**Appendix A: SEL Competencies and Skill Areas Represented in the Thirteen SEL Resources**

The definitions of each skill area and examples given are designed to provide a concise paraphrasing of the content of the SEL Resources for Grades 1-3. The text in this document was created by DESE staff and members of the Early Learning Program Quality Workgroup with feedback from pilot sites in schools across MA (see list of contributors and pilot sites in Acknowledgements). Examples derive largely from the evidence-based performance indicators in the Resources, however the examples given do not reflect full competency in any given skill area.

|  |
| --- |
| SEL COMPETENCY and Skill Areas: Grades 1, 2, and 3 |
| 1: SELF-AWARENESS: Identifying and Expressing Emotions |
| DEFINITION | The ability to accurately identify, recognize and express emotions, including:* Recognizing emotions in others;
* Identifying emotions in oneself and others; and
* Expressing emotions.
 |
| EXAMPLES | Students can name the emotion they feel, or they can select a picture of someone whose expression matches the way they feel. Student can accurately match pictures of faces that show specific basic emotions with the name of that emotion. Student begins to identify the emotions of others and of characters in stories.Student begins to express difficult or complex emotions appropriately. |
| 2: SELF-AWARENESS: Demonstrating Accurate Self-Perception |
| DEFINITION | The ability to accurately assess one’s strengths and limitations; a sense of being included as well as:* Accurate self-perception
* Recognizing strengths
* Recognizing when you need help

The ability to know that you need help is accurate self-perception; knowing who to seek help from is social awareness.  |
| EXAMPLES | Students know their strengths, interests, and personal characteristics. For example, they can talk about themselves using terms such as: athletic, serious, playful, active, quiet, thoughtful, kind, a good problem-solver, a good friend/ team member, someone with a good sense of humor, someone who likes to do math (read or write or draw), as well as other characteristics.Student reports feeling like an important part of the life of the class, and that teachers encourage her/his participation and acknowledge and value her/his contributions.Student shows awareness that mistakes are part of learning. |
| 3: SELF-AWARENESS: Self-Efficacy/ Competence |
| DEFINITION | Demonstrating a well-grounded sense of confidence, optimism, and a growth mindset, including:* Self-confidence;
* Self-efficacy; and
* Belief in the value of effort.

Mindset: Believing that one’s most basic abilities, including intellect and social-emotional skills, can be developed through study, practice, and hard work which can ultimately lead to motivation to take on and complete tasks (Authority: Dweck)Self-efficacy: The degree to which individuals believe in their ability to perform tasks and thus control outcomes in their life (sometimes called “agency”). (Authority: Bandura; Rotter; Heckman) |
| EXAMPLES | Students embrace challenges and recognize that addressing those challenges makes them stronger and smarter.Students proceed with learning tasks with confidence in themselves. Student can work through something even when feeling frustrated or that something is hard to complete. |
| 4: SELF-MANAGEMENT: Demonstrating Impulse control and stress management |
| DEFINITION | The ability to successfully regulate one’s emotions, thoughts, and behaviors in different situations — effectively managing stress, controlling impulses, and motivating oneself. The ability to set and work toward personal and academic goals, including:* Impulse control;
* Stress management; and
* Self-discipline.

The ability to understand rules and behavioral expectations and to demonstrate self-control. The ability to determine when to seek help from a trusted adult to manage stress, problems, and strong emotions. |
| EXAMPLES | Students understand and accept behavioral consequences or may help select their own consequences, if appropriate.Students know and use a variety of strategies to calm themselves down. Students show self-control even when they are excited or feel strong emotions. Students recognize when their feelings, mood, or state of mind is making it hard for them to focus or work, so that they consider how best to cope with and manage their feelings. |
| 5: SOCIAL AWARENESS: Ability to display empathetic characteristics |
| DEFINITION | The ability to take the perspective of and empathize with others. Research tells us the cognitive skill required for true perspective-taking develops around age eight. Up until K-1st grade: while children may agree that different people can have different feelings about something, they are likely to confuse their own feelings with what another feels. Between ages 5-9, children start to understand that different people have different reactions because they have different perspectives as well as access to different information. By age 7-9, they begin to “step in someone else’s shoes” or predict what another person might say or feel about something, and why. |
| EXAMPLES | Students name the emotion they see a character displaying in a story they are reading together and discuss why that character feels that way.Students participate in “bucket-filling” activities in which they provide peers with positive authentic feedback.Students identify how different people (or characters) in a real situation (or a story) may feel very differently at the same time about the same thing. |
| 6: SOCIAL AWARENESS: Recognizing diversity and demonstrating respect for others. |
| DEFINITION | The ability to recognize and appreciate differences among people, and to respect others, including those from diverse backgrounds and cultures, including:* Recognizing and appreciating diversity; and
* Demonstrating respect for others.

Social awareness includes recognizing others as human, and that while people have many of the same needs, it is important to understand that we are diverse; we have different abilities and disabilities, appearances, races, cultures, family types and traditions. |
| EXAMPLES | Students learn from people with different experiences and opinions. Students understand and respect that people may act, dress, think and live differently based on their past experiences, including their family background and culture of origin. Students consider what others may be thinking and feeling. They learn to predict how a person they interact with, or how a character in a story, might feel, or how they might act, given their situation and perspective. |
| 7: RELATIONSHIP SKILLS: Communication |
| DEFINITION | Relationship skills include the ability to interact effectively with others by communicating clearly, and listening actively, including:* Conversing with others, in pairs or in groups;
* Listening actively;
* Asking appropriate questions;
* Using and understanding non-verbal cues and body language; and
* Using symbols to effectively communicate, including drawings, and writing as well as digital communication.

Being able to interact with others using effective communication skills is essential to learning; learning depends on positive relationships students build with others in the learning environment. |
| EXAMPLES | Throughout the early elementary grades, students become more able to converse with each other for an increasing number of back-and-forth exchanges (e.g., 3-5 exchanges). Students contribute ideas in classroom discussions, brainstorming sessions and small group work.Students actively and attentively listen with increasing stamina (e.g., for up to 30 minutes by the end of third grade).Students practice active listening with a partner, including reflecting back what they have heard and asking relevant and appropriate questions.  |
| 8: RELATIONSHIP SKILLS: Adult and Peer Relationships |
| DEFINITION | The ability to establish and maintain healthy and rewarding relationships with diverse individuals and groups, including both adults and peers and: * Social engagement;
* Relationship-building; and
* Teamwork.

Being able to engage in appropriate interactions with trusted and caring adults, to use them as resources and to cooperate in group work with peers.  |
| EXAMPLES | Students get along with their classmates; they are polite, kind, and greet each other appropriately and comfortably.Students are comfortable approaching and interacting with trusted adults in school to express their interests and needs. Students recognize that individuals may play different roles as part of an effective group and begin to recognize how they can be active and productive members of a group.Students are able to give their opinions, and to disagree with others respectfully. |
| 9: RELATIONSHIP SKILLS: Conflict Management |
| DEFINITION | The ability to negotiate conflict with others constructively, using strategies that have been modeled for them and/or a problem-solving model that they have studied and discussed. Competency in conflict management includes the ability to resist inappropriate social pressure: knowing how and when to say no and to stand up for oneself. (See also Self-efficacy and Responsible Decision-Making: Self-reflection and Evaluation).  |
| EXAMPLES | Students respect the opinions of others during a discussion or disagreement.Students work through most disagreements with others without adult intervention; however, they know when to ask for adult help in difficult peer interactions. Students know several ways to navigate disagreements. They are able to make suggestions about how to resolve differences or to offer a compromise.Students participate in group discussions and role play how to approach challenging social problems or situations. |
| 10: RELATIONSHIP SKILLS: Offering and Accepting Help |
| DEFINITION | The ability to seek and offer help when needed. This includes being able to identify who might need help, where to seek help and who would be helpful.Accepting help includes recognizing family, school, and community resources and supports. (also part of Social Awareness)Offering and accepting help includes being able to judge whether a problem is trivial or serious and determine the best course of action: whether it makes sense for the student to try to solve it on their own, with a peer, or with adult help. |
| EXAMPLES | Students know how to seek and get help from peers and/or adults for school related or personal problems.Students offer to help in appropriate ways, such as cleaning up after an activity, and by being a contributing member of their learning community.Students notice if peers are in distress or might need help and reach out with aid and concern. Students seek help and ask questions when they don’t understand something or are having difficulty. |
| 11: RESPONSIBLE DECISION MAKING: demonstrate beginning personal, social, and ethical responsibility |
| DEFINITION | The ability to make constructive and respectful choices about personal behavior and social interactions based on consideration of ethical standards, safety concerns, social norms, and the well-being of self and others.Taking responsibility for effective management of his/her possessions, schoolwork, and time.Interacting with respect and care for both objects and people (e.g., behaving in safe and kind ways); Ethical responsibility: Understanding basic or beginning principles of ethical standards; being able to analyze situations and apply their understanding to solve problems in a fair and just manner.  |
| EXAMPLES | When they arrive each morning, students independently identify and follow classroom routines, completing all needed steps to successfully start the school day.Students consider potential consequences to others before they make a decision about how best to act. Students participate respectfully in a conversation or debate about what is fair or just in a complex or challenging situation, based on real events in the classroom, school, community, or nation.  |
| 12: RESPONSIBLE DECISION MAKING: demonstrate the ability to reflect on and evaluate the results of his or her actions and decisions. |
| DEFINITION | The ability to reflect on one’s actions and decisions, evaluating the potential consequences, including the effects on the well-being of self and others and:* Identifying problems;
* Analyzing situations;
* Solving problems;
* Evaluating; and
* Reflecting

The ability to consider and make constructive choices after thinking a situation through and evaluating the potential consequences to self and others.  |
| EXAMPLES | Students can analyze and explain why a decision or action would be considered “right” or “wrong”.Students recognize the benefits of and willingly participate in reviewing their work and making corrections as needed (e.g., check math answers for reasonableness, identify writing errors, etc.)Students identify situations that might be unsafe and identify how to avoid or address them to stay safe. This includes making responsible decisions online.Students reflect back on their actions after they experience an unexpected consequence and plan another way of responding next time.  |
| 13: COOPERATION: Collaboration, Small Group Work and Cooperative Play  |
| DEFINITION | Cooperation, in the context of cooperative play and learning, includes reciprocity, turn taking, and sharing. Small group work includes project-based learning and partner work to solve problems, discuss ideas or complete a task. Cooperation is the basis of successful group play at recess and on the playground. Cooperation is a key part of collaborative problem-solving and group collaboration. Cooperation connects with or overlaps strongly with relationship skills such as listening to and respecting the perspective of others, leadership, conflict resolution, and helping one another.NOTE: Cooperating is viewed by CASEL as part of Relationship skills. Cooperative and collaborative learning methods are recognized as *evidenced-based strategies for supporting development of other social emotional competencies,* including relationship skills, problem-solving, and self-efficacy. Cooperation is a focus in many of the SEL programs featured in [CASEL’s Program Guides](https://casel.org/guide/) (<https://casel.org/guide> (Identifying Effective SEL programs). |
| EXAMPLES | Students working in small groups in productive ways demonstrate cooperation and/or collaborative skills in multiple ways, including:* Taking turns in group discussions;
* Showing understanding of and participating in assigned roles in small groups (e.g., scribe, illustrator, or reporter, facilitator, timekeeper, encourager) or in reciprocal teaching (i.e., predictor, questioner, clarifier, and summarizer); and
* Showing respect and courtesy to other group members even when they disagree.

Students playing group games (e.g., four-square, kickball, jump rope) cooperatively at recess with minimal to no adult intervention is another example of strong cooperation skills.  |