**TOOL: Using Grade-Level Team Meetings to Support SEL**

A school’s efforts at SEL are more likely to succeed if you consistently make space to discuss SEL implementation. Grade-level team meetings are an excellent time to support reflection, inquiry, and collaboration among teachers.

**This tool provides discussion prompts divided into four buckets:** positive classroom culture, integration of SEL into instruction, effective implementation of evidence-based programming, and student-centered discipline/restorative practice. **You will likely have limited time—don’t attempt to do all sections at once**. Instead, as an SEL team, determine your focus monthly or quarterly, as needed.

**Directions: Representatives from the SEL team use this tool to check in with teachers from their own grade-level teams during team meetings.**

* Ideally this will happen weekly for 5-10 minutes.
* This tool is most effective in groups of four to five people.
* Encourage a supportive, informal conversation.
* You do not need to have all the answers! There may be challenges that come up for teachers where they could use feedback from peers. At other times, teachers may be able to find solutions themselves with a little time and space to talk the situation through.
* You may also choose to use some of the time to make space for personal reflection. A basic tenet of adult learning is that we learn as much or more from reflecting on our experiences as we do from the experience itself.

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| **About the Leveled Prompts…**  While the main function of this tool is to integrate SEL into team meetings through reflection and discussion, it can also be a powerful mechanism to build relationships among team members. The questions in this tool are leveled so they increase in depth once trust is built. Use your judgment to determine when, and how, to integrate level 2 questions. |

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| **Facilitating the Discussion**  There are multiple strategies you can use to facilitate discussions and help ensure equity of voice. Try one of the following:   * **Think/pair/share.** Give everyone a minute to think and jot down notes. Have people turn to a partner and discuss for three to five minutes. Share out. * **One-on-one share**. Give one partner three full minutes to talk while the other partner listens without comment. After three minutes, switch roles. Share out. * **Whip-around share.** Each person gets two to three minutes (depending on the topic and time available) to share out. * **Quick write/journaling.** Writing is a good way to encourage and ground reflection. The writing doesn’t need to be shared, but can serve as a way to open up conversation. * **Open-ended questions.** Posing questions that have no single answer supports deep thinking for complex challenges that have multiple possible solutions.   **Think tank.** One person describes a problem of practice while peers listen. Then the peers do a quick whip-around to ask thoughtful, open-ended questions to support reflection (e.g., what are possible roadblocks? What made you decide to \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_?) The person who described the problem jots down questions for future reflection. |

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| **Level** | [**Prompts that support the creation of positive classroom culture…**](https://schoolguide.casel.org/module/supportive-classroom-environment/) |
| **Level 1** | * Have teachers administer the [Student Survey tool](https://drive.google.com/file/d/0B6NbD2X4zbv0ZDBvWWk2U3VNQm8/view) and discuss results. “What did you learn? What is one thing that surprised you? Why? What is one small step you can take now to respond to feedback?” * After students create [classroom agreements](https://schoolguide.casel.org/module/supportive-classroom-environment/), ask teachers to reflect on the process. “How did it go? Why do you think that is? What do students think will be the most beneficial agreement? Why?” * At the beginning of the year, ask teachers to reflect on what a supportive classroom environment looks like, sounds like, and feels like. Then ask them to identify one action step they will take to bring this vision to life in their classrooms. * “Think about a teacher who had a profound impact on your learning. Which [competencies](https://casel.org/core-competencies/) made them effective?” * “What [competencies](https://casel.org/core-competencies/) make a positive classroom leader? Why?” * *Collaboratively complete the Schoolwide SEL Implementation Rubric to determine where the school is in terms of implementation and identify next steps.* |
| **Level 2** | |  | | --- | | * “What is one challenge you are facing in your classroom community? What is one step you can take to support students?” * “What is one way that you stay calm/support yourself when your classroom feels challenging?” * “How are students doing with classroom procedures? What is one time of day where they struggle? What is one step you can take to make it better?” * “How is your classroom culture supporting or detracting from learning? Why? What is one small action step you can take to continue to build a classroom culture that supports learning and intellectual risk-taking?” * “What attribute makes you a strong classroom leader? Why?” * General reflections: “Where are you confident in terms of creating a classroom community? Where are you unsure? What are you learning?” | |
| **Other prompts and notes:** |  |

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| **Level** | [**Prompts that support the integration of SEL into instruction…**](https://schoolguide.casel.org/module/integration-of-sel-and-instruction/) |
| **Level 1** | * “What are your lesson objectives for next week? What SEL objectives could you include?” * “Look at your lesson plans for next week. Find one opportunity to embed a discussion or reflection. Share out.” * “Which competencies did you encourage students to use in their academic learning this week? How did using those competencies support their learning?” |
| **Level 2** | |  | | --- | | * “What is one area of integration that you have found especially challenging? What is one small step you can take right now to make it better?” * **“**Which [academic learning structures](https://drive.google.com/file/d/0B6NbD2X4zbv0ZkZSaUJlX0E1Qzg/view) did you use this week? What went well? What were the challenges?” * General reflections: “Where are you confident in terms of integrating SEL and instruction? Where are you unsure? What are you learning?” | |
| **Other prompts and notes:** |  |

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| **Level** | **Prompts that support effective implementation of evidence-based programming….** |
| **Level 1** | * “How can you extend the main ideas from this week’s lesson throughout the day?” * “Which lesson are you teaching this week? What competencies do they include?” * “What is one [best practice](https://drive.google.com/file/d/0B6NbD2X4zbv0WTJSVjVIVUxackE/view) you would like to incorporate more thoroughly into your explicit instruction and throughout your day? What is one step you will take to do this?” |
| **Level 2** | |  | | --- | | * “What challenges have come up during your teaching of evidence-based programming (e.g., time constraints, student behavior, etc.)? How have you dealt with these challenges?” * “What is one thing that went really well during your explicit instruction this week? Why do you think this is? * General reflections: “Where are you confident in terms of explicit SEL instruction? Where are you unsure? What are you learning?” | |
| **Other prompts and notes:** |  |

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| **Level** | **Prompts that support student-centered discipline….** |
| **Level 1** | * “Describe one [proactive strategy](https://schoolguide.casel.org/module/supportive-classroom-environment/#Student-Centered-Discipline) you used to meet students’ needs last week or that you plan to use this week? What, if any, impact did it have?” * “What is one area of SEL that your class as a whole most needs support with right now? How could you provide opportunities for them to practice this competency?” Examples might include being able to take the perspective of others, communicating assertively, or having awareness of personal strengths and goals. Consider using the [CASEL competency wheel](https://casel.org/core-competencies/) to guide you. * “Who is one student you would like to work on developing a more positive relationship with? What is one thing you could do to develop this relationship?” * Review the [social discipline window](https://www.iirp.edu/what-we-do/what-is-restorative-practices/defining-restorative/13-social-discipline-window). Ask teachers to reflect privately on where their approach fits within this framework. What are the benefits and disadvantages of each quadrant? Where do you believe you fit? |
| **Level 2** | |  | | --- | | * “Describe one behavior infraction that occurred in your class. How did you respond? What was the effect? Could you have been more restorative in your approach? How?” * Ask teachers to track their responses to student behavior and whether responses escalated, de-escalated, or had a neutral effect on student behavior. Discuss what they found and why they thought it was the case. * “What is one area of restorative practices that is going well in your class? What is one area of restorative practices that is a challenge for you in your class?” * General reflections: “Where are you confident in terms of restorative practices and relationship-building? Where are you unsure? What are you learning?” | |
| **Other prompts and notes:** |  |