State of SEL Assessment and Practitioners’ Perspectives

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Multidisciplinary collaborative of leading researchers and practitioners in the fields of PreK-12 education, assessment, SEL, and related fields.

Collaborator Network of 3,400+ researchers, educators, policymakers, advocates, and others dedicated to the rapidly growing field of SEL.

Framework Briefs to explore similarities and alignments among the growing number of SEL-related frameworks.

SEL Assessment Guide helps educators to select and effectively use currently available SEL assessments.

Design challenge fosters next generation SEL assessment and generates a set of design principles to guide SEL assessment.
Student Social and Emotional Competence Assessment

The Current State of the Field and a Vision for Its Future

Clark McKown, xSEL Labs
Thank you

• Members of the Establishing Practical Social-Emotional Competence Assessments of Preschool to High School Students Project (Assessment Work Group or AWG)
• The Funders Collaborative for Innovative Measurement
• The webinar and reports are a result of AWG convenings and collaborations.
The State of the Field

SEL Programs are Widely Used

11:1 return on investment

What about assessment?
Today’s Focus

universal + student competence
The State of SEL Assessment (Tools)
The State of SEL Assessment (Tools)

Self-Report:
I understand what other people feel

- Not At All True
- A Little True
- Pretty True
- Very True
- Extremely True

Teacher Report:
Understands what peers are feeling

- Almost Never
- Rarely
- Sometimes
- Often
- Almost Always

Direct Assessment:
What does this girl feel?

- Happy
- Sad
- Angry
- Scared
- Just OK

Some use administrative records.
A Vision for the Future of SEL Assessment

Social and Emotional Learning Framework

Standards
- Shared expectations of
  - the competencies students should know and be able to demonstrate at different ages.

Teaching and Learning
- Educational actions to foster
  - the competencies students should know and be able to demonstrate at different ages.

Assessment
- Measures of
  - the competencies students should know and be able to demonstrate at different ages.

Professional Learning
A Practice Vision and Challenges

1. Assess SEL
2. Review data
3. Teach SEL
4. Re-Assess SEL
5. Review data
Summary

(We’re here.)

(If we’re wise, we’ll get here.)
NATIONAL PRACTITIONER ADVISORY GROUP (NPAG)
NPAG was formed to engage practice leaders in addressing the pressing issues and challenges surrounding SEL assessment and efforts to use data to inspire SEL practices.

The goal was to bring together the voice of practitioners to help shape and ensure all Measuring SEL efforts, products, and communications are grounded in ways that make them most useful to practitioners.
National Practitioner Advisory Group (NPAG)

28 educators, youth development professionals, school administrators, state and district leaders, and nonprofit out-of-school time leaders.

- Washoe County School District, Nevada
- Evergreen Unified School District, Washington
- Iowa Department of Education
- Renton School District, Washington
- Arlington Public Schools, Massachusetts
- Boston Public Schools, Massachusetts
- New York City Department of Education, New York
- Teach for America
- San Francisco Unified School District, California
- Aspire Public Schools, California & Tennessee
- YMCA of the USA
- Minnesota Department of Education
- Citizen Schools
- Bedford Public Schools, Massachusetts
- Avon Grove School District, Pennsylvania
- BellXcel
- Minneapolis Public Schools, Minnesota
- Communities that Care, Work, Lead for the State of Colorado, Department of Public Health & Environment
- Highline Public Schools, Washington
- Egret Lake Elementary, School District of Palm Beach County, Florida
- West County Charter Middle School, California
- Amherst Street Elementary School, Nashua School District, New Hampshire
- Port Townsend School District, Washington
- E.L. Haynes Elementary Public Charter School, Washington DC
- Los Angeles Unified School District, California
- Washington Leadership Academy Public Charter School, Washington DC
- Da Vinci RISE High, California
- Oakland Unified School District
PRACTITIONERS’ PERSPECTIVES ON MAKING SEL ASSESSMENT WORK

featuring

Brenda McLaughlin, BellXcel
Susan Ward Roncalli, Los Angeles Unified School District
NPAG Resources

Making SEL Assessment Work: 
Ten Practitioner Beliefs

Executive Summary

Making Assessment Work: Ten Practitioner Beliefs was developed by the National Practitioner Advisory Group on Using Data to Inspire SEL Practice (NPAG), a group of social and emotional learning (SEL) practice leaders convened to provide insights on SEL. Collectively, we believe that SEL assessment is a valuable investment. At the same time, we caution that assessment of social-emotional competencies and SEL practices, when not implemented with a strengths-based, growth-oriented focus, can be more harmful than helpful.

Educators, program leaders, and policymakers recognize the value of holistically supporting young people’s social, emotional, and academic development. Assessment of social and emotional competencies helps paint a fuller picture of youth’s capabilities and needs. As widespread implementation of SEL practices gains traction, SEL data are increasingly

Making SEL Assessment Work: 
Resources and Further Reading

Introduction

In this companion piece to Making Assessment Work: Ten Practitioner Perspectives, the National Practitioner Advisory Group on Using Data to Inspire SEL (NPAG) offers further resources and reading for implementing a vision for ethical, strengths-based social and emotional learning (SEL) assessment. The list should be considered a starting point: we recognize that, although work has begun, more must be done to translate our vision into usable, practical resources for the field.

I. Effective assessment begins with a strong vision and intentionality.


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This consensus statement was developed from discussions and work of the National Practitioner Advisory Group. It is designed to facilitate a stronger practitioner voice in the discussions and decisions concerning SEL assessment.

Making SEL Assessment Work

BELIEF STATEMENT + RATIONALE + ACTION STEPS + REFLECTION
Making SEL Assessment Work

1. Begin intentionally and with a strong vision.
2. Assess strengths, not deficits.
3. Create a positive culture and climate.
4. Implement and assess with an equity lens.
5. Recognize the importance of adult social-emotional competence.
When implemented and assessed through an equity lens, SEL can mitigate bias and promote appreciation of diversity.

Some assessments of SEL may be biased toward a particular group; that is, assessments may privilege expressions of cultural norms that do not hold for all groups.
Example: Implement and assess with an equity lens (#4)

- Identify frameworks and assessments that elevate DEI.
- Determine whether the assessment involved diverse learners.
- Foster conversations about bias for youth and adults.
- Pair programming with culturally responsive teaching.
- Assess if practices are used to discriminate—intentionally or not.

1. Who is in the room making decisions about SEL assessments?
2. When interpreting data, what strengths and biases do you bring to the table?
3. How might youth interpret and respond to items on assessments?
4. Are there any glaring discrepancies when we disaggregate data by demographics?
Making SEL Assessment Work

BELIEF STATEMENTS

6. Measure for growth, not an endpoint.
7. Foster adult capacity continuously.
8. Authentically engage and collaborate with youth and families.
9. Use data to continuously improve SEL practice.
10. Implement universal and differentiated approaches to SEL development.
How has the process of developing these beliefs informed practice?
So how can we get from where we are now to where we need to be?
Please use the chat box to ask a question or contribute to the discussion.
Thank you!

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