

NY Social Emotional Learning Benchmarks - Equity Revisions

Research suggests that student learning benchmarks (or standards) may increase the likelihood that students will be fully and authentically engaged in their own social and emotional learning, be more connected to school, and become more empowered learners.

In 2018, the School Climate and Student Engagement Workgroup of the New York State Safe Schools Task Force identified goals to guide SEL benchmarks for New York State schools. Those original goals provided the foundation for the equity-centered revisions found in this updated set of benchmarks. This update aligns the social emotional learning benchmarks with the New York State Education Department's (NYSED's) [Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion Framework and Policy Statement](#), NYSED's [Culturally Responsive-Sustaining Education Framework](#), NYSED's [Civic Readiness Initiative](#), and Learning for Justice's [Social Justice Standards](#).¹

New York State Social Emotional Learning Goals²

- 1. Young people develop a self-awareness that nurtures and affirms a strong sense of identity, informs decisions about their actions, and builds a sense of agency.**
- 2. Young people use social awareness and interpersonal skills to establish, navigate, and maintain mutually supportive relationships with individuals and groups that nurture a strong sense of belonging.**
- 3. Young people demonstrate intentional decision-making skills and behaviors that consider social, emotional, and physical safety and well-being in personal, school, and community contexts.**

These goals are further developed with indicators recommended for voluntary use at the early elementary (K-2), late elementary (3-5), middle school (6-8), early high school (9-10), and late high school (11-12) levels. Districts and schools are encouraged to be intentional in their sequential development of competencies and skills within these developmental bands. Indicators within each developmental band are labeled a, b, and sometimes c for easy identification, but may happen in any order for implementation. It is anticipated that learners will continue to practice and develop skills established in earlier developmental bands throughout their lives. Adult indicators are provided first, prior to early elementary, because strong adult SEL competencies among all adults in the school community provide the foundation for young people's competency development. These indicators are meant to provide guidance to adults around what skills and abilities to focus on teaching and fostering throughout a young person's developmental progression. It is anticipated that students in the earlier grade bands will need more intensive support in learning the competencies, and that students in the later grade bands will learn with increasing independence; however, the level of support necessary for success for each student within each grade band will vary widely. With all benchmarks, it is important to recognize that developmental bands are suggestions and should be adjusted for individual students (e.g., those with neurodiversities). Since SEL occurs explicitly and informally across multiple contexts in the classroom and school community, it is not anticipated that every adult in the school system will address every indicator with every student. This necessitates collaborative planning to ensure all indicators are addressed for all students. The indicators are not meant to be used for diagnostic purposes, to grade student performance, or as a justification for exclusionary or punitive practices.

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¹ Learning for Justice (formerly Teaching Tolerance) (2018). [Social Justice Standards: The Teaching Tolerance Anti-Bias Framework](#). Southern Poverty Law Center.

² Goal 1 aligns with self-awareness and self-management in the Collaborative for Academic, Social, and Emotional Learning's (CASEL's) Core Competencies. Goal 2 aligns with social awareness and relationship skills. Goal 3 aligns with responsible decision-making.

Inherent to the social emotional learning goals is each goal's interrelationship with the others. While the goals separate intrapersonal, interpersonal, and decision-making skills, none exist without the influence of the others. While it may be practical to focus on individual elements of this document at times, it should ultimately be considered as a whole. Further, development and practice of social and emotional competencies is a lifelong and often non-linear process. While the benchmarks present a structural starting point for district and school integration of SEL, it should not be considered absolute. All students and adults will progress differently. Affirming and supporting these differences is part of our collective practice.

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Goal 1: Develop self-awareness that: nurtures and affirms a strong sense of identity, informs decisions about personal actions, and builds a sense of agency.

Knowing and understanding their emotions, interests, strengths and abilities, and having a strong sense of identity, including aspects rooted in culture, ethnicity, race, religion, gender identity or expression, ability, for example, and using those understandings to inform decisions about personal behaviors, habits, and routines. These skills enable young people to respond thoughtfully, affect change, cope with emotions, and motivate themselves to persevere when faced with personal, academic, or work-related obstacles. It is critical for caring adults to support young people in their efforts to establish and monitor their progress toward goals, whether personal, academic, career, or work-related. These social emotional competencies and mindsets, thought processes, and strategies can contribute to a strong sense of identity and promote self-confidence and agency as they provide a strong foundation for thriving in school and life.

Base Indicator Learners will be able to:	Adults Adults will develop and practice the abilities to:	Early Elementary (K-2) Adults will support, teach and model for young people as they learn to:	Late Elementary (3-5) Adults will support, teach and model for young people as they learn to:	Middle School (6-8) Adults will support, teach and model for young people as they learn to:	Early HS (9-10) Adults will support, teach and model for young people as they learn to:	Late HS (11-12) Adults will support, teach and model for young people as they learn to:
1A. Identify and understand their emotions and how emotions relate to their actions. Use understanding of emotions to inform actions.	1A.A. Experience complex emotions with awareness and understand how those emotions relate to their actions. 1A.B. Reflect and respond thoughtfully and intentionally when they experience intense emotions.	1A.1a. Recognize and name their basic emotions, where they feel them in their bodies, and describe situations that may evoke these emotions. 1A.1b. Identify their emotions and make choices to support their well-being, including simple self-regulation techniques such as belly breathing).	1A.2a. Identify a range of increasingly complex emotions and possible causes. 1A.2b. Identify and practice self-regulation skills and coping strategies that help them to express their emotions.	1A.3a. Identify the connections between their thoughts, feelings, and behaviors. 1A.3b. Apply self-regulation skills to effectively express emotions, including strong emotions.	1A.4a. Experience complex thoughts and feelings with awareness of their effect on mind and body. 1A.4b. Effectively express complex thoughts and emotions with trusted peers or adults.	1A.5a. Examine how the expression of their thoughts and emotions in different contexts affects self and others. 1A.5b. Express their emotions in increasingly complex situations to advocate for their needs and wants.

Base Indicator	Adults	Early Elementary (K-2)	Late Elementary (3-5)	Middle School (6-8)	Early HS (9-10)	Late HS (11-12)
<p>Learners will be able to:</p> <p>1B. Discover and reflect on aspects of personal and group identity such as characteristics, qualities, and interests, including those rooted in culture, ethnicity, race, religion, sexual orientation, gender identity or expression, ability, etc., and identify external resources that support or contribute to identity development.</p>	<p>Adults will develop and practice the abilities to:</p> <p>1B.A. Have a clear awareness of their own personal and group identities and how those reflect and shape their view of self and experience in the world. Reflect regularly on their identity as it shifts over time or in different contexts. Share their authentic self while creating space for those around them to feel safe and free to do the same.</p> <p>1B.B. Regularly access supports that contribute to their identity and know how to seek out and find additional resources when necessary.</p>	<p>1B.1a. Identify likes, dislikes, and personal strengths.</p> <p>1B.1b. Identify family, peer, school, and community assets that contribute to their identity in multiple groups and communities.</p>	<p>1B.2a. Describe aspects of their identity, such as strengths, skills, beliefs, qualities, opinions, and interests, including those reflective of membership in multiple identity groups.</p> <p>1B.2b. Explain how family members, peers, school personnel, and community members can support their identity development.</p>	<p>1B.3a. Identify how their personal strengths, challenges, experiences, and identities influence choices and outcomes.</p> <p>1B.3b. Explore and assess school and community assets and opportunities to identify resources that will contribute to their identity development.</p>	<p>1B.4a. Build their self-confidence through use of positive self-talk, using affirmations, practicing gratitude, and using personal strengths to problem-solve.</p> <p>1B.4b. Identify positive adult role models and support systems. Analyze if and how they contribute to identity development.</p>	<p>1B.5a. Implement a plan to build on a personal strength or address a challenge while honoring the value, authenticity, and dignity of self.</p> <p>1B.5b. Participate meaningfully and assess ways involvement in their community can support identity development and encourage aspirations.</p>

Base Indicator	Adults	Early Elementary (K-2)	Late Elementary (3-5)	Middle School (6-8)	Early HS (9-10)	Late HS (11-12)
<p>Learners will be able to:</p> <p>1C. Demonstrate skills related to setting and working toward personal and academic goals.</p>	<p>Adults will develop and practice the abilities to:</p> <p>1C.A. Have clear personal and professional goals and actively work toward meeting and/or sustaining them. Understand how regular self-care supports their goals.</p> <p>1C.B. Understand which strategies and coping mechanisms work best for them and apply them when dealing with obstacles.</p>	<p>Adults will support, teach and model for young people as they learn to:</p> <p>1C.1a. Identify and set short-term personal or academic goals.</p> <p>1C.1b. Describe how learning is helpful to their personal and academic growth.</p>	<p>Adults will support, teach and model for young people as they learn to:</p> <p>1C.2a. Set a short-term goal and begin working toward it.</p> <p>1C.2b. Identify steps in working toward a goal.</p>	<p>Adults will support, teach and model for young people as they learn to:</p> <p>1C.3a. Develop a plan and prioritize steps in working toward a goal.</p> <p>1C.3b. Monitor progress on a short-term goal and make necessary adjustments to their plan to work toward their goal.</p>	<p>Adults will support, teach and model for young people as they learn to:</p> <p>1C.4a. Develop one or more long-term goals and sequential action steps in working toward them.</p> <p>1C.4b. Monitor progress toward longer-term goals, identifying indicators that align with their priorities, and acknowledging barriers within and beyond their influence.</p>	<p>Adults will support, teach and model for young people as they learn to:</p> <p>1C.5a. Identify personal and systemic resources to mitigate barriers to achieving goals, including those related to oppression, power, and privilege.</p> <p>1C.5b. Identify and apply strategies intended to address their obstacles in working toward goals beyond high school.</p>



Goal 2: Use social awareness and interpersonal skills to establish and maintain mutually supportive relationships with individuals and groups and nurture a strong sense of belonging.

The ability to recognize and empathize with the thoughts, feelings, and perspectives of other individuals and groups, including ideas and perspectives that are different from their own, is central to forming and maintaining supportive relationships. Equally important to establishing strong and supportive relationships are strategies and skills that enable decisions regarding personal actions, communicating with other people or groups, and navigating conflicts with others, and considering contextual factors.

Base Indicator	Adults	Early Elementary (K-2)	Late Elementary (3-5)	Middle School (6-8)	Early HS (9-10)	Late HS (11-12)
<p>Learners will be able to:</p> <p>2A. Recognize and build empathy for the feelings and perspectives of others.</p>	<p>Adults will develop and practice the abilities to:</p> <p>2A.A. Recognize subtle and direct cues to understand and express concern for the feelings of students and adult peers.</p> <p>2A.B. Empathize with many others' perspectives, even when they disagree.</p>	<p>Adults will support, teach and model for young people as they learn to:</p> <p>2A.1a. Recognize that others may experience situations differently from them.</p> <p>2A.1b. Use listening skills to identify the feelings and perspectives of others.</p>	<p>Adults will support, teach and model for young people as they learn to:</p> <p>2A.2a. Identify verbal, physical, and situational cues that indicate how others may feel.</p> <p>2A.2b. Communicate perceived understanding of the expressed feelings and perspectives of others.</p>	<p>Adults will support, teach and model for young people as they learn to:</p> <p>2A.3a. Practice perspective-taking to infer understanding of others' thoughts, feelings, and intentions.</p> <p>2A.3b. Practice respectful curiosity to better understand others' lived experiences.</p>	<p>Adults will support, teach and model for young people as they learn to:</p> <p>2A.4a. Reflect on the similarities and differences between their own perspectives and the perspectives of others, including those from different identity groups.</p> <p>2A.4b. Use their communication skills and respectful curiosity to better understand others' feelings, perspectives, and life experiences.</p>	<p>Adults will support, teach and model for young people as they learn to:</p> <p>2A.5a. Demonstrate empathy for the unique lived experiences of others and their differing perspectives. Practice self-reflection to better understand self and others.</p> <p>2A.5b. Demonstrate empathy and communication skills to work collaboratively across lines of difference in groups.</p>

Base Indicator	Adults	Early Elementary (K-2)	Late Elementary (3-5)	Middle School (6-8)	Early HS (9-10)	Late HS (11-12)
<p>Learners will be able to:</p> <p>2B. Recognize and affirm individual identities as well as individual and group similarities and differences, including those rooted in culture, ethnicity, race, religion, sexual orientation, gender identity or expression, ability, etc.</p>	<p>Adults will develop and practice the abilities to:</p> <p>2B.A. Recognize and support the identities of students and adult peers. Recognize and respond intentionally to bullying, including microaggressions, impacting students or adult peers.</p> <p>2B.B. Create and facilitate safe spaces and/or affirming content that reflects the many identities in the community.</p>	<p>Adults will support, teach and model for young people as they learn to:</p> <p>2B.1a. Recognize their similarities to and differences from others.</p> <p>2B.1b. Express respectful curiosity about the history and lived experiences of others.</p> <p>2B.1c. Recognize bullying behaviors and practice safety and courage in seeking help from a trusted adult to respond.</p>	<p>Adults will support, teach and model for young people as they learn to:</p> <p>2B.2a. Identify contributions of individuals and social and cultural groups across lines of difference.</p> <p>2B.2b. Demonstrate ability to communicate across a variety of groups.</p> <p>2B.2c. Identify ways to respond when they experience or witness bullying and/or relational aggression, such as seeking support of a trusted adult, or demonstrating courage in speaking up for themselves or a peer.</p>	<p>Adults will support, teach and model for young people as they learn to:</p> <p>2B.3a. Exchange ideas and beliefs with individuals and social and cultural groups across lines of difference through open-minded communication.</p> <p>2B.3b. Demonstrate understanding of how culture or life experience shapes communication within and between identity groups.</p> <p>2B.3c. Reflect on the role of bias against individual, social, and cultural differences in bullying, stereotyping, prejudice, and microaggressions.</p>	<p>Adults will support, teach and model for young people as they learn to:</p> <p>2B.4a. Recognize traits of a variety of cultures, including the dominant culture and their own culture, and understand how to negotiate their own identity in multiple spaces.</p> <p>2B.4b. Demonstrate ability to build and sustain meaningful relationships with individuals from different social and cultural groups and speak up with courage when harm has occurred.</p> <p>2B.4c. Reflect on the individual, cultural, and systemic impacts of stereotyping, prejudice, and microaggressions.</p>	<p>Adults will support, teach and model for young people as they learn to:</p> <p>2B.5a. Identify community-building strategies that honor contributions and differences of individuals and social and cultural groups across lines of difference.</p> <p>2B.5b. Advocate for the well-being and rights of others and reflect on how the responsibility to stand up to exclusion, prejudice, and injustice contributes to the common good.</p> <p>2B.5c. Evaluate strategies for being kind to self and others, and for responding to stereotyping, prejudice, and microaggressions.</p>

Base Indicator	Adults	Early Elementary (K-2)	Late Elementary (3-5)	Middle School (6-8)	Early HS (9-10)	Late HS (11-12)
<p>Learners will be able to:</p> <p>2C: Apply a variety of communication and social skills to interact with individuals and groups across lines of difference.</p>	<p>Adults will develop and practice the abilities to:</p> <p>2C.A. Use direct and subtle methods of communication in their interactions with students, adult peers, and community.</p> <p>2C.B. Participate in regular and meaningful communication with students, adult peers, and community across lines of difference.</p>	<p>Adults will support, teach and model for young people as they learn to:</p> <p>2C.1a. Identify ways to interact with others that protect personal and collective safety and well-being, including establishing, maintaining, and respecting boundaries.</p> <p>2C.1b. Demonstrate adaptability in social contexts that consider community and personal well-being.</p>	<p>Adults will support, teach and model for young people as they learn to:</p> <p>2C.2a. Describe and practice approaches for developing and maintaining supportive relationships, including ways to respond to peer pressure.</p> <p>2C.2b. Engage in strategies to work effectively and cooperatively across lines of difference.</p>	<p>Adults will support, teach and model for young people as they learn to:</p> <p>2C.3a. Practice empathy in order to establish and maintain positive relationships with individuals and groups across lines of difference.</p> <p>2C.3b. Demonstrate cooperation and teamwork to promote group well-being and collective efficacy.</p>	<p>Adults will support, teach and model for young people as they learn to:</p> <p>2C.4a. Reflect on the ways requesting and providing support impacts a variety of relationships.</p> <p>2C.4b. Reflect on their roles, efforts, and experiences across lines of difference in groups.</p>	<p>Adults will support, teach and model for young people as they learn to:</p> <p>2C.5a. Reflect on the results of using communication and social skills in daily interactions with peers, teachers, and families and develop strategies to improve in areas that are challenging.</p> <p>2C.5b. Assess the impact of their participation in groups working to effect community change.</p>



Base Indicator	Adults	Early Elementary (K-2)	Late Elementary (3-5)	Middle School (6-8)	Early HS (9-10)	Late HS (11-12)
<p>Learners will be able to:</p> <p>2D. Demonstrate the ability to prevent, manage, or resolve conflicts, including those that involve injustice or are related to culture, ethnicity, race, religion, sexual orientation, gender identity or expression, ability, etc.</p>	<p>Adults will develop and practice the abilities to:</p> <p>2D.A. Use a variety of communication skills to prevent, manage, navigate, and/or resolve conflicts and support students and adult peers to do the same.</p> <p>2D.B. Respond immediately to conflicts that involve injustice or are related to culture, ethnicity, race, religion, gender identity or expression, ability, etc. to affirm student and adult peer identity, agency, and belonging.</p>	<p>Adults will support, teach and model for young people as they learn to:</p> <p>2D.1a. Identify opportunities, challenges, and conflicts commonly experienced by themselves and their peers.</p> <p>2D.1b. Communicate needs and wants clearly with peers and trusted adults, and practice approaches to navigating conflicts with adult support.</p>	<p>Adults will support, teach and model for young people as they learn to:</p> <p>2D.2a. Identify strategies for preventing, managing, or navigating interpersonal conflicts.</p> <p>2D.2b. Apply simple approaches to navigating conflicts.</p>	<p>Adults will support, teach and model for young people as they learn to:</p> <p>2D.3a. Describe potential causes and consequences of conflicts; recognizing that power and privilege impact relationships.</p> <p>2D.3b. Practice strategies for responding constructively to conflict and relational aggression.</p>	<p>Adults will support, teach and model for young people as they learn to:</p> <p>2D.4a. Analyze how communication strategies help to navigate conflicts.</p> <p>2D.4b. Apply conflict resolution skills to navigate individual and group relationships in a variety of contexts.</p>	<p>Adults will support, teach and model for young people as they learn to:</p> <p>2D.5a. Self-assess conflict-resolution skills and develop a plan to strengthen them.</p> <p>2D.5b. Practice using negotiation skills to reach solutions that value identities, relationships, and promote social justice.</p>

Goal 3: Demonstrate intentional decision-making skills and behaviors that consider social, emotional, and physical safety and well-being in personal, family, school, and community contexts.

The ability to make thoughtful and intentional decisions considering their individual and collective well-being is the foundation of an individual's participation in community. Each person needs the ability to solve problems by accurately defining issues and decisions to be made, generating multiple solutions, anticipating the outcomes of each, and having the ability to evaluate and learn from the outcomes of their decision making.

Base Indicator	Adults	Early Elementary (K-2)	Late Elementary (3-5)	Middle School (6-8)	Early HS (9-10)	Late HS (11-12)
<p>3A: Consider individual and collective social, emotional, and physical safety and well-being, as well as social context in making decisions.</p>	<p>3A.A. Make intentional decisions that consider and support the safety and well-being of themselves, students, and adult peers.</p> <p>3A.B. Consider how social context shapes situations and use that understanding to inform decision-making.</p>	<p>3A.1a. Explain how their actions impact self and others.</p> <p>3A.1b. Create, understand, and practice shared classroom expectations that support the well-being of self and others.</p>	<p>3A.2a. Demonstrate consideration for the safety and well-being of self and others.</p> <p>3A.2b. Demonstrate knowledge of how social expectations affect decision making and actions in multiple contexts.</p>	<p>3A.3a. Consider how curiosity, honesty, fairness, and compassion enable them to take the needs and wants of self and others into account when making decisions, including seeking help from an adult for a peer whose well-being may be endangered</p> <p>3A.3b. Analyze the sources and effects of school and societal rules, including those that cause or perpetuate injustice, and their impact on individuals and groups.</p>	<p>3A.4a. Demonstrate personal responsibility by making decisions that support the well-being of self and others.</p> <p>3A.4b. Evaluate how the expectations of different groups, including the expectations of those with social influence, power, and privilege, influence personal decisions and actions.</p>	<p>3A.5a. Apply critical thinking skills to evaluate social context and systems to inform decisions that support the well-being of self and others.</p> <p>3A.5b. Examine how societal expectations shape decisions and actions and vary across groups and cultures.</p>

Base Indicator	Adults	Early Elementary (K-2)	Late Elementary (3-5)	Middle School (6-8)	Early HS (9-10)	Late HS (11-12)
<p>Learners will be able to:</p> <p>3B: Apply decision making skills to influence outcomes and strengthen agency in social and academic life.</p>	<p>Adults will develop and practice the abilities to:</p> <p>3B.A. Make decisions that support and improve outcomes for themselves, students, and adult peers.</p> <p>3B.B. Make decisions, including about the spaces they create and facilitate, that create opportunity for student agency.</p>	<p>Adults will support, teach and model for young people as they learn to:</p> <p>3B.1a. Identify a range of decisions that they make at school and at home and the effects of those decisions.</p> <p>3B.1b. Apply a simple decision-making approach to make intentional choices when they are interacting across lines of difference.</p>	<p>Adults will support, teach and model for young people as they learn to:</p> <p>3B.2a. Identify and apply decision-making steps that consider impact on self and others.</p> <p>3B.2b. As part of a decision-making approach, generate multiple solutions and evaluate the impact on self and others for a range of academic and social situations.</p>	<p>Adults will support, teach and model for young people as they learn to:</p> <p>3B.3a. Reflect on how decision-making skills contribute to their study habits, academics, relationships, and participation in group activities in and out of school.</p> <p>3B.3b. As part of decision-making, consider strategies for making choices based on their values that promote personal and collective safety and well-being.</p>	<p>Adults will support, teach and model for young people as they learn to:</p> <p>3B.4a. Generate possible solutions to challenges, anticipate potential consequences of decisions, and take intentional action toward desired outcomes.</p> <p>3B.4b. Apply decision-making skills to establish mutually supportive interpersonal and intergroup relationships.</p>	<p>Adults will support, teach and model for young people as they learn to:</p> <p>3B.5a. Analyze how current decision-making affects college, career, and personal life choices.</p> <p>3B.5b. Evaluate how decision-making regarding equity, diversity, and fairness affects interpersonal and intergroup relationships, and ways decision-making can support civic engagement.</p>



Base Indicator	Adults	Early Elementary (K-2)	Late Elementary (3-5)	Middle School (6-8)	Early HS (9-10)	Late HS (11-12)
<p>Learners will be able to:</p> <p>3C. Take action to support the well-being of their school and community, including taking stands against bias and injustice.</p>	<p>Adults will develop and practice the abilities to:</p> <p>3C.A. Use restorative practices in responding to a witnessed incident of bias or injustice among students or adult peers.</p> <p>3C.B. Engage in work to support their school and/or local & global communities.</p>	<p>3C.1a. Identify ways they can help their classroom community.</p> <p>3C.1b. Identify ways they can help their family.</p>	<p>3C.2a. Identify ways they can take action to support their school community.</p> <p>3C.2b. Identify ways they can take action to support their local community.</p>	<p>3C.3a. Participate in civic experiences such as community service to address identified needs in their school, including those rooted in bias and injustice, and reflect on their efforts.</p> <p>3C.3b. Participate in civic experiences such as community service to address identified needs in their community, including those rooted in bias and injustice, and reflect on their efforts.</p>	<p>3C.4a. Plan, implement, and evaluate their participation in service-learning to improve school culture and climate.</p> <p>3C.4b. Plan, implement, and evaluate their participation in service learning to build greater social justice within their local community.</p>	<p>3C.5a. Participate cooperatively with others to plan, implement, and evaluate civic capstone projects to meet identified school needs.</p> <p>3C.5b. Work cooperatively with others to plan, implement, and evaluate a civic capstone project that addresses a social injustice identified in the local or global community.</p>

