



Washington Office of Superintendent of
PUBLIC INSTRUCTION

REPORT TO THE LEGISLATURE

UPDATE: Social Emotional Learning Progress Report 2026

Authorizing Legislation: [RCW 28A.300.477](#)

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The Washington Social Emotional Learning (SEL) Committee, referred to in this report as “the Committee” and “Committee,” was established in 2019 through Senate Bill 5082 (SB 5082)—codified in Revised Code of Washington (RCW) [28A.300.477](#)—to promote and expand SEL and to build upon the work of the previous years’, which is shared in the [2021–25 SEL Progress Reports](#).

Recommendations

For each recommendation, the Committee offers relevant context and rationale in the Recommendations section of this report to inform decision-making. Most of the recommendations are the same or a variation of recommendations from previous reports as they have not yet been acted upon. The following are the 2026 recommendations made by the Committee to the Governor and the Washington State Legislature:

Recommendation 1: The Committee recommends that the Washington State Legislature appropriates dedicated funding to OSPI to support a comprehensive landscape scan of the SEL environment across kindergarten through 12th grade public schools.

The landscape scan should:

- Map the current implementation, supports, and conditions of SEL practices statewide — including in extended learning settings (educational or learning environments that extend beyond the traditional school day, school year, or standard classroom instruction) — through intentional engagement with students, staff, families, and community partners, particularly those from historically underserved communities, using inclusive engagement methods that center lived experiences, local context, and equitable representation across all settings.
- Identify gaps and inequities in resources, training, and student outcomes.
- Produce a statewide report with disaggregated data and actionable recommendations for policy, practice, and equitable resource allocation specific to both schools and communities.
- Develop specific and inclusive (reflecting school, community, and family voices) step-by-step implementation plans for each of the actionable recommendations identified for policy, practice, and equitable resource allocation determined by the landscape scan results, with ongoing collaboration with the Committee.
- The scan should be launched no later than the next fiscal year and completed within 12–18 months of funding.

Recommendation 2: The Committee recommends that the Washington State Legislature appropriates dedicated funding for OSPI to develop and make available a statewide school climate survey for voluntary use by K–12 public school districts.

The school climate survey should:

- Be research-informed and developmentally appropriate, with versions suitable for students, staff, and families.
- Be built to be accessible using multiple formats (including online and non-digital options).
- Reflect equity-centered, culturally-sustaining, and trauma-informed principles.
- Measure key conditions that support student learning and well-being, including belonging, safety, relationships, inclusion, and engagement.
- Be designed to minimize local burden, allowing districts to use a high-quality, optional tool rather than creating or purchasing separate surveys.
- Include guidance and resources to support districts in interpreting disaggregated results and using data for continuous improvement.

Recommendation 3: The SEL Committee recommends that the Washington State Legislature appropriates dedicated funding to the Professional Educator Standards Board (PESB) to develop and conduct a statewide SEL needs assessment of educator preparation programs.

The needs assessment should assess the effectiveness of educator preparation programs to:

- Increase the capacity and skills of educator candidates and faculty related to the Washington SEL standards, including understanding bias, equity, culturally sustaining practices, trauma-informed approaches, and universally designed practices.
- Integrate SEL into coursework, clinical practice, and program standards.
- Identify strengths, gaps, and inequities in how candidates are prepared to implement SEL across diverse school and community contexts.
- Include engagement with educator candidates, faculty, and community partners, with intentional outreach to historically underserved communities.

Alignment with the Educational Opportunity Gap Oversight and Accountability Committee (EOGOAC)

Two of the recommendations are aligned to those shared in the [2025 Educational Opportunity Gap Oversight and Accountability Committee Legislative Report](#) regarding the need for a school climate survey and landscape scan. The EOGOAC has similarly called for tools to measure school conditions and close equity gaps for students of color, including through shared exploration of a landscape analysis that centers community voice. The two committees met in the last joint committee meeting and discussed what landscape analysis could look like in an authentically useful way, including insight from parents, families, and communities, with an emphasis on including community voice.

INTRODUCTION

The Committee was established in 2019 through SB 5082—codified in RCW [28A.300.477](#)—to build upon work from previous years shared in the 2021–25 SEL Progress Reports. These reports can be found on the [Committee webpage](#). The purpose of the Committee is to promote and expand SEL implementation.

The [SEL K–12 Standards, benchmarks and indicators](#) along with the guiding principles provide a foundation and system for effective SEL implementation. This framework, found in [Appendix A](#), outlines key SEL skills and defines SEL as a process through which individuals build awareness and skills in managing emotions, setting goals, establishing relationships, and making responsible decisions that support success in school and life.¹

The evidence base supporting SEL is robust: a meta-analysis of more than 270,000 students found an 11-percentile-point gain in academic achievement when students were taught SEL and a review of over 575,000 students across 53 countries confirmed significant improvements in skills, behaviors, school climate, and academic outcomes.² SEL is most effective when schools, families, and communities — including tribal and Indigenous communities — work together as genuine partners.³

The benefits of SEL include improved academic performance, greater resilience, better decision-making, reduced behavior issues, and stronger relationships between students and adults in their lives. These benefits require intentional, sustained, and equitably resourced investment from the Legislature, OSPI, school districts, and the communities they serve. For every \$1 spent on effective SEL programming, the return is \$11 in long-term benefits — including higher graduation rates, improved health outcomes, and reduced involvement in the juvenile justice system.⁴ Investing in SEL is both the right thing to do for Washington's students and a fiscally responsible decision that pays dividends for generations.

¹ Office of Superintendent of Public Instruction (OSPI). (2023). *Washington State social emotional learning implementation guide*. Retrieved from https://ospi.k12.wa.us/sites/default/files/2023-12/washingtonsel_implementationguide_2023final_.pdf

² Cipriano, C., et al. (2023). The state of evidence for social and emotional learning: A contemporary meta-analysis of universal school-based SEL interventions. *Child Development*, 94(5), 1181–1204.
Durlak, J. A., et al. (2011). The impact of enhancing students' social and emotional learning: A meta-analysis of school-based universal interventions. *Child Development*, 82(1), 405–432.

³ ERIC. (2024). Family-school-community partnerships to promote social and emotional learning. In *Handbook of Social and Emotional Learning* (2nd ed.). Guilford Press. Retrieved from [Family-School-Community Partnerships to Promote Social and Emotional Learning](#)

⁴ Belfield, Clive, A. Brooks Bowden, Alli Klapp, Henry Levin, Robert Shand, and Sabine Zander. 2015. [The Economic Value of Social and Emotional Learning](#). *Journal of Benefit-Cost Analysis* 6(3), 508–544.

As required by RCW [28A.300.477](#), this report includes Committee accomplishments, state-level data regarding implementation of SEL, identification of systemic barriers, and recommendations. For each recommendation, the Committee offers relevant context and rationale in the Recommendations section of this report to inform decision-making. Most of the recommendations are the same or a variation of recommendations from previous reports as they have not yet been acted upon.

SYSTEMIC BARRIERS

Washington's PreK–12 education system faces a set of interconnected systems barriers that limit the consistent, equitable, and effective implementation of SEL across schools, districts, communities, and educator preparation programs. These barriers reflect gaps in data, measurement, and preparation, that taken together, prevent the system from responding to the full scope of student needs.

Communities, including families, community organizations, nonprofits, and tribal and Indigenous communities, are essential allies and partners in addressing these barriers, and their voices and expertise must be central to any meaningful solution. Addressing these barriers requires coordinated investment and action across all levels of the education system. The SEL Recommendations have been created to address the following system barriers identified by the Committee.

1. Lack of Current, Statewide Data on SEL Framework Implementation

Without an updated, comprehensive picture of how SEL is being implemented across Washington's K–12 schools — and critically, for whom it is and is not working — the system cannot identify whether current approaches are producing equitable outcomes or inadvertently serving some students while leaving others behind. Context matters — the COVID-19 pandemic and its aftermath, combined with the current climate of fear and instability created by immigration enforcement actions in communities across Washington, have created ongoing and evolving challenges for students, educators, and communities alike, including increased behavioral needs, trauma, disengagement, and diminished trust in institutions. These shifting conditions make a current, ongoing landscape scan not just useful but essential. Not having current, longitudinal, and disaggregated statewide SEL data is a system barrier for the following reasons:

- **Outdated Information:** The most recent statewide landscape scan was conducted in 2018 — before the pandemic fundamentally altered the educational landscape. Since then, student mental health and behavioral needs have increased significantly, SEL practices have expanded, and expectations around equity and trauma-informed approaches have grown. Decisions made on outdated data risk missing the current reality in schools and communities.
- **Evolving Community Context:** The ongoing challenges stemming from the pandemic including increased student behavioral needs, chronic absenteeism, and educator burnout continue to affect Washington's schools. At the same time, immigration enforcement actions have created profound fear, instability, and trauma for immigrant and mixed-status families across the state, directly impacting student attendance, sense of safety, and willingness to engage with school communities. Together these realities underscore the need for real-time, contextually informed data. A one-time scan is insufficient; the system needs ongoing mechanisms to understand and respond to changing conditions on the ground, in partnership with the communities most affected.

- **Absence of Disaggregated Landscape Data:** The state currently lacks disaggregated data on SEL conditions and access, making it impossible to see whether SEL resources, support, and culturally sustaining practices are equitably distributed across communities and student populations. Without this disaggregated lens, systemic disparities remain invisible — masked by averaged figures that cannot reveal the differentiated experiences of Black, Indigenous, students of color, English learners, students with disabilities, students from low-income families, and rural and tribal communities.
- **Inequitable Resource Allocation:** Without current data identifying gaps and disparities across communities, resources may not reach the districts, schools, and communities that need them most — particularly those that are historically underserved or underfunded.
- **Limited Accountability for Outcomes:** Without consistent statewide data, it is difficult to assess whether SEL efforts are producing meaningful improvements in student well-being and success, or whether existing approaches are equitable and effective across all student populations and communities.
- **Barriers to Informed Policymaking:** OSPI, the Legislature, district leaders, and community partners rely on current evidence to make informed decisions about guidance, professional learning, and investment. The absence of updated data creates blind spots that limit the quality and equity of those decisions.

2. Inconsistent and Inequitable Approaches to Measuring School Climate

Washington school districts are currently measuring school climate using a wide variety of tools that differ in design, quality, focus, and accessibility, making it difficult to understand and improve conditions for student well-being across the state. The lack of a shared, voluntary, state-developed school climate survey is a system barrier for the following reasons:

- **Inequitable Access to Quality Tools:** Districts without sufficient capacity or funding are unable to develop or purchase high-quality, research-informed surveys, resulting in unreliable or limited data about their school environments — and leaving some communities without meaningful insight into the conditions affecting their students.
- **Inconsistent Measurement:** The wide variation in survey tools makes it impossible to compare results across districts or identify statewide trends in school climate, belonging, safety, and student engagement.
- **Inconsistent Understanding of School Climate's Value:** Across Washington's districts, there is significant variation in how school leaders, educators, and communities understand and prioritize school climate measurement. Without a shared framework and common understanding of why school climate data matters and how it connects to student well-being, belonging, and SEL, some districts invest meaningfully in this work while others do not, perpetuating an uneven landscape of support for students statewide.

- **Participation Gaps:** Historically underserved communities — including families with limited internet access, limited digital literacy, limited English proficiency, or disability-related accommodations — are often left out of school climate data collection entirely, meaning the perspectives of those most affected by inequity are least likely to be captured. Online-only survey administration is one significant source of these gaps, but barriers to participation extend beyond format to include language access, cultural relevance of survey content, trust in institutions, and the accessibility of the process itself.
- **Burden on Districts:** Without a state-developed option, districts must invest significant time and resources creating or procuring their own tools, diverting capacity away from using data to actively improve school climate in partnership with their communities.

3. Fragmentation and Inconsistency in SEL Framework Preparation and Implementation Across the System

Based on the Committee's collective experience and expertise, the challenge of fragmentation is not limited to the disconnect between educator preparation and K–12 classrooms — inconsistency appears to exist both across and within each level of the education pipeline. While Washington has established a state-funded professional learning day focused on SEL every other year, it is unclear without current statewide data whether this alone has been sufficient to produce consistent levels of SEL framework implementation across K–12 schools or to address the variation that exists across and within educator preparation programs. This systemic fragmentation is a barrier for the following reasons:

- **Inconsistent Preparation Across Programs:** Without a statewide needs assessment there is no way to confirm whether educator candidates are consistently prepared to implement SEL, including trauma-informed, culturally sustaining, and universally designed approaches across diverse school contexts. Preparation may vary not only between institutions but within them, meaning the quality and depth of SEL preparation a candidate receives could differ significantly depending on their program, faculty, or clinical placement.
- **Lack of Consistency Across Educator Preparation Organizations:** Educator preparation programs operate with significant autonomy, and there is currently no shared framework or accountability structure ensuring that SEL including equity-centered and culturally sustaining practices, is embedded consistently across all programs statewide. This may result in a fragmented preparation landscape where the depth of SEL preparation candidates receive varies significantly.
- **Risk of Bias When SEL is Not Done Well:** Inconsistency in the way SEL is delivered matters beyond quality alone — when SEL is implemented without adequate preparation, cultural awareness, or equity-centered practices, it can reinforce rather than reduce bias. Educators who are not well-prepared may unintentionally apply SEL frameworks in ways that reflect

cultural blind spots, leading to inequitable experiences for students from historically marginalized communities.⁵

- **Absence of Ongoing Professional Development for In-Service Educators:** The absence of ongoing, sustained professional development for in-service educators means that even when educators receive initial SEL training, that learning may not be consistently reinforced or deepened over time — potentially resulting in inconsistent SEL practice across classrooms and schools. Without current data, it is difficult to assess whether a single state-funded professional learning day every other year is sufficient to build and sustain the depth of practice needed to serve all students equitably.
- **Inconsistent Implementation in K–12:** Even with a state-funded SEL professional learning day, current data is insufficient to confirm whether implementation of SEL across K–12 schools is consistent. Without ongoing, coordinated professional learning, clear guidance, and meaningful community partnership, the depth and quality of SEL practice may vary widely from school to school and district to district.
- **Inequitable Outcomes for Students:** Without current data, it is difficult to confirm the full extent to which inconsistent preparation and implementation affect students' access to high-quality SEL. However, it is reasonable to expect that where preparation and implementation vary, students' experiences may differ depending on where they go to school and which preparation program their educator attended — potentially contributing to uneven outcomes across schools and communities.
- **Capacity Gaps in Schools:** If educators enter the workforce underprepared for SEL, the burden of building that capacity may fall to individual schools and districts, often without adequate time, funding, community partnership, or support.
- **Missed Opportunity for Systems Alignment:** Without coordination between the Professional Educator Standards Board (PESB), OSPI, communities, and educator preparation programs, the education pipeline operates as a series of disconnected stages rather than a coherent system, reducing the overall effectiveness of SEL efforts statewide.

These barriers are significant, but they are not insurmountable. The three recommendations that follow are targeted, evidence-informed investments designed to directly address each of these gaps.

⁵ GLSEN. (2022). *LGBTQ data inclusion research brief*. Retrieved from <https://www.glsen.org>

RECOMMENDATIONS

While social and emotional development occurs naturally in any learning environment, the Committee's work focuses on intentional, research-backed SEL — structured approaches grounded in evidence that systematically build students' social and emotional skills in ways that informal interactions alone cannot achieve. When this kind of SEL is not implemented well, or not implemented at all, the consequences for students are real and lasting. When SEL is not implemented well, or not implemented at all, the consequences for students are real and lasting. Students who lack strong social and emotional skills are more likely to struggle academically, experience mental health challenges, disengage from school, and face barriers to success in the workforce and in civic life. The gaps are not felt equally: students from historically underserved communities, those experiencing poverty, and those with the greatest needs are often the least likely to have access to high-quality, culturally responsive SEL. Without accurate, current information about how SEL is being implemented across Washington — and how it is being experienced by students, families, and educators — the state cannot make the informed investments needed to ensure every child has access to the social and emotional support they deserve.

The Committee's three recommendations are designed to fill that information gap. While each gathers information to strengthen SEL across Washington, they differ in focus, method, and purpose and together, they form a comprehensive picture of the state of SEL in Washington.

Key Terms and Definitions Relating to the Recommendations

A **landscape scan** is a systems-level review of SEL implementation across state, district, school, and community levels that examines existing policies, programs, resources, and gaps through document review, data analysis, and partner engagement. This is important because Washington has not conducted a comprehensive statewide review of SEL since 2018, and policymakers cannot effectively target resources or guide practice without an updated understanding of what is currently in place and what is missing.

A **school climate survey** shifts the focus from systems to individuals, inviting students, families, educators, and staff to share their lived experiences and perceptions of the school environment — including how safe, supported, and connected they feel. This matters because strong policies and programs do not always translate into positive experiences, particularly for students from historically underserved communities. A climate survey ensures that the voices of those most affected are central to understanding whether SEL efforts are making a real difference.

A **needs assessment**, as recommended here, is forward-looking and specifically focused on educator preparation programs, and identifies what future educators need to implement SEL effectively and

equitably before they enter a classroom. This is essential because even the best SEL frameworks will fall short if educators are not adequately prepared to bring them to life.

Together these three tools are mutually reinforcing: the landscape scan reveals what exists across the system; the climate survey surfaces how that system is experienced by those within it; and the needs assessment identifies what must be strengthened in educator preparation to support equitable implementation. No single tool can provide the full picture, but taken together, they will equip the Legislature, OSPI, PESB, and local communities with the comprehensive, actionable understanding needed to make informed and lasting investments in student well-being.

Recommendation 1: The Committee recommends that the Washington State Legislature appropriates dedicated funding to OSPI to support a comprehensive landscape scan of the SEL environment across kindergarten through 12th grade public schools.

This landscape scan should:

- Map the current implementation, supports, and conditions of SEL practices statewide — including in extended learning settings — through intentional engagement with students, staff, families, and community partners, particularly those from historically underserved communities, using inclusive engagement methods that center lived experiences, local context, and equitable representation across all settings.
- Identify gaps and inequities in resources, training, and student outcomes.
- Produce a statewide report with disaggregated data and actionable recommendations for policy, practice, and equitable resource allocation specific to both schools and communities.
- Develop specific and inclusive (reflecting school, community, and family voices) step-by-step implementation plans for each of the actionable recommendations identified for policy, practice, and equitable resource allocation determined by the landscape scan results, with ongoing collaboration with the SEL Committee.

To support this work, the Legislature should provide dedicated appropriation to OSPI or an equivalent state education research partner. The scan should be launched no later than the next fiscal year and completed within 12–18 months of funding.

Rationale

Washington state has not conducted a comprehensive, statewide scan of SEL in K–12 public schools since 2018. During this time the educational landscape has changed significantly, including increased student mental health and behavioral needs, expanded use of SEL practices across districts, and a growing emphasis on equity, culturally sustaining practices, and trauma-informed approaches. While

many schools and districts have invested in SEL, the state lacks current, reliable information to understand how SEL is being implemented, the conditions that support or hinder effective practice, and the extent to which educators are prepared and supported to deliver high-quality SEL. This absence of updated statewide information limits the ability of policymakers and education leaders to make informed decisions about guidance, professional learning, and future investments.

Funding a statewide SEL landscape scan will provide timely, equity-centered insight into the current SEL environment across Washington’s diverse K–12 system. The scan will identify strengths, gaps, and inequities in access to culturally sustaining and trauma-informed SEL practices; explore adult capacity to implement SEL; and examine system conditions such as school climate, policies, professional learning supports, expanded learning opportunities, community-based partnerships, and existing school district infrastructure.

In addition, intentional engagement with students, families, and community partners, particularly those from historically underserved communities, will center lived experiences and local context in the findings. The resulting recommendations will equip the Legislature, OSPI, and school districts with actionable information to inform SEL implementation, target resources equitably, and support student well-being and success statewide.

Recommendation 2: The Committee recommends that the Washington State Legislature appropriate dedicated funding for OSPI to develop and make available a statewide school climate survey for voluntary use by K–12 public school districts.

The school climate survey should:

- Be research-informed and developmentally appropriate, with versions suitable for students, staff, and families.
- Be built to be accessible using multiple formats (including online and non-digital options).
- Reflect equity-centered, culturally-sustaining, and trauma-informed principles.
- Measure key conditions that support student learning and well-being, including belonging, safety, relationships, inclusion, and engagement.
- Be designed to minimize local burden, allowing districts to use a high-quality, optional tool rather than creating or purchasing separate surveys.
- Include guidance and resources to support districts in interpreting disaggregated results and using data for continuous improvement.

Rationale

School climate is a critical condition for student well-being, engagement, and academic success, and is closely connected to effective SEL implementation.⁶ Many Washington school districts currently seek to understand school climate through surveys; however, approaches vary widely in design, focus, and alignment to equity. It is essential that this survey be developed using community engagement, specifically seeking feedback from underrepresented communities. While many surveys are administered online, this format may unintentionally exclude families without reliable internet access, limited digital literacy, language access, or accommodations for disabilities. Without intentional design, survey administration methods can reinforce participation gaps and limit the voices of historically underserved communities. The Washington State Board of Education's White Paper on Assessing School Climate, A Review of Evidence, Practices and Recommendations for Implementation in Washington State, describes school climate as a complex, multidimensional construct and highlights the importance of valid, inclusive, and developmentally appropriate measures. The paper also identifies barriers to participation in school climate surveys and emphasizes the need for approaches that reduce burden and increase representation, particularly for historically underserved students, families, and communities.⁷

Funding OSPI to develop a statewide, school climate survey will provide districts with access to a high-quality, research-informed tool grounded in equity. A state-developed survey can support consistent measurement of key conditions such as belonging, safety, relationships, inclusion, and engagement, while allowing districts to use the tool for continuous improvement. By including versions for students, staff, and families and providing guidance for local data use, a statewide survey will elevate multiple perspectives, reduce barriers to participation, and strengthen districts' ability to understand and improve school climate. This investment will support more equitable access to meaningful school climate data and advance statewide efforts to create safe, inclusive, and supportive learning environments for all students.

⁶ Thapa, A., et al. (2013). A review of school climate research. *Review of Educational Research*, 83(3), 357–385.

⁷ Washington State Board of Education. (2024). *Assessing school climate: A review of evidence, practices and recommendations for implementation in Washington State*. Retrieved from <https://sbe.wa.gov>

Recommendation 3: The SEL Committee recommends that the Washington State Legislature appropriate dedicated funding to PESB to develop and conduct a statewide SEL needs assessment of educator preparation programs.

The needs assessment should assess the effectiveness of educator preparation programs to:

- Increase the capacity and skills of educator candidates and faculty related to the Washington SEL standards, including understanding bias, equity, culturally sustaining practices, trauma-informed approaches, and universally designed practices.
- Integrate SEL into coursework, clinical practice, and program standards.
- Identify strengths, gaps, and inequities in how candidates are prepared to implement SEL across diverse school and community contexts.
- Include engagement with educator candidates, faculty, and community partners, with intentional outreach to historically underserved communities.

Rationale

Educator preparation programs play a foundational role in building adult capacity to implement high-quality SEL. However, Washington does not currently have a comprehensive statewide understanding of how SEL—including culturally sustaining, trauma-informed, equity-centered, and universally designed practices—is embedded across preparation programs. The last landscape scan, completed in 2018, focused on K–12 public schools. Without current information, it is difficult to determine whether educator candidates are consistently prepared to create inclusive, affirming, and developmentally appropriate learning environments for diverse student populations.

Funding a statewide SEL needs assessment conducted by PESB will provide important insight into preparation practices and inform improvements to program standards, expectations, and professional learning supports. Coordination and communication between PESB and OSPI during this process will be important to ensure alignment between pre-service preparation and in-service implementation expectations within PreK–12 systems. When educator preparation and K–12 policy guidance are aligned, educators enter the workforce better equipped to implement SEL effectively and equitably from the outset. This alignment strengthens system coherence, reduces fragmentation, and promotes continuous improvement across the educator pipeline.

STATUS UPDATE

SEL Implementation Data

Provision of SEL Instruction

Students in kindergarten through 3rd grade are required to receive instruction in SEL. Washington’s SEL Standards and Benchmarks are designed to provide comprehensive instruction over time that support students to learn both concepts and skills. Tables 1 and 2 show how many districts provided SEL instruction in grades K–3 and the total number of hours of instruction provided. The hours of instruction provided are one possible indicator of how comprehensive instruction is.

Table 1: 276 school districts reported that students in kindergarten and 1st grade receive SEL instruction; 275 reported SEL instruction in 2nd grade, and 271 districts reported instruction in 3rd grade. These are listed as percentages in the table below.

Table 1: Percent of Districts that Provided SEL by Grade Level

Year	Kindergarten	Grade 1	Grade 2	Grade 3
2024–25	93%	93%	93%	92%
2023–24	95%	94%	94%	94%
2022–23	91%	92%	92%	91%

Source: OSPI Survey: 2024–25 Comprehensive Sexual Health Education (CSHE) Reporting.

Table 2: Most districts were able to meet 10 or more hours of SEL instruction. An average of 192 districts responded, “More than 10 hours” and are listed as percentages by grade level below. An average of 45 districts responded with “6–10 hours” but are not included in the table below.

Table 2: Percent of Districts that Provided 10 or More Hours of SEL Instruction by Grade Level

Year	Kindergarten	Grade 1	Grade 2	Grade 3
2024–25	65%	66%	66%	64%
2023–24	68%	67%	68%	68%
2022–23	70%	69%	70%	70%

Source: OSPI Survey: 2024–25 Comprehensive Sexual Health Education (CSHE) Reporting.

Table 3: Materials used to provide SEL; most responses listed Second Step Curricula for K–3 students. Twenty districts responded “Other,” with common answers including Character Strong, but they were not distinguished by grade level.

Table 3: Materials Used to Provide SEL Instruction to K–3 Students

Curricula	Kindergarten	Grade 1	Grade 2	Grade 3
MindUP	10 districts	8	8	8
PATHS	4 districts	5	4	3
Responsive Classroom	4 districts	4	5	4
Ruler	10 districts	8	8	10
Second Step	172 districts	169	169	160
None of the above	106 districts	105	104	109

Source: OSPI Survey: 2024–25 Comprehensive Sexual Health Education (CSHE) Reporting.

SEL Professional Learning Data

Two online learning opportunities were developed for teachers and educational staff to build adult capacity, expand knowledge, and promote the integration of SEL. The modules are intended for educators to apply key learnings, such as culturally sustaining practices, trauma-informed practices, and equity to their implementation of SEL. Additionally, the Academic Learning is Social and Emotional Module was also developed for educators. Both modules are loaded with resources, and educators may receive clock hours free of charge for completing the segments. A diverse population of educators, support staff, administrators, and community members are engaging in this learning which would indicate an interest in implementing and improving SEL.

Table 4 shows the average number of participants for all seven SEL learning modules from July 15, 2025, through April 15, 2026. The numbers are generated from a survey given at the end of each learning module.

Table 4: SEL Online Modules 1–7 Participation by Organization

Organization Type	Average Number
School District	822
ESD	24
Tribal School	5
College or University	4
Government Agency	2
Private School (in WA)	20
Non-Profit	5
School/District out of state	16
Other	45

Source: SEL Module(s)#1–7 Final Quiz Reports; averaged. (7/15/25 – 4/15/26).

Table 5 shows participation in the online module Academic Learning is Social & Emotional from July 15, 2025, through April 15, 2026. The numbers are generated from a survey given to individuals at the end of the course.

Table 5: Academic Learning is Social and Emotional Module**Participation by Organization**

Organization Type	Number Participants
School District	737
ESD	18
Tribal School	11
College or University	13
Government Agency	3
Private School (in WA)	29
Non-Profit	10

Organization Type	Number Participants
School/district out of state	15
Other	52

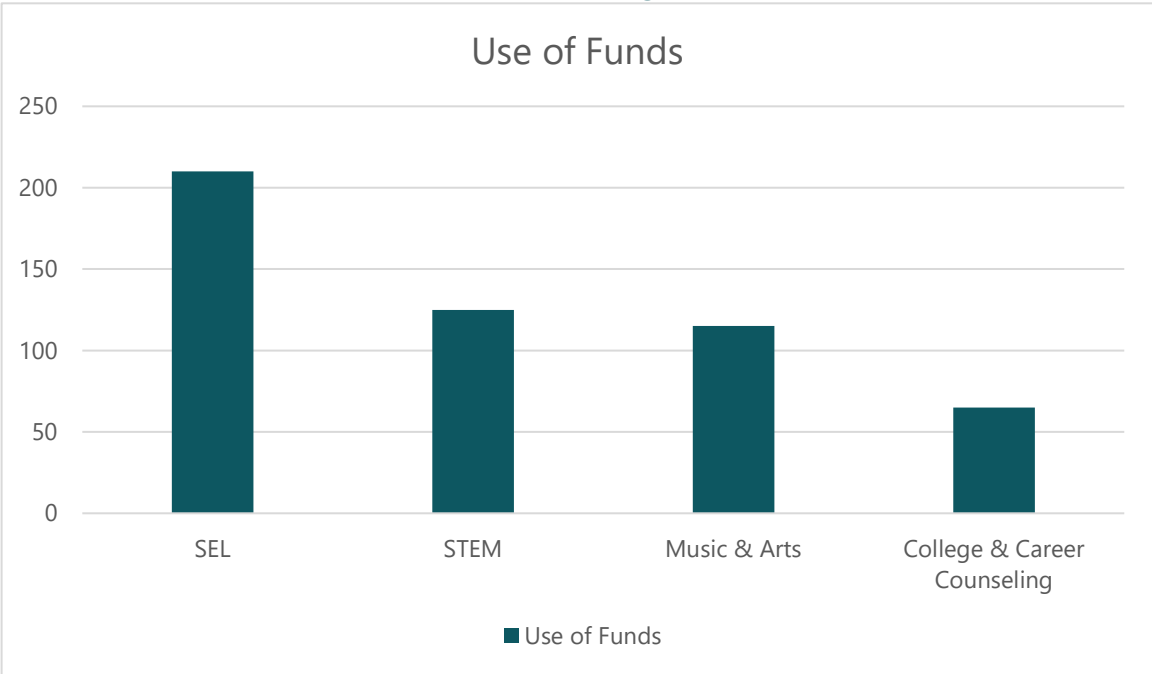
Source: Academic Learning is Social and Emotional Final Quiz Report, (7/15/25 – 4/15/26).

Student Support & Academic Enrichment (Title IV, Part A)

The Student Support and Academic Enrichment (Title IV, Part A) program provides funding to improve students’ academic achievement by increasing the capacity of local educational agencies (LEAs). The data from the 2024–25 Public Report indicates that most districts participating in the Title IV, Part A program are utilizing funds to develop, implement, or expand activities that integrate SEL as part of a well-rounded and safe and healthy educational experience for all students. The districts’ needs are clear; SEL funding is needed.

Table 6 shows the use of Title IV, Part A Well Rounded Education funds by number of districts. SEL was the only category with over 200 districts reporting use of funding for SEL.

Table 6: 2024–25 Use of Title IV, Part A Funding Requests



Source: Student Support & Academic Enrichment, Title IV, Part A: 2024–25 Public Report

Accomplishments

In addition to writing a legislative report with recommendations, identifying systemic barriers, needed policies, and needed policy changes, the Committee met throughout the 2025–26 school year to discuss topics that impact SEL in Washington. Committee meeting topics included but were not limited to:

- Discussion on the current state of SEL in Washington;
- The impact of SEL on students, families, communities, and educators;
- SEL in higher education;
- School climate and school climate surveys;
- The need for SEL funding; adult SEL capacity building; and
- The imperative of ensuring our work is grounded in equity and culturally sustaining practices.

Partner Feedback

An ongoing, legislatively required, task of the Committee is to seek feedback from partners. One goal of this is to help identify strategies and practices happening around SEL implementation and to identify the needs of the LEAs. To this end, the Committee held a panel of educational staff that shared various approaches to SEL; however, even with different approaches, there was careful consideration of intentionally involving students in the decision-making process. Additionally, SEL implementation efforts involved more than just teaching SEL curriculum but recognizing the shared responsibility of supporting SEL implementation. The panelists reported training not just educators, but also bus drivers and support staff around the school, creating an environment where consistent adult training creates the support needed for their students to thrive.

Outreach and Advocacy

A key priority for the Committee this year has been ensuring that the work happening in meetings reaches beyond the committee meetings. With nearly 30 members who have deep expertise in SEL and represent a wide range of organizations, agencies, and communities across Washington, the Committee is uniquely positioned to serve as a conduit for information and advocacy. To that end, a Committee Information Sheet was developed to support members in sharing committee discussions, presentations, and emerging recommendations with their respective networks. The Committee also created an online Organization and Community Feedback Form to capture input gathered by members who engage with their networks on SEL topics, needs, and priorities. This feedback will be integrated into Committee discussions in the upcoming year, ensuring that community and organizational perspectives inform the work going forward.

Multiple members reported engaging their networks this year. Members shared information with organizations and agencies including the State Board of Education, Roots of Inclusion, the Community Center for Education Results, the South King County Discipline Coalition, the Special Education Advisory Board, and the Puget Sound Education Service District Community Wisdom Council —

raising awareness of the Committee's work and connecting these groups to SEL resources. Another member shared information directly with SEL providers about topics the Committee has discussed. A member reported regularly incorporating SEL into conversations on prevention with all nine Educational Service Districts across the state.

A third member, who also serves as the Washington School Counselor Association's (WSCA) Legislative Advocate, communicated with WSCA members and legislators about the Committee's work — noting that WSCA is supportive of SEL and they plan to improve their delivery to students. These efforts reflect the Committee's commitment to broad, community-rooted engagement as Washington works to strengthen and expand SEL statewide.

School District SEL Implementation Needs Assessment

OSPI has continued the work initiated by the Committee's SEL Implementation Data Subcommittee following that subcommittee's dissolution. During the 2024–25 school year, the subcommittee began developing a School District SEL Implementation Needs Assessment — a rubric designed to help districts identify strengths and areas for improvement in their SEL implementation, specifically, adult practices, regardless of whether the districts are formally reporting data. Once complete, the assessment will automatically connect districts with resources to support identified areas of growth. Several current Committee members have volunteered to participate in this ongoing work with OSPI.

The School District SEL Implementation Needs Assessment is intentionally aligned with the Washington State SEL Framework's essential elements and guiding principles, which include grounding SEL in equity, cultural responsiveness, universal design, and trauma-informed practices; strengthening adult SEL capacity within schools; creating supportive conditions for student SEL development; and fostering meaningful collaboration with families and communities.

Including SEL in Content Learning Standard Updates

OSPI is refining, prioritizing, and clarifying existing content learning standards, with an intentional effort to embed SEL alignment throughout. The accompanying guidance will include SEL examples and alignment, resources for parents and community members, and practical implementation tools. OSPI coordinators previously met with the Committee to request member volunteers to provide feedback on the guidance, and that feedback continues to inform the work as it moves forward.

SEL Online Module Update

OSPI, with the support of Committee members, will begin updating the SEL Online Module. This collaborative effort reflects the Committee's continued commitment to ensuring that SEL resources remain current, relevant, and accessible to educators and communities across Washington.

BACKGROUND INFORMATION

Social Emotional Learning Committee

RCW [28A.300.477](#) identifies the purpose of the Committee as promoting and expanding SEL in a manner that helps students build awareness and skills in managing emotions, setting goals, establishing relationships, and making responsible decisions that support success in school and in life. In addition to the legislative report, the Legislature tasks the Committee with the following ongoing work:

1. Identifying professional development opportunities for teachers and educational staff and reviewing and updating the SEL Online Modules.
2. Identifying best practices or guidance for schools implementing the SEL standards, benchmarks and developmental indicators.
3. Identifying strategies to improve coordination between early learning, K–12 education, youth-serving community partners, and culturally based providers, and higher education regarding SEL.
4. Consider systems for collecting data on SEL and monitoring implementation.
5. Engage with interest holders and seek feedback.

Committee Membership

Member Name, Organization	Representative Compliance (w/ RCW 28A.300.477)
Esmerelda Garibay, Commission on Hispanic Affairs (CHA)	Commission on Hispanic Affairs
Caryn Park, Commission on Asian Pacific American Affairs (CAPAA)	Commission on Asian Pacific American Affairs
Scott Lehrman, Commission on Asian Pacific American Affairs (CAPAA)	Commission on Asian Pacific American Affairs
Frieda Takamura, EGOAC	One representative from the Educational Opportunity Gap Oversight and Accountability Committee
Peggy Carlson, Department of Children Youth and Families (DCYF)	One representative from the Department of Children, Youth, and Families.

Tammy Bolen, OSPI	Office of Superintendent of Public Instruction with expertise in student support services
Laurie Dils, OSPI	Office of Superintendent of Public Instruction with expertise in curriculum and instruction
Bonnelley Pauulu, Office of Education Ombuds (OEO)	One representative from the Office of the Education Ombuds
Mary Fertakis, State Board of Education (SBE)	One representative from the State Board of Education
Carola Brenes, Division of Behavioral Health and Recover (DBHR)	One representative from the Health Care Authority's Division of Behavioral Health and Recovery
Davida Sharpe-Haygood, Washington Association of Colleges for Teacher Education (WACTE)	One higher educational faculty member with expertise in SEL
Monika Schuller, Washington Education Association (WEA)	One currently employed K–12 educator
Dr. Kathi Weight, Washington Association of School Administrators (WASA); Superintendent of Steilacoom Historical School District	One currently employed K–12 administrator
Emily Santiago, Washington Association of School Psychologists (WSASP)	One school psychologist
Therssa Warren, Washington Association of School Social Workers (WASSW)	One school social worker
Jenny Morgan, Washington School Counselors Association (WSCA)	One school counselor
Lauren MacDonald, Washington Education Association (WEA)	One school counselor

Kris Harper, School Nurse Organization of Washington (SNOW); Bethel School District	One school nurse
Ellie Lovde, Washington Mental Health Counselors Association (WMHCA)	One mental health counselor
Brandi Moore, Washington State Parent Teacher Association (WSPTA); Arlington School District	One representative from a school parent organization
Jay Tyus, Superintendent, Wilbur and Creston Cooperative School Districts	One member from a rural school district
Mona Johnson, Washington Association of Educational Service Districts (AESD)	One representative from the educational service districts
Maddy Vonhoff, Committee for Children	One representative from a coalition of members who educate about and advocate for SEL and skill development
Sala Sataraka, Schools Out Washington	One representative from a statewide expanded learning opportunities intermediary
Nick Yoder, National University	One representative from a nonprofit organization with expertise in developing social-emotional curricula
Shelley Barker, Washington School Principals' Education Foundation (WSPEF)	One representative from a foundation that supports SEL
Radu Smintina, Youth Development Strategy Roundtable	One representative from a coalition of youth-serving organizations working together to improve outcomes for young people

Co-Chairs of the Committee

- Davida Sharpe-Haygood, WACTE
- Jay Tyus, Superintendent, Wilbur and Creston Cooperative School Districts

CONCLUSION & NEXT STEPS

The Committee recognizes that the precarious state of current affairs, including limited state and local budgets, possible federal funding cuts, and threats to long-established civil rights make for an uncertain future. The Committee will stay committed to its charge of promoting and expanding SEL across Washington's K–12 public schools in a manner that is equitable, culturally responsive, and grounded in the needs of the whole child. Looking ahead, the Committee has identified several priority areas for future work that reflect its ongoing commitment to advancing equitable and effective SEL across Washington:

- If funded, following the completion of the landscape scan, the Committee will review and analyze the resulting data to inform ongoing policy and practice decisions.
- If funded, the Committee will provide guidance and insight to OSPI in the development of the statewide school climate survey, ensuring that the tool reflects equity-centered and community-informed principles.
- The Committee will support the annual update of the SEL Online Module to ensure that resources remain current and relevant for educators across Washington.
- The Committee will continue its work on the School District SEL Implementation Needs Assessment, advancing a tool that supports districts in identifying strengths and areas for growth in their SEL implementation.
- The Committee will continue gathering feedback from community partners on SEL topics and needs, ensuring that the voices of those closest to students remain central to the work going forward.

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

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The Committee would also like to thank Committee members Monika Schuller and Jay Tyus, along with Tana Petersen, for their participation in the educator panel.

OSPI extends its sincere gratitude to all members who generously volunteer their time, expertise, and insight to advance the work of the Committee.

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APPENDICES

Appendix A: SEL Framework

This report references Washington’s SEL Framework, which outlines a shared, statewide approach to implementing SEL at the district and school level. The SEL framework, which is part of the Washington State Social Emotional Learning Implementation Guide, offers this shared vision through four guiding principles and three essential elements for successful SEL implementation. The framework commits to four guiding principles:

- Equity: Ensure each child receives what they need to develop to their full academic and social potential.
- Cultural Responsiveness: Draw upon students’ unique strengths and experiences while orienting learning in relation to individuals’ cultural context.
- Universal Design: Provide a framework to improve and optimize teaching and learning for all people by removing barriers in the curriculum.
- Trauma-Informed Practices: Recognize the unique strengths and challenges of children and youth due to the adversities they face.⁸

The framework has the following three essential elements:

1. Create conditions to support students’ SEL by creating a positive school climate and culture; linking SEL to existing school policies and practices; focusing on classroom-based approaches that promote SEL; selecting and implementing evidence-based SEL practices; and using data for continuous improvement.
2. Collaborate with families, communities, and expanded learning opportunity providers in the design, implementation, and review of local plans to integrate SEL in schools and communities.
3. Build adult capacity and adult SEL competencies that can be demonstrated and modeled. Creating a SEL leadership team, developing a vision statement, conducting a needs and readiness assessment, and creating an implementation plan will ensure that professional learning is targeted, and educators can support the needs of all students.

⁸ Office of Superintendent of Public Instruction (OSPI). (2023). *Washington State Social Emotional Learning Implementation Guide*. Retrieved from https://ospi.k12.wa.us/sites/default/files/2023-12/washingtonsel_implementationguide_2023final_.pdf

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