SCHOOL SETTINGS WORKSHEET

GOALS & PRIORITIES

This section of the worksheet is designed to support your school/organization in identifying key priorities and goals as well as limitations or challenges that may influence SEL program selection. These questions are meant to facilitate deeper thought and discussion about the strengths, opportunities, and needs of your specific context, setting the stage for selecting an SEL program that best suits the needs of your community.

Needs and Goals

1. Is there a specific content focus or urgent need you hope to address by implementing a new program? Examples include bullying prevention, character education, behavior management, etc.

2. Do you have a specific mission and/or existing requirements or initiatives with which you are trying to align SEL programming, such as school climate, community service, health and wellness, art, etc.?

> **EXPERT TIP**
>
> Use data to guide decision-making. This may include student and staff school climate data, disciplinary records, or qualitative data from focus groups or interviews with key stakeholders (teachers, students, parents, administrators, etc.). Employing data will aid in the selection of programming that best suits your specific needs and context, and will allow you to monitor results over time.

3. Are there specific skills or social-emotional or behavioral needs you are hoping to address? For example, empathy, attention skills, conflict resolution, etc.?

4. Who will take part in the program? What cultural considerations or learning needs must be addressed? For example, will the program be implemented universally across your school/organization, or is it intended to be used with a specific population (by gender, age, etc., or with English language learners or students with disabilities)?

Time and Structure

5. Do you have any schedule or timing constraints that would influence SEL programming?

   - Is there dedicated time available each day/week for SEL programming?

   - Does SEL programming need to be integrated into academic time, playground time, or other specific place (e.g., classrooms, gym) in your setting?

> **EXPERT TIP**
>
> SEL programming is most effective when it extends throughout the entirety of a setting, such that it is embedded into daily interactions and improves the quality of relationships. Limiting SEL programming to a specific time-block or location can minimize effectiveness, and can limit the extent to which children learn and apply skills in their daily lives. Look for ways to embed SEL across the day, across micro-settings (classroom, art room, lunchroom, playground, buses, etc.), and among all the adults who interact with students/children.

- Is there a specific structure or time you are hoping to use to integrate SEL programming across the school? Examples include advisory periods, P.E./health or wellness classes, or language arts classrooms.

Leadership and Training

6. Who are the stakeholders involved in both selecting and implementing new SEL programming?

    - What process will you use to discuss SEL priorities and review options for SEL programming?

    - Who will be involved in each stage, and how will you ultimately decide which program to implement?

    - Who will implement the program? What kind of training will this require?

> **EXPERT TIP**
>
> SEL programming is most effective when a diverse range of stakeholders are involved in the program selection process. Making decisions from the top-down can undermine buy-in and compromise effectiveness.

Prioritizing Needs

There are a great number of SEL programs to choose from, offering a wide variety of skill focus, teaching strategies, implementation support, evidence of effectiveness, and general approach toward SEL. Determining the program that best suits your school or organization depends on both the goals and needs you have identified, as well as specific factors that may illuminate the importance of different program features and components (e.g., training, cost, skill focus, lesson structure, etc.) Using the questions on the previous page, consider which program features and components are most important for your school or program. Record your top five priorities below. Once you have determined priorities, continue to the following pages for guidance on finding specific programs that align with your priorities.

1. _____

2. _____

3. _____

4. _____

> **FOR EXAMPLE, a school might identify the following top priorities:**
>
> 1. Population – designed with a focus on grades K-3 with resources for Spanish speakers
>
> 2. Evidence of effectiveness – has shown positive impact among low-income students
>
> 3. Lesson-based – to be integrated with weekly classroom activities
>
> 4. Family & Community Engagement – has lots of resources and components related to parents, families, and the broader community

PROGRAM FEATURES AND COMPONENTS

The following pages will help you to narrow in on specific programs based on your priorities. Keep in mind the program features that you have identified as most important. If you are unsure about which program features to prioritize, the following exercises may help you to further clarify the needs and goals of your school or program, as well as identify programs that may be a good fit. We have focused this worksheet on the skill focus, instructional methods, and program components, but you may have identified additional top priorities which further narrow the programs you are most interested in (such as evidence of effectiveness, specific population, etc.). See program profiles for information not included here.

SKILL FOCUS

SEL SKILLS			
Skill Domain	**Skill**		
Cognitive Skill	Attention Control	Working Memory/Planning	Inhibitory Control	Cognitive Flexibility
Emotional Skills	Emotion Knowledge/ Expression	Emotion Behavior/ Regulation	Empathy/ Perspective-Taking	
Interpersonal Skills	Understanding Social Cues	Conflict Resolution	Prosocial Behavior	
Character				
Mindset				

Looking at the chart above, consider specific skill domains and skills that are most important for your school or organization. For a more detailed description of each skill domain and skills, please refer to p. 15-18 in Section 1 of the guide.

Step 1: What, if any, specific skill domains would you like to prioritize? Please list your top priorities below using the left hand column on the following page.

> **EXPERT TIP**
>
> While some programs focus more heavily on specific skills, many programs provide a balanced focus across a wide variety of skills. If you would like a program that provides a balance of skills, write "balanced" in top left hand column.

Step 2: Now that you have filled in your top skill domain and/or skill priorities, please refer to Table 1 on p. 33-34 in Section 3 of the guide to find programs that meet these needs. Fill in the names of programs that fit the criteria in the right hand column on the following page. To learn more about the programs in your list, please refer to the program snapshots and more in depth program profiles.

Skill Domain	Programs
Example: Cognitive	*ICPS, We Have Skills, SECURe, Second Step, MindUP, Responsive Classroom*
1.	
2.	
3.	

Skills	Programs
Example: Prosocial Behavior	*Caring School Community, Good Behavior Game, Before the Bullying, Lions Quest, We Have Skills*
1.	
2.	
3.	
4.	
5.	

INSTRUCTIONAL METHODS

COMMON INSTRUCTIONAL METHODS			
Art/Creative Projects	Drawing	SEL Tool/Handout	Visual Display
Book/Story	Games	Skill Practice	Vocabulary
Didactic Instruction	Kinesthetic	Songs	Writing
Discussion	Role-Play	Video	

Consider the chart above. Are there specific instructional methods that you are most interested in using? Think about both the students who will be using the program and the instructors who will be leading or facilitating it. For a more detailed description of each instructional method, please refer to p. 19-20 in Section 1 of the guide. Here are some questions to consider:

- Are there certain instructional methods that have been more/less effective for either students or instructors at your school/organization?
- Are there any instructional methods that you would like to introduce or see more of relative to current instructional methods?
- What instructional methods are most developmentally appropriate for your students?

Step 1: List the instructional methods that you would like to prioritize in the left hand column below. If you do not have a strong preference or would like to find a program that employs a variety of instructional methods, indicate "variety" below. If there are any instructional methods you would prefer not to employ, write the method(s) below with a note or asterisk alongside.

Step 2: Now that you have filled in your instructional methods priorities, please refer to Table 2 on p. 35-36 in Section 3 of the guide to find programs that meet these needs. Fill in the names of programs that fit the criteria in the right hand column below. To learn more about the programs in your list, please refer to the program snapshots and more in depth program profiles.

Instructional Methods	Programs
Example: Songs	*Before the Bullying, Conscious Discipline, Second Step, Too Good for Violence*
1.	
2.	
3.	
4.	

PROGRAM COMPONENTS

COMMON PROGRAM COMPONENTS

Academic Integration	School Climate/Culture	Adult SEL
Family Engagement	Assessment Tools	Support for Implementation
Community Engagement	Adaptability/Flexibility	Supplementary Activities
Professional Development	Out-of-School Time	

The chart above lists common program components and features that are available at varying degrees in different programs. Consider your priorities and the list above to determine if there are any program components that are particularly important to your school or organization. For a more detailed description of each component, please refer to p. 25-26 in Section 1 of the guide.

Step 1: List the program components that you would like to prioritize in the left hand column on the following page. Include any notes about the specific characteristics that you are looking for.