



# **Strategic Framework Social Emotional Learning *Implementation Targets***

**2025-2026**

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# Focus Areas

1

Establish a district-wide system of social-emotional learning and support

2

Build equitable systems and support throughout the district

3

Increase E-12 opportunities for career exploration and preparation

# Focus Area: Social-Emotional Learning

1

Establish a district-wide  
system of  
social-emotional  
learning and support

## Integrated SEL with Academic Instruction

## Supportive Discipline

## Authentic Family Partnerships

## Aligned Community partnerships



### INDICATORS OF SCHOOLWIDE SEL

Schoolwide SEL is a systemic approach to integrating academic, social, and emotional learning across all school contexts. This approach provides a learning environment that infuses SEL into all aspects of instruction and promotes equitable outcomes for all students. Central to this system is high-quality professional learning and the use of data for continuous improvement. When fully implemented, schoolwide SEL contributes to more successful and equitable outcomes for young people, and is evidenced by the following indicators:

LEVEL	INDICATOR	DESCRIPTION
CLASSROOM	<b>Explicit SEL instruction</b>	Students have consistent opportunities to cultivate, practice, and reflect on social and emotional competencies in ways that are developmentally appropriate and culturally responsive.
	<b>SEL integrated with academic instruction</b>	SEL objectives are integrated into instructional content and teaching strategies for academics as well as music, art, and physical education.
	<b>Youth voice and engagement</b>	Staff honor and elevate a broad range of student perspectives and experiences by engaging students as leaders, problem solvers, and decision-makers.
SCHOOL	<b>Supportive school and classroom climates</b>	Schoolwide and classroom learning environments are supportive, culturally responsive, and focused on building relationships and community.
	<b>Focus on adult SEL</b>	Staff have regular opportunities to cultivate their own social, emotional, and cultural competence, collaborate with one another, build trusting relationships, and maintain a strong community.
	<b>Supportive discipline</b>	Discipline policies and practices are instructive, restorative, developmentally appropriate, and equitably applied.
COMMUNITY	<b>A continuum of integrated supports</b>	SEL is seamlessly integrated into a continuum of academic and behavioral supports, which are available to ensure that all student needs are met.
	<b>Authentic family partnerships</b>	Families and school staff have regular and meaningful opportunities to build relationships and collaborate to support students' social, emotional, and academic development.
	<b>Aligned community partnerships</b>	School staff and community partners align on common language, strategies, and communication around all SEL-related efforts and initiatives, including out-of-school time.
	<b>Systems for continuous improvement</b>	Implementation and outcome data are collected and used to continuously improve all SEL-related systems, practices, and policies with a focus on equity.

1

Establish a district-wide system of social-emotional learning and support

# Integrated SEL with Academic Instruction

1

Establish a district-wide system of social-emotional learning and support

Integrating SEL objectives into instructional content and teaching strategies for academics as well as music, art, and physical education.

## *Objective:*

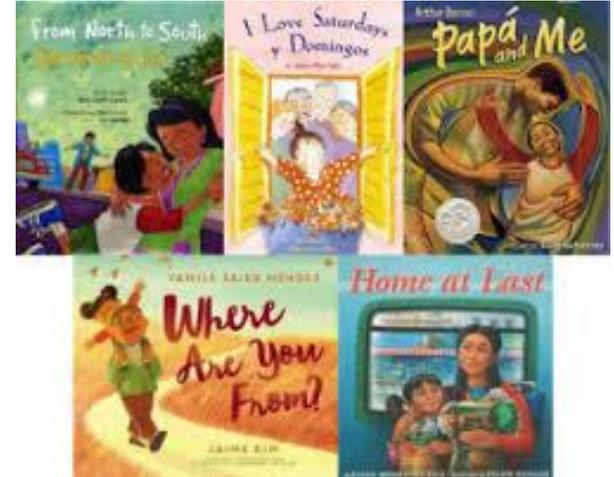
- Implement AMAZEworks curriculum in the elementary special education program classrooms. (also in equity targets)
- Develop an “Executive Functioning Skills Toolbox” to support students’ self-regulation, planning, and task completion.

# Integrated SEL with Academic Instruction

Implement AMAZEworks curriculum in the elementary special education program classrooms. (also in equity targets)

The diverse trade books—spanning topics such as disability, family structure, culture, gender, and life experiences—help students develop empathy, social-emotional skills, and an inclusive mindset while reflecting the realities of their own and others' lives.

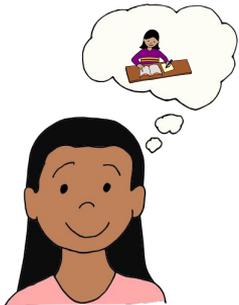
Important in creating environments where every child feels **valued**, **respected**, and **connected**.



# Integrated SEL with Academic Instruction

Develop an “Executive Functioning Skills Toolbox” to support students’ self-regulation, planning, and task completion.

## Specific Teaching Strategies





### Executive Function Toolbox

Strategies and Accommodations for Student Success

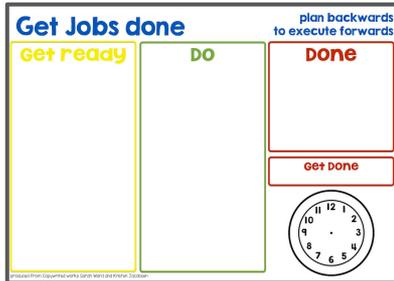
#### Teach Strategies

- READ A ROOM** Situational Awareness  
S.T.O.P. Strategy (Sara Ward): Space, Time, Objects, and People. Noticing these elements helps students participate appropriately, follow instructions, determine how others are feeling, and understand the context of a task.
- MENTAL PICTURES** Working Memory and Planning  
Visualize Executive Function: A powerful strategy for thinking ahead (future thinking), organizing information, and controlling focus. It involves creating a mental image of the desired outcome or the steps required.
- BREAK DOWN TASKS** Organization and Initiation  
11 Tips on Breaking Down Tasks: Makes work less overwhelming, giving a clear plan to follow. Supports task initiation, focus, and persistence.
- MAKE TASKS VISUAL** Working Memory  
Turns abstract into concrete, easy-to-follow maps, supporting working memory and organization. See visual examples under Environmental Accommodations.
- STRUCTURE, ROUTINES, FRAMEWORKS** Cognitive Load and Self Regulation  
Automates everyday tasks, reducing the cognitive load. This allows the student to conserve mental energy for higher-level skills like planning, problem-solving, and emotional regulation. How to...
- REMOVE SUPPORTS GRADUALLY** Fading Supports  
"I Do, We Do, You Do": Fading supports slowly transfers the responsibility for planning, organizing, and self-monitoring from the teacher to the student, promoting independence.
- TEACH METACOGNITION** Self-Awareness  
"Thinking about thinking" gives the student the awareness and control over their cognitive processes. This skill is critical for self-correction and strategy selection. 3 Ways to Teach Metacognition

# Integrated SEL with Academic Instruction

Develop an “Executive Functioning Skills Toolbox” to support students’ self-regulation, planning, and task completion.

## Environmental Accommodations



**Executive Function Toolbox**  
*Strategies and Accommodations for Student Success*

**Provide Environmental Accommodations**

- SENSORY MODULATION TOOLS** (Emotional Regulation and Focus)  
Provides targeted sensory input to help regulate alertness and emotional state, improving focus, attention, and ability to engage in complex tasks. Heavy Work opportunities are typically organizing to the brain and body. (Consult with OTs for individualization.)
- VISUALS TO SUPPORT FUTURE THINKING** (Planning and Goal Setting)  
Get Ready, Do, Done visual planning template (Cognitive Connections) teaches students how to approach and complete multi-step tasks by planning backward from the end goal ("Done").
- PICTURE-BASED TOOLS** (Sequencing and Working Memory)  
Visual Schedules and Checklists help students visualize the sequence of actions, maintaining a focus on the next required action to reach the end.
- TIME TRACKERS** (Time Management/Pacing)  
Visual Timer or the 360 Thinking Time Tracker makes the abstract concept of elapsed time physically visible. This helps the student better manage effort and pace.
- STRUCTURE, ROUTINES, FRAMEWORKS** (Self-Monitoring/Initiation)  
Wearable Device Study: Vibrating watches provide discreet, non-verbal, and consistent physical reminders to check a schedule, transition to a new activity, or initiate a task, compensating for weaknesses in time awareness and self-monitoring.

**KEY RESOURCES AND TOOLS**

- S.T.O.P.
- BREAK IT DOWN
- FADING
- METACOGNITION
- VISUALIZE
- ROUTINES
- TIMERS
- SCHEDULES
- HEAVY WORK
- READY, DO, DONE

# Supportive Discipline

1

Establish a district-wide system of social-emotional learning and support

Creating discipline policies and practices that are instructive, restorative, developmentally appropriate, and equitably applied.

## *Objectives:*

- Develop and implement sensory and movement-based regulation strategies in collaboration with district occupational therapists.

# Supportive Discipline

Develop and implement sensory and movement-based regulation strategies in collaboration with district occupational therapists.

## Sensory-based Classroom Considerations





### Sensory Toolbox

*Classroom Adaptations and Activities/Tools to Consider for Student Success*

#### Classroom Considerations

- Physical Seating and Positioning**
  - Create buffer zones for students sensitive to touch (end of row, carpet)
  - Seat students away from high-traffic areas, such as the pencil sharpener, sink, trash can, hallway
  - Wall-facing for students easily distracted by peer movement
  - Back-to-the-wall seating for students feeling anxious about unseen movement behind them
  - Floor tape or individual rugs to clearly define physical space
  - Flexible seating options for individual student preferences
- Visual Environment**
  - At least 40% of wall space clear (high-contrast posters and hanging decorations can cause visual noise)
  - Consistent, predictable daily schedule at eye level.
  - "First/Then" boards to help students mentally prepare for upcoming transitions.
  - Use as much natural lighting as possible, dim lighting/twinkle lights to create calmer space
  - Curtains or bins to hide cluttered shelves
- Auditory Considerations**
  - Dampen sound with tennis balls or felt on chair leg bottoms.
  - Add soft elements to absorb sound and reduce echoes.
  - Provide 5 and 1 minute verbal or visual warning before loud sounds such as bells or moving to loud environments
  - Position sensory-sensitive students away from electronic or mechanical devices that make subtle sounds
  - Background relaxing music during independent work times
- Transitions and Flow**
  - Line placement at either front or back
  - Staggered departures to avoid chaotic rush or noise
  - Clear pathways to ensure incidental touch is minimal
  - breathing routine: 4-7-8 breathing together as a class (transition)
  - Embed a movement break into the classroom routine
  - Hold an object during hallway transitions
- Olfactory/Smell**
  - Encourage a "no perfume/cologne" policy and use unscented cleaning supplies or dry-erase markers when possible
  - If the classroom is near the cafeteria, keep the door closed during lunch prep times to prevent strong food odors from drifting in.
- Instructional Delivery**
  - Reduce verbal load by pairing verbal instructions with a simple written list or icons on the board.
  - Non-verbal hand signals for common needs (e.g., bathroom, water), reducing the noise level / chatter in the room
  - Sit in the student's chair or sit on the carpet where they spend their time. You might notice a flickering light, a draft, or a distracting reflection that isn't visible from a standing adult's perspective.

# Supportive Discipline

Develop and implement sensory and movement-based regulation strategies in collaboration with district occupational therapists.

## Sensory and Movement Activities and Tools



### Sensory Toolbox

Classroom Adaptations and Activities/Tools to Consider for Student Success

#### Sensory and Movement Activities and Tools

- The Calmers**

Pressure to muscles and joints is almost always grounding and calming. Use these when a student is "high energy," anxious, or physically restless. Consider wall or chair push-ups, chair dips, weighted lap pads (with monitoring and family permission), resistance bands on chair legs, resistive putty or dough, and weighted deliveries.
- The Regulators**

Movement and balance activities can be either alerting or calming. These tools help students who "crave" movement and find it hard to sit still. Consider wobble stools, wiggle cushions, stability balls to sit on in the classroom, and sensory paths to provide structured sequences of movement and Yoga cards as a quick whole-class movement break providing both movement and balance challenges.
- The Focusers**

Tactile tools help students filter out background distractions by giving their hands something "neutral" to do. Consider Velcro under the desk or table for discrete tactile input, quiet fidgets, texture squares, or task-specific sensory bins.
- The Stabilizers**

Input through the mouth or ears can quickly "reset" a student's nervous system. Consider chewable jewelry (with family permission), sports water bottles, noise cancelling headphones (or Loops), and crunchy/chewy/sour snacks.
- Sensory Jobs**

Build sensory input into "jobs" so the student doesn't feel singled out. Consider jobs such as stacking/unstacking chairs, making deliveries to other classrooms or the office, returning stacks of books to the library, cleaning whiteboards, shelving books, etc.

#### KEY RESOURCES AND TOOLS

-  CALMING HEAVY WORK ACTIVITIES
-  REGULATING MOVEMENT SEQUENCES
-  THE OT TOOLBOX CLASSROOM SENSORY STRATEGIES TOOLKIT
-  NOT-TOO-OVER STIMULATING MOVEMENT BREAK
-  TRANSITION MOVEMENT IDEAS

# Aligned Community Partnerships

1

Establish a district-wide system of social-emotional learning and support

Ensuring that school staff and community partners are aligned on common language, strategies, and communication around all SEL-related efforts and initiatives, including out-of-school time.

- Share information and gather feedback on SEL implementation through the School Health Advisory Committee (SHAC).

# Aligned Community Partnerships

Share information and gather feedback on SEL implementation through the School Health Advisory Committee (SHAC).

WHOLE SCHOOL, WHOLE COMMUNITY, WHOLE CHILD  
A collaborative approach to learning and health



Community members (including a physician, retired teacher, parent), school staff, board member, and partners in health and mental health (Riverland Clinic, 360 Communities, Associated Clinic of Psychology, and PhaseZero chemical health counseling.)

## Feedback:

- Importance of common language and practices
- Involve families and community members with concrete, tangible messages - family discussions
- Message is best from teachers or school where students attend - from someone who cares and knows the child
- SEL work is connected to student success

# Authentic Family Partnerships

1

Establish a district-wide system of social-emotional learning and support

Providing families and school staff with regular and meaningful opportunities to build relationships and collaborate to support students' social, emotional, and academic development.

## *Objectives:*

- Develop a family SEL engagement guide with strategies for supporting social-emotional development at home.

# Authentic Family Partnerships

Develop a family SEL engagement guide with strategies for supporting social-emotional development at home.

Researching best practices and gathering feedback.

- Feedback from School Health Advisory Committee
- Input from students
- Survey Data
- Resources and consultation from CASEL - Collaborative for Academic, Social, and Emotional Learning

Providing families and school staff with regular and **meaningful opportunities** to **build relationships** and **collaborate** to support students' social, emotional, and academic development.



Garlough Team - Principal Libby Huettl, Parent/Paraprofessional Alison Gravalin, Cultural Liaison Xiomara-Calderon.



UNIVERSITY OF MINNESOTA

1

Establish a district-wide system of social-emotional learning and support



## INDICATORS OF SCHOOLWIDE SEL

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# Questions?