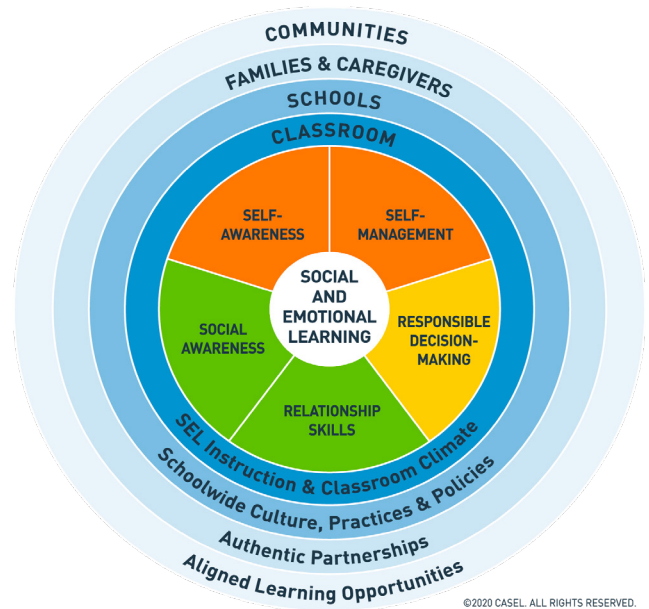# GROUP REFLECTION PROTOCOL FOR SEL

CASEL'S SEL FRAMEWORK: DISCUSSING THE CORE COMPETENCIES AND WHERE THEY ARE PROMOTED

In 2020, CASEL updated the most widely recognized definition and framework for social and emotional learning (SEL). The updates reflect current science on learning and development, and place additional emphasis on how SEL can advance educational equity and excellence.

The reflection protocol can help you facilitate a discussion on the updated SEL framework in small or large groups. The prompts allow you to think about what CASEL's updated SEL framework means for implementation efforts in your school, district, or other setting.

This is a companion tool to CASEL's SEL Framework (also available in Spanish).

Defining Social and Emotional Learning (SEL)

Examine the definition of SEL and work to define what's important for advancing educational equity and excellence in your local context. Use the prompts to make connections to personal and collective goals for your community.

After reading page 1 of CASEL's SEL Framework:

1. **Reflect individually:** What is a word or phrase that you really connect to? Why?

2. Discuss your individual reflections with **partners or in small groups** to give everyone the opportunity to share their reflections. Share one word or phrase you are connecting to and why you chose it.

3. Come back together for a **whole group discussion** and ask:

   • What stands out as very important as you read and discuss this definition?

   • How does SEL connect with what you believe is important for students, adults, schools, and/or communities?

Learn more: casel.org

The CASEL 5: Core Competence Areas

CASEL's framework highlights the importance of enhancing the social and emotional competence of all young people and adults. This knowledge, these skills, and these attitudes can be taught and applied across developmental stages and cultural contexts toward the SEL vision and goals of your community. Dive deeper into the descriptions and illustrative examples to discuss how they are present in your context and how they can be amplified.

After reading page 2 of CASEL's SEL Framework:

1. **Reflect individually:**

   • Circle any word or phrase that is unclear to you or that you have questions about.

   • Underline any word or phrase that stands out as a priority for your school, district, community, or organization.

2. Discuss your individual reflections in **partners/small groups**:

   If your group is smaller than 10:

   • Share out any circled words/phrases that are unclear to you or that you have questions about.

     ○ Discuss what this word/phrase might mean.

     ○ Ask, "What might we see, hear, or experience if this word/phrase was fully present in a classroom, school, community setting, or workplace?"

   • Share out any underlined words/phrases that stand out as a priority.

     ○ What are some reasons this would be valued by young people and adults in our school, district, state, community, or organization?

     ○ How is this currently being prioritized and/or supported in our classrooms, schools, workplaces, and youth-serving/community settings?

     ○ How does this priority connect to the goal of advancing educational equity and excellence?

     ○ What would be important to focus on to move this forward?

   If your group is larger than 10:

   • Set up five posters or digital notetaking spaces for each of the five competencies. Divide each into two columns: QUESTIONS and PRIORITIES

   • Ask participants to:

     ○ Write any circled words/phrases on a note ("sticky note" or the virtual equivalent) and put it under Questions on the corresponding poster.

SELF-AWARENESS

QUESTIONS | PRIORITIES

Options: Jamboard, Google Slides, Padlet, A Web Whiteboard

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The CASEL 5: Core Competence Areas (continued)

- ○ Write any underlined words/phrases on a note and put it under Priorities on the corresponding poster.

- Break into discussion groups—one for each poster. Ask each group to choose a notetaker and a spokesperson to share with the full group.

  - ○ Discuss words/phrases in the Questions column: What does this word/phrase mean? What might we see, hear, or experience if this word/phrase was fully present in a classroom, school, community setting, or workplace?

  - ○ Discuss words/phrases in the Priorities column: What are some reasons this would be valued by young people and adults in our school/district/state/community/organization? How is this currently being prioritized and/or supported in our classrooms, schools, workplaces, and youth-serving/community settings? How does this priority connect to the goal of advancing educational equity and excellence? What would be important to focus on to move this forward?

The Key Settings

Authentic partnerships among schools, families, and communities are critical to creating equitable learning environments, supportive relationships, and coordinated practices to truly promote SEL across all the settings where students live and learn. Further contextualize your discussion by envisioning SEL in action across local settings and partnerships.

After reading pages 3 and 4 of CASEL's SEL Framework:

1. **In partners/small groups,** identify what actions you could take to better integrate and promote SEL across key settings with the prompts below. Record your group's recommendations to share out.
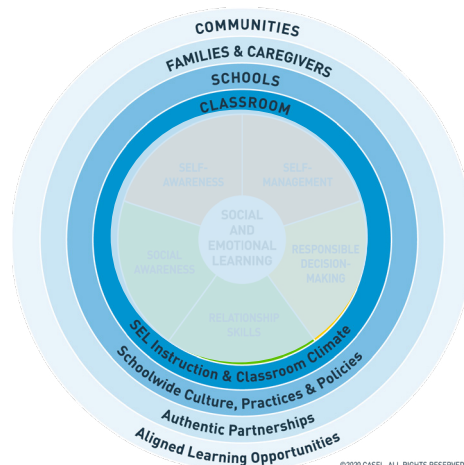
- Classroom setting: Discuss what might you see, hear, or experience in a classroom that fully integrates and promotes SEL.

  - ○ What are we doing now in classrooms that exemplifies SEL?

  - ○ What would support us to move further in this direction?

- School setting: Discuss what impacts/outcomes you would hope to see for the climate, culture, practices, and policies of a school that is working to integrate and promote SEL.

  - ○ What are we doing already to drive toward these impacts and outcomes?

  - ○ Where do we see a mismatch between current schoolwide practices and our commitment to SEL?

Learn more: casel.org

The Key Settings (continued)

- Families and caregivers: Discuss in what ways authentic partnerships with families and caregivers are critical to the success of SEL.
  - What are some examples of ways families are genuinely integral to our school, organization, or workplace?
  - What are some examples that demonstrate families are not yet fully embraced as authentic and valued partners in our school, organization, or workplace?

- Community setting: Discuss what SEL-related roles community partners currently play in your school, organization, or workplace?
  - What other SEL-related ideas do you have for collaborative community partnerships, and how would they be mutually beneficial?

- How can we better coordinate and align SEL efforts across our classroom, school, family, and community settings?

Identifying Next Steps

Reconvene as a **whole group**. Have each small group share and explain their recommendation(s). Collect all recommendations on poster paper or a digital notetaking space where all can view them. Group similar recommendations together.

Ask all participants to respond to a final question:

- Given our discussion and the recommended actions shared today, what is our best next step to start or improve SEL implementation in our community?

Note: If you are building or expanding an SEL team, consider an item to recruit new members such as "Check here if you are interested in joining meetings to build out and implement an SEL action plan."

Learn more about implementing high-quality SEL

After engaging in this exercise to build an understanding of CASEL's SEL definition and framework, a next step might be to begin or improve SEL implementation in your school or district.

Learn the process for systemic SEL implementation and access practical guidance and tools in CASEL's Guide to Schoolwide SEL for schools or the District Resource Center for school districts.

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