

Social-Emotional Learning (SEL)

Foundational Principles



Research on SEL demonstrates the following foundational principles are fundamental as we work together to use the Iowa SEL resources for learners (children, youth, and adults).



Social-emotional learning

is an ongoing process of acquiring and applying knowledge, attitudes and skills throughout life, in predictable and unpredictable situations.

- SEL is a process
- SEL is more than behavior
- SEL is more than a curriculum
- Mastery of competencies is not expected.
- SE skills are developmental and contextual



Social-emotional learning

involves all adults, as teachers and life-long learners.

- SEL hinges on caring adults
- Adult SEL is the first step
- Adults examine their own competencies
- Adults model competencies
- Adults embrace self-care



Social-emotional learning

helps to create safe, healthy and supportive environments that extend beyond the classroom to the whole school, home and community.

- SEL occurs all day, every day, everywhere.
- SEL is focused on the “whole child”
- SEL is a lever for equity



Social-emotional learning

promotes learner voice and provides opportunities to encourage, engage, and empower learners to make decisions that allow them to explore their choices, interests, and experiences in multiple contexts.

- SEL embraces authentic learner voice
- SEL is a strengths-based approach
- Learner voice is influential and action-oriented

SEL is integrated within multi-tiered systems of support (MTSS) and supports Iowa's focus on social-emotional-behavioral health (SEBH), literacy, and math.

What is SEL?

Social and emotional learning (SEL) is the process through which children and adults acquire and effectively apply the knowledge, attitudes, and skills necessary to:

- understand and manage emotions
- set and achieve positive goals
- feel and show empathy for others
- establish and maintain positive relationships
- make responsible decisions

(Collaborative for Academic, Social, and Emotional Learning, 2018)



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Fig. 1 The above multi-section wheel represents the 5 social-emotional competencies in the center. In a sequence of circles around the competencies include: Classroom Curriculum & Instruction, School-wide Practices & Policies, Homes and Communities and Family & Community Partnerships.

SEL Approaches

- **Explicit SEL Skills Instruction**
- **Teacher Instructional Practices**
- **Integration within Academic Curriculum Areas**
- **Organization, Culture and Climate Strategies**

Short-Term Outcomes

- **SEL Skill Acquisition: Five Competence Areas**
- **Improved Attitudes: Self, Others, Learning and Schools**
- **Enhanced Learning Environment: Supportive, Engaging and Participatory**

Behavioral/Academic Outcomes

- **Positive Social Behavior**
- **Fewer Conduct Problems**
- **Less Emotional Distress**
- **Improved Academic Performance**

Iowa Social-Emotional Learning Competencies 3-5



Self-Awareness The following table shows targets and indicators related to Self-Awareness.

Identifying Emotions	Accurate Self Perception	Self-Confidence
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Recognize differing intensity levels of their emotions. Identify how thoughts and emotions influence behavior. Describe a range of emotions and the situations that cause those emotions. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Identify personal traits, strengths, and challenges that help or hinder academics, social situations, and/or emotional regulation. Describe the personal qualities they possess that make them successful members of their school community. Describe personal skills and interests that they want to develop. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Identify positive qualities about themselves. Express positive beliefs in one's ability to achieve. Actively participate, question, and contribute.

Self-Management The following table shows targets and indicators related to Self-Management.

Impulse Control	Stress Management	Self-Discipline & Self-Motivation	Goal Setting	Organizational Skills
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Identify productive self-regulating strategies to process emotions and reframe thoughts and behaviors. Demonstrate productive self-regulating strategies to process emotions and reframe thoughts and behaviors. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Identify stressors that result in physical or emotional responses. Identify healthy practices that can minimize response to stress and promote physical and mental wellness. Communicate the need for assistance to manage stress as needed. Demonstrate constructive ways to handle situations that cause stress. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Demonstrate the ability to stay actively engaged and persist in activities. Demonstrate ability to delay immediate gratification. Accept mistakes as part of learning. Demonstrate the ability to take initiative. Demonstrate ability to work independently. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Demonstrate the ability to identify a simple goal. Implement steps toward a goal including identifying resources needed, monitoring progress, and make changes as needed. Reflect on process and outcome of goal setting. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Demonstrate skills that keep personal items organized. Demonstrate ability to manage time and tasks.

Social Awareness The following table shows targets and indicators related to Social Awareness.

Perspective Taking & Empathy	Appreciating Diversity and Respect for Others	Civic Engagement
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Recognize differing points of view and perspectives. Identify and interpret social cues (verbal and nonverbal) to determine how others feel. Recognize when one's feelings are affected by/match the way someone else is feeling (experiences empathy). 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Identify ways that people are alike and different from self. Identify contributions of various social and cultural groups. Demonstrate consideration for the feelings, wishes, rights, and traditions of others. Work/interact effectively with those who are similar and different from oneself. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Identify and perform roles that contribute to one's family, school and community. Recognize each individual is part of numerous communities. Identify strategies for improving those communities.

Iowa Social-Emotional Learning Competencies 3-5 (continued)



Relationship Skills The following table shows targets and indicators related to Relationship Skills.

Communication	Social Engagement	Relationship Building	Teamwork
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Recognize facial expressions, body language, gestures, words, and tone of voice of others to understand others' thoughts and feelings. Use facial expressions, body language, gestures, words, and tone of voice to interact effectively with others in a variety of ways. Attentively listen and respond to the needs, wants, and ideas of others. Deliver and receive compliments, feedback, and respond appropriately. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Initiate and engage in social interactions with peers and adults. Demonstrate social behaviors that are appropriate to the situation and environment. Recognize that the same norms and behaviors for face-to-face interactions apply to interactions through social media. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Identify and demonstrate personal qualities and decisions that contribute to a healthy relationship. Identify and apply strategies for handling relationships that are not safe, healthy, or positive. Express interest and appreciation for others. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Demonstrate cooperative behaviors with others (listen, encourage, acknowledge opinions, compromise, reach consensus). Recognize and support others with different abilities in group activities.

Responsible Decision-making The following table shows targets and indicators related to Responsible Decision-making.

Identifying Problems	Analyzing Situations & Solving Problems	Evaluating & Reflecting	Ethical Responsibility
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Recognize when a situation is a problem and what makes it a problem (ex. safe vs unsafe; healthy/unhealthy, legal/illegal, just or unjust, etc.). Identify choices that may result in a problem. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Identify the possible positive and negative effects a decision could have on themselves and others. Identify situations that require assistance from an adult. Identify situations when peer pressure influences decisions. Apply choice and accept responsibility for outcome. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Reflect on the effect of choices on self and others (Did it work? Was it fair? How was each individual affected?). Identify new thinking as a result of the problem-solving process (What would you change, if anything, for next time?). 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Demonstrate an awareness of equity, justice, fairness, and respect that positively impacts school and community. Demonstrate an understanding of the consequences of one's actions and how it impacts others. Accept ownership for actions.

Link to [Iowa's SEL Webpage](#) that includes the full document with examples and additional resources.