

Social and Emotional Learning Completed Study Guide

1.) Positive outcomes such as mental wellness, school connectedness, and reductions in suspensions are more likely to occur and sustain over time when districts and schools implement a Comprehensive System of Learning Supports that:

- promotes the necessary conditions for learning (i.e., a safe, caring, responsive, and participatory learning environment and the development of academic, physical, social, emotional, and behavioral competencies); and
- addresses the barriers to learning and teaching such as: bullying, disengagement, mental health issues and behavioral concerns.

2.) Social and Emotional Learning is the process of acquiring the skills, knowledge and attitudes to recognize and manage emotions, demonstrate care and concern for others, establish positive relationships, make responsible decisions and handle challenging situations effectively.

Developing these skills is a life-long process and therefore relevant to Pre-K – 12th grade and beyond.

3.) As a result of the IL Children’s Mental Health Act of 2003, the IL State Board of Education adopted Social and Emotional Learning Standards.

The 3 SEL Goals are:

- **Develop self-awareness and self-management skills to achieve school and life success;**
- **Use social awareness and interpersonal skills to establish and maintain positive relationships; and**
- **Demonstrate decision-making skills and responsible behaviors in personal, school, and community contexts.**

Applied to learning, students who are self-aware and able to manage their emotions, can calm down, focus, and spend more concentrated time on learning tasks. Socially-aware students can recognize the impact of their behavior which is the basis for treating others with respect. When students have good decision-making skills, they know how to pause long enough to make appropriate choices before acting which leads to more positive behavioral norms.

4.) Standards that accompany the first SEL Goal, **Develop self-awareness and self-management skills to achieve school and life success:**

A. Identify and manage one’s emotions and behaviors

- B. Recognize personal qualities and external supports
- C. Demonstrate skills related to achieving personal goals

5.) Standards that accompany the second SEL Goal, **Use social awareness and interpersonal skills to establish and maintain positive relationships:**

- A. Recognize the feelings and perspectives of others
- B. Recognize individual and group similarities and differences
- C. Use communication and social skills to interact effectively with others
- D. Demonstrate an ability to prevent, manage, and resolve interpersonal conflicts in constructive ways

6.) Standards that accompany the third SEL Goal, **Demonstrate decision-making skills and responsible behaviors in personal, school, and community contexts:**

- A. Consider ethical, safety and societal factors in making decisions
- B. Apply decision-making skills to deal responsibly with daily academic and social situations
- C. Contribute to the well-being of one's school and community

7.) The promotion of social and emotional competencies and a positive school climate are essential components of any Comprehensive System of Learning Supports. Social and emotional learning and a positive school climate not only contribute to the positive outcomes described earlier but investments in promotion and prevention can also result in longer term savings when children are diverted from needing more intensive and expensive services.

8.) The integration of SEL and other universal programming into existing systems and structures is essential. This includes but is not limited to integration into: governance and instructional teams, district and school improvement plans, communication plans, data systems/tools, and professional development plans.

Social and emotional learning can be integrated into existing practices/programming by:

- embedding lessons into the existing curricula;
- taking advantage of teachable moments that occur naturally throughout the day;
- modeling social and emotional competencies;
- promoting students' feelings of autonomy, relatedness, and competence; and
- providing opportunities for students to practice social and emotional competencies and contribute to their class, school, and community.

9.) Students acquire SEL skills through:

- Explicit interactive instruction;
- Practice and *feedback*;
- Observation of modeling by adults and peers;
- Reflection on one's experiences; and
- Application and generalization

10.) There is a mutually beneficial and reinforcing relationship between SEL skills instruction and the creation of safe, *caring*, participatory and responsive learning environments.

School climate can be organized into the following areas of focus: Safety (e.g., rules and norms; physical safety; and *social-emotional* safety), Relationships (e.g., respect for diversity; school connectedness/engagement; social support- adults; social support- students; leadership), Teaching and Learning (e.g., social, emotional, ethical and civic learning; support for learning; professional relationships), and the Institutional Environment (e.g., physical surrounding).

11.) SEL promotes mental health/wellness and helps to reduce or prevent mental health problems. For some students, the universal social, emotional, and behavioral supports provided to all students will not be sufficient and additional *targeted* interventions may be necessary. A **Response to Intervention (RtI) process** for a Comprehensive System of Learning Supports should be utilized to identify students who need tier 2 supports, match students' needs with interventions, monitor student progress, and determine if different or more intensive tier 3 supports are warranted.

12.) Community and Family Partnerships are paramount to the successful implementation of a Comprehensive System of Learning Supports.

To promote partnerships with families, school personnel can:

- ensure the coordination of programs to encourage and enhance capabilities for home support of learning and social, emotional and behavioral development;
- initiate regular proactive communication with families to build positive *relationships* for the enhancement of the social, emotional, behavioral, and academic success of all students;
- communicate student's strengths to his/her family;
- invite parents to participate in school activities; and
- invite families to *participate* around school related concerns.

To promote partnerships with communities, school personnel can:

- engage the community to identify all reliable and valid resources to support student learning within the community;
- engage the community to problem solve around gaps in social, emotional, behavioral, physical, and academic supports;
- invite valid and reliable community resources into the school to address any gaps in services while maintaining the integrity of the district's mission;
- when appropriate, make linkages with community providers for more intensive interventions;
- when appropriate, initiate conversations with local businesses to provide opportunities for work-related experience such as internships, simulated job interviews, or long-term employment; and
- communicate regularly with community partners to ensure continued progress toward goals.

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