

This document is intended to assist school professionals in differentiating between Social and Emotional Learning (SEL) Competency Assessment, Universal Social, Emotional, and Behavioral (SEB) screening, and more targeted SEB assessment. This document provides some basic information relating to screening and assessment, with a selection of additional resources linked at the end to support the comprehensive planning necessary to implement effective practices.

It is important to know the **purpose** of your intended assessment, as that will determine both the type of assessment you choose and the consent and assent requirements. Action must be taken to ensure assessment and screening policies and practices are trauma sensitive, culturally responsive, and done through a lens of advancing equity.

	SEL Competency Assessment	Universal SEB Screening	Targeted SEB Assessment
Definition	The evaluation of the nature, quality, or ability of students' SEL competencies, specifically interpersonal and intrapersonal knowledge, skills, attitudes, and mindsets to identify a level of strength and to guide instructional practices with a continuous improvement lens (McKown 2020; CASEL Assessment Workgroup 2018).	Mental health screening is not a product, but rather a process for identifying students at risk of developing mental and behavioral health challenges (Twyford, et al., 2010), as well as an evidenced-based and proactive method for monitoring universal (Tier 1) supports (Romer et al., 2020).  "The most widely supported SEB screeners focus on social, emotional, and behavioral indicators that are reliable (consistent), valid (accurate and applicable), and associated with SEB wellness and academic success" (Romer et al., 2020).  SEB screening involves assessment of early signs of psychological problems, as well as the presence of resilience factors and indicators of wellbeing (Romer et al., 2020).	The gathering and integration of data to evaluate a person's behavior, abilities, and other characteristics, particularly for the purposes of making a diagnosis or treatment recommendation. [Professionals] assess diverse psychiatric problems (e.g., anxiety, substance abuse) and nonpsychiatric concerns (e.g., intelligence) in a range of clinical, educational, organizational, forensic, and other settings. Assessment data may be gathered through interviews, observation, standardized tests, self-report measures, physiological or psychophysiological measurement devices, or other specialized procedures and apparatuses (APA, 2020).  Note: A targeted assessment could be related to a special education assessment or Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 [29 U.S.C.794].



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Purpose	Formative Assessment - To measure how SEL implementation is impacting instruction and whether any adjustments need to be made (CASEL Assessment Workgroup 2018)  Summative Assessment - To undertake a higher-level examination of the effectiveness of districtwide or schoolwide SEL implementation, as well as classroom-based programs (CASEL Assessment Workgroup 2018)  Advance Equity - It can help to reveal disparities in the degree to which students' needs are being supported by schools and districts (CASEL Assessment Workgroup 2018).  Deepen Understanding - Comprehend how SEL competencies manifest in students over time (McKown & Clark 2019).	The goal of SEB screening is to generate new and useful information so that students can be better served in interventions that prevent or mitigate mental health challenges and promote resiliency (DPI, 2018; NCSMH, 2020). SEB screening may be conducted to achieve the the following:  • Improve access to mental health supports • Identify students at risk for future negative outcomes • Identify students who may need monitoring or intervention (i.e., secondary or tertiary) • Inform decisions about needed services across universal, targeted, or intensive services • Identify personal strengths and wellness, as well as risk factors and signs of emotional distress • Assess effectiveness of universal social, emotional, and behavioral curriculum • Show strengths and concerns specific to certain subsets of a school's population, such as a single grade or age group • Reduce stigma when asking youth about mental health within the school setting • Enhance students' sense of empowerment and self-esteem	The purpose of individualized, targeted assessment is to determine individual level of risk and resilience, and to identify the most appropriate actions to ensure the immediate and long-term safety and well-being of the individual (NASP, 2015). Targeted assessment may be conducted to achieve the following:  • Used to aid diagnosis of a mental health disorder, neurological disorder, specific disease, and/or possible drug abuse  • Assess levels of risk for acute conditions such as suicide risk  • Determine eligibility for special education (e.g., learning disability, emotional disability).  • Distinguish between physical and mental health issues that may cause similar symptoms when used by medical professionals  • Evaluate the mental health of a person who has been referred for problems at school, home, and/or their personal life and relationships  • Improve clinical decision making and treatment outcomes  • Assess for trauma history and related impacts



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What it is NOT	<ul> <li>Not a tool to determine special education eligibility.</li> <li>Not a remediation program or other intervention.</li> <li>Not a behavior intervention strategy.</li> <li>Not a diagnostic tool for students at risk for mental health concerns.</li> <li>Not a tool to report student deficits (SEL Competency scores should not be included on a report card).</li> </ul>	<ul> <li>Not a clinical evaluation.</li> <li>Not a diagnostic tool for students at risk for mental health concerns.</li> <li>Should not be used for individual progress monitoring to determine the efficacy of Tier 2 or Tier 3 intervention.</li> <li>Not an assessment of attitudes and feelings (e.g., school climate surveys, SEL competencies).</li> <li>Not a comprehensive system needs assessment, which seeks to understand the range of needs among stakeholder groups, and the overall functioning of the broader system.</li> </ul>	<ul> <li>Not used as a universal screener.</li> <li>When administered in school, it does not supplant the need for a clinical evaluation by a mental health provider.</li> </ul>
Considerations	<ul> <li>Use an assessment tool that is best designed for the competency being assessed.</li> <li>Assess strengths; do not use a deficit model.</li> <li>Assess adult fidelity of intentional instruction before assessing student growth (post-baseline).</li> <li>SEL skills are developmental and contextual.</li> <li>Challenging behaviors are not indicative of SEL skill deficits, as misbehavior may occur for numerous reasons.</li> <li>SEL is not a reason for a student to receive tier 2 or tier 3 support, but</li> </ul>	<ul> <li>Consider using SEB screening tools that assess both student strengths as well as risk factors.</li> <li>Schools are encouraged to engage in this process in a way that is both meaningful and manageable. This includes using proactive plans with considerations found in such guides as the <u>DPI Mental Health Screening Resource Guide</u>.</li> <li>Select screeners that focus on student behavior(s) of concern, are contextually appropriate and that generate useable data aimed toward a specific outcome.</li> <li>Include students, educators, and</li> </ul>	<ul> <li>Understand informed consent and FERPA requirements related to sharing pupil record information with mental health providers.</li> <li>Obtain parental consent for individualized, targeted assessments.</li> <li>Consider federal, state, and local requirements around consent and assent procedures in conjunction with professional ethical codes.</li> <li>Consider IDEA requirements regarding the obligation to refer students suspected of</li> </ul>



	SEL skill development may be included as PART of an intervention.	families in the selection, use, and intervention planning to improve engagement and appropriateness for the population.  Consider piloting screening procedures in one school and at one time point in the year to problem solve implementation considerations.	having a disability for evaluation (Child Find) and parent's rights related to assessments that may impact eligibility, services and placement in special education (Procedural Safeguards).
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Equity considerations	<ul> <li>Should not be used as a grade on a report card or a score on a teacher evaluation.</li> <li>Should not be used to identify deficits and further stigmatize students or teachers.</li> <li>Cultural context must be considered (e.g., how is data captured, how is it used, with whom is data shared, and whose stories are represented).</li> <li>SEL is not a behavior management or compliance tool.</li> <li>Normed on the population for which you intend to use it.</li> </ul>	<ul> <li>Screening measures and procedures should be normed to the population for which you intend to use it.</li> <li>Screening should be done in a trauma sensitive manner.</li> <li>Ensure that strengths and perspectives of students from all cultures and identities are captured.</li> </ul>	<ul> <li>Culturally responsive assessment includes linguistic considerations and context.</li> <li>Signs or symptoms may be viewed differently in different populations due to bias (e.g., anger, aggression, and irritability are signs of depression, however these signs can be missed [or misunderstood] in African American boys).</li> <li>Normed on the population for which you intend to use it.</li> </ul>
What you do with the information	<ul> <li>Inform adult practice.</li> <li>Identify professional development needs.</li> <li>Identify what to intentionally instruct.</li> <li>Assess fidelity of the instructional practice.</li> </ul>	<ul> <li>Follow up with students and families as indicated in the screening instructions.</li> <li>Consider additional universal or targeted services to address needs that are identified.</li> <li>Consider additional targeted</li> </ul>	<ul> <li>Obtain necessary information sharing authorizations, consents, and assents.</li> <li>Follow up with a mental health provider when necessary.</li> <li>School mental health professionals support the</li> </ul>



		assessments that may be needed to further understand individual student concerns.  • Provide additional universal level supports if a high percentage of students score in the at-risk range.	clinical goals in the school setting.  Develop individualized support plans, including prevention and crisis response.
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Examples	<ul> <li>Compendium from CASEL</li> <li>Assessments aligned with DPI SEL         Competencies     </li> <li>Rand Education Assessment Finder:         Measuring social, emotional, and academic competencies     </li> </ul>	<ul> <li>Best Practices is Universal SEB         Screening: An Implementation Guide     </li> <li>SHAPE System Assessment Library</li> </ul>	<ul> <li>Examples are wide-ranging with selection guided by mental health professionals</li> </ul>

### **Parent and Guardian Consent and Student Assent**

### SEL Competency Assessment

Schools and educators implementing a comprehensive SEL system are not required to notify parents, guardians, and
caregivers of SEL competency assessment. Assessment that is used to determine instructional methods or that is part of
regular school activities does not require consent. However, best practice would dictate that all stakeholders are informed
and involved in the process of determining the purpose of the assessment, what is assessed, how it is administered, as well as
how that assessment data is then used.

### Universal SEB Screening

- SEB screening or progress monitoring that gathers information by reviewing existing data or gathering input from classroom teachers and other educators (e.g., review of student data, including office disciplinary referrals, suspension and detention rates, attendance, check-in/check-out, and other intervention data, with no direct contact with a student) does not require parent and guardian consent.
- The type of consent required in public schools related to SEB Screening is primarily determined by the Protection of Pupil



Rights Amendment (PPRA), 20 U.S.C. § 1232h and 34 C.F.R. part 98. The PPRA requires consent to be obtained before students are given a "psychiatric or psychological examination or test," in which the primary purpose is to reveal "[m]ental and psychological problems potentially embarrassing to the student or [their] family." 34 C.F.R. § 98.4. This requirement can apply to behavioral health surveys and assessment tools, depending on the types of questions included in the measure that is administered. A critical question asked by the PPRA is whether student participation is required. If student participation is required, then active consent must be obtained. It is best practice to avoid incentivizing or providing consequences based on student participation, as doing so may cause a student or parent to feel participation is effectively required. Additionally, best practice includes giving minor students the opportunity to assent or dissent prior to test administration.

- According to the <u>US Department of Education</u>, "Although these terms are not found in PPRA, 'active' consent is commonly
  understood to mean that a parent must provide a signed, dated, written consent before his or her child can participate in a
  survey. 'Passive' consent, on the other hand, is understood to signify that consent is assumed after a parent is notified and
  given the opportunity to opt their child out of participating in a survey." Rights under PPRA transfer from the parents to a
  student who is 18 years old.
- School districts must notify parents and guardians of their rights under the PPRA, including the right to opt their child out of a survey or assessment covered by the PPRA. Parents and guardians must also be given the opportunity to inspect any instruments (e.g., a screening tool) prior to administration.
- Ounder Title IV-A of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act of 1965, 20 U.S.C. § 7101, Parents Right to Know, districts are required to get *active* parental consent for mental health assessment and services, including mental health screening, **if** your district purchased the screening or services using Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA) Title IV-A money. Some exceptions apply, including to protect the immediate health and safety of the child, and other instances in which an entity actively seeks parental consent but such consent cannot be reasonably obtained, as determined by the LEA, in the case of a child whose parent has not responded to the consent notice or a child who has attained 14 years of age and is an unaccompanied youth, as defined in section 725 of the McKinney-Vento Homeless Assistance Act (42 U.S.C. § 11434a). The statutory text can be found on the National Center on Safe and Supportive Learning Environments Title IV A website and additional information on the DPI Title IV-A website: https://dpi.wi.gov/titleiva.
- For more information on rights and responsibilities related to the PPRA, please see the <u>U.S. Department of Education PPRA</u> for Parents, <u>PPRA Model Notice & Consent Opt-Out for Specific Activities</u>, and the <u>Annual Notice to Superintendents</u>.



### Targeted Assessment

 For children who are suspected of having a disability in any area (e.g., cognitive disability, emotional behavioral disability, specific learning disability, speech and language), informed consent meeting the criteria in 34 C.F.R. 300.300 is required prior to an evaluation under the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA) or Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973.

\*\*This information has been designed to help local school districts develop their own local policies regarding consent and assent. It is not to be construed as legal advice. A local education agency should consult with its own legal counsel when formulating local policies and procedures regarding parent and guardian consent, and minor assent.

#### **Additional Questions**

### 1. How are SEB assessment and school climate surveys different?

a. Social, Emotional, and Behavioral screening differs from other assessments of attitudes and feelings, such as within school climate surveys, in that SEB screening focuses on an individual student's level of SEB health and the student's identity is known. In contrast, school climate surveys typically yield data that are aggregated across groups to indicate a given school's safety and SEB health as perceived by a variety of stakeholders (e.g., student, staff, parents, guardians) and can provide another source of important data, especially in regard to environmental and contextual factors (Romer 2020).

#### 2. Should we screen for Adverse Childhood Experiences in school?

a. The DPI does not recommend this practice. The Adverse Childhood Experiences (ACE) study was a study done on a population to determine health risks of the population. Knowing a person's ACE score does not tell us how that ACE impacted them and what supports they may need. Engaging with effective trauma sensitive schools (TSS) philosophy and practices ensures a universal level approach to caring for students and adults. This approach is both preventative, as well as comprehensive, in that it encourages policies and practices that benefit all people and systems. When an individual student is struggling, one should try to uncover any potential barriers and to problem-solve solutions that match needs. For example, knowing a student had an ACE is not as informative in a school setting as knowing a specific impact of that trauma, such as knowing a student's trauma response is activated by loud noises.



### 3. What do I need to know about behavioral assessment as part of a special education evaluation?

a. There are several things to consider when conducting behavioral assessments for students as part of either a special education evaluation or for the purpose of progress monitoring IEP goals. When a student is referred for a special education evaluation, the IEP team must obtain written consent from a parent prior to conducting any assessment that will be used to determine the student's eligibility for special education and their disability-related needs. If a student has social, emotional, and behavioral needs that are addressed through an IEP goal, the IEP needs to document how progress toward that goal will be assessed and how often progress will be reported to the parents. For additional information regarding special education evaluations and progress monitoring, refer to DPI resources on <a href="Comprehensive Special Education Evaluations">Comprehensive Special Education Evaluations</a> and <a href="College and Career Ready IEPs">College and Career Ready IEPs</a>.

### 4. Can parents and guardians access screening and assessment results?

- a. Parents and legal guardians have access to pupil records in Wisconsin, including both progress and behavioral records (Wis. Stat. §§ 118.125(2)(a)& (b)). The definition of behavioral records includes "psychological tests, personality evaluations, records of conversations, any written statement relating specifically to an individual pupil's behavior, tests relating specifically to achievement or measurement of ability... and any other pupil records that are not progress records" (Wis. Stat. § 118.125(1)(a)).
- b. A school psychologist, counselor, social worker and nurse, and any teacher or administrator designated by the school board who engages in alcohol or drug abuse program activities, shall keep confidential information received from a pupil that the pupil or another pupil is using or is experiencing problems resulting from the use of alcohol or other drugs unless the student consents in writing to this disclosure, there is serious and imminent danger to the health, safety or life of any person and disclosure will alleviate that danger, or the information is required to be reported as part of suspected child maltreatment or school violence. (Wis. Stat. § 118.126(1).)
- c. The definition of pupil records specifically excludes, "[r]ecords necessary for, and available only to persons involved in, the psychological treatment of a pupil." Wis. Stat. § 118.125(1)(d)(2). The term "psychological treatment of a pupil" is not defined in this section of statute. In chapter 51, treatment records are defined as specific records created in the course of providing services to individuals for mental illness, developmental disabilities, alcoholism, or drug dependence maintained by treatment facilities or licensed mental health providers as detailed in statute. Wis. Stat. § 51.30(1)(b). Chapter 51 contains provisions for access and disclosure of treatment records. Wis. Stat. § 51.30(4).



### 5. Should we include SEL scores on the school or district report card?

a. No. Intentionally teaching SEL is an important strategy for schools and districts, however, SEL competence assessment scores are not designed to be used as a grade or score. Social and emotional learning assessment results are not a proxy score for behavior, and current assessments are not validated to be used in this way.

#### 6. What SEL assessment tool should we use?

a. To choose a SEL assessment tool, you need to determine your goals--both what data will support (e.g., monitor student progress in a particular SEL competency area) and what data will not support (e.g., evaluate teacher performance). Once you have identified your goals, review available, evidence-based assessment tools to determine if they have the potential to address those SEL assessment goals. Additionally, the assessment tool should fit within your SEL framework, support your SEL competencies of focus, and make sense methodologically when considering your target population. Language and terms used in the tool should reflect trauma-sensitive culturally-responsive practice that avoids stereotyping and perpetuating negative bias.

#### 7. How do we assess SEL skills for tier 2 or tier 3 intervention?

a. SEL competence assessments are not designed for this purpose. There are many possible reasons that a student may require additional support in either tier 2 or tier 3 programming. It is not recommended that schools identify students strictly for SEL skill remediation for tiers 2 and 3. While SEL skill deficits may contribute to a child's behavioral and emotional challenges, they are not the root cause of the problem. For example, a student may act out and not demonstrate good anger management skills. This does not mean that they lack the skill or that they are unable to apply what they know. If the root cause of the problem is grief, for example, reteaching and practicing SEL skills is not addressing the problem. Social and emotional skill remediation may be part of an intervention, but it should not be the sole purpose for receiving tier 2 or tier 3 support.

#### 8. Can school staff administer SEB screeners and assessments? What training is needed?

a. Staff need to evaluate each assessment's recommendations for training and license information. Many universal screeners are able to be administered by classroom teachers, though they may need a trained individual to score or interpret results.

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#### Additional Resources for Consideration -

### • SEL Competency Assessment

- SEL Assessment Technical Guidebook Buros Center for Testing Spencer Foundation Project Scholars (2020)
- o Best Practices in Universal Social, Emotional, and Behavioral Screening: An Implementation Guide (2020)
- Making SEL Assessment Work. 10 Practitioner Beliefs National Practitioner Advisory Group Competence Assessment (2019)
- Are You Ready to Assess Social and Emotional Learning and Development, 2nd Ed-American Institutes for Research -Competence Assessment (2019)
- SEL Assessment Must Be Strengths Based, But What Does that Mean? (CASEL 2019)
- Mental Health and Social Emotional Learning, <u>Blog post</u> (McKown 2020)
- <u>Choosing and Using SEL Competency Assessments: What Schools and Districts Need to Know</u> CASEL Assessment Workgroup (2018)
- o Rand Education Assessment Finder: Measuring social, emotional, and academic competencies

#### SEB Screening & Assessment

- Mental Health Screening Resource Guide (DPI 2018)
- Best Practices is Universal SEB Screening: An Implementation Guide Positive Behavioral Interventions & Supports (PBIS)
   (2021)
- <u>Universal Social, Emotional, and Behavioral Screening for Monitoring and Early Intervention</u> California Department of Education (2020)
- Guidance for Trauma Screening in Schools Defending Childhood State Policy Initiative (2016)
- School Mental Health Quality Guide: Screening National Center for School Mental Health (2020)

#### • Consent Guidance

- PPRA for Parents U.S. Department of Education Information (USDOE)
- PPRA Model Notice Student Privacy Policy Office (SPPO) of the USDOE
- PPRA Annual Notice to Superintendents U.S. Department of Education Information (USDOE)



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