

Indiana Social-Emotional Learning Competencies: A Neurodevelopmental, Culturally Responsive Framework

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Brandie M. Oliver¹ and Christy T. Berger²

Abstract

Social/emotional learning (SEL) programs and practices have gained momentum across the state of Indiana in recent years in response to the changing needs of students and families. Many school communities have adopted SEL due to the heightened challenges posed by students impacted by trauma or chronic stress. As schools began to adopt SEL programs and practices, the Indiana Department of Education responded by developing the Indiana SEL Competencies to provide a unified framework and several resources with which educators in the state continue to evolve their work. This article outlines foundational principles of SEL, highlights unique aspects of the Indiana SEL Competencies, and presents implications for the school counselor's role in working toward systemic implementation of SEL.

Keywords

educational neuroscience, school counseling, social/emotional learning, trauma

Educating students can no longer be focused solely on developing academic knowledge and content; critical research has revealed that social/emotional and cognitive capabilities are integral to, and inseparable from, students' academic and post-secondary success (S. M. Jones & Kahn, 2017). The support for social/emotional learning (SEL) is robust. Scholarship pertaining to both research and practice has had rapid growth and interest over the last 2 decades (Durlak et al., 2015; Humphrey, 2013). Due both to SEL's fast-paced spread into education and how SEL integrates multiple disciplines, a common challenge has been to identify one universal framework (Berg et al., 2019; Blyth, 2018). According to the 2018 American Institutes for Research Report, 136 SEL frameworks from 14 different schools of thought (e.g., human development, psychology, education) have been identified (Berg et al., 2019; Berg et al., 2017). Exploring the many different SEL frameworks presents a daunting task for educators. Trying to identify which are being implemented or in current use poses various challenges, as does pinpointing the key features when working toward a universal framework to guide the future of SEL (Berg et al., 2019; Blyth, 2018; S. M. Jones & Kahn, 2017). To address these challenges, Indiana developed a comprehensive, neurodevelopmental, culturally responsive SEL framework with developmentally appropriate student competencies spanning Grades pre-K–12. Throughout this work, several questions were explored to guide the development of the comprehensive SEL framework and competencies. Three key questions that

helped map Indiana's SEL work were as follows: What is the foundation of SEL? What makes the Indiana SEL Competencies unique? What role will the school counselor play in the comprehensive and systemic implementation of SEL?

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Foundations of SEL

SEL development is an integral component of education that enables students to build relationships with others; cope with stress; problem-solve; acquire mental, emotional, and academic supports; and succeed in work and life (Osher et al.,

¹ College of Education, Butler University, Indianapolis, IN, USA

² Indiana Department of Education, Indianapolis, IN, USA

Corresponding Author:

Brandie M. Oliver, PhD, College of Education, Butler University, Indianapolis, IN, USA.

Email: bmoliver@butler.edu

2016). Research supports that “effective mastery of social-emotional competencies is associated with greater well-being and better school performance whereas the failure to achieve competence in these areas can lead to a variety of personal, social, and academic difficulties” (Durlak et al., 2011, p. 406). What is the need for SEL in education? In simple terms, it is to equip all students to manage the inevitable challenges, stress, and uncertainties that often arise in everyday life and to attain personal and postsecondary success. The Collaborative for Academic, Social, and Emotional Learning (CASEL, 2018) defines SEL as the process through which students gain and effectively apply the knowledge, attitudes, and skills necessary to understand and manage emotions, set and achieve positive goals, feel and express empathy for others, develop and maintain positive relationships, and make responsible decisions.

CASEL has been a leader, catalyst, advocate, and collaborator while serving the field of SEL. According to CASEL (2018), SEL supports children and adults in identifying and regulating emotions, working toward positive goals, demonstrating empathy for others, developing healthy relationships, and making decisions. CASEL’s SEL framework has been widely used by researchers, policy makers, and educators to help guide, design, and implement SEL within pre-K–12 schools across the nation (Weissberg et al., 2015). Borowski (2019) described CASEL’s framework for Systemic Social and Emotional Learning as an integrated framework that works to promote its five SEL competencies through multiple contexts within the school environment.

CASEL (2013) developed five core intrapersonal, interpersonal, and cognitive competencies to foster the development of the cognitive, affective, and behavioral domains of SEL.

1. Self-awareness: Recognizing feelings as they occur; having a realistic assessment of one’s own abilities and a well-grounded sense of self-confidence.
2. Social awareness: Sensing what others are feeling; being able to take their perspective, appreciating and interacting positively with diverse groups.
3. Self-management: Handling emotions so they facilitate rather than interfere with the task at hand; delaying gratification to pursue goals; persevering in the face of setbacks.
4. Relationship skills: Handling emotions in relationships effectively; establishing and maintaining healthy and rewarding relationships based on cooperation; negotiating solutions to conflict; seeking help when needed.
5. Responsible decision-making: Accurately assessing risks; making decisions based on a consideration of all relevant factors and the likely consequences of alternative courses of actions; respecting others; taking personal responsibility for one’s decisions.

By using a structured SEL framework such as the one CASEL has provided, schools can follow a detailed road map

through which educators can work to nurture and develop SEL competencies in all students.

Key Benefits of SEL

Numerous studies have detailed multiple benefits of SEL. SEL has shown a positive impact on student achievement and an increase in prosocial skill development. The initial meta-analysis conducted by Durlak and colleagues (2011) revealed that participating in SEL showed a positive impact on students’ academics, resulting in an 11-percentile point gain in achievement and an increased development of social/emotional skills, improved attitude toward self and others, improved positive social behaviors, and decreased conduct problems and emotional distress. Another meta-analysis study conducted by Taylor et al. (2017) reviewed 82 SEL programs and found that 3.5 years after students completed the program, the benefits of SEL persisted. In another significant connection shared by Almlund et al. (2011), the social/emotional competency is more predictive of academic and career achievement than IQ. Taylor and colleagues (2017) found that students receiving the specified SEL intervention scored 13 points higher in academic and demonstrated a 6% increase in high school graduation rates and an 11% increase in college attendance rates. The study also revealed additional long-term benefits beyond the standard academic measures: The SEL participants were less likely to have a clinical mental health disorder, to have ever been arrested or be involved with the juvenile justice system, and to have lower rates of sexually transmitted infections and pregnancies (Taylor et al., 2017).

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Systemic Implementation of SEL

As evidenced in the data above, well-implemented SEL programs and practices can have positive impacts on students’ lives. SEL instruction and programming takes place both at the whole-school and classroom levels and is delivered by multiple stakeholders within the school community (Weissberg et al., 2015), including school counselors (Van Velsor, 2009). Evidence indicates that high-quality implementation is positively associated with better student outcomes. S. M. Jones and Bouffard (2012) highlighted the importance of effective implementation of SEL and recommended moving from “programs to strategies” as a way of changing mindsets concerning the comprehensive implementation of SEL within a school district. Although well-designed SEL programs implemented with

fidelity have been associated with positive academic outcomes (Durlak et al., 2011), common barriers to program fidelity include sufficient dosage and accurate duration of program session (S. M. Jones et al., 2010). Other possible drawbacks of the SEL program model include having the sole focus be at the classroom level and facilitated within the classroom. Because of this hyper-focused classroom approach, SEL programs miss opportunities to help students develop SEL tools necessary for other environments such as the playground, the lunchroom, and hallways. A final barrier impacting SEL programs centers on the fact that teachers receive little to no formalized training in SEL (Lopes et al., 2012). Shifting from programs to strategies would provide a continuum of SEL approaches that range from routines, strategies, and structures that educators and students can use daily and throughout the school, to intensive services for students requiring the most support.

Development of Indiana's SEL Competencies

CASEL's framework was the guide and foundation in building the Indiana SEL Competencies. Through the examination of 136 SEL frameworks, Berg et al. (2019) identified three key issues requiring additional attention: (a) the need to focus on SEL development across multiple sociocultural contexts (which can include students' complex identity development dependent on age, types of support, etc.); (b) the explicit instruction and focus on cultural responsiveness, cultural/racial identity development, and developing a strength-based cultural lens for both adults and students; and (c) intentional SEL strategies designed for students affected by trauma and chronic adversity.

Learning and responding to this work, Indiana added two competencies, sensory-motor integration and mindset, to its five SEL competencies that align with each of the five CASEL competencies. The Indiana SEL Competencies have unique names setting them apart from the CASEL competencies and have distinct definitions. Although five of the Indiana SEL Competencies articulate alignment with the CASEL standards, the Indiana Competencies intentionally expand the work of CASEL by including neurodevelopmental, culturally responsive, and trauma-responsive pre-K–12 indicators. In January 2019, the Indiana SEL Competencies for students in Grades pre-K through 12 (Desautels & Oliver, 2019) were released to address social and emotional well-being through a neurodevelopmental, culturally responsive framework. The foundation for these competencies was developed from the fields of educational neuroscience research, social/emotional research, trauma, and culturally responsive best practices.

Below are the Indiana SEL competency titles, definitions, and aligned CASEL competency, if applicable (in parentheses).

1. Sensory-motor integration (new competency): The ability to have body awareness and recognize sensations in

the body. Gaining sensory-motor integration is an important skill for managing transitions, changing routines, increasing alertness for learning, and improving regulation.

2. Insight (self-awareness): The ability to know your emotions and how they affect your thoughts and actions. Gaining insight is an important skill for building self-confidence, self-esteem, and empathy for others. Insight helps students recognize their own strengths and areas of growth.
3. Regulation (self-management): The ability to recognize and manage one's emotions. Regulation skills build positive self-control, positive self-discipline, and impulse control.
4. Collaboration (relationship skills): The ability to work well with others, including in the group and teamwork environment. Collaboration works to build positive communication and conflict management skills.
5. Connection (social awareness): The ability to have strong social awareness, giving students the ability to take the perspectives of others and empathize with people of diverse backgrounds and cultures.
6. Critical thinking (responsible decision-making): The ability to make constructive choices and understand metacognitive strategies to enhance learning. Critical thinking skills build responsible decision-making, analytical, and critical inquiry skills, which are necessary to approach learning from an innovative, creative, multicultural, and ethical lens.
7. Mindset (new competency): The ability to demonstrate cognitive flexibility and a willingness to learn. Developing mindset is a critical learning skill for building perseverance, adaptability, self-discovery, resilience, and the ability to receive and give constructive feedback.

Developing the Competencies and Framework

Learning from the thorough research conducted by the Assessments Work Group Frameworks Subgroup (Dusenbury et al., 2019; S. Jones et al., 2019), the Indiana SEL Competencies sought to address the three recommendations identified as key factors contributing to healthy SEL development: (a) focus on SEL development across multiple sociocultural contexts, (b) focus on cultural responsiveness and cultural/racial identity development and the explicit instruction to support a strength-based cultural lens for both adults and students, and (c) focus on the intentional SEL strategies designed for students affected by trauma and chronic adversity. The addition of the sensory-motor integration and mindset competencies enhanced the focus on providing supports for students impacted by trauma, created ongoing opportunities for strength-based multicultural competency development, and incorporated diverse

SEL approaches using the most current neurodevelopmental research (S. Jones et al., 2019; Weissberg, 2019).

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Two new competencies. The sensory-motor integration and mindset competencies were created to address the barriers identified as most often contributing to inequitable access to social/emotional and academic development, therefore impacting overall student well-being and outcomes (Simmons et al., 2018). The educational neuroscience framework used in the development of the competencies provided multiple opportunities to address the equity issues previously identified.

Specifically, within the sensory-motor integration competency, educational neuroscience raises awareness of how biological factors, not only environmental ones, play an important role in accounting for differences in learning ability between individuals (Royal Society, 2011). Within trauma-responsive practices, when a student experiences chronic stress or fear, the survival part of the brain is activated, alerting the limbic system and the fight/flight/freeze response; the survival brain's activation decreases functioning of other brain areas responsible for information processing, planning, and other executive functions (Pawlo et al., 2019; Perry, 2017; Van der Kolk, 2014). Students are unable to learn new information when they continuously operate in a fear response state because the brain, when affected by trauma or chronic stress, is significantly limited in its capacity to receive, integrate, and store new information; the toxic levels of stress hormones can interrupt typical physical and mental development and even change the brain's architecture (Sacks & Murphey, 2018). The sensory-motor integration competency focuses on the mind-body connection to help bring awareness to both students and educators of how stress can have a profound impact on the body and brain's biochemistry (Sousa, 2010).

Educational neuroscience helped frame the mindset competency based on the concepts of neuroplasticity (Siegel, 2011) and growth mindset (Dweck, 2006). Siegel (2011) explained neuroplasticity as the brain's ability to change its structure in response to ongoing experience and focused practice. Through explicit instruction and focus on neuroplasticity, students are provided skills and strategies to build resiliency and new pro-social behavioral skills to respond to stress, challenges, or conflict. In doing so, the classroom environment becomes a place that is welcoming, supportive, and fosters resilience. Infusing growth mindset principles reinforces the brain's malleability and helps demonstrate that intelligence is not fixed (Dweck, 2006). Students' beliefs about intelligence are not only critical to their academic outcomes but also help them develop

resilience following life's adverse experiences (Yeager & Dweck, 2012).

Connecting the Framework to Strategic State Priorities

Dusenbury's (2019) comprehensive state review of SEL standards and framework connected the most effective strategic priorities and approaches to one or more of seven state drivers (Berg et al., 2017; Dusenbury, 2019). Indiana's framework has worked to align all seven drivers to build interprofessional and collaborative practices across systems. Below, we describe two drivers, (a) workforce readiness, college and career readiness, and 21st-century skills and (b) multi-tiered system of support (MTSS), to illustrate how our framework has set out to intentionally link the new SEL competencies with these high-priority state initiatives. Appendix A provides the full list and description of the seven drivers.

Workforce readiness, college and career readiness, and 21st-century skills. Indiana Senate Enrolled Act 297 states that no later than July 1, 2019, each school within a school corporation shall include interdisciplinary Employability Skills Standards established by the Indiana Department of Education (IDOE), in conjunction with the Department of Workforce Development and approved by the State Board of Education, in the school's curriculum. IDOE created Indiana's Employability Skills Standards (2019), which prepare students for the ever-changing needs of today's workforce. These standards were to be implemented beginning in the 2019–2020 school year. The standards are based on the National Employability Skill Standards from the Office of Career, Technical, and Adult Education, the Indiana Department of Workforce Development's Employability Skills Benchmarks, the Governor's Work Ethic Certificate, and the IDOE's SEL Competencies. The standards are arranged within four key areas: Mindsets (M), Work Ethic (WE), Learning Strategies (LS), and Social and Emotional Skills (SE).

During the initial stages of developing the Employability Skills Standards, social/emotional skills was identified as a theme to be embedded within these standards. Indiana has recently developed another resource to further promote Indiana's SEL Competencies and reinforce the connections between Employability Skills Standards, Indiana SEL Competencies, and the ASCA Mindsets & Behaviors (American School Counselor Association [ASCA], 2014). The crosswalk can be found in Appendix B.

MTSS. MTSS is a systemic, data-driven program designed to address academic and behavioral concerns by employing a comprehensive, three-tiered system of supports comprising both prevention and intervention strategies (Sugai & Horner, 2009). MTSS ensures a detailed and structured universal support system for students and provides individualized support options for those students with higher needs. IDOE selected MTSS as the primary structure for teaching and learning in our state Every Student Succeeds Act plan based on many factors. Key among them was its ability to maximize equity, provide

student/family access to necessary mental health resources, and ultimately, to positively affect student outcomes (Horner et al., 2010). With a record of demonstrated impact on school climate, safety, and increased student access to mental health resources, MTSS is the optimal vehicle for supporting our educational partners' attainment of academic, behavioral, and social/emotional goals (National Center on Response to Intervention, 2010).

Implications for School Counseling Practice

Integrating SEL within the Deliver component of the ASCA National Model (ASCA, 2019) is a natural fit for the types of social/emotional, academic (Lemberger & Hutchison, 2014), and career services provided by school counselors (ASCA, 2019). As schools adopt SEL programs, teachers are often tasked with the implementation of all or parts of the student delivery component. According to the 2018 McGraw-Hill Social and Emotional Learning Report, only 22% of teachers reported feeling "very prepared" to teach SEL. School counselors are equipped to provide training and ongoing consultation to support teacher SEL development (ASCA, 2019; Cowan et al., 2013).

A one-size-fits-all approach does not work to meet the needs of all students, nor does it challenge equity, access, and social/emotional issues for students who present with a continuum of needs related to sensory, impulsivity, and regulatory problems (Perry, 2017). A comprehensive school counseling program that aligns with MTSS is integral in the process of removing these systemic barriers and working toward a strength-based, whole-student-focused culture that supports social/emotional, academic, and behavioral success for all students (ASCA, 2019).

Utilizing the Indiana SEL Competencies as a foundation, school counselors can build lessons and programming to teach students about the important role their brains play in learning and life. For example, when concentrating on the sensory-motor integration competency, school counselors can help students build healthy stress response skills by first focusing on the mind-body connection (Stahl et al., 2015). By teaching strategies that include mindfulness practices, school counselors give students opportunities to practice paying attention in the present moment as they begin to develop awareness of the experiences within the mind-body in relation to the thoughts and feelings they are experiencing. This example highlights only one SEL competency-based school counseling intervention. School counselors do not have to work alone when teaching mindfulness; as teachers develop these skills, school counselors can invite them to co-teach, which allows teachers to model the skills for their students.

School counselors are at the front lines of college- and career-readiness planning. With the crosswalk between the Indiana Employability Skills Standards and the Indiana SEL Competencies, school counselors can easily articulate a clear connection between the knowledge and skills required for all

students. This tool also helps school counselors advocate for dedicated time to teach these competencies and justify why they are the right professional in the school to provide these services.

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Collaboration is critical for school counselors to ensure that universal SEL supports are employed, targeting the cognitive, social/emotional, behavioral, and ethical development of all students (Grant et al., 2017). The Indiana SEL Competencies have opened opportunities for continued partnerships and collaboration with school administrators and teachers. The Indiana Association of School Principals, a longtime partner and supporter of school counselors, named SEL as the topic in 2019 for their regional workshops across the state and a key theme at their 2019 annual conference. We presented multiple times at these events and made a strategic effort not only to build knowledge and awareness regarding SEL implementation but also to explicitly share how school counselors are vital partners in effective SEL implementation. Although administrators may feel pressure to act quickly regarding SEL implementation, we caution against a fast approach before first building SEL teacher skills.

Comprehensive SEL programs also focus on increasing capacity building, including providing support and services (both in school and out of school) at Tiers 2 and 3. School counselors have the unique training, knowledge, and skill sets to provide support in all three tiers of SEL implementation. Finally, as understanding of the impact of traumatic experiences and use of universal screeners grow, school counselors can demonstrate their proficiency in the use of data (Betters-Bubon et al., 2016) and work collaboratively with other educators in the building to ensure that all students receive appropriate trauma-responsive and culturally responsive practices.

Through comprehensive and systemic SEL implementation, school counselors establish a platform to advocate not only for all students but also for the profession of school counseling. The ASCA National Model points out the unique position school counselors hold to collaborate, consult, and partner with other educators, community partners, and families (ASCA, 2019). School counselors can serve as leaders in conversations about equity and social justice as they pertain to student behavior and success in schools. Through continued conversations, consultation (Perera-Diltz et al., 2011), and targeted family involvement, school counselors can empower change and work toward equity for all. Table 1 provides sample school counselor roles and responsibilities that align with MTSS and strategies that support the implementation of the Indiana SEL

Table 1. School Counselors' Sample Roles Within Multi-tiered System of Support Specific to Social/Emotional Learning.

MTSS Tier	Students	Teachers	Administrator(s)	Parents/Guardian	Community
Tier 3	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Individual counseling Functional behavior assessment or other assessment tools to support student success 		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Participate with administrator in discipline-related conferencing (bringing SEL perspective) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Provide outside referral resources as appropriate 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Oversee community partnerships offering services in the school/for students Create and update community referral resource tool
Tier 2	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Check-in/Check-out Small group counseling to support specific SEL skill development Coordinate mentor/mentee program Coordinate and supervise peer mediation/peer helping program 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Before/after-school programming to support educator wellness (e.g., mindfulness, self-care group) Provide consultation regarding SEL support (e.g., classroom management, emotion regulation) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Participate in relevant teaming to share SEL perspective to ensure SEL continues to be systemically implemented Collaborate with administrator in positive discipline using restorative practices 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Provide consultation regarding SEL support 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Oversee community partnerships offering services in the school/for students Data monitoring for SEL effectiveness of community partnerships
Tier 1	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Classroom lessons supporting SEL development Facilitate circle lessons Coordinate school-wide advisory program Support/teach Indiana Employability Standards 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Co-teach SEL lesson with teachers Provide professional development to support educator self-care and well-being Provide data from needs assessment or universal screening data to educators 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Provide professional development with administrator on SEL to whole staff, introducing SEL and building educator SEL knowledge and skill necessary for implementation Review data from school climate survey for continuous improvement cycle 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Provide SEL reinforcement activities for at-home practice (e.g., post on website or send in newsletter) Coordinate an SEL family event 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Coordinate community advisory groups Build community partnerships

Note. SEL = social/emotional learning.

Competencies within a school district. The strategies are placed at the MTSS tiers, yet several strategies can span tiers. For example, consultation can span Tiers 2 and 3. School counselors should be creative and flexible in integrating SEL strategies into the school counseling program. These strategies are not an exhaustive list; rather, they serve as samples for school counselors to explore with their administrator and advisory team, ensuring that they fit within the scope and goals of the school counseling program.

Summary and Next Steps

We call on school counselors to put the knowledge, research, and our continued insight about mental health and SEL into action. Building on CASEL's foundational work in SEL, the Indiana SEL Competencies use educational neuroscience as a foundation to address the three recommendations (Dusenbury

et al., 2019; S. Jones et al., 2019) identified as key factors contributing to healthy SEL development: (a) focus on SEL development across multiple sociocultural contexts, (b) focus on cultural responsiveness and cultural/racial identity development with the explicit instruction to support a strength-based cultural lens for both adults and students, and (c) focus on the intentional SEL strategies designed for students affected by trauma and chronic adversity. The Indiana SEL Competencies have been connected intentionally to strategic state initiatives (i.e., employability skills and MTSS), and school counselors can leverage this alignment to further support the cognitive, social/emotional, behavioral, and ethical development for all students. Furthermore, school counselors can provide consultation, professional development, and resources for educators and families to aid in their growth and development in the seven Indiana SEL Competencies. Finally, outreach and advocacy to policy makers, both locally and nationally, will

continue to be an integral part of this work. An immense amount has been accomplished since the January 2019 release of the Indiana SEL Competencies. However, school counselors’ telling of their story, both qualitatively and quantitatively (outcome data), to policy makers is imperative. School counselors need to use their training in leadership and advocacy to share outcome data not only with their school leaders but also with legislators. Sharing how SEL benefits all students and specific subgroups of students, illustrating the culturally responsive dimension of the SEL competencies, is crucial. The Indiana SEL Competencies provide an opportunity to shine a light on school counseling and the services school counselors are uniquely trained to provide within the school community. School counselors need to seize this opportunity, demonstrating their knowledge, skills, and leadership ability to implement SEL across the school community. Indiana’s SEL Competencies and all resources connected to the competencies are accessible and available to all states. SEL is an organic fit as school counselors build comprehensive school counseling programs.

We encourage school counselors nationally to find strategic state or local initiatives to align with SEL. The next important step is for school counselors to articulate their expertise in both SEL and the specified strategic initiative. Finally, school counselors need to seek opportunities to position themselves as leaders, advocates, and change agents within the framework of SEL. In Indiana and other states, the momentum of SEL continues to grow. School counselors must seize this opportunity to ensure that the profession of school counseling is at the center of SEL implementation. The ultimate goal of school counselors’ work is ensuring that all students receive a high-quality, strength-based, equitable education—a goal parallel to that of SEL.

Appendix A

Connections to Strategic Priorities and Approaches

The following seven drivers in SEL frameworks are presented in Dusenbury et al. (2019).

- **Academic integration:** SEL competencies are critical for successful engagement and execution in all learning. Making these connections explicit is important to encourage educators to foster student SEL competencies that support academics.
- **Mental health and well-being** is foundational to social/emotional adjustment and competence. Trauma and other adverse childhood experiences can negatively affect mental health and social/emotional and academic development.
- *Whole child* is a coordinated approach to education and public health that works to ensure that each child will be “healthy, safe, engaged, supported, and challenged.” Thanks in part to EESA, many states are organizing to reflect a whole child approach, and equity and cultural responsiveness, in their educational systems.
- **Workforce readiness, college and career readiness, and 21st-century skills** are closely aligned with SEL because

social/emotional skills (such as self-management, communication, goal setting, collaboration, and responsible decision making) are all critical skills for success in college and career.

- **School climate and culture** refer to the quality and the norms and values of the school environment. School climate and culture are associated with student and teacher social/emotional well-being.
- **Character education and development** is a process designed to promote citizenship, civic principles and values, and ethical behavior. It aligns with social and emotional development.
- Use of multi-tiered system of support (MTSS; formerly called response to intervention, or RTI) recognizes that academic and behavioral functioning are intertwined. MTSS is a systemic approach designed to identify and coordinate evidence-based interventions and supports (PBIS). SEL programs and approaches are often seen as an important component of universal approaches within MTSS because they are designed to promote positive academic and behavioral outcomes in all students.

Available at <https://measuringSEL.caseli.org/wp-content/uploads/2019/02/Framework-C.3.pdf>

Appendix B

Employability Skills Standards (Competencies)

Indiana’s Employability Skills Standards allow students to be prepared for the ever-changing needs of today’s workforce. These standards are to be implemented in the 2019-2020 school year. The expectation is for students to work through the standards in multi-subject areas. As students move through grade levels, they will work with and experience the standards at those grade bands (K-2, 3-5, 6-8, 9-10, and 11-12). The standards are based on the National Employability Skill Standards from the Office of Career, Technical, and Adult Education (OCTAE), the Indiana Department of Workforce Development’s Employability Skills Benchmarks, the Governor’s Work Ethic Certificate, and the Indiana Department of Education’s Social-Emotional Learning Competencies. The standards are arranged within four key areas: Mindsets (M), Work Ethic (WE), Learning Strategies (LS), and Social and Emotional Skills (SE).

Mindsets	Work Ethic
Learning Strategies	Social and Emotional Skills

Mindsets (M) *The established set of attitudes impacting self-growth.*

I. Lifelong Learning

Demonstrate willingness to work and learn, and continually apply new knowledge.

(continued)

(continued)

2. Self-Confidence

Possess belief in own ability to succeed and assert self when necessary.

Work Ethic (WE) *A set of values centered on the importance of doing work and reflected especially in a desire or determination to work hard.*

3. Self Discipline

Demonstrate self-control and behave in accordance with rules with minimal direction.

4. Independence

Successfully carry out expectations with minimal supervision.

5. Perseverance

Demonstrate endurance, and capacity to complete tasks.

6. Time Management and Organization

Plan and organize long and short-term goals while understanding how to balance school, home, and community activities.

7. Adaptability

Manage transitions and adjust to changing situations and responsibilities.

8. Integrity

Act in a trustworthy and honest manner.

9. Professionalism

Demonstrate skills and behaviors appropriate for school and work environments.

Learning Strategies (LS) *Processes and tactics students employ to aid in the cognitive work of thinking, remembering or learning.*

10. Effective Communication

Apply skills to clearly, effectively, and convincingly express ideas and messages to others appropriate to the environment.

11. Aptitude Awareness

Identify and communicate individual interests and skills that align related coursework and experiences to potential career paths and to in-demand occupations.

12. Decision-Making

Utilize critical thinking skills and perspectives of others to make informed decisions based on options, rewards, risks, limits, and goals.

13. Initiative

Apply self-motivation and self-direction to work and learning.

14. Attention to Detail

Achieve thoroughness and accuracy when accomplishing a task.

15. Problem Solving

Apply critical and creative thinking skills to resolve problems.

Social and Emotional Skills (SE) *The process through which the knowledge, the attitudes, and the skills necessary to understand and manage emotions, set and achieve positive goals, feel and show empathy for others, establish and maintain positive relationships, and make responsible decisions is acquired.*

16. Regulation

Recognize and manage one's emotions.

17. Connection

Demonstrate the ability to network with others through social awareness and cultural sensitivity.

18. Collaboration

Work well with others in a team.

Available at <https://www.doe.in.gov/sites/default/files/wf-stem/employability-skills-competencies-final.pdf>

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Author Biographies

Brandie M. Oliver, PhD, is an associate professor with the school counseling program in the College of Education at Butler University in Indianapolis, IN. Email: bmoliver@butler.edu

Christy T. Berger is director of social, emotional, and behavioral wellness at the Indiana Department of Education. Email: CBerger@doe.in.gov