



**PLANNING WORKBOOK  
IMPLEMENTING  
SOCIAL-EMOTIONAL LEARNING  
IN K-12 SCHOOLS**

# OVERVIEW

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**Today more than ever, students need tools to deal with disruptions to their lives and education.**

From widespread physical distancing measures to more personal impacts—such as a COVID-related hospitalization or death in their families—K-12 students and their families must conquer a broad array of challenges to ensure consistent, successful education outcomes. That is why implementing social-emotional learning (SEL) programs in schools has become so imperative—particularly over the past 18 months. SEL programs can play a critical role in helping students develop resiliency and helping the larger community deal with trauma, whether widespread or on an individual level. Through SEL, students acquire the knowledge, interpersonal skills, intrapersonal mindsets, and cognitive strategies needed to deal constructively with the many stressors they encounter every day, enabling them to accomplish tasks and enjoy positive interactions with others. SEL programs can also help schools establish a positive, safe, rigorous learning climate that is inclusive of all students, regardless of demographics, cultural or ethnic backgrounds, disabilities, or language barriers.



Notably, these benefits extend beyond students' K-12 education, instilling competencies that carry over to their postsecondary education, professional careers, and personal lives. Indeed, the benefits of SEL to individual students, families, and the larger community are numerous. For instance, students:

- ▶ Acquire a more positive self-image and greater confidence in themselves
- ▶ Develop empathy and appreciation for other people's experiences and differences
- ▶ Establish stronger, more productive relationships with their peers and adults
- ▶ Display fewer and less intense problem behaviors, such as misconduct or drug use
- ▶ Experience less emotional distress, less anxiety, and lower rates of depression
- ▶ Achieve better school outcomes, including better academic performance and improved attendance
- ▶ Attain better life outcomes, such as decreased likelihood of criminal activity and improved economic mobility

This toolkit was developed to support district and school leaders—along with school-level practitioners such as teachers and counselors—in implementing effective SEL programs. It includes a range of tools designed to help you implement specific action items in support of SEL.





## WHY SEL MATTERS



SEL advances educational equity and excellence through authentic school-family-community partnerships to establish learning environments and experiences that feature trusting and collaborative relationships, rigorous and meaningful curriculum and instruction, and ongoing evaluation. SEL can help address various forms of inequity and empower young people and adults to co-create thriving schools and contribute to safe, healthy, and just communities."

—*Collaborative for Academic, Social, and Emotional Learning*

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# SEL PROGRAM IMPLEMENTATION CHECKLIST FOR DISTRICT LEADERS

**Directions:** Either individually or in collaboration with their peers and colleagues, district leaders should review each item to determine if it has been completed.



	ACTION ITEM	HAS THIS ACTION BEEN COMPLETED?		
<b>1</b>	Select a <b>framework</b> from which to construct systemic SEL programming (e.g., CASEL's <i>Framework for System SEL</i> , <i>Framework for 21st Century Learning</i> )	Yes	No	Unsure
<b>1a</b>	Solicit feedback from and collaborate with <b>internal</b> stakeholders (e.g., <i>principals, teachers</i> ) to refine the selected framework to district contexts	Yes	No	Unsure
<b>1b</b>	Solicit feedback from and collaborate with <b>external</b> stakeholders (e.g., <i>families, community providers</i> ) to refine the selected framework to district contexts	Yes	No	Unsure
<b>2</b>	Define <b>target competencies</b> to develop via the implemented SEL programming (e.g., CASEL's <i>five core competencies, the 4Cs</i> )	Yes	No	Unsure
<b>2a</b>	Solicit feedback from and collaborate with <b>internal</b> stakeholders (e.g., <i>principals, teachers</i> ) to formalize the target competencies	Yes	No	Unsure
<b>2b</b>	Solicit feedback from and collaborate with <b>external</b> stakeholders (e.g., <i>families, community providers</i> ) to formalize the target competencies	Yes	No	Unsure
<b>3</b>	Create <b>measurable goals</b> to orient planning and implementation of SEL programming	Yes	No	Unsure
<b>3a</b>	Solicit feedback from and collaborate with <b>internal</b> stakeholders (e.g., <i>principals, teachers</i> ) to revise and finalize goals	Yes	No	Unsure
<b>3b</b>	Solicit feedback from and collaborate with <b>external</b> stakeholders (e.g., <i>families, community providers</i> ) to revise and finalize goals	Yes	No	Unsure

SEL PROGRAM IMPLEMENTATION CHECKLIST  
FOR DISTRICT LEADERS (CONT.)

	ACTION ITEM	HAS THIS ACTION BEEN COMPLETED?		
4	Develop <b>theories of action</b> and <b>formal action plans</b> to guide leader and staff actions in support of goal attainment	Yes	No	Unsure
	4a Solicit feedback from and collaborate with <b>internal</b> stakeholders ( <i>e.g., principals, teachers</i> ) to revise and finalize action plans	Yes	No	Unsure
	4b Solicit feedback from and collaborate with <b>external</b> stakeholders ( <i>e.g., families, community providers</i> ) to revise and finalize action plans	Yes	No	Unsure
	4c Assign responsibility to specific personnel/ departments/groups for implementing components of each action plan	Yes	No	Unsure
	4d Ensure proper allocation of resources to the assigned personnel/ departments/groups to implement each action plan	Yes	No	Unsure
	4e Provide appropriate training and professional development activities to build capacity of the assigned personnel/departments/ groups to implement each action plan	Yes	No	Unsure
5	Establish <b>mechanisms</b> for accountability, progress monitoring, and program evaluation for implementing SEL programming	Yes	No	Unsure
	5a Identify appropriate key performance indicators (KPIs) to monitor implementation of SEL and progress toward goals	Yes	No	Unsure
	5b Set procedures and timelines to guide progress monitoring and periodic review of SEL-related program data and KPIs	Yes	No	Unsure
	5c Create formal junctures for evaluating SEL programming to determine progress toward established goals and the potential need to revise or adjust action plans	Yes	No	Unsure
	5d Establish and maintain ongoing communications channels to share SEL-related program data and KPIs with <b>internal</b> stakeholders ( <i>e.g., principals, teachers</i> )	Yes	No	Unsure
	5e Establish and maintain ongoing communications channels to share SEL-related program data and KPIs with <b>external</b> stakeholders ( <i>e.g., families, community providers</i> )	Yes	No	Unsure

# SEL PROGRAMMING REFLECTION GUIDE FOR DISTRICT LEADERS

**Directions:** District leaders should reflect upon and discuss these questions in collaboration with other district-level leaders, school leaders, and community partners to build a shared understanding of SEL and common goals for implementation.



1 What are our district's priorities and goals as they relate to SEL? What do we hope students will achieve as a result of participating in SEL programming? How does SEL fit into our district's current strategic priorities and overall vision and mission?

2 What specific and emerging needs does our district have related to SEL? Are there any specific challenges to implementation or student development that we need to address? Are there any mandates or policy guidance from state or federal agencies for which we must account?

3 What ongoing actions are we taking—and what future actions do we intend to take—to initiate, sustain, and improve our SEL programming? Who is responsible for such actions? How do we intend to track success and progress for those actions relative to our priorities and goals?

4 What specific and emerging needs does our district have related to SEL? Are there any specific challenges to implementation or student development that we need to address? Are there any mandates or policy guidance from state or federal agencies for which we must account?

5 How do/will we ensure that SEL programming is implemented and resources are deployed equitably and with fidelity across school sites? How will we ensure that the needs of all students across the district are addressed—regardless of characteristics such as their race, ethnicity, socioeconomic status, disability status, or language status?

# SEL PROGRAM IMPLEMENTATION CHECKLIST FOR SCHOOL LEADERS

**Directions:** Either individually or in collaboration with their peers and colleagues, school leaders should review each item to determine if it has been completed. **Please note that all listed actions should adhere to policy guidance and formal expectations set by your district.**



	ACTION ITEM	HAS THIS ACTION BEEN COMPLETED?		
1	Meet with district leaders to <b>review the SEL framework</b> selected by the district and the corresponding goals and action plans to ensure accurate understanding of key tenets and components	Yes	No	Unsure
1a	Collaborate with <b>district leaders</b> to determine how the selected framework, goals, and action plans will manifest at your school site	Yes	No	Unsure
1b	Solicit feedback from and collaborate with <b>internal</b> stakeholders (e.g., <i>teachers, counselors</i> ) to refine the selected framework, goals, and action plans to school contexts	Yes	No	Unsure
1c	Solicit feedback from and collaborate with <b>external</b> stakeholders (e.g., <i>families, community providers</i> ) to refine the selected framework, goals, and action plans to school contexts	Yes	No	Unsure
2	Distill district goals to the <b>school level</b> to orient planning and implementation of SEL programming	Yes	No	Unsure
2a	Solicit feedback from and collaborate with <b>internal</b> stakeholders (e.g., <i>teachers, counselors</i> ) to revise and finalize school-level goals	Yes	No	Unsure
2b	Solicit feedback from and collaborate with <b>external</b> stakeholders (e.g., <i>families, community providers</i> ) to revise and finalize school-level goals	Yes	No	Unsure



SEL PROGRAM IMPLEMENTATION CHECKLIST  
FOR SCHOOL LEADERS (CONT.)

	ACTION ITEM	HAS THIS ACTION BEEN COMPLETED?		
3	<b>Educate</b> responsible staff members on the selected framework, goals, and action plans and how they will manifest at your school site	Yes	No	Unsure
	3a Review responsibilities and goals with implementing staff members to guide their SEL-related work at your school site	Yes	No	Unsure
	3b Provide initial training and professional development to implementing staff members to build their capacity for SEL-related work at your school site	Yes	No	Unsure
	3c Collaborate with district leaders to ensure adequate provision of resources to enable responsible staff to implement action plans at your school site	Yes	No	Unsure
	3d Establish mechanisms for ongoing coaching and job-embedded professional learning to support responsible staff at your school site	Yes	No	Unsure
4	<b>Implement</b> district-established mechanisms for accountability, progress monitoring, and program evaluation for implemented SEL programming at your school site	Yes	No	Unsure
	4a Collect data for selected key performance indicators (KPIs) to monitor implementation of SEL and progress toward goals at your school site	Yes	No	Unsure
	4b Communicate procedures and timelines to responsible staff to guide progress monitoring and periodic review of SEL-related program data and KPIs at your school site	Yes	No	Unsure
	4c Establish and maintain ongoing communications channels to share SEL-related program data and KPIs with <b>internal</b> stakeholders (e.g., <i>teachers, counselors</i> ) at your school site	Yes	No	Unsure
	4d Establish and maintain ongoing communications channels to share SEL-related program data and KPIs with <b>external</b> stakeholders (e.g., <i>families, community providers</i> ) at your school site	Yes	No	Unsure

# SEL PROGRAMMING REFLECTION GUIDE FOR SCHOOL LEADERS

**Directions:** School leaders should reflect upon and discuss these questions in collaboration with other school-level leaders, school staff, students' families, and community partners to build a shared understanding of SEL and common goals for implementation.



1 What are the district's priorities and goals as they relate to SEL? What does the district hope students will achieve as a result of participating in SEL programming? How do these priorities and goals align with those of our school site?

2 What material resources, human capital, policy infrastructure, and adopted programs does our school currently have in place to support SEL and implement the district's action plan? What deficiencies exist, and how can we collaborate with district leaders to rectify them?

3

What ongoing actions are we taking—and what future actions do we intend to take—to initiate, sustain, and improve SEL programming at our school site? Who is responsible for such actions? How do we intend to track success and progress for those actions relative to the district's and our school's priorities and goals?

4

What specific and emerging needs does our school have related to SEL? Are there any specific challenges to implementation or student development that we need to address? Are there any mandates or policy guidance from the district for which we must account?

5

How do/will we ensure that SEL programming is implemented and resources are deployed equitably and with fidelity across classrooms, grade levels, and content areas taught at our school site? How will we ensure that the needs of all students are addressed—regardless of characteristics such as their race, ethnicity, socioeconomic status, disability status, or language status?

# SEL PROGRAM IMPLEMENTATION CHECKLIST FOR PRACTITIONERS

**Directions:** Either individually or in collaboration with their peers and colleagues, district leaders should review each item to determine if it has been completed.



	ACTION ITEM	HAS THIS ACTION BEEN COMPLETED?		
1	Meet with school leaders to <b>review the SEL framework</b> selected by the district and the corresponding goals and action plans to ensure accurate understanding of key tenets and components	Yes	No	Unsure
	1a Collaborate with <b>school leaders</b> to determine how the selected framework, goals, and action plans will manifest at your school site	Yes	No	Unsure
	1b Collaborate with <b>colleagues</b> in similar roles and/or the same grade level or department to refine the selected framework, goals, and action plans to the contexts of your classroom/office and interactions with students	Yes	No	Unsure
	1c Determine how your work <b>contributes</b> to the attainment of school goals to orient planning and implementation of SEL programming	Yes	No	Unsure
2	Participate in <b>training and professional development</b> on the selected framework, goals, and action plans and how they will manifest at your school site and in your own work with students	Yes	No	Unsure
	2a <b>Clarify your responsibilities and goals</b> with regard to implementing the district's SEL programming at your school site	Yes	No	Unsure
	2b <b>Attend</b> initial training and professional development on the district's SEL programming	Yes	No	Unsure
	2c <b>Catalog available resources</b> you will have access to and be able to utilize in your SEL-related work at your school site	Yes	No	Unsure
	2d Determine the availability of <b>ongoing</b> coaching and job-embedded professional learning to support your SEL-related work at your school site	Yes	No	Unsure



SEL PROGRAM IMPLEMENTATION CHECKLIST  
FOR PRACTITIONERS (CONT.)

	ACTION ITEM	HAS THIS ACTION BEEN COMPLETED?		
3	Implement <b>district-established mechanisms</b> for accountability, progress monitoring, and program evaluation for implemented SEL programming at your school site	Yes	No	Unsure
3a	<b>Collect data</b> for selected key performance indicators (KPIs) to monitor implementation of SEL and progress toward goals at your school site	Yes	No	Unsure
3b	<b>Clarify procedures</b> and timelines to guide progress monitoring and periodic review of SEL-related program data and KPIs at your school site	Yes	No	Unsure
3c	<b>Monitor communications channels</b> that your district and school use to share SEL-related program data and KPIs for your school site	Yes	No	Unsure
4	<b>Implement</b> evidence-based SEL strategies selected by your district/ school	Yes	No	Unsure
4a	Determine—in collaboration with colleagues and school leaders—how the targeted SEL competencies will manifest in your grade level's/subject area's <b>learning standards</b> or your position's particular objectives for working with students	Yes	No	Unsure
4b	Include <b>explicit instruction</b> on the targeted SEL competencies in your instructional planning and/or planned interactions with students	Yes	No	Unsure
4c	Include <b>embedded skills applications</b> on the targeted SEL competencies in your instructional planning and/or planned interactions with students	Yes	No	Unsure
4d	Consistently <b>model</b> the targeted SEL competencies in your formal and informal interactions with students, families, and colleagues	Yes	No	Unsure
4e	Implement <b>assessments</b> for SEL with students as is most applicable and relevant to inform your teaching of/interactions with those students	Yes	No	Unsure

## SEL PROGRAMMING REFLECTION GUIDE FOR PRACTITIONERS

**Directions:** School practitioners should reflect upon and discuss these questions in collaboration with school leaders, their grade-level, departmental, or positional peers, and students' families to build a shared understanding of SEL and common goals for implementation.



1 What are the district's and my school's priorities and goals as they relate to SEL? How do these priorities and goals align with my own work with students?

2 What training and resources are available to me to support SEL and implement the district/school action plan? What additional training and resources do I require to be successful?

3 What ongoing actions am I taking—and what future actions do I intend to take—to support implementation of SEL programming at my school site? What are my specific responsibilities as they relate to SEL?

4 What specific and emerging needs do my students/students at my school have related to SEL? What individual social-emotional assets and challenges do they have that I should address during instruction and/or my formal and informal interactions with them?

5 How do/will I ensure that SEL programming is implemented and resources are deployed equitably and with fidelity in my classroom and/or interactions with students? How will I ensure that the needs of all students I work with or teach are addressed—regardless of characteristics such as their race, ethnicity, socioeconomic status, disability status, or language status?



# ACHIEVE BETTER SEL OUTCOMES

Download our infographic,  
**The Why and How of a Positive  
School Climate**, to get started.

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# ABOUT HANOVER RESEARCH

Hanover guides K-12 leaders in tackling academic and administrative challenges to ensure that students, parents, and staff have the tools they need to ensure all students succeed.

## OUR K-12 EDUCATION SOLUTIONS

### DISTRICT OPERATIONS

Determine the true effectiveness of your district operations and identify opportunities to improve.

### STUDENT SUCCESS

Identify areas for improvement in your district to help all students feel supported.

### STRATEGIC PLANNING

Build your strategic plan to achieve organizational alignment, engage stakeholders, and address improvement areas.

### SCHOOL CLIMATE

Foster a positive learning community by identifying and closing opportunity gaps.

### GRANTS

The Grant Solutions for K-12 support your external funding needs from prospecting private, state, and federal opportunities to program feedback and full proposal development.

### OPERATIONS & FINANCE

Comprehensive insights to run an efficient, financially sustainable institution.

### PROGRAM EVALUATION

Evaluate performance, measure outcomes, and determine ROI to make evidence-based investments in the highest-performing programs.

### TEACHER ENGAGEMENT

Attract, engage, and retain staff with targeted professional learning opportunities.

## OUR BENEFITS



### EXPERT

200+ analysts with advanced multiple methodology research expertise



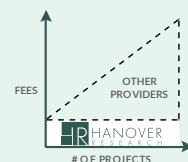
### FLEXIBLE

Ongoing custom research agenda adapts with organizations' needs



### DEDICATED

Exclusive account and research teams ensure strategic partnership



### EFFICIENT

Annual, fixed-fee model shares costs and benefits

**LEARN MORE:** [hanoverresearch.com/contact-us](https://hanoverresearch.com/contact-us)



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