SEL Framework Basics and Comparison Tools

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Assessment Work Group’s Framework Efforts

Frameworks Team

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• Dale Blyth, University of Minnesota
• Teresa Borowski, UIC & CASEL
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• Pat Kyllonen, ETS
• Eric Moore, Minneapolis Public Schools
• ...and Invited Authors

Overview

• Why we focus on frameworks
• The four series of framework briefs
• Why frameworks are important to effective teaching and learning
• Special tools for comparing and connecting framework & SEL competencies
• Lessons from a study of 136 different SEL frameworks
• Questions & contributions
What are frameworks?

A framework is simply a tool that helps organize ideas in order to provide a foundation for thinking, communicating, and acting.

- Introductory Series Brief (p 2)

Frameworks come in many forms from theories and models to taxonomies and rubrics to simple lists or detailed standards.

The CASEL 5 Framework is one of over 130 SEL frameworks and one of two commonly known SEL Frameworks.
Why are frameworks important?

Because . . .

• They exist and are already in use as shortcuts
• They influence how we interpret information
• They can shift how we think about our work
• They can expand or contract who is involved
• They can help us align multiple efforts
How are SEL Frameworks being used?

- Shaping training and professional development efforts: 71%
- Designing programs, curriculum, and activities: 69%
- Talking with stakeholders to whom you are accountable: 67%
- Selecting or designing what to measure: 64%
- Working with students and providing them feedback: 62%
- Talking with families and communities: 55%
Purpose:

• Help practitioners at all levels better understand the role and importance of frameworks in driving SEL initiatives

• Provide tools, ideas, questions and activities that can support practitioners in dealing with common challenges and critical tasks
1. SEL Frameworks – What Are They and Why Are They Important?
2. SEL Frameworks – Practical Challenges and Opportunities
3. Ten Criteria for Describing and Selecting SEL Frameworks

1. Introduction to the Taxonomy Project: Tools for Selecting & Aligning SEL Frameworks
2. Social-Emotional Competencies in Context: Using SEL Frameworks to Build Educators Understanding
3. An Examination of Frameworks for SEL in State K-12 Learning Standards
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>SPECIAL TOPICS SERIES</th>
<th>DESCRIPTIVE SERIES</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. Keeping SEL Developmental: The Importance of a Developmental Lens for Fostering and Assessing SEL Competencies</td>
<td>Descriptions and ratings of nine common SEL Frameworks and an overview of how these were prepared and can be used.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. Using a Developmental Lens to Align Social and Emotional Learning Frameworks, Standards, Practice, and Assessment</td>
<td>Release of entire series will be in August 2019.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. Equity &amp; Social and Emotional Learning: A Cultural Analysis</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. Toward Transformative Social and Emotional Learning: Using an Equity Lens</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
# 10 Criteria: Reflecting on Frameworks

## Five Criteria for Conceptual Clarity

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Criterion</th>
<th>Low</th>
<th>Medium</th>
<th>High</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>1. Specificity</strong> — The extent to which a framework has competencies that are clearly and specifically defined</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>2. Balance</strong> — The extent to which a framework balances intra-personal, inter-personal, and cognitive competencies and includes knowledge, skills and attitudes</td>
<td></td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>3. Developmental</strong> — The extent to which a framework includes and utilizes a developmental lens that illustrates competencies are malleable, how they develop over time, and what they look like at different ages and stages of development</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>4. Culturally Sensitive</strong> — The extent to which a framework is 1) sensitive to and addresses cultural variations in SEL process, 2) includes culturally related competencies that matter for success and 3) does not privilege any one cultural group over others</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>5. Empirically Grounded</strong> — The extent to which the social and emotional competencies named in a framework are grounded in empirical studies that demonstrate their importance for success in school, work, and life</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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</tbody>
</table>
### Five Criteria for Implementation Support

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Criteria</th>
<th>Low</th>
<th>Medium</th>
<th>High</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>1. Intended for Practice</strong> — The extent to which a framework is designed for and/or has been useful to informing or guiding implementation of a SEL effort to build social-emotional competencies</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>2. Resources for Practitioners</strong> — The extent to which a framework has a set of resources and tools that support the use of the framework by preparing and supporting practitioners responsible for implementation</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>3. Resources for Use with and by Children and Youth</strong> — The extent to which a framework has a set of resources and tools that use the framework and are designed for use directly by children and youth</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>4. Resources for Measurement and Data Use</strong> — The extent to which a framework has a set of resources or tools that support assessment of the competencies and the use of the resulting data to inform and improve practice</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>5. Empirically Tested</strong> — The extent to which a framework has studied how it has been or is being used effectively in practice to guide SEL efforts</td>
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</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
These criteria can help:

- **PRIORITIZING** what you need from a framework
- **REVIEWING** what a given framework has to offer
- **COMPARING** different frameworks relative strengths and limitations
- **SELECTING** a framework that best meets your priorities

They are also used in our *Descriptive Series* of Briefs to be released August 2019.
The Taxonomy Project:
Tools for Selecting &
Aligning SEL Frameworks

Stephanie Jones
Harvard University,
EASEL Lab

Access the brief
It can be difficult to navigate the complex and sometimes conflicting terminology in the field.

A large number of fields and disciplines that contribute to what we know about the “non-academic” domain.

Each discipline uses organizing frameworks and terminology specific to its own research tradition and goals.
Why terminology matters

What we know: Research

What we expect to change: Evaluation and Assessment

What we do: Programs and interventions

What should we focus on, and how?

Did it have an effect?

What did we learn?
Our response to the challenge of navigating the complex and sometimes conflicting terminology in the field is a **taxonomy of non-academic skills**:

- System for transparently **navigating between and communicating across** different disciplines
- Uses a common coding system to look at non-academic frameworks and determine **which skills they include** and **how they are defined**
- The resulting database of coded frameworks feeds into a **set of interactive, online tools** designed to function as a **Rosetta Stone** for the field
- We have ~35 **frameworks** in our database, 26 of which are used internationally
Cognitive Regulation

- Attention Control
- Working Memory/Planning
- Inhibitory Control
- Cognitive Flexibility

Emotion Processes

- Emotion Knowledge/Expression
  - 2201 Uses feeling words appropriate to situation
  - 2202 Appropriately uses a range of feeling words of varying intensity
  - 2203 Expresses emotions to others effective ways
  - 2204 Identifies emotions in self or others
  - 2205 Identifies intensity of emotions/feelings in self and others
    (etc.)

Interpersonal Skills

- Understanding Social Cues
- Conflict Resolution
- Prosocial Behavior

Values

- Ethical Values
- Performance Values
- Intellectual Values
- Civic Values

Identity/Self-Image

- Self-Knowledge
- Purpose
- Self-Efficacy/Growth Mindset
- Self-Esteem

Coding system is designed to capture whether and when each framework addresses common “non-academic” skills using three types of codes:
Data-based Online Tools

Framework Profiles
“Look inside Frameworks”
Learn more about widely-used “nonacademic” frameworks and compare skills and features across them.

Three Visual Tools
“Compare Frameworks”
Use a set of interactive visual tools to identify similarities and differences across widely-used frameworks.

Thesaurus
“Search for Skills”
Search a thesaurus of 200+ SEL and “nonacademic” terms to identify related skills across frameworks.

1. Explore Domain Focus
   See how much each framework focuses on six common areas of SEL.

2. Discover Framework Connections
   See where skills in one framework are related to skills in another.

3. Identify Related Skills
   See where similar SEL skills appear across frameworks.
## Comparing targeted skills across frameworks

### Emotionally Intelligent

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Framework</th>
<th>CASEL</th>
<th>Employability Skills</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>21st Century Learning (P21)</td>
<td>20%</td>
<td>52%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ACT Work Readiness</td>
<td>23%</td>
<td>4%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Big Five Personality Traits</td>
<td>14%</td>
<td>39%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Building Blocks for Learning</td>
<td>17%</td>
<td>4%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td>8%</td>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### Employability Skills

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Framework</th>
<th>CASEL</th>
<th>Employability Skills</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Head Start</td>
<td>22%</td>
<td>4%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hilton &amp; Pellegrino 21st Century</td>
<td>38%</td>
<td>39%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Competencies (NRC)</td>
<td>19%</td>
<td>9%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>K-12 SEL Standards (Anchorage)</td>
<td>10%</td>
<td>8%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>K-12 SEL Standards (Connecticut)</td>
<td>31%</td>
<td>7%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>KIPP</td>
<td>8%</td>
<td>7%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>MESH</td>
<td>35%</td>
<td>9%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>OECD</td>
<td>27%</td>
<td>9%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Young Adult Success</td>
<td>26%</td>
<td>7%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### Graphical Representation

- **Cognitive Regulation**
- **Social Skills**
- **Identity**

The bar charts illustrate the percentage of targeted skills across different frameworks for both CASEL and Employability Skills.
Social Awareness (CASEL)

The ability to take the perspective of and empathize with others, including those from diverse backgrounds and cultures. The ability to understand social and ethical norms for behavior and to recognize family, school, and community resources and supports.

- Perspective-taking
- Empathy
- Appreciating diversity
- Respect for others

Framework: CASEL Core SEL Competencies

Social Awareness is a construct in the CASEL Core SEL Competencies framework. The framework (see right) comprises five competencies.

Related Constructs

- Social/emotional intelligence (Character Lab)
- Social awareness (CASEL)
- Teamwork and collaboration (NRC)
- Work effectively in diverse teams (P21)
- Child expresses care and concern toward others (OHS)

Measurements

- Observations
- Character Growth Card

Observable Behavior
Expanding the online Explore SEL platform to connect the...

...such that the site can be used to make clear and precise connections across the entire research to practice cycle.
Social-Emotional Competencies in Context:
Using Social-Emotional Frameworks to Build Educators' Understanding

Juliette Berg,
American Institutes for Research

Access the brief
We wanted to know:

• How are social-emotional competencies conceptualized, operationalized, and measured?

• What are the most common competencies in many disciplines?

- Special focus on adolescence, culture, trauma, special populations, systems of care
- Apply the Taxonomy Project coding system to 50 frameworks

*Funded by Robert Wood Johnson Foundation
Our Approach Involved 5 Steps

Step 1
• Searched frameworks

Step 2
• Created database

Step 3
• Compared frameworks

Step 4
• Coded competencies

Step 5
• Searched measures
Step 1: Searched Frameworks

- Scanned literature
  - Character education, culture, disability, economics, education, foster care, juvenile justice and violence prevention, mental health, mindfulness, positive youth development, psychology, public health, resilience, workforce development

- Inclusion criteria
  - Ages 6-25
  - English-language literature
  - Developed in OECD countries

- Information based on freely available framework documentation

- Vetted list with 64 experts
Step 2: Created Database of 136 Frameworks

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Name of framework</th>
<th>List of competencies/definitions</th>
<th>Description of framework</th>
<th>Developer name</th>
<th>Field or discipline of study/sub-fields</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Scope</td>
<td>Focal age groups</td>
<td>Country of origin</td>
<td>Purpose</td>
<td>Associated measurement tools</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Comprehensive/narrow</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Theoretical/empirical grounding</td>
<td>Developmental sequencing</td>
<td>Culture/diversity</td>
<td>Adversity/trauma/difficulty</td>
<td>y/n</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
### Step 3: Compared Frameworks

#### Percentage of Frameworks By Area of Study

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Area of Study</th>
<th>Total Count</th>
<th>Percentage Addressing Culture, Racial/Ethnic Diversity</th>
<th>Percentage Addressing Adversity/Trauma/Difficulty</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Character</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Culture</td>
<td>7</td>
<td><strong>100</strong></td>
<td>57</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Disability</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Economics</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Foster Care</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>0</td>
<td><strong>100</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Juvenile Justice and Violence Prevention</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>50</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mental Health</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>80</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mindfulness</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Positive Youth Development (PYD)</td>
<td>19</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Psychology</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Public Health</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Resilience</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>13</td>
<td><strong>25</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>School-based competency development</td>
<td>33</td>
<td>24</td>
<td><strong>12</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Workforce</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>22</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>TOTAL</strong></td>
<td><strong>136</strong></td>
<td><strong>18</strong></td>
<td><strong>15</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
## Step 3: Compared Frameworks

### Number of Frameworks by Purpose

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Area of Study</th>
<th>Total Count</th>
<th>Theory/Research Development</th>
<th>Measurement Considerations</th>
<th>Standards/Competencies Identification</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Character</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Culture</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Disability</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Economics</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
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<tr>
<td>Foster Care</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
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<td>6</td>
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<td>1</td>
<td>0</td>
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<tr>
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<td>8</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>School-based competency development</td>
<td>32</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Workforce</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>TOTAL %</strong></td>
<td><strong>100</strong></td>
<td><strong>43.4</strong></td>
<td><strong>6.6</strong></td>
<td><strong>18.4</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Much Overlap Between Frameworks, Many Differences

**Youth-serving systems and services** frameworks emphasize context specificity of competencies

- E.g., pro-sociality, integration within the community, independence & community participation

**Culturally and linguistically diverse youth** frameworks emphasize adaptability, connection, and awareness of bias and privilege for ALL

- E.g., biculturalism, coping with racism, communalism, fairness, respect for diversity

**Frameworks sensitive to experiences of adversity and trauma** emphasize resilience-building competencies

- E.g., recognizing current triggers for “alarm” reactions, evaluating thoughts, defining behavioral options
Step 4: Coded Competencies

- Coded a representative subset of 50 frameworks and 748 competencies using Harvard coding system
- Coded at the subdomain level (23 subdomains)
• Great overlap between domains and subdomains illustrates interconnectedness of competencies
• Coding system expandable to fit competencies related to equity and diversity (e.g., privilege and cultural competence)
• Resilience-building and adaptability competencies help ALL youth navigate daily stresses and long-term challenges; build community
• Meaning and urgency of competencies are individual- and context-dependent
Step 5: Searched Measures

1. Tracked measures in framework documents
2. Searched measures by competency subdomains

- Abundance of measures for most competencies
- Context and culturally-specific measures underrepresented
- Noticeable gap between frameworks and measures
What Should I Think About When Choosing a Framework?

Does the framework consider:

- clear definitions?
- competencies in context?
- perspectives of diverse cultures, races, ethnicities?
- Resilience-building competencies?
Educators Can Support Students’ Competency Development

Self-development

✓ Engage in conversations with colleagues
✓ Identify own triggers
✓ Develop own competencies

With students

✓ Identify expressions of competencies across contexts/cultures
✓ Reflect on cultural biases
✓ Create safe spaces within and outside of classroom
✓ Provide student choice and responsibility
✓ Celebrate unique and collective identities
✓ Get to know your students
Accessing These Briefs

• Visit the MEASURING SEL Website to view our multiple efforts to use data to inspire practice including weekly blogs (http://measuringsel.casel.org)

• Visit the Frameworks Page to access any of the Frameworks Series and Individual Briefs (http://measuringsel.casel.org/frameworks/)
Please use the chat box to ask a question or contribute to the discussion.
Thank you!

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