Washington Office of Superintendent of
PUBLIC INSTRUCTION

SEL Advisory Committee

Meeting Notes

Attendee List

9:00 AM–12:00 PM
12/04/2025
Zoom

	Members		OSPI Staff		Guests
1	Amy Cummings (Alt)	24	Ann Rhoades	29	Sarah Butcher
2	Brandi Moore	25	Atela Tinnin	30	Tana Peterson
3	Carola Brenes	26	Christian Stark	31	Victoria Blakeney
4	Caryn Park	27	Diane Stead	32	Anita Erskine
5	Davida Sharpe	28	Heather Rees		
6	Ellie Lovde				
7	Emily Santiago				
8	Esmeralda Garibay				
9	Jay Tyus				
10	Jenny Morgan				
11	Kathi Weight				
12	Kris Harper				
13	Laurie Dils				
14	Mary Fertakis				
15	Mona Johnson				
16	Monika Schuller				
17	Nick Yoder				
18	Peggy Carlson				
19	Radu Smitina				
20	Sala Satarka				
21	Shelley Barker				
22	Tammy Bolen				
23	Therssa Warren				

Tasks

Tammy Bolen

RCW 28A.300.477 directs OSPI to convene, staff, and appoint members to the Social Emotional Learning Committee. Ongoing tasks of the committee are:

- Align the SEL standards and benchmarks with other relevant standards and guidelines.
- Identify best practices or guidance for schools implementing the standards, benchmarks, and developmental indicators for social emotional learning.
- Engage with stakeholders and seek feedback.
- Identify strategies to improve coordination between early learning, K–12 education, youth-serving community partners, and culturally-based providers, and higher education regarding SEL.
- Advise the legislature via the annual legislative report—due to OSPI on May 1, 2026.
    - Accomplishments
    - State of implementation
    - Systemic barriers
    - Recommendations
- Advise OSPI by providing feedback on learning standards alignment and guidance.

Structure/process of Advisory Committee

Tammy Bolen

We are currently at #2 in the meeting flow: Learning about the topic.

Co-Chair Vote

Tammy Bolen

The intake form asked if members wanted to volunteer to co-chair.
Responsibilities:

- Assist in agenda item creation
- Assist in reviewing recommendations
- Attend planning meetings with OSPI

Candidates:

Jay Tyus

- 25 years in school administration in Washington
- Believes healthy adults and children thrive.
- Leveraging through SEL is effective
- Participation from all SELAC members is welcome, as well as another co-chair, if

we can get another member to volunteer.

Vote: Unanimously in favor of election

Davida Sharpe,

- Outward going president for WACTE
- Loves teaching students of all ages and backgrounds
- Oldest student is in their 80s
- Loves SEL in the teaching space.

Vote: Unanimously in favor of election

The new co-chairs will be Davida Sharpe and Jay Tyus.

Educational Staff Panel: SEL in Washington Schools

Jay Tyus, Superintendent of Wilbur and Creston School District
Monika Schuller, *SEL educator on special assignment from White Salmon School District*
Tana Peterson*, SEL Facilitator, Renton School District*

What does SEL implementation currently look like in your school or district?

- Each panelist mentioned that the school district uses a different SEL curricula and uses separate curricula for younger students and older students.
- SEL is student empowered leadership- All panelists mentioned having structured support for SEL.
- Renton mentioned that their strategic framework was put out by the superintendent.
- Expanded practices to support students.
- From K–12 we use the Second Step for the curriculum used and Work to be Well for grades 6–12.
- We look at attendance and try to improve engagement through SEL practices and student leadership.
- Monika is an SEL teacher on special assignment. We have strategic plans and use Sources of Strength for grades 9–12.
- Implementation started during COVID. The implementation started at the adult level, and we first addressed SEL and trauma. A lot of the teachers needed that, and the reset of adult and student needs has helped us maneuver through the process and get them resources.
- Jay: We are in year 3 of implementation of the Franklin Covey model. The first 3 are personal habits, which align with SEL. We are working through interdependence phase. Habit 7 is tied together with everyone in the schools.
- We have Big Rock plans on our calendars as first priority. It has been crucial for

the thriving of the group.
- The leadership is empowered and we help them through barriers. We have 300 students, and we are better able to provide supports to student. SEL for children and adults is lived first.
- We don't start teaching it in classrooms until teacher training has been in place for at least six months.

Are there particular needs or challenges in making SEL work for students with different backgrounds, languages, or needs?

- Monika: Our district is not racially diverse—mostly Latino & White.
- Our population has undergone change from poverty to non-poverty. Socio-economic changes happening in our district have shifted students' needs.
- Mental health supports outside our district are diminishing, causing problems for families with limited means of transportation. In a rural community we don't have access to many resources outside of schools.
- We also need Spanish-speaking supports and we just don't have that much right now.
- Jay: one of the tenets is that diversity is to be celebrated, and people come from different experiences.
- The Tribal students have a long commute, which we respect. Our Keller Youth Council has a voice at the table.
- The emphasis of students' needs is threaded through so each person is seen and their individual greatness is emphasized and shared to help build our school around it.
- Tana: We have adult SEL in Renton, as well—bus drivers and certificated staff, etc.
- We've led book studies and try to emphasize education for all staff.
- We have a student symposium where we gather 25 high school students, and we gather the data of their surveys and go over it with them. The symposium discusses how to help the culture of their buildings. A lot of the students want to celebrate their cultures together, make it a Renton thing, rather than siloing individual cultures.
- Renton is very diverse, so we want to hear from the kids.
- We use have created a Health Hub to support our students. We were able to partner with King County we have counselors fill out forms for mental health supports. We find culturally relevant mental health supports for our students.
- For our department, we have a referral hub. We want one form to be filled out for supports.
- We lean into the SEL standards set by OSPI. The challenges are continuing the work with time limitations and staffing cuts.
- Monika mentioned that the biggest challenge for students and families is getting

support for mental health. Don't have access to resources that larger communities might have.

What barriers do you face in teaching or implementing SEL?

- Jay: The greater barrier is the adults. Once you get to the later grades, they are more focused on content. In the earlier grades, the focus is more on the students.
- Inside the secondary structure a schedule is required.
- Sometimes the secondary teachers will get in the way of implementation. Some teachers think it's one more thing. It's about 5%, but that's enough to slow down progress.
- 100% of our kids are tracking their goals.
- We need to make sure everyone understands and has access to the toolbox.
- Monika: There is always one teacher who does not believe in SEL, but the rest are invested in trainings.
- Our districts done a great job of creating a center for resources. Our biggest barrier is social systems outside of the district. We don't have a lot of mental health agencies outside.
- The families need support. We have a barrier with Tier 3 students due to lack of resources. Less money is going toward social services.
- Tana: My background is elementary teacher & counselor. Time is a barrier. We have blocks and community meetings. We are identifying contact areas. At the secondary level, our schools are engaging at the student level to recommend supports to recommend to staff. We have assemblies with the Sounders. We have some outside supports but bringing SEL into middle and high schools has been the game changer.
- Attendance has been another focus, so we're trying to reduce truancy.
- We have been working on teachers' attitude. Finding champions in the building and giving them voice has been effective.
- Student empowerment is our next level. We're training students to be facilitators.

How does school climate affect SEL efforts?

- Jay: We've reduced discipline actions to 2–3 per week. SEL is largely credited for that. Healthy people treat each other well, high expectations create engaged students. This approach has had a significant decrease in discipline referrals and which shows up in engagment and improved academics.
- Tana: Leadership in the building affects the climate and we have some strong assistant principals and deans that are leading the cultural change in the schools. You can see how the climate in the building trickles down to the staff- which impacts the SEL work.
- Monika: We had a Superintendent who was affecting progress in culture, but he

left.
- We are doing some good health and wellness programs such as a yoga series.
- Tying together student and adult culture has been helpful to develop an effective wellness program.
- Jay: SEL is part of the systemic school change and process. You can't fake it or play along. It's a part of everything and embedded into our goals, which is why we have clear outcomes. It isn't a program or add on, it is the system.

Panel Reflection Discussion

- Monika mentioned the importance of vulnerability—It's important that children see that we're human and how we deal with conflict. We're the ones who can show them that grieving and uncertainty affect adults too, and provide a healthy example of how to cope.
- Importance of adult SEL—what can we as a group do to advocate on that aspect? We have lots of poverty and trauma, and teachers who care and support SEL and who also need support. What can we do systemically to help without just giving them more work to do? Human resources are more important than money, because we don't want to burn out our educators.
- Finances—We know the legislature won't be funding a lot of new things because of what we are hearing about the budget. We're trying to find supports within the committee that isn't money dependent. Our school has an SEL coach and counselor and a student resource center. We have not traditionally had them, and they have been helpful to the students. One counselor cannot effectively serve 600 students (as one of the counselors mentioned they are doing). Money and bodies are needed for effective implementation. We're always going to come back to funding.
- Outside the box thinking—what I have found in crisis response is that we have outside resources to help us through partnerships. We have a program for our staff to talk to counselors. Family First for after-school has a health point in it.
- Staffing—In Washington the ratio for school counselors is 250:1 Some counselors have 800–900:1. Districts have been trying to find funding.
- Models where students are involved in the school decision process are incredibly useful and empowering. Using peer mentoring programs and teaching student leaders to help reach students provides a level of support to staff.

Review and Discuss Member-Generated Topics

Tammy Bolen

Google Doc for Discussion

Breakout Rooms (35 minutes)

We will continue on topics that were already started.
Questions to consider in the Google Doc:

- Are there any topics or possible recommendations that we should consider based on the panel discussion?
- Are there any recommendations you feel are ready to be drafted?
- Which topics require more learning?
- How does equity or context shape them?
- "After discussion, we'll prioritize 1 topic for the next meeting.
- Use breakout rooms for smaller group discussion, report back to full group.

Decide if the topic should advance into:

- Possible SELAC Recommendations
- Recommendations for OSPI
- Considerations for all recommendations
- Continue to fill out the topic chart: each topic needs at minimum the problem that the topic is trying to solve.
- Are there any topics that are ready to be drafted?
- Choose one topic that may need additional learning from your group to share with the whole group.
- How does equity or context shape them?

Discussion:

Were there any topics that your group drafted as a recommendation?
What is the prioritized topic for your group?
Group 1:

- We know there is no funding. How can we advocate for SEL without asking for money?
- Education works in isolation and recommend to the legislature that there is some more collaboration with the ESDs and outside agencies ASCA and possibly create a hub to help support diversity and resources and perhaps involve the legislature.
- It is important to start thinking about being less siloed. These issues are impacting multiple domains, whether mental health or school systems, money is the biggest barrier. We are all doing similar things, so collaborating in a way that is intentional and purposeful is recommended. As a recommendation, the legislature should hear from police department, schools, etc. and be encouraged to bring all of these groups together to work on solutions. Legislature wants to have these recommendations linked to established actions. Perhaps they can establish a coalition. SELAC has written something similar to this before, so that could be reviewed.

- Advocacy around unfunded mandates might be more successful, since they would be less cost. One recommendation was that the legislation that creates the SELAC be changed to make it more diverse. There is more learning and discussion that can come from this, but priority needs to be established.

Group 2:

- We talked about the school climate survey and started working backward on information that we need to know. It's difficult to come up with a survey that works across the state. What do we need to know, and how will this information be used? What is the rationale? What is the important data to collect? We should get student input for the questions to be used. The recommendation(s) should be linked to the discussion.
- The accountability measures do not affect school climate. The needs of the particular school community need to be included for school climate. As we're aligning it to recommendations, we should say we are holding the districts accountable and emphasize what the parameters involved in that accountability will be, such as impacts on funding, etc. Sometimes accountability should be celebrated.

Group 3:

- Number 1 was prioritized. A landscape survey has not gone out since 2018, and we need to find out what's going on out there. We can't solve problems if we don't have an accurate picture of the needs.
- We need questions that are well thought-out and anti-bias.
- We should address the wellness of the staff in our state, because it's difficult to deliver SEL if they are not feeling it or well enough to deliver it.
- First recommendation is to do a landscape survey. Our group also talked about doing a school climate survey. We know they are all over the board. Our group talked about identifying required processes like that the survey should go to teachers, students and families.

Advocacy Discussion

Tammy Bolen

Washington SEL Implementation Brief: Focus on Culturally Sustaining Practices

Clarify advisory vs. advocacy roles.

Review a brief.

Discuss shared messaging (create outline to use) or presenting SEL and the drafted recommendations.

- OPSI and other state agencies cannot lobby to engage legislators to see funding for our programs.
- We write recommendations and the SELAC members take them to their organizations and get feedback from them. We need you to get on the meeting schedule with your organization to discuss this and we want to send you in prepared. Tammy shared a brief with key information. The members took time to review the brief. The link is attached.
- Tammy also shared an example of a one-pager on SEL. The one-pager highlighted how SEL improves success in academics. SEL also helps reduce burnout among the staff. Employability skills in the long term are included.
- Tammy wanted to know if something like this would be helpful when members go back to their organizations. She can draft something and send it out to members. She asked for a commitment from members to review it and provide feedback. When we get to drafting the recommendations, we can add them to the one pager as well.
- It would be helpful if our members can hand it off to the people in their organizations who work with legislators.
- We have other briefs on our web site that help with discussion with other groups and with different focus.
- Please read and provide feedback.

Additional Discussion

Does the group have thoughts about the legislative recommendation from last year to develop educator standards for SEL? Did we decide not to pursue that this year? It seems we continually circle back to the importance of adult SEL capacity, and having educator standards feels like a way to address this more directly.

Tammy committed to sending out this comment along with the most recent SEL legislative report. This will be included in the next email.

Public Comment

Public Comment Submission Link
Tammy Bolen
No public comment was given.

Next Steps and Reflections

Tammy Bolen

- Planning and next steps for members:
    - Members: When we get drafting recommendations, you will take them

back to organizations. You will want to schedule ahead and get on the meeting agenda for your organization and/or set up meetings to discuss with organizational leaders.

- Bring feedback to the committee.

- Please provide feedback on today's meeting so we can improve our meetings. Meeting feedback survey