

Instruction

Student Social and Emotional Development ¹

Social and Emotional Learning (SEL) is defined as the process through which students enhance their ability to integrate thinking, feeling, and behaving to achieve important life tasks. Students competent in SEL are able to recognize and manage their emotions, establish healthy relationships, set positive goals, meet personal and social needs, and make responsible and ethical decisions. ²

The Superintendent shall incorporate SEL into the District's curriculum and other educational programs consistent with the District's mission and the goals and benchmarks of the Ill. Learning Standards.³ The Ill. Learning Standards include three goals for students: ⁴

1. Develop self-awareness and self-management skills to achieve school and life success.
2. Use social awareness and interpersonal skills to establish and maintain positive relationships.
3. Demonstrate decision-making skills and responsible behaviors in personal, school, and community contexts.

The incorporation of SEL objectives into the District's curriculum and other educational programs may include but is not limited to: ⁵

1. Classroom and school-wide programming to foster a safe, supportive learning environment where students feel respected and valued. This may include incorporating scientifically based, age- and culturally appropriate classroom instruction, and District-wide and school-wide strategies that teach SEL skills, promote optimal mental health, and prevent risk behaviors for all students. ⁶
2. Ongoing staff professional development and support to promote students' SEL development. ⁷
3. Parent/Guardian and family involvement to promote students' SEL development. This may include providing parents/guardians and families with learning opportunities related to the importance of their children's optimal SEL development and ways to enhance it. ⁸

¹ State law requires this subject matter be covered by policy. 405 ILCS 49/15(b).

² This text paraphrases the definition in the Ill. Children's Mental Health Partnership's 2005 Strategic Plan for Building a Comprehensive Children's Mental Health System in Illinois, pg. 73, Appendix C, starting at pg. 69. [The Children's Mental Health Partnership's annual reports are available at: https://dph.illinois.gov/topics-services/life-stages-populations/maternal-child-family-health-services/child-health/icmhp.html.](https://dph.illinois.gov/topics-services/life-stages-populations/maternal-child-family-health-services/child-health/icmhp.html)

³ Required by the Children's Mental Health Act, 405 ILCS 49/1 et seq. ISBE incorporated social and emotional development standards into the Ill. Learning Standards. For more information see: www.isbe.net/sel. School social workers may implement a continuum of social and emotional education programs and services in accordance with students' needs. 405 ILCS 49/15(b).

⁴ The goals, along with their benchmarks, performance descriptors and indicators are available at the link in f/n 3, above.

⁵ The objectives are a matter of local school board discretion. A board may replace the sample objectives with its own local objectives. This sample policy lists the ISBE's SEL goals found on ISBE's website, cited in f/n 3, above.

⁶ 20 ILCS 1705/76 requires the Ill. Dept. of Human Services (IDHS) to create and maintain an online **mental health database and resource** page on its website with mental health resources to: (1) assist school social workers, school counselors, parents, teachers, and school support personnel with the goal of connecting them with mental health resources related to bullying and school shootings; and (2) encourage information sharing among educational administrators, school security personnel, and school resource officers. See the **IDHS School Based Mental Health Database** at: www.dhs.state.il.us/page.aspx?item=118331.

20 ILCS 1705/76.2, added by P.A. 103-222, requires IDHS to partner with ISBE to provide technical assistance for the provision of mental health care for students during school days.

105 ILCS 5/27-1080, added by P.A. 103-764 and renumbered by P.A. 104-391, allows districts to provide students with at least 20 minutes per week of *relaxation activities* to enhance students' mental and physical health as part of the school day. *Relaxation activities* may include mindful-based movements, yoga, stretching, meditation, breathing exercises, guided relaxation techniques, quiet time, walking, in-person conversation, and other stress-relieving activities. *Relaxation activities* may take place during a P.E. class, social emotional learning class, or student-support or advisory class or as a part of another similar class.

⁷ See SEL resources to support instruction of the Ill. Learning Standards at: <https://ilclassroomtech.weebly.com/social-emotional-learning.html>. See professional development resources at: <https://casel.org/state-resource-center/professional-development/#state-resource-center-professional-development>.

⁸ The Ill. Children's Mental Health Partnership provides resources for youth, caregivers, and professionals. See f/n 2, above.

4. Community partnerships to promote students’ SEL development. This may include establishing partnerships with diverse community agencies and organizations to assure a coordinated approach to addressing children’s mental health and SEL development.
5. Early identification and intervention to enhance students’ school readiness, academic success, and use of good citizenship skills. This may include development of a system and procedures for periodic and universal screening, assessment, and early intervention for students who have significant risk factors for social, emotional, or mental health conditions that impact learning.⁹
6. Treatment to prevent or minimize mental health conditions in students. This may include building and strengthening referral and follow-up procedures for providing effective clinical services for students with social, emotional, and mental health conditions¹⁰ that impact learning. This may include student and family support services, school-based behavioral health services, and school-community linked services and supports.
7. Assessment and accountability for teaching SEL skills to all students. This may include implementation of a process to assess and report baseline information and ongoing progress about school climate, students’ social and emotional development, and academic performance.¹¹

LEGAL REF.: **Children’s Mental Health Act**, 405 ILCS 49/, **Children’s Mental Health Act**.

CROSS REF.: 1:30 (School District Philosophy), 6:10 (Educational Philosophy and Objectives), 6:40 (Curriculum Development), 6:60 (Curriculum Content), 6:270 (Guidance and Counseling Program), 7:100 (Health, Eye, and Dental Examinations; Immunizations; and Exclusion of Students), 7:180 (Prevention of and Response to Bullying, Intimidation, and Harassment), 7:250 (Student Support Services)

20 ILCS 1705/11.4, added by P.A. 103-546, requires IDHS to create and maintain an online care portal to serve as a central resource for families with children who have significant and complex behavioral health needs. See **the care portal, Behavioral Health Care and Ongoing Navigation (BEACON)**, at: <https://beacon.illinois.gov/>. IDHS, in coordination with various state agencies, is to develop training and communication for school districts, hospital social workers, and system partners to demonstrate how individuals can assist a family seeking youth behavioral health services.

⁹ Information about Early Childhood Mental Health Consultation is available at: www.iecmhc.org/.

¹⁰ 305 ILCS 5/5-5.23(g) created the *Family Support Program* (FSP) in the Ill. Dept. of Healthcare and Family Services. FSP is a restructure of the former Individual Care Grant program. Its purpose is to enable early treatment of youth, emerging adults, and transition-age adults with a serious mental illness or serious emotional disturbance. Eligibility criterion for FSPs are established at 89 Ill. Adm. Code Part 139.

¹¹ For information on this objective, see ISBE’s Comprehensive System of Learning Supports at: www.isbe.net/Pages/Learning-Supports.aspx. Information about school climate is available from ISBE at: www.isbe.net/Pages/School-Climate.aspx.