**Tool: Steps for Developing a Shared Vision for Schoolwide SEL**

Collaborating closely with out-of-school time partners? See the [OST-enhanced version of this tool](http://schoolguide.casel.org/uploads/2019/01/Steps-for-Developing-a-Shared-Vision-for-SEL-OST.docx?utm_source=Resources-OST&utm_medium=Download&utm_campaign=OST_Links).

([http://bit.ly/2DpqHbW](http://schoolguide.casel.org/uploads/2019/01/Steps-for-Developing-a-Shared-Vision-for-SEL-OST.docx?utm_source=Resources-OST&utm_medium=Download&utm_campaign=OST_Links))

1. **Gather Stakeholders**

It’s recommended that schools include as many staff, families, students, out-of-school-time providers, and community partners as possible. Larger school communities may wish to hold several sessions or convene focus groups to get a wide variety of viewpoints. When time is limited, consider providing the questions below in advance.

1. **Ask Individuals to Identify Their “Personal Why”**

Before groups can identify their shared vision, it’s helpful for each individual to consider their own reasons for choosing to work in schools. Using the questions below as a prompt, ask individuals to use sticky notes to note their hopes for children and why they feel that creating safe, supportive, and engaging environments through social-emotional learning is important:

* Why did you decide to go into education?
* What do you believe about children?
* Why is it important that you are a part of this school community?
* What is your dream for our students?



*The school community at Spry Elementary in Chicago, IL reflect on their “personal whys.”*

1. **Ask Small Groups to Identify Their “Shared Why”**

Next, break the stakeholders into small groups. Ask participants to review the sticky notes they created in step 2 and use the guiding questions below to identify similar themes in each group.

* What are our core values?
* What are our priorities?
* What does success mean for our students?
* What qualities and skills do we hope all students possess upon leaving our school?
* What culture and climate do we want to build?

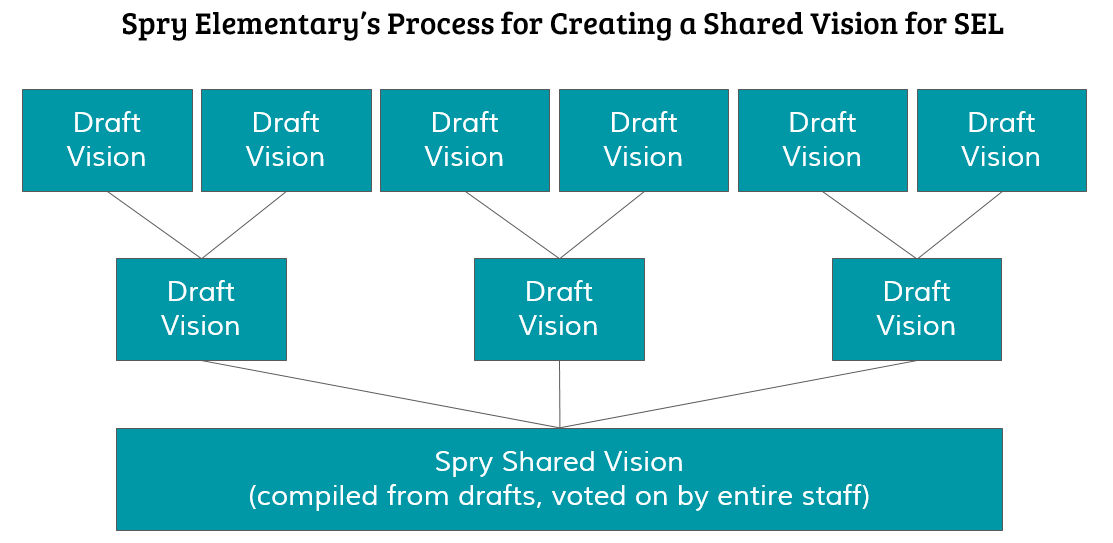


*The school community at Spry Elementary in Chicago, IL, break up into small groups*

*to identify common themes in their core values and priorities.*

1. **Incorporate Group Feedback into a Single Shared Vision**

The SEL Leadership team can use each group’s “shared why” to draft a shared vision that represents all stakeholder groups. Then stakeholders can vote whether to accept or revise the draft. If the stakeholders vote to revise, the SEL Leadership Team can organize a revision session with all stakeholders. With patience and collaboration, it’s possible to create a shared vision that captures the spirit of the entire school community.



The school community at Spry Elementary in Chicago used a three-level consensus-building process. Once individuals engaged in preliminary guiding questions, six small groups formed and drafted shared visions. Those six groups then combined into three larger groups and merged their shared visions. Those three larger groups then finalized a shared vision for SEL.

1. **Make your Shared Vision Visible and Actionable**

It’s important to make your vision visible, prominent, and actionable. Some practices include painting it on the entry hall wall or putting it on the school’s website, letterhead, and T-shirts for field day. Launch the idea in creative ways that will appeal to the school to create momentum. It’s a good idea to refer to the shared vision at staff meetings, in internal email communications, when communicating with families and your network about new projects and initiatives, and when hiring and orienting new staff. Making your shared vision visible and useful will be key in its sustainability**.**

The time needed to develop a shared vision will differ from school to school. Plan to dedicate at least one hour to steps 1-3 of the activity above. The SEL team can then complete steps 4 and 5 after the group discussions conclude during one or two SEL team meetings.