



Focus Area 1B

Professional Learning Plan

Review your current level of implementation, identify needs and resources, set goals, and develop concrete action steps for SEL implementation.

An important part of schoolwide SEL implementation is ongoing, high-quality professional learning that supports staff in developing practices that prioritize and promote SEL. Effective professional learning involves educators as active participants in their learning and is focused on schoolwide impact rather than solely individual growth.

If you have already begun developing a professional learning plan, use the rubric or the questions below to identify areas for continuous improvement:

Do staff engage in high-quality and ongoing professional learning, including receiving coaching and feedback?

Are professional learning opportunities aligned to the school's SEL goals, and does it develop skills for cultivating supportive, equitable learning environments and promoting SEL for students?

Are professional learning opportunities scaffolded to support staff based on their roles and current knowledge of SEL?

Does the SEL team collect staff feedback to shape an effective approach to ongoing support and coaching?

As your team develops an SEL implementation plan, determine what professional learning needs to occur to achieve your goals. For example:

Goal 1: All teachers will begin integrating SEL into at least one lesson plan per week beginning on Nov. 15, 2019.

Action Steps:

- The SEL team will participate in district-provided training on SEL and academic integration by Sept. 30, 2019.
- The SEL team will provide a two-hour professional learning session to all teachers on integrating SEL into lesson plans during the Nov. 1, 2019, in-service day, and the principal will set expectations for integrating SEL into lesson plans.
- The SEL team will meet with grade-level teams to collaboratively review lesson plans monthly from Dec. 1, 2019, to June 30, 2020.

For each implementation goal, consider:

- **Who** will engage in professional learning. Identify the specific groups that need to be engaged to reach the goal. This may include the SEL team, the entire staff, teachers, community partners, etc.
- **What** your school needs to know and be able to do to achieve this goal. Align all professional learning objectives with your school's shared vision and goals. Also, consider stakeholders' current levels of

understanding and need. Depending on your school's goals and needs, professional learning topics might include:

- Cultivating social and emotional competencies as an adult.
 - Integrating SEL into academic lessons.
 - Implementing continuous improvement cycles.
 - Learning to use a new SEL program.
 - Promoting equity through SEL.
- **How** professional learning will be accessed and delivered. Professional learning can come from a number of sources. Sometimes the SEL team will have the knowledge and expertise to lead professional learning at their school. Other times the team will have the responsibility of looking for others who can provide professional learning. Consider:
 - Who in our school or community already has expertise in this area?
 - What district professional learning is available to support this?
 - What outside professional learning is available to support this e.g. community partners, external providers, conferences, webinars, etc.?
 - What online or print tools and information is available to support this?

Regardless of the source, professional learning is most effective when it is supported by school leaders, provides participants with opportunities to practice what they are learning, and allows time for reflecting on progress. For more on effective professional learning, see [Learning Forward's Standards for Professional Learning](#).

- **When** and **Where** professional learning will take place. Consider the schedules and needs of all stakeholders who will need to be present in professional learning to ensure participants can engage fully. This may require attention to teaching schedules, as well as when out-of-school time and community partners are present. Professional learning can take place throughout the school year as a component of:
 - In-service days.
 - Staff meetings.
 - [Grade-level or department meetings](#).
 - Scheduled classroom visits.
 - Dedicated professional learning community (PLC) time.
 - Off-site at district or conference events.

Phillips Elementary School's Professional Learning Plan

Phillips Elementary School uses a collective and collaborative structure for professional learning about SEL. Their professional learning plan emphasizes three critical concepts: time, universal implementation, and leadership.

"Time" means that SEL is an instructional priority. Professional learning has a place on every meeting agenda and professional activity, and time is dedicated every week throughout the school year for staff members to discuss, review, reflect on, and improve classroom and schoolwide SEL implementation.

"Universal implementation" means that all adults at the school participate in ongoing professional learning for SEL. Adults practice the SEL skills they are learning so they can lead students and families in SEL activities. Participating school personnel include classroom teachers, office staff, paraprofessionals, yard duty supervisors, cafeteria staff, after-school staff, and any other adult who touches students' lives.

“Leadership” refers to the expectation that everyone should be part of establishing and developing a positive school culture. Every adult and student in the school is encouraged to model and reinforce SEL in every aspect of school life. Funding and other forms of support are allocated to facilitate professional SEL-related learning opportunities and programming.

Staff is motivated to participate in these professional learning opportunities because they are teacher-led, provide a safe learning environment for open sharing of experiences and ideas, highlight practical teaching practices, and address the academic, social, and emotional needs of students in ways that are relevant and practical.

You can read more about ongoing, embedded professional learning in Focus Areas 2 and 3. You can also capture your professional learning plans in the SEL Planner, then use the following sections to outline the resources you’ll need and a communication strategy.

Up Next: Communication Planning