

Michigan Department of Education
Talking Points

Social and Emotional Learning

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Tagline: **Children matter. You matter. Learn SEL!**

[Michigan.gov/mde-sel](https://michigan.gov/mde-sel)

Communication Strategy Goals (the change we seek)

- Michigan districts and schools are implementing systemic SEL to improve the health, safety, and wellness of all learners.
- ISD's are aware and understand their role in supporting local districts in SEL.
- MDE's SEL work is internally aligned and is supporting ISDs and LEAs in their SEL work.

Main messages

- We need your help! Our kids need YOU to help them be successful and navigate difficult times in life. We need every teacher to know what the 5 SEL competencies are, learn about them, and integrate SEL into their world every day! (SEL is not a one and done).
- The five SEL competencies, as a set, offer an evidence-based approach for student success. These competencies need explicit instruction and support.
- Social and Emotional Learning occurs when adults model and help students build their skills to identify and manage their emotions, learn from others, build healthy relationships, and make responsible decisions.
- There are five SEL competencies (self-awareness, social awareness, self-management, responsible decision making, and relationship skills) that are essential to prepare children, and the adults who care for them, for success in life. All five are equally important and should be intentionally taught across all settings and integrated within each content area.
- These skills have become so much more relevant due to the current challenges of the pandemic, systemic racism, and the grief and loss that has occurred.
- When children see their identities represented in school, when educators foster a child's sense of belonging and their social and emotional learning is explicitly linked to empowerment, what CASEL defines as 'agency', SEL is more likely to be aligned with equity.
- SEL is an important component of Michigan's Top 10 Strategic Education Plan to support the health, safety, and wellness of all learners.
- Comprehensive health education is the only content area that is foundational in building SEL competencies.
- SEL is consistent with the Whole School, Whole Community, and Whole Child (WSCC) model.

Benefits of SEL - Successful Outcomes

- SEL participants demonstrate significantly improved social and emotional skills, attitudes, behavior, and academic performance that reflected an 11-percentile-point gain in achievement.*

**The impact of enhancing students' social and emotional learning: A meta-analysis of school-based universal interventions Durlak, J. A., Weissberg, R. P., Dymnicki, A. B., Taylor, R. D., & Schellinger, K. (2011). The impact of enhancing students' social and emotional learning: A meta-analysis of school-based universal interventions. Child Development, 82, 405-432.*

- Grass roots support of SEL competencies fit with the whole child approach.
 - The SEL online modules have been popular because they help strengthen a whole child approach to learning, as 24,000 educators and leaders have enrolled in at least one of the five SEL modules.
- SEL is compatible with other evidence-based practices and Multi-Tiered System of Supports (MTSS).
 - SEL competencies are considered a Tier 1 universal practice that integrates with MTSS. They are a foundational practice for school-based mental health, trauma informed efforts and they complement Positive Behavior Interventions and Supports (PBIS).
- SEL competencies prepare our children for life after high school.
 - When children know and can demonstrate SEL skills, they contribute to the school community, they are prepared for the post-secondary world; they are more likely to demonstrate work readiness; and they are more likely to advocate for a socially just world.
- Developmentally, Michigan's SEL competencies range from birth to high school graduation.
 - Social and emotional learning competencies, developed within age bands, provide alignment for all educators so that children grow, adults can plan for each child's transition to new levels of schooling.

5 SEL Competencies and the why

SEL comprises five competencies important to all students:

1. self-awareness
2. social awareness
3. self-management
4. relationship to others
5. responsible decision making

What people may want to know:

- Can it be integrated into MTSS? (Answer above)
- Is it an option in the Michigan Integrated Continuous Improvement Process (MICIP)? MICIP encourages SEL as a content area that can lead to positive outcomes for children.
- What SEL curricula exist? The CASEL SELECT resource offers levels of evidence assigned to the variety of curricular options. MiStrategy Bank provides SEL programming with levels of evidence.

Why do SEL competencies exist?

<https://casel.org/impact/> The need for SEL and its positive impact are listed at the CASEL webpage. Promote student wellness, decrease risk for mental illness, increase academic performance.

SEL/Children's Mental Health Network

- MDE established the SEL/Children's Mental Health Network in November 2020
- A network of state stakeholders with input from national experts. Members of the network represent all 10 Michigan Association of School Administrator (MASA) regions.
- Goals of the network are to:
 - Help broaden, deepen, and make our efforts in SEL and children's mental health across the state more cohesive, which is essential and consistent with the state's strategic education plan goal of promoting the health, safety, and wellness for all learners.

- Focus on increasing the numbers of teachers with foundational professional learning in social and emotional learning, as well as to deepen the knowledge base of those who already have some training in the area.
- Address children’s mental health. Even before the pandemic, 20 percent of children were experiencing mental health challenges, according to the national Centers for Disease Control and Prevention.

Engaging teachers/administrators

- Administrators develop selection criteria for SEL champions. Once determined, the district team asks a minimum of two to four teachers in each building in their district to complete the Michigan Virtual online course: *Introduction to SEL*. After the learning is completed, district leadership invites the teachers to a planning session about how to share with staff the value of SEL. As a team, they share the value of SEL in staff meetings, presentations, board meetings, newsletters, and social media.
- Two to four teachers and one administrator in each building complete the Michigan Virtual online course: *Introduction to SEL*. After their learning is completed, with district leadership, they will plan how to share the value of SEL in staff meetings, presentations, board meetings, newsletters, and social media.

Engaging education stakeholders/partners

- Professional associations spread the word of the district level plan and celebrate the power SEL.
- Share stories.

Engaging MDE staff

- MDE office staff learn the five SEL competencies.
- Within each office, we ask that staff identify linkages between the SEL effort and their own work. After this alignment, MDE offices also will promote the opportunities for integration of SEL.
- The following offices have already aligned SEL to their efforts:
 - Office of Educator Excellence - SEL competencies are built into teacher certification.
 - Office of Educational Services - SEL competencies are in alignment with technology skills.
 - Office of Great Start - SEL competencies are part of Pyramid Model Demonstration effort.
 - Office of Educational Assessment - SEL assessments have been identified and supported.
 - Office of Health and Nutrition Services - the office is the sponsor of the SEL competencies.
 - Office of Strategic Planning and Implementation - the office supports SEL’s value to the MTSS Leadership team, supports the integration of the Way of Work (WoW) into the SEL workgroup, is the lead for SEL’s strategic communication.
 - Office of Partnership Districts - Two SEL presentations have been provided to PALs and leadership.
 - Office of Systems, Evaluation, and Technology – is in the process of aligning the Michigan Integrated Technology Competencies for Students (MITECS) to SEL competencies.