

Recommendations to create consistently positive Social Emotional Learning experiences for children and youth all day and all year.

SEL Planning Team Purpose

The SEL Planning Team was formed to address Objective 4.5.1 (*Expanded Learning and K-12 develop and demonstrate a shared commitment to improved student outcomes across academic, social, emotional, and physical domains.*) from the Expanded Learning/K-12 Integration Initiative of the strategic plan. The planning team was formed to provide recommendations to the EXLD regarding the types of supports and structures the EXLD should design and execute to better integrate social emotional learning (SEL) into the System of Support for Expanded Learning (SSEL) that is funded by the EXLD. This will result in Expanded Learning Programs across the state receiving technical assistance to deepen SEL opportunities for students and foster alignment around SEL strategies with the school day. The team was co-led by the field and EXLD and was comprised of 23 members representing various stakeholder groups including EXLD staff, county leads/staff, technical assistance providers, SEL organizations, K-12 educators, program providers, and community based organizations.

Understanding SEL

There was much discussion of the meaning of SEL among the team. There was also a recognition that California's size, diversity, and desire for local decision-making preclude one state-adopted definition or framework for SEL. Instead, the group's discussion were based on a common understanding of SEL as described by the Center for Collaborative and Social Emotional Learning ([CASEL](#)):

Social and emotional learning (SEL) is the process through which children and adults acquire and effectively apply the knowledge, attitudes, and skills necessary to understand and manage emotions, set and achieve goals, feel and show empathy for others, establish and maintain positive relationships, and make responsible decisions.

Recommendations

The recommendations fall within six categories where the EXLD can promote SEL and coherence between Expanded Learning and the school day. The categories are areas of existing influence within the EXLD infrastructure and the statewide system that can be leveraged to influence change across the field. **In most instances implementation of these recommendations will provide additional opportunities for collaboration with the field.**

Overarching themes through these recommendations include:

1. The need to build on existing initiatives (like the [Quality Standards for Expanded Learning in California](#)) and infrastructure (like the SSEL).
2. The importance of creating bridges between Expanded Learning and other SEL-related initiatives/fields.
3. The development of adult social and emotional skills, through training and coaching, to ensure that they have the capacity to support young people's SEL.
4. A focus on cultural shifts that embed SEL into all strategies and environments, as opposed to prescribing a particular program or curriculum.

The recommendations represent an overall consensus from the group. However, there were varying opinions from team members on some of the more detailed aspects of the recommendations which are reflected in the detailed recommendations.

Summary Recommendations

Assessment

- Within the Quality Standards and Quality Standards in Action, explicitly identify and highlight standards and practices that support SEL.
- Develop, disseminate, and train on SEL assessment tools.

Collaboration

- Support collaboration around SEL at all levels – state, county, district.
- Create an SEL Planning Team 2.0 that includes more K-12, SEL experts and university representation as well as Expanded Learning representation to move these recommendations forward.

Communications

- Improve EXLD's communications channels to multiple stakeholders within and beyond the Expanded Learning field.
- Establish a central interactive hub of SEL resources and information and disseminate it through a strengthened communication network.

Grant Guidelines/ Requirements

- Update the 21st Century Community Learning Center (21st CCLC) and Afterschool and Education and Safety (ASES) RFAs and ASES Renewal Applications to include explicit statements about the role of Expanded Learning in supporting SEL.
- Redesign ASES Program Plans to include quality, CQI, and SEL as defined by CDE.

Policy

- Engage in School Climate evaluation and capacity building conversations to ensure role of Expanded Learning in supporting SEL and School Climate and Culture is embedded in new systems and materials.
- Ensure that actions coming from the California Collaborating States Initiative Team continue to consider the role of Expanded Learning in context of statewide initiatives like the Multi-Tiered Systems of Support, School Climate and Culture, Health Framework, Family Engagement, etc. and work to secure a “seat at the table” for Expanded Learning representatives in these statewide initiatives.
- Leverage recent reorganization of CDE's branches to build connections and strategies across related fields, for example, early education, college career, English Learners, Special Education, etc.

Technical Assistance (TA)/ Professional Development (PD)

- Strengthen the System of Support for Expanded Learning capacity and requirement to support SEL among grantees.
- Invest in statewide and regional intermediaries to increase the volume and quality of statewide TA/PD.
- Sponsor and promote a mechanism (e.g.: badges, certification) that validates staff training history and experience, and allows staff to communicate and transfer these trainings to new positions in the Expanded Learning field.