



LEARNING POINT

Where does SEL assessment fit in the building and district assessment system?

Have you heard the expression, “what gets assessed, get addressed?” In order for Social and Emotional Learning (SEL) assessment to be taken up in the classroom, it is necessary for building and district leadership to demonstrate commitment to SEL assessment through systemic SEL implementation.

Are you ready?

“Readiness” in the context of SEL implementation and assessment includes identifying beliefs about SEL and identifying SEL as a prior-

ity for your school community. The more ready a school or district is for implementation, the more likely the implementation will be successful, in part due to increased buy-in from leadership and staff.

What’s your vision?

As part of this planning, you may consider revisiting your district’s vision as part of this discussion. District-wide vision statements can be refined to promote clear language

that prioritizes SEL and assessment. Inclusion of SEL and assessment in the district-wide vision for student and district success also signals to all stakeholders in the school community that the district is invested in SEL for the long-term, and that this is not a one-year or one-issue initiative that will fall off at year-end.

Start with taking a district audit by way of a priority setting questionnaire. The Collaborative for Academic, Social, and Emotional Learning (CASEL)

Identify your assets

Next, assess your district’s needs and resources by examining how you are currently implementing SEL and assessment. Consider asking, “Where are we now?” and “Where have we been?” Consider your existing SEL programming and initiatives completed or underway as strengths and learning moments to bring to the table. Resist the temptation to abandon where you have first invested in order to adopt something new; it’s important to think about programming and assessment as complimentary, not as competitive. Check out CASEL’s Districtwide SEL Implementation Rubric as an indicator to inform your self-assessment.

Clarify goals and roles

After completing your self-assessment, clarify your goals and move your district carefully into implementation in accordance with your plan. Whether you prefer a Gant chart or roadmap, the key is for all stakeholders in the school community to be invested in the goals together as you work to implement SEL assessment intentionally throughout your district.

Clarify roles and responsibilities as they relate to the implementation and assessment of SEL. Ensure that all school stakeholders are a part of this implementation planning and



Caption: Collaborative for Academic Social and Emotional Learning Guide to Systemic SEL

continuous evaluation. When goals and roles are clear, we hold ourselves accountable for progress, and implementation and continuous improvement can flourish.

Let data be your guide

As discussed in a companion Learning Point (“How can educators assess social and emotional learning?”), it is critical to consider both the formative and summative uses of SEL assessment data. Let the data be your guide to what is working, for whom, and how. These benchmarks and interim

goals will be critical at supporting your district to succeed in enacting your vision.

Proceed with caution

The newness of SEL assessments and their limited psychometric evidence alongside the developmental aspects of SEL, which would in many cases result in students’ scores decreasing over-time, indicate that SEL assessments should not be included as part of school or district high-stakes decision making. Therefore, ensure that school leadership and

stakeholders have a firm understanding of the nature of SEL and assessment before reviewing the data to inform successful decisions for the district.

This data literacy can be developed by accessing free web-based resources through CASEL and trusted education content providers such as xSEL Labs. In addition, consider diversifying the type of data being reviewed—such as conducting interviews and focus groups with students and teachers to compliment data collected during review.

TO LEARN MORE

CASEL Districtwide Action Planning Workbook

<https://bit.ly/2HcgIM6>

CASEL Implementation Rubric

<https://drc.casel.org/rubric/>

xSEL Labs

<https://xsel-labs.com/>

Learning Point: What is social emotional learning?

<http://bit.ly/LP-SEL>

Learning Point: How can educators assess social and emotional learning?

<http://bit.ly/LP-SEL2>

The Michigan Assessment Consortium’s Assessment Learning Network (ALN) is a professional learning community consisting of members from MI’s professional education organizations; the goal of the ALN is to increase the assessment literacy of all of Michigan’s professional educators.