

Glossary

This glossary is intended to accompany the Washington state SEL resource package which contains the Implementation Guide; the Standards, Benchmarks, and Indicators; the Module, and the Briefs. Several of these terms also appear within the Legislative Report. Having a common understanding of the terms as we learn together about this complex topic will enhance mutual understanding across the disciplines.

Adverse childhood experiences (ACEs) are traumatic experiences—such as abuse, household dysfunction, or neglect—that occur in a person’s life before the age of 18. The hallmark Kaiser ACE study (1955 to 1997) proved there was an association between ACEs and problems with health/well-being later on in life, demonstrating the urgent need to properly support children who have been affected by ACEs. Since then, numerous studies on ACEs have been conducted (e.g., the Behavioral Risk Factor Surveillance System).

Benchmark is a term used to identify specific and measurable skill-building milestones within a social emotional learning (SEL) standard. SEL standards, benchmarks, and indicators form part of the Washington State SEL framework, which articulates social emotional learning and development in practical, tangible ways that can be observed and supported intentionally.

Codesign is an approach to design attempting to actively involve all stakeholders in the design process to help ensure the result meets their needs and is usable. The term is used in a variety of fields as a way of creating environments that are more responsive and appropriate to the users' cultural, emotional, social, and practical needs.

Competency refers to a wide range of knowledge, skills, and traits applicable to all academic, career, and civic settings, and believed to be necessary for success in today’s world.

Cultural humility is about accepting one’s limitations by increasing self-awareness of biases and perceptions and engaging in a life-long self-reflection process about how to put these aside and learn from others.

Culturally responsive teaching and learning addresses existing issues of power and privilege and can empower all students in ways that respect and honor their intersecting cultural influences. Culturally responsive approaches draw upon students’ unique strengths and experiences while orienting learning in relation to individuals’ cultural contexts. Delivering a culturally responsive education requires ongoing attention to attitudes, environments, curricula, teaching strategies, and family/community involvement efforts.

Culture is a product of relationships among and between individuals and stakeholder groups, a school's social norms (what is considered acceptable and unacceptable behavior within the school community), and the expectations individuals have for themselves and for others. School culture encompasses issues directly related to equity, such as the physical and emotional safety of students, the orderliness and welcoming nature of classrooms and public spaces, and the degree to which a school embraces and celebrates racial, ethnic, linguistic, and cultural diversity.

Developmentally appropriate education uses an understanding of child development to design programs or approaches that meet the needs of a particular age group and developmental stage.

Disproportionate discipline or discipline disparities is when one demographic group is targeted for disciplinary actions at a greater rate and/or in harsher or more exclusionary ways than students in other demographic groups. Nationally, the Government Accountability Office has reported that black students, boys, and students with disabilities are subjected to disproportionate discipline in public schools.

Educators are people who provide instruction. They can be school day teachers, school staff, afterschool teachers, community partners, or other people who contribute to the educational culture of a school.

Environmental and instructional conditions for learning are the varied factors that affect a student's ability to learn, including the school or classroom culture and climate, the curriculum, the instructional approaches used, etc.

Equity is achieved in a system in which each child receives what he or she needs to develop to his or her full academic and social potential.

Essential elements are the primary approaches to successfully implementing SEL in a school or district. The three essential elements described by the Washington SEL Implementation Guide are: 1) Create conditions to support students' SEL; 2) collaborate with families, communities, and providers of expanded learning opportunities (ELO); and 3) build adult capacity.

Evidence-based approaches to education create practical applications informed by findings from the best available research.

Framework outlines a shared, statewide approach to implementing SEL at the district and school level. The SEL framework, which is included in the WA SEL Implementation Guide, offers

this shared vision through four guiding principles and establishes three essential elements for successful SEL implementation.

Grade band is a group of grades or ages. In Washington State, there are four grade bands: early elementary (kindergarten through Grade 3), late elementary (Grades 4 and 5), middle school (Grades 6–8), and high school/adult (Grade 9 and beyond).

Growth mindset describes a self-perception or “self-theory” where an individual believes they can learn more or become smarter if they work hard and persevere, and that their innate qualities (e.g., intelligence or talent) are just the starting point. This concept was developed by psychologist Carol Dweck. The opposite of a growth mindset is a “fixed mindset,” where an individual has the self-perception that their basic qualities are fixed or set. Dweck’s research suggests that students with a growth mindset are more likely to take academic risks, be academically resilient, and foster a broader love of learning.

Guiding principles are the foundational themes that inform the planning, implementation, review and redesign, and sustainability of the SEL approach in Washington State. The four principles are equity, cultural responsiveness, universal design, and trauma-informed practices.

Historic oppression refers to chronic, pervasive, and intergenerational experiences of oppression in our society. The Washington SEL Implementation Guide notes that bias, historic oppression, exposure to trauma, and inequitable access to resources influence students’ social emotional skill development and adults’ perceptions of students’ skills.

Implicit bias is defined as the mental process that causes us to have negative feelings about and attitudes toward people based on characteristics like race, ethnicity, age, and appearance. This cognitive process functions in our subconscious mind; people are typically not aware of the negative biases that develop over the course of a lifetime.

Inclusive refers to an intentional approach to creating learning environments and experiences that support all students.

Indicator is a measure of growth. In the Washington SEL framework, indicators are the smallest and most precise metric for quantifying growth in social emotional skills.

Linguistic assets are part of an asset-based way of thinking about instructional approaches for students who speak English as a second language or are English language learners. This approach recognizes and builds on the student’s first language and recognizes that as a strength.

Modules are individual professional development offerings. OSPI has developed an SEL online module consisting of five professional development learning segments.

School administration refers to the leadership and other non-teaching staff at a school or district.

School climate stems from people’s experiences of school life and can be thought of as the collective “mood” of the school. Climate can vary based on events and changes in the school environment. It both influences and is influenced by school culture.

Skills refers to a wide range of knowledge, skills, and traits applicable to all academic, career, and civic settings, and believed to be necessary for success in today’s world.

Stakeholder refers to anyone who is invested in the welfare and success of a school and its students. As part of its efforts to develop the Washington SEL Implementation Guide, Washington State has engaged with stakeholders including families, educators, community-based organizations, and tribal representatives across the state.

Stereotype threat refers to the risk of confirming negative stereotypes about an individual’s racial, ethnic, gender, or cultural group.

Toxic stress is a strong, frequent, and sometimes prolonged activation of the body’s stress response system. Without appropriate support, adverse childhood experiences can cause or trigger toxic stress.

Trauma-informed approaches to human care build on an awareness of the deep and lasting impact that trauma can have on individuals and communities. In Washington State’s approach to SEL, a trauma-informed approach recognizes the unique strengths and challenges of children and youth in light of the adversities they face. The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) outline six guiding principles for a trauma-informed approach: safety; trustworthiness and transparency; peer support; collaboration and mutuality; empowerment voice and choice; and cultural, historical, and gender issues.

Universal design for learning (UDL) refers to a “set of principles for curriculum development that give all individuals equal opportunities to learn. UDL provides a blueprint for creating instructional goals, methods, materials, and assessments that work for everyone—not a single, one-size-fits-all solution, but rather flexible approaches that can be customized and adjusted for individual needs.”

Acronyms

Acronym	Definition
ACEs	Adverse Childhood Experiences
AIR	American Institutes for Research
CASEL	Collaborative for Academic, Social, and Emotional Learning
CAST	Center for Applied Special Technology
CDI	MacArthur-Bates Communicative Development Inventories (CDI)
DCYF	Department of Children, Youth, and Families
ELA	English Language Arts
ELOs	Expanded Learning Opportunities
EOGOAC	Educational Opportunity Gap Oversight and Accountability Committee
ESSA	Every Student Succeeds Act
GPA s	Grade Point Average
GTL	Center for Great Teachers and Leaders (at American Institutes for Research)
LEAD Tool™	Leadership for Equity Assessment & Development Tool
LEAs	Local Education Agencies
MTSS	Multi-Tiered System of Supports
NCSSLE	National Center on Safe and Supportive Learning Environments
OSPI	Office of Superintendent of Public Instruction
PACE	Partners Advancing Character Education
PBIS	Positive Behavior Intervention System
PD	Professional Development

Acronym	Definition
PDSA	Plan, Do, Study, Act
REL NW	Regional Educational Laboratory Northwest
SAFE	Sequenced-Active-Focused-Explicit
SBI s	Standards, Benchmarks, and Indicators
SEAD	Social Emotional and Academic Development
SEAs	State Education Agencies
SEL	Social Emotional Learning
SELB	Social Emotional Learning Benchmarks (Workgroup)
SELI	Social Emotional Learning Indicators (Workgroup)
TPEP, 5D+	Teacher/Principal Evaluation Program, Rubric for Instructional Growth and Teacher Evaluation
UDL	Universal Design for Learning
WSSDA	Washington State School Directors' Association
YDEKC	Youth Development Executives of King County

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