

## Appendix A: Addressing the IL Social and Emotional Learning Standards in Educator Preparation Programs

The dual purpose of this appendix is to provide some responses to Frequently Asked Questions (FAQ) and to help illustrate *how* social and emotional learning goals may be integrated within educator preparation programs. **Key to successful integration is:**

- **Surveying what relevant social and emotional content already exists within the curriculum, in order to determine how it could be enhanced and/or expanded across various learning venues; and**
- **Taking advantage of natural opportunities to teach and promote the further development of social and emotional competencies in future educators.**

Prior to accomplishing these objectives, curriculum planners need to identify what social and emotional learning goals should be taught. To begin this process, program developers should reference the Illinois Social and Emotional Learning (SEL) Standards. As explained in the accompanying document, the Illinois SEL Goals describe age-appropriate competencies related to self-awareness and self-management skills; social awareness and interpersonal skills; and decision-making skills and responsible behaviors. The Illinois SEL Goals and related learning standards are:

### **Goal 1: Develop self-awareness and self-management skills to achieve school and life success.**

Learning Standard A: Identify and manage one's emotions and behavior.

Learning Standard B: Recognize personal qualities and external supports.

Learning Standard C: Demonstrate skills related to achieving personal and academic goals.

### **Goal 2: Use social-awareness and interpersonal skills to establish and maintain positive relationships.**

Learning Standard A: Recognize the feelings and perspectives of others.

Learning Standard B: Recognize individual and group similarities and differences.

Learning Standard C: Use communication and social skills to interact effectively with others.

Learning Standard D: Demonstrate an ability to prevent, manage, and resolve interpersonal conflicts in constructive ways.

### **Goal 3: Demonstrate decision-making skills and responsible behaviors in personal, school, and community contexts.**

Learning Standard A: Consider ethical, safety, and societal factors in making decisions.

Learning Standard B: Apply decision-making skills to deal responsibly with daily academic and social situations.

Learning Standard C: Contribute to the well-being of one's school and community.

To learn more about the goals of social and emotional learning and view the complete Illinois SEL Goals, including age-level distinctions and more specific sub-learning standards, curriculum planners may visit the following Illinois State Board of Education webpage: [http://www.isbe.net/ils/social\\_emotional/standards.htm](http://www.isbe.net/ils/social_emotional/standards.htm).

### ***Section 1: What social and emotional learning goals should be taught?***

Once curriculum designers for educator preparation programs have conducted a thorough review of the Illinois SEL Goals, they may extrapolate the corresponding knowledge, skills, and attitudes required for educators to support SEL Goal development in students. By determining what social and emotional skills students need to thrive personally and professionally, program developers can identify the teacher qualifications that are necessary to teach, facilitate, and model these skills. The competencies to be developed in educator candidates may be prioritized according to several criteria, including but not limited to:

- What social and emotional competencies align and contribute to the stated mission, vision, philosophies, and/or goals of the teacher preparation program?
- What social and emotional knowledge, skills, and attitudes equip educators to help students best prepare for successful endeavors now and in the future?
- What social and emotional competencies complement curricular goals, including teacher competency related to academic content standards?

What social and emotional knowledge, skills, and attitudes would most enhance an educator's professional experience and school climate? The prioritization of SEL goals and learning standards may also be related to various conceptual or content topics emphasized within the existing educator preparation program. For instance, educator efforts to increase **engagement** may relate closely to the promotion of SEL Goal 1 in relation to self-awareness and self-management and Illinois SEL Goal 2 which emphasizes social interactions. Other examples of concepts supporting SEL Goals include but are not limited to:

- Multi-tiered Systems of Support
- Child Development
- Conditions for Learning
- Collaborative Learning
- Student-Teacher Interactions
- Diversity and Equity Issues
- Barriers to Learning
- Classroom Management/Discipline
- Restorative Practices

Once priority concepts or content are established, curriculum planners may chart the knowledge and skills educators would need to foster students' development of the specific Illinois SEL Learning Standards related to each priority concept.

For example, curriculum planners may choose to explicitly focus on the competencies educators would need to promote SEL Goal 2, Learning Standard C: “Use communication and social skills to interact effectively with others,” because a) it aligns with the program premise that learning is best supported within learning communities, b) it aligns with the program’s emphasis on promoting college and career readiness skills in students, and/or c) it is a skill area in which increased competency would not only benefit students, but would benefit professionals in their work settings as well.

Corresponding knowledge and skills related to educator practices may then be identified.

For instance:

SEL Standard C:	Educator Knowledge:	Educator Skills:
“Use communication and social skills to interact effectively with others.”	Child development stages in relation to social interactions	Use of respectful language in interactions with others
	Strategies to create optimal conditions for student interaction and collaboration	Creation of norms when working within a collaborative pair or group
	Etc.	Etc.

## ***Section 2: Who should be included in social and emotional learning capacity building?***

Once target concepts and skills are identified, the educator skills necessary to promote them can be mapped throughout the curriculum for educational professional candidates. The scope of social and emotional capacity-building must extend across professional educator roles in order to ensure consistency in awareness, skill development, and modeling for students. Therefore, the infusion of social and emotional learning goals into educator preparatory programs should span courses for future administrators, teachers, and pupil support personnel. Shared themes and common language should blanket all levels of professional preparation, complemented by instructional attention to the unique contextual considerations of each professional position.

### **Future Administrators**

The promotion of social and emotional learning in schools is most effective if prioritized by administrative leaders at the system-level and communicated as clear expectations of all professionals within a school building. In order to prepare future administrators as leaders in this arena, curriculum developers should be intentional in their design.

For example, if school safety has been identified as a priority concept, program developers might consider building administrators’ capacity related to establishing discipline policies that promote all three SEL Goals. For instance, some administrator competencies under Goal 1 may include:

<b>SEL Standard A:</b>	<b>Educator Knowledge:</b>	<b>Educator Skills:</b>
"Identify and manage one's emotions and behavior."	Child development stages in relation to self-awareness and management	Use of developmentally appropriate discipline measures
	Strategies to effectively support students as they process the emotions and inappropriate behavior(s) that resulted in the disciplinary action	Creation of a discipline structure that includes social and emotional instruction and/or reflection related to the inappropriate behavior
	Etc.	Etc.

### Future Teachers

Once systemic focus is established, the successful incorporation of social and emotional learning is most dependent on the intentional actions of professionals who interact directly with students throughout the school day. Thus, teachers are primarily poised to transfer SEL skill-building through both modeling and instruction that explicitly incorporates SEL skill-building in an integrated approach with academic curriculum.

For example, if a higher education program identifies cognitive engagement as a priority concept, curriculum developers will need to consider the knowledge and skill sets future teachers will need to develop in order to promote this type of engagement. Some competencies under Goal 1 may include:

<b>SEL Standard C:</b>	<b>Educator Knowledge:</b>	<b>Educator Skills:</b>
"Demonstrate skills related to achieving personal and academic goals."	Child development stages in relation to self-awareness and management	Use of developmentally appropriate expectations
	Strategies used to set and work toward goals	Demonstration of how to identify areas for improvement, write a measureable goal, break it down into steps, identify obstacles, identify resources, and monitor progress
	Etc.	Etc.

## Future Pupil Support Personnel

In addition, pupil support personnel (counselors, social workers, psychologists, etc.) must not be overlooked as key contributors to this shared effort. These professionals can play a key role in modeling and teaching SEL competencies for students as they may have enhanced training and experience working with students experiencing social and emotional challenges. For these same reasons, pupil support personnel may also be utilized as a resource informing professional development efforts to increase and monitor SEL awareness and knowledge, skills, and attitudes among staff. Pupil support professionals may be utilized as staff mentors in this regard.

For example, one common barrier to learning is truancy. Pupil support personnel are often asked to develop programming to reduce truancy. Students are truant from school for various reasons; however, developing social and emotional skills can significantly reduce absenteeism. If truancy is a priority concept, curriculum developers might consider building pupil support personnel's capacity to provide interventions that promote the development of all 3 SEL goals. For instance, the knowledge and skills that pupil support personnel may need to support Illinois SEL Goal 3 include:

<b>SEL Standard B:</b>	<b>Educator Knowledge:</b>	<b>Educator Skills:</b>
"Apply decision-making skills to deal responsibly with daily academic and social situations."	Decision making strategies	Model decision making strategies
	Societal pressures that interfere with healthy decision making	Facilitation of the identification of societal pressures that interfere with healthy decision making
	Community resources to support healthy decision making	Facilitation of the identification of community resources to support healthy decision making
	Etc.	Etc.

### ***Section 3: How can social and emotional learning be integrated into curricular planning?***

Upon identifying target concepts and audiences, curricular design teams may survey what relevant social and emotional content already exists within the curriculum, in order to determine how this could be enhanced and/or expanded across various learning venues. Certainly, courses in traditional formats may be enhanced or created to ensure conceptual emphasis on topics related to social and emotional learning. Priority conceptual themes may comprise entire courses or series of courses, and/or be integrated as conceptual threads throughout multiple courses.

Alternative course formats also pose a range of possibilities. For instance, courses that are completely online or blend online and face-to face components may provide a distinct

opportunity for highlighting the unique and contemporarily significant social and emotional considerations related to teaching and learning in virtual environments.

Below is an example of instructional strategies that promote a skill in various learning venues:

SEL Standard: “Use communication and social skills to interact effectively with others.”	Face to face course:	Online/blended course:	Field experience:
	Provide opportunities for students to practice using appropriate verbal and nonverbal communication in group discussion.	Provide opportunities for students to practice providing written feedback that is constructive in tone and content in an online discussion forum.	Provide opportunities for students to practice providing constructive feedback both verbally and in written form in regard to student work.
	Etc.	Etc.	Etc.

As candidates advance through a progression of diverse learning experiences, they should also build in scope and content related to social and emotional learning. Infusion in all stages of the educator candidate’s preparation supports an increasing development of social and emotional competencies in line with other professional skills and provides opportunity to apply what is learned in real-life field scenarios. These first-hand field assignments, progressing from early observations to student-teaching or internship experiences, should contain evaluative opportunities focused on challenges and successes related to the promotion of SEL goals and reduction of barriers to learning. Student teachers may be required, for instance, to clearly articulate attempted strategies and lessons learned in this regard.

In addition, there are numerous opportunities for curriculum developers to strategically facilitate activities that can address multiple SEL Standards and simultaneously develop knowledge and skills in other content areas. For example, to address the ELA Common Core Standards a professor might assign groups of students to review a research study on the impact of teachers’ cultural biases on student learning. Prior to the assignment, the professor establishes, with the class, norms for group work (SEL Goal 2, Standard C). Then, students are not only asked to “delineate and evaluate the argument and specific claims in a text, including the validity of the reasoning as well as the relevance and sufficiency of the evidence” (an ELA Common Core Anchor Standard for Reading), but to self assess their own biases (SEL Goal 1, Standard B and Illinois Professional Teaching Standards, Teaching Diverse Students, Knowledge Indicators- the competent teacher F), develop related individual and group learning goals (SEL Goal 1, Standard C) and discuss professional learning opportunities with the group (SEL Goal 1, Standard B). The activity can expand further and evolve into a student-led learning community, giving the future teachers opportunities to practice multiple standards across ELA and SEL. It is important to note, that the professor brings explicit attention to each activity and the various standards being addressed prior to the development of a student-led learning community.

Last, research supports the premise that students best develop social and emotional knowledge and skills in a school context when those same competencies are consistently and intentionally modeled by teachers, administrators, and pupil support personnel. The same truth is evident on the post-secondary level. Thus, as the cultivation of SEL skills in pre-K through 12<sup>th</sup>-grade students is enriched by the modeling of SEL competencies by their educators, the cultivation of



SEL skills in educator candidates is similarly enriched by the modeling of SEL competencies by their professors.

Skills educator candidates may practice in order to explicitly model for students include:

- Seeking feedback
- Journaling thoughts and reflections
- Setting goals and reviewing progress
- Breaking projects into manageable pieces
- Planning and prioritizing
- Scheduling specific times for specific purposes
- Managing stress
- Creating, monitoring and updating a to do list
- Asking for help when needed
- Using choice words to promote autonomy, connectedness, and confidence
- Active listening
- Collaborating with peers
- Consulting with others for an informed decision

Considering again the example of collaboration skills, professors can best model the skills required for successful collaborative efforts by effectively and openly collaborating with their colleagues as well as their students. The significance placed on collaborative approaches, observable in instructional emphasis and practical application, then transfers with newly certified educators into their professional environments. Here, the collaborative skills gained can be used to simultaneously facilitate positive professional collaborations within schools and provide a perceptible model to be emulated by students. With these and other skills sets, the same knowledge and skills practiced among adults in the school environment should be articulated directly for students, so that they may practice these skills with both their peers and teachers in their academic and social pursuits.

### ***In Conclusion***

Although this appendix provided some strategies and guiding questions to assist program developers with the integration of the Illinois Social and Emotional Learning Standards into educator preparation programs, it is important to note that there are multiple ways in which institutions of higher education can meet the mandate outlined in Part 25, Section 25.115 (Licensure). Regardless, curriculum designers should ensure that the chosen strategies fit the unique context of the institution. In addition, curriculum designers and faculty should make a concerted effort to: 1) examine the extent to which their programming is already addressing the Illinois SEL Standards in order to build upon existing efforts 2) look for natural opportunities in which social and emotional learning can be promoted throughout coursework and the environment and 3) engage in collegial dialogue around the integration of the Illinois SEL Standards into educator preparation programs.