



Washington State principal
preparation programs

SOCIAL EMOTIONAL LEARNING IMPLEMENTATION BRIEF



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IMPLEMENTATION BRIEF

Beginning January 2020, the Washington State legislature requires preparation programs to incorporate the [Washington social emotional learning stands and benchmarks](#). Social emotional learning (SEL) is a process through which people build awareness and skills in managing emotions, setting goals, establishing relationships, and making responsible decisions that support success in school and in life.

Additionally, in order for principals to recognize signs of emotional or behavioral distress in students, and appropriately refer students for assistance and support, the guidance provided to candidates must also include guidance on related competencies, such as trauma-informed practices, consideration of adverse childhood experiences (ACEs), mental health literacy, anti-bullying strategies, and culturally sustaining practices.

Social emotional learning strategies are primarily Tier I fundamental instructional approaches for all students, but they are not contained within Tier I and may be infused across Tiers II and III with varying levels of individualization. The mental health concerns addressed in the second component of this WAC is intended for use at Tiers II and III.

This brief provides the starting point for implementing the Social emotional learning requirements in the legislation. Resources for addressing the related competencies are included at the end of this document.

Related competencies



Related standards

- [Program standards domain 2.C.vii](#)
- [NELP standards - SEL program standards crosswalk](#)
- [OSPI's Social-emotional learning standards and benchmarks](#)
- SEL program standards also intersect with the AWSP Leadership Framework, especially Criterion 2.2 (promoting social and emotional safety) and Criterion 1.5 (meeting unique and particular needs of students).

FIRST STEPS FOR PRINCIPAL PREPARATION PROGRAMS

Build faculty SEL competency

1. **Relationships matter.** Principal preparation programs emphasize positive relationship building among faculty and candidates to model candidate relationship building amongst themselves, teachers, students, and the broader community. Programs demonstrate how to draw from the diverse cultures/backgrounds of the candidates to prepare them to enact culturally-sustaining and equitable leadership practices.
2. **Context matters.** Individuals use their social emotional skills depending on the varied contexts in which they find themselves, including cultural, historical, political, and racialized contexts. Programs create environments that support application and further development of adults' own culturally and contextually responsive social emotional competencies, including opportunities to practice and reflect upon all six of the Washington State SEL standards.
3. **Knowledge of self matters.** Begin with developing your own SEL competencies. Reflect on how your experiences and cultural background impact your work as a principal educator.
4. **Community engagement matters.** Learn about the current SEL work in Washington State by checking out standards, benchmarks, indicators, and guiding principles. Explore ways your program can embed this work throughout coursework and practicum experiences.



FIRST STEPS FOR PRINCIPAL PREPARATION PROGRAMS

Program design

1. **Embed social emotional learning into coursework.** Washington State’s Social Emotional Learning (SEL) Standards are directly connected to numerous NELP standards. [View the crosswalk document.](#)
2. **Embed authentic social emotional learning into principal internship experiences.** This should include both experiences that improve the candidates’ own social emotional competencies, and candidate experiences facilitating social emotional growth in others. Similarly, candidates should gain experience in school-wide systems to promote social emotional learning.
3. **Develop equity-focused and culturally sustaining social emotional learning coursework and internship experiences.** This may include a focus on whole-child development and/or strengthening student and adult relationships for all students. These experiences should also highlight the ways that diverse students, families, and communities talk about SEL in different terms and have different emphases for social and emotional growth and support.
4. **Emphasize family and community connections.** Social emotional learning is a collaborative and intercultural process. Coursework and internship experiences should prepare principal candidates to establish meaningful partnerships with families and communities to promote culturally sustaining SEL. This should include discussion of aligning SEL work that is happening in schools to family and community SEL practices.



RESOURCES FOR PRINCIPAL PREPARATION PROGRAMS

Related policy requirements

- [WAC 181-78A-232](#)
- [RCW 28A.410.270](#) and [RCW 28A.410.273](#)

Resources

- [OSPI's Washington social emotional learning standards and benchmarks](#)
- [PESB's preparation program SEL requirements](#)
- Identifying signs of emotional or behavioral distress in students, and referral process
 - OSPI [trauma informed schools and adverse childhood experiences](#) resources
 - OSPI [mental, social, and behavioral health](#) resources
 - OSPI [youth suicide prevention, intervention, and postvention](#) resources

Educator support

- [American Institutes for Research \(AIR\)](#) offers a [coaching toolkit](#) for instructional coaches, administrators, and district leaders who support teachers/staff in integrating SEL into their daily instructional practice.
- [CASEL Guide to Schoolwide SEL](#) | Guidance for school leaders for systemic SEL implementation in a school

LEARN MORE [Additional resources on social emotional learning and related competencies](#)



SOCIAL EMOTIONAL LEARNING RESOURCES

Social emotional learning

[Office of the Superintendent of Public Instruction's \(OSPI\) social emotional learning \(SEL\) webpage](#) includes guidance, resources, and multiple links to collective funds of knowledge on SEL such as:

- [OSPI's social and emotional learning in Washington State schools: building foundations and strategies module](#). This SEL online module has been designed in distinct learning segments including:
 - Learning Segment 1: Introduction to SEL
 - Learning Segment 2: Embedding SEL Schoolwide
 - Learning Segment 3: Creating a Professional Culture Based on SEL
 - Learning Segment 4: Integrating SEL into Culturally Responsive Classrooms
 - Learning Segment 5: Trauma Informed Social Emotional Learning
 - Learning Segment 6: Identifying and Selecting Evidence-Based Programs

[Professional Educator Standards Board's \(PESB\) SEL webpage](#) includes guidance and resources for educator preparation programs, as well as references to the WAC and RCW language addressing SEL and related competencies in Washington State.

[Collaborative for Academic, Social and Emotional Learning \(CASEL\)](#) is the leading national source for research and resources related to SEL in schools and communities and offers many valuable resources for educators, such as:

- [Focus on Family Partnerships](#) | How to create meaningful partnership opportunities and two-way communication that invite families to understand, experience, inform, and support the social emotional development of their students.
- [CASEL CARES Initiative Resources](#) | Resources designed to support educators, parents, and anyone who works with children during the COVID 19 pandemic.



RELATED COMPETENCIES RESOURCES

Related competencies

Adverse childhood experiences

- [Adverse Childhood Experiences \(ACEs\)](#) resources from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention
- [CASEL resources on mental health, trauma, and well-being](#)
- [Center for Youth Wellness](#)
- [Washington State Department of Health](#)

Anti-bullying strategies

- [Bullying prevention and intervention: information for educators](#)
- [Bullying prevention and intervention in schools](#)
- [Framework for school-wide bullying prevention and safety](#)
- [Stop bullying.gov](#)

Culturally sustaining practices

- [Culturally sustaining pedagogy](#) from the California Department of Education

Mental health literacy

- [Mental health resources](#) from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention

Trauma informed practices

- [CASEL resources on mental health, trauma, and well-being](#)
- OSPI resources on [trauma informed schools, youth suicide prevention, intervention, & postvention](#), and [behavioral health supports & resources](#).

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