm and regulated environment, showing how to manage impulses, and discussing ways to resolve conflicts.



Key Features of High-Quality Standards for SEL

American Institutes for Research and CASEL's guidance for State Education Agencies on developing SEL policies and guidelines, with examples from other states.

SOURCE: AIR
TAGS SEL standards board policies implementation support culturally responsive
professional learning planning
The Collaborating States Initiative (CSI) Recommended Process for Developing State Policies and Guidelines to Support Social and Emotional Learning AIR and CASEL's guide for State Education Agencies to develop, implement, and sustain SEL policies and guidelines. This
document provides the "big picture", other related documents provide detail for specific action steps.
SOURCE: AIR
TAGS SEL standards board policies implementation plan planning
Developing and Articulating Learning Goals or Competencies for Social and Emotional Learning. American Institutes for Research and CASEL teamed up to create this guide for developing SEL standards. Includes a definition of terms and guidance for setting up a writing team and articulating learning goals.
SOURCE: AIR
TAGS SEL standards board policies SEL competence implementation plan planning
Oakland SEL Competencies Posters for Classrooms

This poster set illustrating the 5 SEL competencies were distributed by Oakland's team to all schools, along with suggested activities for introducing each poster/concept to a classroom community.

SOURCE: Oakland Unified School District

RELATED RESOURCES

Oakland SEL Competencies Posters for Classrooms (Spanish)

This poster set illustrating the 5 SEL competencies were distributed by Oakland's team to all schools, along with suggested activities for introducing each poster/concept to a classroom community.

	sible decision making SEL competence SEL overview advisory/homeroom
commu	unications classroom level
Classroo	om Guide for using the SEL Competencies Posters
Jakland p	roduced a set of classroom posters featuring the 5 SEL competencies, and provided this guide for teacher
	produced a set of classroom posters featuring the 5 SEL competencies, and provided this guide for teacher ning experiences around each poster.
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OURCE: District	ning experiences around each poster.

See artifacts shared by districts and schools

TITLE

Oregon's Transformative Social and Emotional Learning Framework & Standards

Oregon's Transformative SEL Framework and Standards provide intentional focus on the social and emotional elements of learning, teaching, and cultivating affirming school culture through a transformative approach.

SOURCE: Oregon DOE

TAGS SEL standards equity

SEL Skills Continuum, Adult and PreK-12

This example from a school division in southeastern Virginia includes "I can" statements to describe skills within each of the 5 SEL competency areas. Separate lists for adults, PreK, K-1, 2-3, 4-5, 6-8, 9-10, and 11-12 show how social and emotional skills are developmental and are expressed differently over time.

TAGS SEL standards

Sacramento City Core Competencies and Indicators for SEL

Sacramento City Unified School District's motto for SEL is "We Are. We Belong. We Can." Their standards include the 5 core competencies and add Growth Mindset as a sixth component.

SOURCE: Sacramento City Unified School District TAGS SEL standards SEL competence PK-12 Dallas PreK-Adult Social and Emotional Learning Standards Dallas' SEL standards build from CASEL's 5 core competencies. SOURCE: Dallas Independent School District TAGS SEL standards PK-12

Oakland's SEL Standards and Student Report Card Introduction - Part 1 (Video)

Video from Oakland to help teachers complete the SEL part of the report card for each student. Focus is on assessing students equitably and in a strengths-based way. For the 1st marking period, teachers completed the section on self-management and relationship skills.

SOURC District	E: Oakland Unified Sc	hool				
TAGS	student assessment	anti-bias	SEL standards	videos	self management	relationship skills
equit	y teacher training					

RELATED RESOURCES

Oakland's SEL Standards and Student Report Card Introduction - Part 2 (Video)

Video from Oakland to help teachers complete the SEL part of the report card for each student. Focus is on assessing students equitably and in a strengths-based way. For the 2nd marking period, teachers completed the section on self-awareness and social awareness.

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TAGS	student assessment	anti-bias	SEL standards	videos	social awareness	self awareness
equi	ty teacher training					

Cleveland's SEL Standards and Scope and Sequence (PK-12)

Cleveland's scope and sequence provides early and late quarter SEL goals for each grade level PK-12.

TAGS student assessmen	t SEL standards	middle school grades high school grades
elementary school grade	6 PK-12	
Oakland School Board I	olicy on SEL	
Policy stating that SEL under statement, provide PD, adopt		n Oakland, and intent to implement SEL standards, change the mission SEL growth.
SOURCE: Oakland Unified District	School	
TAGS school board S	EL standards boar	rd policies assessment college and career readiness
culture and climate	rofessional learning	integrate with district priorities SEL leadership
Washoe County SEL Sta	ndards	
SEL standards and indicators	from Washoe County.	
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Oakland PK-Adult SEL Standards
Oakland's SEL standards, which have been enhanced to prioritize equity and respect for diversity.
SOURCE: Oakland Unified School District
TAGS SEL standards equity culturally responsive PK-12
New Jersey SEL Competencies and Subcompetencies
The State of New Jersey has adopted CASEL's 5 core SEL competencies, and articulates sub-competencies for each in this poster.
SOURCE: New Jersey DOE
TAGS SEL standards PK-12
Nashville K-12 SEL Standards (I Can Statements)
Nashville's "I Can" statements differentiated for each grade K-12, and categorized by the 5 core SEL competencies.
SOURCE: Metropolitan Nashville Public Schools
TAGS SEL standards middle school grades high school grades elementary school grades PK-12
CDI District Standards
Links to SEL standards adopted by 9 districts within the Collaborating Districts Initiative.
SOURCE: CASEL
TAGS SEL standards SEL competence middle school grades high school grades
elementary school grades PK-12
DuPage County K-8 SEL Standards
DuPage County's SEL standards, differentiated for each grade level K-8 and categorized within the 5 core SEL competencies.
SOURCE: DuPage County School Districts
TAGS SEL standards SEL competence middle school grades elementary school grades
Austin K-12 SEL Standards
Austin's SEL standards and student expectations, differentiated by grade band.
SOURCE: Austin Independent School District
TAGS SEL standards SEL competence middle school grades high school grades
elementary school grades PK-12

Anchorage PK-12 SEL Standards

Anchorage SEL standards with student-friendly "I" statements for each, based around 4 goals of self-awareness, self-management, social awareness, and social management.

SOURCE: Anchorage Public				
School	S			
TAGS	SEL standards	SEL competence	PK-12	

Find resources to help you learn more on this topic

TITLE
What Does Evidence-Based Instruction in Social and Emotional Learning Actually Look Like in Practice? This brief answers the question: What do school staff actually do in the classroom and school to help students achieve the goals laid out in SEL standards? Describes 4 approaches that together form a comprehensive plan.
SOURCE: CASEL
TAGS SEL standards research brief implementation plan evidence-based programs
instructional practices
The Case for PreSchool through High School State Learning Standards for SEL. Chapter providing a research review about the importance of state SEL standards for all grade levels, components of high quality standards, examples from states, and areas of overlap with other standards.
SOURCE: CASEL
TAGS school board SEL standards board policies research brief PK-12
integrate with district priorities building buy-in for SEL