**[Guidelines on Implementing   
Social and Emotional Learning (SEL) Curricula](#_Developing_students’_social)** **K-12**

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*Last updated November 2017*

#### [Guidelines on Implementing Social and Emotional Learning (SEL)](#_Introduction_and_Background/Context) K-12 Curricula

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#### Developing students’ social and emotional competencies contributes to students’ academic achievement. This document contains guidelines for schools and districts on how to effectively implement social and emotional learning (SEL) curricula for students in grades Kindergarten (K)-12. (While the guidelines are for K-12 curricula, information and resources reference and can be applied to Pre-Kindergarten programs as well.) The information relates to leadership, professional development, resource coordination, instructional approaches, policies and protocols, collaboration with families, and implementation of K-12 SEL competencies. These guidelines and related resources are posted and will be updated on the Department of Elementary and Secondary Education’s [bullying prevention and intervention pages](http://www.doe.mass.edu/bullying). Additionally, this document and other resources related to students’ social and emotional learning can be found on the Department’s [SEL webpage.](http://www.doe.mass.edu/candi/SEL/)

Many schools and districts in Massachusetts are moving forward with initiatives related to SEL. Aligning these efforts can help promote students’ skill proficiency while supporting their academic success. Moreover, local SEL curricula can align with initiatives related to character education, civic education, diversity, youth development, team teaching, and more. To sustain a successful district-wide initiative, support for SEL is needed from a broad-based community-wide coalition that understands the importance of SEL and advocates for and helps to support effective SEL programming for all children and youth.

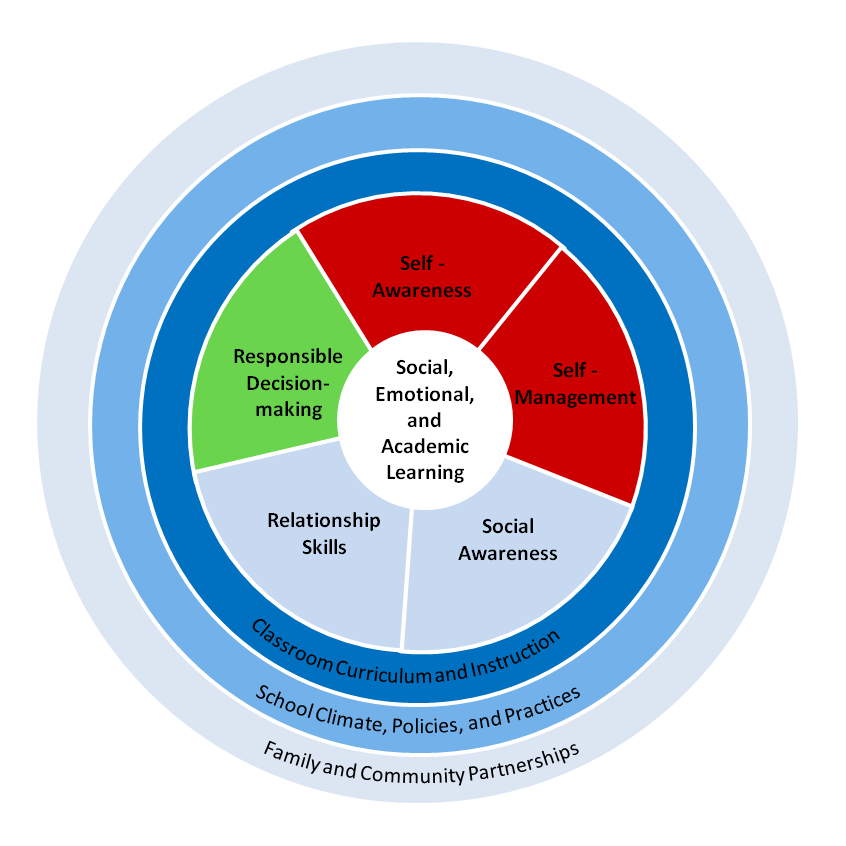
The Department’s [strategic plan](http://www.doe.mass.edu/research/StrategicPlan-Summary.pdf) includes as one of its five strategies: Supporting social-emotional learning, health, and safety. These SEL guidelines are organized to reflect topics and priority areas within the [Behavioral Health and Public Schools Framework and Self-Assessment Tool](http://bhps321.org/) and the standards in the [Massachusetts Curriculum Frameworks](http://www.doe.mass.edu/frameworks/). Additional examples of SEL-related statewide initiatives include: The [Conditions for School Effectiveness](https://www2.ed.gov/about/inits/ed/implementation-support-unit/tech-assist/ma-essential.pdf), the [Massachusetts Tiered System of Supports](http://www.mass.gov/edu/government/departments-and-boards/ese/programs/accountability/tools-and-resources/massachusetts-tiered-system-of-support/), the [Bullying Prevention and Intervention Model Plan](http://www.doe.mass.edu/bullying/), the [Massachusetts Model for Comprehensive School Counseling](http://www.doe.mass.edu/ssce/mscamodel.html), the Educator Effectiveness [Guidebook for Inclusive Practice](http://www.doe.mass.edu/edeval/guidebook/), and [Service-Learning](http://www.doe.mass.edu/csl/).

#### BACKGROUND

#### The Law: Context and Definitions

[Chapter 92 of the Acts of 2010](https://malegislature.gov/Laws/SessionLaws/Acts/2010/Chapter92): [An Act Relative to Bullying in Schools](http://www.malegislature.gov/Laws/SessionLaws/Acts/2010/Chapter92), called for a number of requirements to help schools prevent and address bullying. The statute recognizes the important role that SEL competencies play in improving outcomes for students while also serving as a preventive strategy related to bullying in schools. Section 16 of Chapter 92 of the Acts of 2010 directs the Department to publish guidelines on SEL curricula, as follows:

The department of elementary and secondary education shall publish guidelines for the implementation of social and emotional learning curricula in kindergarten to grade 12, inclusive… For purposes of this section, social and emotional learning shall mean the processes by which children acquire the knowledge, attitudes and skills necessary to recognize and manage their emotions, demonstrate caring and concern for others, establish positive relationships, make responsible decisions and constructively handle challenging social situations.

**[](https://www.edutopia.org/pdfs/blogs/edutopia-weissberg-SELessential-caselSEAlearning.png)**Researchers and practitioners have offered a [range of other definitions](http://www.doe.mass.edu/boe/docs/fy2016/2016-04/spec-item1-SEL-definitions.docx) for Social and Emotional Learning that districts may choose to use.

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#### Social Emotional Learning Competencies

#### The competencies as defined by the Collaborative for Academic, Social, and Emotional Learning ([CASEL](http://www.casel.org/)) are:

* ***Self-Awareness*** refers to students’ ability to identify and recognize their own emotions; develop an accurate self-perception of their strengths, needs, and values; and a well-grounded sense of self-efficacy.
* ***Self-Management*** includes students’ ability to: control their own impulses; effectively manage their emotions (including anxiety, stress, frustration and anger); motivate themselves and develop self- discipline; set and achieve goals; and develop organizational skills.
* ***Social Awareness*** addresses perspective taking, and helps students recognize similarities and differences between themselves and others; develop empathy, compassion and respect for others and diversity.
* ***Relationship Skills*** encompasses a broad array of important social skills, including effective communication skills; skills to support social engagement and build relationships; cooperation; negotiation, conflict resolution and interpersonal problem solving; assertiveness skills, refusal skills; and the ability to seek help from others, when needed.
* ***Responsible Decision Making*** includes the skills needed to problem solve and make effective choices, including problem identification and situation analysis; generating alternative solutions, making a choice, implementing a decision, and evaluating and reflecting on choices; all within the context of personal, social, and ethical standards, safety and responsibility.

Students in grades K-12 need instruction in social and emotional learning skills, followed by opportunities to practice and generalize those skills across settings and situations. Research has shown that SEL can be successfully taught by regular classroom teachers using evidence-based lessons and activities that focus on specific skills such as responsible decision making. Additionally, research has shown that particular SEL skills such as identifying one’s own feelings, goal setting, coping, empathy, respect, communication, collaboration and decision making are most effectively targeted for development when they are organized and focused on specific learning objectives and teaching practices.

Once students have demonstrated proficiency in using the appropriate skill for a specific situation, classroom teachers can also provide opportunities for application of skills throughout the school day and in specific subject classes, using a variety of general teaching practices, including active forms of learning, such as discussion, cooperative learning and project-based learning, brainstorming, role playing and behavioral rehearsal. All of these provide students with opportunities to practice developing social and emotional skills. Ideally all adults in the school model social and emotional competence. Indeed, SEL is most effectively fostered when educators create classroom experiences and broader school climate that are warm, inclusive and based on positive relationships and interactions, and where academic, social and emotional learning taps into students’ own curiosity and motivation. Section VII provides examples of learning activities that provide students with opportunities to practice SEL skills in different situations and settings and in an integrated way (e.g., through English Language Arts instruction).

To support more targeted needs, educational specialists and counseling staff should also model skills and expand students’ capacity for skill practice in one-on-one and small group situations.

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#### Benefits of SEL

Implementing evidence-based SEL programs and practices in schools provides a strong foundation for creating a safe and supportive learning environment where all students can succeed. It promotes positive outcomes in social and emotional learning as well as academic areas. The [state definition](http://www.doe.mass.edu/sfs/safety/?section=commission#sssdefined) of safe and supportive schools includes references to SEL. These skills should help students to succeed in school and beyond.

Effective SEL programs include multi-component, school-based interventions involving classroom-based curricula and other teaching and organizational approaches that focus on teaching students skills that will enhance social and emotional competencies, including their ability to be available for learning. Key findings from researchon effective approaches to SEL in schools are included in the bibliography.

**School climate**

A sustainable, positive school climate can also be supported and enhanced by SEL, as can efforts to reduce dropout rates, foster youth development and academic achievement, and increase the knowledge, skills, and disposition necessary for students to be responsible and productive members of the school community and society as a whole. Many studies (e.g., those cited in the [2013 and 2015 CASEL Guides](http://www.casel.org/guide/), [2017 Meta-Analysis](http://www.casel.org/2017-meta-analysis/)) have found that SEL can increase attendance, and a related sense of connection to school and to adult members of the school community. When school members feel safe, valued, cared for, engaged, and respected, learning can measurably increase.

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#### Social and Emotional Learning Instructional Approaches that Further Student Learning and Success

* + - 1. **Evidence-based curricula**

Research clearly demonstrates that social and emotional skills can be taught through school-based programs. Numerous nationally-available, evidence-based SEL curricula provide systematic classroom instruction and teaching practices that enhance students’ social emotional competencies. In addition to skills-building components, a number of SEL curricula feature elements that are designed to foster positive classrooms and school environments, and to establish practices that build trust and rapport among and between students and adults.

Effective approaches incorporate four elements: Sequenced, Active, Focused, and Explicit (SAFE) [as outlined in the SAFE framework](http://www.casel.org/what-is-sel/approaches/). Instructional components of an SEL program include sequenced, well-designed lessons intended for use in all educational settings including core academic classrooms. Lessons can be incorporated into the learning day and not considered solely as a supporting initiative. A prescribed sequence of lessons promotes student learning, builds upon what has been taught in earlier levels, and prepares students for what will be taught in later lessons and later grades. Alignment of lesson plans for each grade helps schools implement programs consistently. SEL needs to be promoted in all classrooms, so that all students will benefit. Curricula should be of sufficient intensity and duration in each program year. Tools for monitoring implementation, available with many programs, can assist teachers in achieving a high level of fidelity.

Curricula should teach students skills and provide opportunities for them to further develop these skills through practice on a daily basis. Sharing circles, morning meetings, cooperative learning groups, advisory programs, and proactive classroom management are all components that support evidence-based implementation. Although an SEL curriculum is only one component of evidence-based school-wide SEL programming, it can be the cornerstone of the entire effort. Well-designed curricula implemented in all classes will ensure that students receive consistent and developmentally appropriate skill instruction.

Curricula should be selected based on the specific needs of the students and linked to the goals and outcomes of the program. School-wide classroom instruction allows all faculty and staff to share a common approach and language for addressing social, emotional, and behavioral issues. In addition, many curricula include components for involving the family, community, and school mental health and support personnel in promoting SEL, and provide the necessary professional development for using the program.

* + - 1. **Additional factors/approaches to consider**

The varying needs of individual students, schools, and communities are factors to consider when making decisions about curricula. Cultural and linguistic sensitivity, respect for diversity, and any necessary support for vulnerable populations should be emphasized. SEL interventions can be effective in both school and after-school settings; for schools in urban, suburban, and rural areas; and for racially and ethnically diverse student bodies.

The Department recommends aligning SEL from Kindergarten through grade 12, sustained professional development, and collaborative learning around issues of cultural competency and social and emotional learning. Developing students’ social emotional competencies can support positive self-worth in connection to their race/ethnicity, color, sex, gender identity, religion, national origin, and sexual orientation, as well as their ability to interact positively with people of different backgrounds. Students and adults who understand cultural perspectives are better equipped to build and maintain strong interpersonal relationships. Schools and educators can tailor SEL instruction to reflect the social and cultural experiences of their students, address their needs, and help students understand a variety of perspectives and values. Schools and educators are encouraged to develop examples in SEL instruction that reflect the social and cultural experiences of their students as well as those that help students understand a variety of perspectives and values. Educators are also encouraged to reflect on their own cultural perspective(s) and how these influence their interactions and teaching.

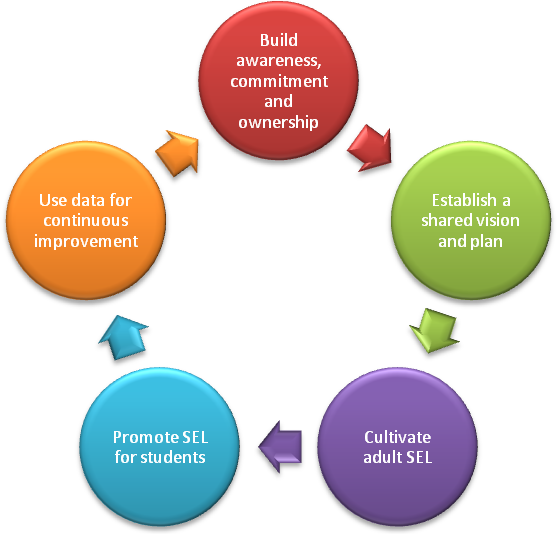
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#### SEL AND SAFE AND SUPPORTIVE LEARNING ENVIRONMENTS

#### I. Leadership: School-wide Implementation Phases

1. **Commitment from administrators**

Research has demonstrated the importance of commitment to SEL by school leaders and the involvement and engagement of key stakeholders in sustaining a school-wide SEL initiative. Stakeholders include, but are not limited to, administration, faculty and staff, students, parents/guardians/families, and community organizations and members. As a part of this commitment, administrators may identify key people to delegate responsibility for overseeing SEL efforts, for moving forward these efforts, and for effectively communicating with and involving top leadership. These efforts are more likely to succeed when they are supported by district leaders as well.

Students’ social and emotional development is enhanced when the adults in the school model social and emotional competence. It is important, therefore, to provide teachers, administrators, and other staff with opportunities to develop and strengthen their own social and emotional skills, health, and well-being. At a district and school level, the commitment to SEL includes investing stakeholders in the importance of SEL, promoting positive SEL in adults and students, and continuously studying the impact that SEL initiatives are having on adults, students, and the overall climate.

1. **Build awareness, commitment, and ownership**

School leadership teams are encouraged to conduct a needs and resource assessment to determine what will most effectively meet identified needs including, but not limited to, plans for professional development, the types of evidence-based programs and instruction to adopt and implement, and how progress will be assessed. Schools should avoid adopting a random assortment of programs to address social and emotional issues. Adopting multiple programs without a thoughtful plan as to how they are well-coordinated can create confusion and competition for time with lessons in core academic learning areas. Each school could develop its own plan for SEL implementation and climate improvement following district-wide guidelines with alignment across the grade levels K-12. With a coordinated approach, key elements of social and emotional learning can serve as an organizing framework for all of a school’s academic, prevention, health, and youth development activities.

1. **Establish a shared vision and plan**

The principal, administrators, teachers, and other stakeholders create and share a school-wide vision of students’ social, emotional and academic development and of a safe and supportive learning environment. The vision should include a framework for supporting students in acquiring the SEL competencies as outlined in the CASEL framework described on page 3 and should be aligned with the district’s overall vision for this work.

1. **Cultivate and promote SEL in adults and students**

Districts and schools should conduct professional development and pilot SEL programming. Piloting allows staff to become familiar with program content and methods of delivery while identifying implementation obstacles. Professional development should include strategies for how to teach and promote SEL competencies in students across the age continuum and strategies for promoting SEL in adults working with students. (See Professional Development section II below for more details.)

1. **Using data for continuous improvement**

Educators should assess school climate and other readiness factors to guide planning around SEL program implementation. Measuring tools can assess implementation and outcomes as well as school climate. Additionally, measuring tools help a school/district determine readiness for SEL implementation and identify factors that contribute to or impede effective implementation. These tools can allow a school to identify which social emotional learning skills are already present in other curricula, such as health and prevention education, and which may need to be added. Further, self-assessment tools for administrators, teachers, and other users can provide information on the degree and fidelity of implementation. The tools may assist the school in understanding the extent to which schools and classroom environments are supportive of SEL.

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#### II. Professional Development

Job-embedded professional development (PD) refers to teacher learning grounded in day-to-day practices designed to enhance teachers’ content-specific instructional practices with the intention of improving overall student learning. In this model, PD is integrated into the school day, with teachers assessing and finding solutions for authentic and immediate problems of practice. The Department of Elementary and Secondary Education supports an approach to professional development that is systematic, on-going, and based on making measurable progress toward an ambitious standard for teaching and student learning.

SEL should be a priority aligned with the school’s mission, and leadership is a critical factor in the effective implementation of high-quality SEL. District and building administrators, along with school leaders, participate in training with school faculty and staff, not only to understand what is being implemented, but also to demonstrate the key role of leadership in creating a climate conducive to effective SEL implementation. Principals and other school leaders should model and reinforce skills and behaviors in both large and small group settings with staff and students and as opportunities arise. Adult role modeling of appropriate SEL behaviors should be a primary focus. Additionally, professional development should be nested in a context of strong relational skills and relationship building so that district and school administrators can effectively mentor and guide educators.

Teaching methods and classroom climate may need adjustments to enhance social and emotional learning. Data indicate that SEL programs are most effective when incorporated into routine educational practice; therefore, professional development for teachers should include ways to create a warm and inclusive classroom environment where SEL can flourish; and ways to model and reinforce SEL competencies with all students in daily individual and group interactions.

Research on effective SEL programs suggests that teachers benefit from ongoing technical assistance and performance feedback. Research also shows a link between the SEL competencies of educators and the SEL proficiency of students. All adult members of a school community should receive training so everyone can support, model, and reinforce SEL skills in a variety of settings beyond the classroom. Investment in initial and continuing staff development for all school personnel is important for program success.

To the extent possible, districts and schools should create opportunities for cross- system professional development that includes educators, administrators, counselors, school nurses, cafeteria workers, custodians, bus drivers, athletic coaches, advisors to extracurricular activities, support staff, and paraprofessionals.

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#### III. Coordinating with Community Resources and Services

The positive impact of school-based SEL initiatives can be enhanced by collaborating with child-serving community providers and organizations. These efforts can include a coordinated and shared approach with early childhood and after-school programs, athletics, and other recreational and social activities in the community as well as health and human service agencies. Additionally, programs that involve students in the community, as well as community members in school-based instruction such as service learning, can enhance ­­­­­­­SEL competencies. Community service and field-based learning activities provide students with opportunities to apply their developing social and emotional competencies in meaningful ways, and are important at all grade levels. Schools can improve the effectiveness of SEL initiative by building partnerships and sharing training opportunities with community-based agencies.

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#### IV. Collaboration with Families

Family engagement is important for sustaining SEL at all levels, preschool through high school. Many evidence-based curricula, particularly those at the preschool and elementary level, contain an education component specifically designed for parents/families (including guardians and other actively involved family members). Schools can work with parents and family members to share information and offer support that enables them to model and reinforce SEL-related skills and attitudes at home. By partnering with parents to reinforce skills and prompts, school staff can strengthen the SEL initiative. Programs should engage families through regular and on-going activities and communication, as research has shown that family engagement results in improved outcomes for students.

Family collaboration can be accomplished by a variety of approaches,as suggested below.

* District and school leaders engage parents/guardians as essential partners in their efforts to promote SEL vision statements and school implementation plans and activities that involve all families. This includes families’ participation in developing plans, identifying professional development goals, assessing and prioritizing needs, and evaluating student progress.
* School personnel receive professional development and demonstrate awareness and sensitivity to cultural, linguistic, and other aspects of family diversity (e.g., disabilities, socioeconomic levels, sexual orientation and gender identity/expression, etc.), including culturally-specific beliefs and concerns related to social emotional learning.
* School staff work together to create a safe, welcoming environment in which all families feel that their voices are valued by creating ways in which families can express their thoughts and suggestions, including opportunities for anonymous feedback to the school.
* School leadership and staff receive professional development and skill-building on interacting with families in an effective and supportive manner, being comfortable and knowledgeable in addressing students’ emotional and behavioral challenges with parents, and providing information on community resources.
* The school partners with the Parent Teacher Organization/Association (PTO/PTA), School Council, Special Education Parent Advisory Council, and similar organizations to regularly share information about school-wide programs and school efforts to address the behavioral health of all students. The school or district provides educational forums for parents on topics related to promoting behavioral health as well as social programs that provide opportunities for families to engage in the school community, e.g., game or movie nights, morning and evening meals. Families are surveyed to gather input on particular topics for forums and interests for activities or social gatherings. Planning may include providing transportation and child care to facilitate the attendance of some families at these events, providing notice of events in the language of the home, and interpreter availability or multiple events held in different languages to accommodate the linguistic diversity of the school community.

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#### V. Policies and Protocols

#### Schools should review all policies and protocols to ensure that they reflect and reinforce a clear SEL approach at all levels of the system. School discipline policies should reflect the necessary balance between accountability and an understanding of supporting SEL strategies, and focus on prevention and positive behavioral strategies rather than solely on removing students from the classroom or school setting.

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#### SOCIAL AND EMOTIONAL LEARNING INTEGRATION

#### [Integrating Social and Emotional Learning Competencies into Academic Content Areas](http://www.casel.org/csi-reports-tools-and-resources/)

Learning in the content areas can be enhanced when instruction and teaching practices are ***explicitly*** designed to promote all five core competencies of SEL. Indeed, we know from rigorous research that curriculum and instruction that are intentional about giving students the chance to develop core social and emotional competencies of *self-awareness, self-management, social awareness, responsible decision making,* and *relationship skills* significantly increase academic achievement, improve attitudes and behaviors, decrease negative behaviors and reduce emotional distress. Effective classroom instruction builds upon these competencies to drive student learning and engagement.

**The following sections illustrate potential connections between SEL and English Language Arts (ELA) and Literacy, and Mathematics. Additional content area examples for History and Social Science and Science & Technology/Engineering as well as High School ELA can be found in Appendix A.**

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* **[SEL and English Language Arts (ELA) and Literacy](http://www.doe.mass.edu/frameworks/ela/2017-06.pdf)**

An English language arts and literacy curriculum is enhanced when it is intentional about developing social and emotional learning (SEL) core competencies. The Massachusetts English Language Arts and Literacy Curriculum Framework includes an SEL guiding principle.

***Guiding Principle 10:***

*Social and emotional learning can increase academic achievement, improve attitudes and behaviors, and reduce emotional distress. Students should practice recognizing aspects of themselves in texts (self-awareness), struggling productively with challenging texts (self-management), tailoring language to audience and purpose (social awareness), grappling vicariously with choices faced by others (responsible decision making), and collaborating respectfully with diverse peers (relationship skills).*

The chart below provides a few examples of learning activities educators could conduct in a kindergarten ELA block that would support content skills and knowledge and social and emotional learning competencies.

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **SEL Competencies** | **English Language Arts & Literacy**  Kindergarten |
| *Self-Awareness*  The ability to accurately assess one’s strengths and limitations and identify emotions is essential for students to develop self-efficacy skills in order to complete ELA academic assignments. | * Create individual or class books about emotions, such as photographs of themselves demonstrating emotions with the words below. * Sing songs that illustrate emotions (e.g., “If you’re happy and you know it,” including “angry, scared, sad”). * Identify emotions of characters in stories and compare/contrast them with their own feelings in similar situations. * Read *You and Me* by Manna (2000) and create representations of some characteristics that are the same or different between themselves and one of the characters in the story. * Create an original story or illustration using a list of emotions vocabulary words (e.g., illustrate the word “furious”). |
| *Self-Management*  Self-management skills are necessary for students to master ways to calm themselves and focus their attention sufficiently so that they can effectively participate in learning, including ELA learning. | * Use props (e.g., red, yellow, green signs) during a story to indicate potential conflict, when to stop; slow down and think; or go ahead with a solution. * Return to a project at a later time (e.g., place "save" or “under construction” signs on projects). * Draw or write instructions for tasks requiring a series of steps to follow in order (e.g., a recipe for making a sandwich, constructing a tower out of blocks). |
| *Social Awareness*  Writing depends on the ability to take the perspective of the reader. Characters in literature also represent different perspectives of a story. Perspective taking is an essential part of the SEL core competency of social awareness. | * Develop, illustrate, and display a list of kind, considerate, and empathetic actions/behaviors. * Create social stories describing how someone might feel when… (e.g., exclusion, hitting, etc.) |
| *Relationship Skills*  The ability to communicate clearly, listen well, and cooperate with others are skills that will enhance student capacity for effectively participating in ELA learning, including collaborative learning opportunities. | * Engage in reciprocal conversations and discussions with peers and with adults, one-on-one or in small groups. * Practice listening attentively in partners (e.g., for one minute, each child describes his/her perspective on a topic while the other listens, then each child summarizes the partner’s statements). * Use a variety of media (crayons, paint, writing, photos, videos, etc.) to create greeting cards, notes, invitations, etc. for a specific person such as a friend or family member |
| *Responsible Decision Making*  The ability to evaluate options and make constructive choices to complete ELA assignments can be fostered through analyzing situations and practicing problem solving. | * Use stories to discuss rules, analyze reasons for rules, and identify ways that rules keep us safe. List actions that were not safe and explain why. * Create a class problem solving book explaining and illustrating their solutions to problems and use it for reflection. The pages can be laminated so children can take it home and share it with families. |

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* **[SEL and Mathematics](http://www.doe.mass.edu/frameworks/math/2017-06.pdf)**

The Massachusetts Mathematics Curriculum Frameworks for Mathematics includes an SEL guiding principle.

***Guiding Principle 8:*** *Social and emotional learning can increase academic achievement, improve attitudes and behaviors, and reduce emotional distress. Students should practice self-awareness, self-management, social awareness, responsible decision-making, and relationship skills, by, for example: collaborating and learning from others and showing respect for others’ ideas; applying the mathematics they know to make responsible decisions to solve problems, engaging and persisting in solving challenging problems; and learning that with effort, they can continue to improve and be successful.*

The chart below provides a few examples of learning activities that could be provided in a middle school Mathematics curriculum that would support content area constructs and also social and emotional learning competencies.

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **SEL Competencies** | **Mathematics**  (e.g., middle school) |
| *Self-Awareness*  All learning, including Mathematics, is affected by students’ goal setting skills that help them to complete academic assignments. Additionally, students’ ability to demonstrate self-awareness provides them opportunities to actively and meaningfully engage in collaborative problem solving in Mathematics. | * Mathematically proficient students make sense of problems and persevere in solving them. For example, while transforming algebraic expressions and evaluating correspondence between equations, verbal descriptions, tables and graphs encourage students to ask themselves at every step, “Does this make sense?” * Encourage students to mindfully tap into what they already know and to break down complex problems in order to solve them successfully. For example, in middle school in order to graph g(x) = 2x+3, first graph the function without the constant (something they would have learned before), and then pick that up and shift it upward by 3. This would mean adding 3 to all the y coordinates of points on 2x. |
| *Self-Management*  Self-management skills are necessary for students to master ways to calm themselves and focus their attention sufficiently so that they can effectively participate in learning, including Mathematics. | * During group work, have the students practice pausing to discuss the problem at hand. * Follow rules for collegial discussions and decision –making, track progress toward specific goals and deadlines and define individual roles as needed. * Encourage students to paraphrase their peers. * Prepare scaffolded materials in anticipation of particularly challenging tasks to be provided to students as needed. For example, hint cards, reference materials, videos, partners, etc. |
| *Social Awareness*  Effective mathematical practice includes students working together in groups to solve mathematical equations. Having the relationship skills such as listening to others, reflecting on others’ differing opinions/approaches to a problem and asking questions of one another’s thinking are relationship skills that are important in the advancement of one’s learning, including collaborative learning, in Mathematics. | * Encourage students engaged in collaborative discussions, to respond thoughtfully to diverse perspectives and approaches, and qualify their own views in light of evidence provided rather than personal views. * Create routines that require students to take on the perspective of another student and defend their thinking. |
| *Relationship Skills*  Effective mathematical practice includes students working together in groups to solve mathematical equations. Having the relationship skills such as listening to others, reflecting on others’ differing opinions/approaches to a problem and asking questions of one another’s thinking are relationship skills that are important in the advancement of one’s learning, including Mathematics. | * Have students work together in a group to look at a set of graphs and group them based on commonalities. * Have students work in pairs to discuss and model their understanding of the Pythagorean Theorem. * During group work, encourage students to ask each other clarifying questions and/or follow up questions when uncertain about the solution and/or the approach to solving a math problem. * Provide students with time to reflect on their own group work/relationship skills. |
| *Responsible Decision Making*  Mathematics assumes that students will have the ability to evaluate information and draw conclusions related to mathematical problem solving. | * Teach students to identify relevant external mathematical resources, such as digital content located on a website, and use them to pose or solve problems. * Have students draw specific evidence from informational sources to support analysis, reflection and research. * Have students critically evaluate the claims, evidence and reasoning of others and attend to important distinctions with their own claims or inconsistencies in competing claims. * Encourage students to evaluate the conjectures and claims, data, analysis and conclusions in texts that include quantitative elements, comparing those with information found in other sources. |

For additional guidance on both teaching practices and lessons/activities that support social and emotional learning integrated across the content areas, please see [Appendix A](file:///F:\2017%20documents\Appendix%20A%207.13.docx).

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***ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS AND CONTACT INFORMATION:*** These guidelines were written and updated by Massachusetts Department of Elementary and Secondary Education (Department) staff after a review of resources including, but not limited to, research studies and guidance from the Collaborative for Academic, Social, and Emotional Learning (CASEL), the University of California, Los Angeles (UCLA), and other institutions of higher learning. The Department wishes to thank the many individuals and representatives from schools and organizations who also contributed to providing input and feedback on these guidelines. The guidelines will continue to be updated over time, and at least biennially. Feedback and comments can be directed to the Office of Student and Family Support via [achievement@doe.mass.edu](mailto:achievement@doe.mass.edu) or   
781-338-3010. Guidelines last updated November 2017.

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#### RESOURCES

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**Appendix A – Additional Examples of SEL Integration**

This section provides examples of integration between core academic subjects and the five competencies. Having multiple opportunities to practice and generalize skills will assist students in becoming proficient in content areas and the five competencies.

* **SEL and History and Social Science**

History and Social Science are enhanced when it is intentional about developing social and

emotional learning (SEL) core competencies.

The chart below provides a few examples of learning activities that could be provided in a middle school History and Social Science class that would not only be supportive of content area constructs but also of social and emotional learning competencies.

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **SEL Competencies** | **History and Social Science**  (e.g., middle school) |
| *Self-Awareness*  History and Social Science begin with an awareness of self and how the individual is a member of their families, communities, and country. | * Have students reflect on and discuss the different groups they belong to – their family, their school community, their neighborhood community, their country – and how membership in these different groups affects how they see the world. * Have students reflect on and discuss or do reports on their own family history or the different cultures represented in their community, similarities across groups and what the motivation was for these groups to emigrate to the U.S. * Use accounts of historical events drawn from primary sources or historical fiction, to have students identify with a time they may have had the same feelings or faced similar choices as a historical figure and ask them to discuss in small groups (or write in their journals or on an essay question) how they handled those situations. |
| *Self-Management*  Self-management skills are necessary for students to master ways to calm themselves and focus their attention sufficiently so that they can effectively participate in all learning, including History and Social Science. | * Lead students in a discussion of how to use their awareness of emotions as a guide to decision making. Have students research the motivation of particular historical or contemporary figures for taking the actions they did. Discuss how these figures exercised the self-discipline and planning to work for the common good. * Lead discussions about positive and negative ways in which historical figures expressed their feelings of oppression, anger, or disappointment through writing, art or other actions. * Lead a discussion about how students can express their feelings in positive ways (e.g., talk to an adult or friend, put feelings into words; create media, art or written work that reflects these feelings an essay about how we feel), or show their feelings through dance. |
| *Social Awareness*  Understanding History and Social Science depends on an awareness of ourselves in relation to others – how we are similar and how we may be different. Understanding of History and Social Science also depends on an awareness of different cultures and historical experiences. Historical figures provide an opportunity to understand that people have different perspectives based on their experiences. Perspective taking is an essential part of the SEL core competency of social awareness. | * Discuss cues in the environment, such as the presence of people of different ages, when people are quiet, etc., in determining what kinds of behaviors are appropriate during public speaking. Work with students to develop a set of criteria for making an effective presentation, as students present on a given topic ask the others in the audience to record their feedback using these criteria. * Conduct a simulation of a historic event such as a public debate or trial, with students playing the various roles involved in it. Provide an opportunity for students to reflect on what they learned about the content and emotional perspective they experienced. * Research historical figures who resisted stereotypes or worked to promote justice and equality for all individuals. * After reading selections from primary source documents or historical fiction, ask students to reflect orally and in writing on questions about the negative effects of stereotyping. Give them opportunities to share their perspectives in pairs or small groups. * Work with students to develop a set of criteria for the review of media presentations or current or historic events and provide opportunities to review selected videos or other media using these criteria to assess the accuracy of the content, the perspective represented, the emotional impact and the overall effectiveness. |
| *Relationship Skills*  History and Social Science may be explicitly organized to develop community service skills, which give students opportunities to practice communication, assertiveness, conflict resolution, and problem solving. Teachers may also use project based learning and/or cooperative learning techniques, which also offer opportunities for students to practice important interpersonal skills. | * Research a contemporary issue in the local community and create a plan of action to resolve it. Lead a community service project to address the issue, so that students can practice communication, assertiveness, social problem solving, and helping others, at the same time they are learning about the needs of their community. * In preparation for presentations, teach lessons to develop speaking and listening skills (e.g., how to identify and prepare one’s message, how to introduce oneself and be sure others are listening, how to speak loudly and clearly so that others can hear, etc.). Work with students to develop a set of criteria for making an effective presentation, as students present on a given topic ask the others in the audience to record their feedback using these criteria. * Use history and the experiences of historical figures as an opportunity to teach students a lesson or lessons on how to resolve conflicts peacefully. |
| *Responsible Decision Making*  As part of a History and Social Science curriculum, students have an opportunity to reflect on the values of different historical figures, and how values and beliefs can motivate a person to serve others and their community. Additionally, it is important for students to have opportunities to develop the ability to evaluate options and make effective decisions to complete assignments. | * Teach student, using primary and secondary source materials, about the ethical dilemmas that historical figures have faced and how and why they reached the decisions they did. * Teach lessons that explore the way successful historical figures made decisions. * Teach students a formula for making good decisions (e.g., stop, calm down, identify the problem, consider the alternatives, make a choice, try it out, re-evaluate). * Ask students to apply their decision making formula to problems historical figures faced and reflect on the end result and whether the formula requires additional refinement. * Research and discuss examples of leaders and other historic and contemporary figures who have demonstrated courage and adherence to values such as being a good citizen, finding ways to help the community or country. * Walk through the steps of problem-solving in response to situations in history. * Work with students to develop a set of criteria for making ethical decisions. Discuss situations in history, using primary source and historical fiction, and current events as the basis for students to apply and refine these criteria. |

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* **SEL integrated with Science and Technology/Engineering**

A Science and Technology/Engineering curriculum is enhanced when it is intentional about developing social and emotional learning (SEL) core competencies.

The chart below provides a few examples of learning activities that could be provided in an elementary (kindergarten) Science and Technology/Engineering curriculum that would not only be supportive of science and technology/engineering content area constructs but also of social and emotional learning competencies.

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| --- | --- |
| **SEL Competencies** | **Science and Technology/Engineering**  (e.g., elementary school) |
| *Self-Awareness*  All learning, including Science and Technology/Engineering, is affected by students’ goal setting skills that help them to complete academic assignments. Additionally, students’ ability to demonstrate self-awareness provides them opportunities to actively and meaningfully engage in collaborative problem solving in Science and Technology/Engineering. | * Share photographs or draw pictures of when they were babies, then observe and discuss ways they have grown and changed. * Discuss and make lists of ways to reduce the use of natural resources in the classroom, at home and in the community. * Create surveys with questions about what types of clothing is needed or how it feels outside for different types of weather. Collect information about local weather from the newspaper, online sources or television and compare predictions to what actually occurs. |
| *Self-Management*  Self-management skills are necessary for students to master ways to calm themselves and focus their attention sufficiently so that they can effectively participate in all learning, including Science and Technology/Engineering. | * Over the course of several weeks, have students work on individual projects or investigations on topics of their choosing. Provide tools to help them decide what questions they have, how they are going to investigate their questions, and how to represent their findings. Have them monitor and document their progress throughout the duration of the project. * Take children on a walk around the school yard/neighborhood guiding them to observe and record living and non-living objects. Have the class create a list with pictures of their observations. * Use visuals, read, and add books to the class library in languages and cultures represented in the classroom about scientists, engineers and the many challenges they may have faced to make a scientific discovery or and innovation with engineering design. |
| *Social Awareness*  Scientists and Engineers may bring different perspectives to their understanding of science concepts. Working together to investigate and explore science concepts depends on the ability to take the perspective of a partner. Perspective taking is an essential part of the SEL core competency of social awareness. | * Make a chart listing characteristics of living and non-living things, and then create a class mural or individual artwork about living and non-living things. * Provide rich materials, including manufactured or naturally occurring items for children to observe and manipulate. |
| *Relationship Skills*  Effective Science and Technology/Engineering practices include students working together in groups to solve problems. Having the relationship skills such as listening to others, reflecting on others’ differing opinions/approaches to a problem and asking questions of one another’s thinking are relationship skills that are important in the advancement of one’s learning, including Science and Technology/Engineering. | * Working in groups, have students investigate and communicate the idea that different kinds of materials can be liquid or solid depending on the temperature. * With other students, use and share quantitative observations of local weather conditions to describe patterns over time. this could include numbers of sunny, windy and rainy day as well as relative temperature in a month. Analyze the data collected using quantitative language (e.g., more, less, the same) and write about or represent their observations through drawings. * In groups, build, compare, and balance towers/structures using different-shaped blocks (cylinders, cones, cubes, spheres, arches) or other materials. Ask students to share their reasons for selecting their materials or shapes used to build their structures and encourage others to ask questions of the “builders”. |
| *Responsible Decision Making*  Students may have many opportunities to evaluate information and make a claim with evidence related to science investigations and engineering design problems. These opportunities support their ability to use their evaluations and claims to make effective decisions. | * Teach students a formula for making good decisions (e.g., stop, calm down, identify the problem, consider the alternatives, make a choice, try it out, re-evaluate). * Ask students to apply the decision making formula to problems a student might encounter in a scientific experiment or design process.  encourage students to apply the design engineering or science process to problem solve, provide feedback and make decisions individually or in small groups. * Walk through the problem-solving steps in response to situations in science, technology and engineering. * Engage students in small group discussions about responsible decision making regarding our environment (e.g., recycling an item versus throwing it out; re-using scrap paper for art projects to reduce the amount of trees vs. always using new paper). |

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* **SEL integrated with English Language Arts (ELA)**

The chart below provides a few examples of learning activities educators could conduct in a high school ELA class that would support content skills and knowledge and social and emotional learning competencies.

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
|  | **English Language Arts**  (e.g., high school) |
| *Self-Awareness*  The ability to accurately assess one’s strengths and limitations and identify emotions is essential for students to develop self-efficacy skills in order to complete ELA academic assignments. | * Use a literature selection to have students identify with a time they may have had the same feelings as a character and ask them to discuss in small groups (or write in their journals or on an essay question) how they handled those situations. * Use a novel or short story to discuss the characters’ feelings and how those feelings affected others and ultimately the outcome of the story. |
| *Self-Management*  Self-management skills are necessary for students to master ways to calm themselves and focus their attention sufficiently so that they can effectively participate in learning, including ELA learning. | * Over the course of several weeks, have students work on individual goal projects using goals they identify for themselves. Have them monitor and document their progress for several weeks. * Use literature to discuss how characters persevered through hard times to turn their lives around or reach a goal. |
| *Social Awareness*  Writing is impacted by the ability to take the perspective of the reader. Characters in literature also represent different perspectives of a story. Perspective taking is an essential part of the SEL core competency of social awareness. | * Lead class project connected to literature to promote awareness of the rights of others. * Discuss and analyze the origins and negative effects of stereotyping and prejudice, as reflected in literature. * Study characters in literature that showed respect for others, served others, and discuss their example. |
| *Relationship Skills*  The ability to communicate clearly, listen well, and cooperate with others are skills that will enhance student capacity for effectively participating in ELA learning, including collaborative learning opportunities. | * Teach lessons to develop speaking and listening skills (e.g., how to identify and prepare one’s message, how to introduce oneself and be sure others are listening, how to speak loudly and clearly so that others can hear, etc.). * Teach lessons on effective listening and give students chance to practice, taking turns in pair shares. * Teach lessons to develop listening, including nonverbal behavioral to show you are listening. |
| *Responsible Decision*  The ability to evaluate options and make constructive choices to complete ELA assignments can be fostered through analyzing situations and practicing problem solving. | * Teach students a formula for making good decisions (e.g., stop, calm down, identify the problem, consider the alternatives, make a choice, try it out, re-evaluate). * Ask students to apply the decision making formula to problems characters face in literature. * Discuss higher order values demonstrated by figures in literature –being a good citizen, ways to help the community or country. * Walk through the steps of problem-solving in response to situations in literature. |

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