



grow outside

Reflection Tool

This tool was designed to help you reflect on and informally assess your program's current capacity to intentionally take advantage of your outdoor school setting, organizational context, field practices, and stakeholders to support social and emotional learning (SEL). This is not intended to be a formal evaluation of your organization, nor a strategic or long-term planning process, but rather an opportunity for structuring reflection and discussion among leaders with various perspectives and vantage points within your organization. This process will help you to identify areas of strength in your organization's capacity to effectively support SEL and create specific actionable steps to improve your program over three months to a year.

Four Steps to use Program Relection Tool

1



2



3



4

Assemble Team

Use Tool

Discuss

Choose Actions

How to Use This Tool

- 1)** Assemble a “vertical” leadership team that includes leaders from all levels and various aspects within your organization, choosing individuals who understand or can help to develop the vision you wish your program to achieve. Set a meeting time when you can all focus on sharing your reflections. Determine if your team will reflect in all areas, or will focus on specific sections of the tool; communicate correspondingly.
- 2)** Provide a copy of this tool for each person on the team.
- 3)** Together, read through the questions in each section. Use the included examples to ensure the team shares a common understanding of what each question is asking.
- 4)** Ask each member to mark a quick, informal, private rating of their view of the organization’s current capacity in each area. Use a rating scale of 1-5, with 1 representing “not at all: our organization has no capacity in this area,” and 5 representing “to a great extent: our organization has very well developed capacity in this area.” Rate all of the questions before engaging in discussion.
- 5)** Then, systematically discuss the various perceptions of your program’s current status related to each question. Is there quick consensus or are there different viewpoints? Why? What are the immediate and long-term benefits and costs of improving each particular capacity? Try to arrive at a consensus score for each question; this might be a number or just an informal ranking (“pretty high” or “pretty low”). Otherwise, consider noting something like, “No consensus: we’re pretty high in some areas of this capacity and very low in others.”
- 6)** After completing the process with each question, discuss initial priorities. You might choose something because it will take only a small investment to move from the current to the desired status, because it features the largest gap between the current and desired status, or because you believe it’s particularly important and will lead to other improvements. You’ll need to balance “low hanging fruit” with more strategic actions that are critical, but may take longer to carry out. It’s important to demonstrate some quick progress related to this process, but also to move ahead in a somewhat systematic fashion.

It is important to note that individual scores should not be combined or averaged. The reflection tool is intended to help each individual consider their unique viewpoint of the relative strengths and areas for growth within the organization. Each individual score has its own intrinsic value.

Organizational Context

Organizational context includes the values and mission of the organization, the extent to which those values are operationalized into the daily work of the program, and the systems in place to use the values to influence decision-making and support program goals. These attributes might not seem related to SEL at first glance, but many of them—such as organizational identity, and the mechanisms in place to help the organization run smoothly and implement policies related to its values—are directly related to an organization’s capacity to offer high-quality student experiences, including those related to SEL.

Organizational Identity

Answers the questions: “Who are we?” “What do we stand for?” “What do we do?” and “How?” Learning to embody the mission and core values of an organization promotes employee self-awareness (recognizing individual thoughts and values) and social awareness (through perspective-taking, appreciation for diversity, respect for others, and empathy).

- 1. To what degree does our organization have a clearly identified and widely understood mission, vision, and set of values?**

Notes:

Example: *The organization has a mission and values statement that all employees are aware of and can speak to. There is a vision for what effective SEL looks like in the program, and it is used to guide practice for field instructors.*

Scale of 1 to 5:

1 2 3 4 5

- 2. To what degree does our organization refer to its identity (mission, values, culture) to align operations, including decisions about policies and procedures?**

Notes:

Example: *The organization periodically reviews its policies and procedures to ensure they are in harmony with its mission and values. When they are not in harmony, staff investigate the discord and look for ways to bring them into alignment with organizational mission and values.*

Scale of 1 to 5:

1 2 3 4 5

3. To what degree do we allow our identity as an organization to shift or change over time in order to be responsive to societal needs, stakeholder communities, and current best practices in education?

Notes:

Examples: Deciding to prioritize cultural relevance and taking action to ensure this priority is absorbed into the organization's identity, mission statement, program policies, and educational practices, including SEL teaching practices; forming focus groups with communities that the program serves to determine how the values, priorities, and needs of the community can be met through the program.

Scale of 1 to 5:

1 2 3 4 5

4. To what degree does the organization have mechanisms to assess how closely we are reaching our intended goals and outcomes?

Notes:

Examples: Soliciting regular, anonymous feedback from teachers and stakeholders; working with external evaluators to assess student outcomes.

Scale of 1 to 5:

1 2 3 4 5

Organizational Structure

Refers to an organization's operational policies and procedures. An organization with strong organizational structure in relation to SEL competencies supports employee understanding of the expectations and implementation of their roles within the context of organizational values, mission, and impact, and offers them opportunities to grow and develop. Highlighted competencies include self-awareness, self-management, social awareness, and relationship building.

1. To what degree do we build organizational literacy around different roles in the organization in a way that builds trust and institutional memory within our organization?

Notes:

Examples: Making sure that job roles, specific organizational policies, and responsibilities are well defined, and that knowledge of these is held by several staff members at different levels of the organization; supporting the agency of individual staff members and trusting them to fulfill their roles as described.

Scale of 1 to 5:

1 2 3 4 5

2. To what degree does our organization offer professional development opportunities at all levels?

Notes:

Example: Offering consistent professional learning opportunities, including some related to SEL; offering clear ways that staff members can grow in their position or advance into new roles in order to support retention.

Scale of 1 to 5:

1 2 3 4 5

3. To what degree does our organization identify leadership styles within our staff, with an emphasis on strength-finding, and actively recruit for a range of styles?

Notes:

Examples: Staff members have the opportunity to join committees and task forces to create, grow, and innovate; organization values “vertical leadership,” meaning that everyone, regardless of their position, is welcome to join and/or lead the group.

Scale of 1 to 5:

1 2 3 4 5

4. To what degree do we have policies and practices in place to support organizational values and culture?

Notes:

Examples: Shifting to longer blocks of uninterrupted teaching time to support a priority of offering high-quality instruction; a policy of including students from different schools in field learning groups to connect to the priority of students meeting new peers and the SEL opportunities that arise from this.

Scale of 1 to 5:

1 2 3 4 5

Intentional Community Culture and Feedback and Evaluation Systems:

An organization with intentional community culture demonstrates inclusive relationship-building practices at all levels of the organization. Relationship building is the core competency here. An organization's strength in this area is directly tied to their capacity to support SEL; the more reflective and inclusive the staff culture, the more effective and responsive they are likely to be in implementing practices that support SEL. Feedback and evaluation systems help organizations ask, "How effective are we in matching our objectives that are related to having an intentional and inclusive culture?"

1. To what degree do we have stated organizational values related to intentional and inclusive culture?

Notes:

Examples: Explicitly naming inclusion as a core value, and including clear examples of what it looks like to live that value day-to-day.

Scale of 1 to 5:

1 2 3 4 5

2. To what degree do we demonstrate inclusivity in internal facing policies and outward facing communications?

Notes:

Example: Removing a college degree from the list of necessary qualifications for potential staff members, and listing experience in the communities served by the organization as a desired qualification.

Scale of 1 to 5:

1 2 3 4 5

3. To what degree do we have systems and pathways in place to learn how we can demonstrate even more inclusivity?

Notes:

Examples: Consistently seeking out professional learning opportunities from organizations that hold expertise in equity, inclusion, and cultural relevance, and how those issues connect to SEL; paying experts and community members to review program materials through the lens of inclusion.

Scale of 1 to 5:

1 2 3 4 5

4. To what degree does our organization provide pathways for employees to share feedback (e.g. to peers, supervisors, partner organizations)?

Notes:

Example: Employing a range of modalities for collecting feedback, including peer-to-peer feedback, verbal feedback to leadership, written feedback about organizational operations and policies, and pathways for submitting anonymous written feedback.

Scale of 1 to 5:

1 2 3 4 5

5. To what degree does our organization have procedures for analyzing, reflecting on, and responding to feedback?

Notes:

Examples: Having transparent protocols for reviewing and analyzing written feedback submitted by employees, and documenting how the feedback has been addressed; working with a third party to create a plan for addressing feedback; enacting systems of checks and balances to ensure that feedback that challenges current accepted organizational policies, particularly with a lens of equity, do not go ignored.

Scale of 1 to 5:

1 2 3 4 5

Professional Learning

For an organization to implement SEL effectively, it must be embedded in training and professional learning for staff at all levels and in all roles.

- 1. To what degree do all staff have the opportunity to influence and develop the training and professional development plans?**

Notes:

Examples: Decisions about which professional learning opportunities to pursue are informed by staff members at all levels of the organization; the leadership shows transparency in sharing the long-term professional learning plans for the organization, and solicits input regularly and consistently.

Scale of 1 to 5:

1 2 3 4 5

- 2. To what degree does the organization intentionally offer professional learning that builds field instructors' competency in SEL?**

Notes:

Examples: Offering specific professional learning modules focused solely on SEL; integrating SEL into modules related to other topics, such as teaching pedagogy, equity and inclusion, and discussion facilitation strategies; offering professional learning opportunities focused on building instructors' own SEL skills; offering time for instructors to set goals, reflect on instructional practice, and reflect on their own SEL competencies.

Scale of 1 to 5:

1 2 3 4 5

3. To what degree does our organization deliberately address issues related to equity, inclusion, and cultural relevance when offering professional learning?

Notes:

Examples: *Offering specific professional learning opportunities that build instructors' understanding of the needs and priorities of the communities served; offering professional learning on equitable and inclusive teaching practices; addressing equity and inclusion in workplace culture.*

Scale of 1 to 5:

1 2 3 4 5

4. To what degree do progressions exist to provide appropriate scaffolding for training on difficult or risky topics?

Notes:

Example: *Think critically about the readiness of your team and work with partners who have expertise in equity and inclusion work to inform your training plans.*

Scale of 1 to 5:

1 2 3 4 5

Physical Space Design Considerations

Creating spaces—administrative offices and staff housing, in addition to programming spaces—that are visibly and explicitly inclusive aligns strongly with the SEL domains of social awareness and relationship skills.

1. To what degree has our organization considered physical space designs with social and emotional well-being in mind?

Notes:

Examples: Making all-gender bathrooms available for students and staff; setting up stump circles or other seating options around the site to facilitate interaction between instructors and students; making space in these seating arrangements for people who use wheelchairs; prioritizing ADA-compliant trails and buildings in new building projects, and ensuring they are used as appropriate; posting welcome signs in various languages, or that acknowledge different backgrounds; placing posters and images around the site that feature scientists and environmental activists from historically underrepresented and marginalized identity groups.

Scale of 1 to 5:

1 2 3 4 5

2. To what degree do we provide opportunities for feedback regarding physical spaces and their impacts on social and emotional well-being?

Notes:

Examples: The organization collects feedback surveys from students and teachers at the end of the week that include specific questions about physical spaces and how they impacted students' experiences; the organization solicits feedback from community partners, particularly those of underrepresented identities on the organization's staff and members of the disabled community, when designing a new physical space on the campus, and does so early enough in the design process that their feedback can inform the design of the new physical space.

Scale of 1 to 5:

1 2 3 4 5

Field Practice

Field practice refers to what takes place during the “teaching time” of a program. Creating an inclusive, positive learning environment where all students are supported to successfully participate in all learning, including SEL, is a critical piece of success. Organizations can also use field practice and teaching pedagogy to intentionally teach SEL skills that students will need to be successful in the academic learning portions of the activity, and offer support as students take on challenges and develop new skills.

A Positive Learning Context

A positive group learning culture and a context where students’ basic needs are met are essential components of students’ SEL. Tending to students’ physical and emotional needs allows their focus to remain on learning.

- 1. To what degree do field instructors in our program clearly communicate safety, boundaries, and expectations to students during learning experiences?**

Notes:

Example: *Communicating to students how long their outdoor learning experiences will last, how to ask for support or gear if they need it, when they can expect things like meals and bathrooms, and any unsafe areas to avoid.*

Scale of 1 to 5:

1 2 3 4 5

- 2. To what degree do instructors in our program establish group agreements and norms at the outset of a program, ideally in partnership with students, that create a supportive learning context and intentionally scaffold specific SEL competencies?**

Notes:

Examples: *Discussing agreements and expectations with students at the beginning of the experience; requiring that instructors also generate a set of agreements within their smaller teaching group; including agreements like “Think Together” or “Stick with Challenges,” and offering strategies that support students to engage with specific SEL competencies.*

Scale of 1 to 5:

1 2 3 4 5

3. To what degree does our organization have an agreed upon and consistently implemented understanding of what it means to use inclusive language with students?

Notes:

Examples: Making a sincere effort to utilize current language when referring to marginalized groups, including terms related to gender, race, and physical ability; discussing specific instances and teaching situations where instructors would use these terms.

Scale of 1 to 5:

1 2 3 4 5

4. To what degree do our instructors honor multiple positive ways for students to contribute to the group, with a particular emphasis on SEL skills and competencies that can be overlooked in the classroom?

Notes:

Example: Identifying ways students contribute positively to the learning environment that expand upon the traditional idea of being a “good student,” such as highlighting the positive contributions of bringing empathy, humor, curiosity, excitement, or energy into the group.

Scale of 1 to 5:

1 2 3 4 5

5. To what degree do our instructors intentionally build a “learning culture” among students, where a common goal is growth and learning?

Notes:

Examples: Challenging the idea that learning means memorizing what the instructor says; sharing with students that the goal of the group is to learn from each person’s ideas and their shared experiences, and to grow together.

Scale of 1 to 5:

1 2 3 4 5

6. To what degree do our instructors encourage student voice, choice, leadership, and responsibility during programs?

Notes:

Examples: Offering students a “free choice” elective learning time, thereby supporting their development of skills related to autonomy and self-regulation; allowing students to step into a range of leadership roles (i.e. medical kit carrier, group checker-inner, water drinking reminder-er, etc.).

Scale of 1 to 5:

1 2 3 4 5

7. To what degree do our instructors employ a variety of strategies to facilitate students’ learning interactions with one another?

Notes:

Example: Students are given multiple and varied opportunities to interact with classmates, including pair discussion, and small and large group discussion; engaging students in problem-solving while designing an investigation or engaging in habitat restoration; ensuring novel pairings and groupings of students throughout a program.

Scale of 1 to 5:

1 2 3 4 5

8. To what degree do our instructors put in effort and take clear actions to demonstrate that they care about their students?

Notes:

Examples: Instructors learn, use, and properly pronounce students’ names; instructors engage in one-on-one conversations with students; instructors make students feel heard by answering their questions and addressing their feedback promptly and with sincerity.

Scale of 1 to 5:

1 2 3 4 5

9. To what degree do our instructors consistently include check-ins with students throughout a program?

Notes:

Example: Students are asked to offer a “one-word check-in” with their instructors at the beginning of the teaching day; instructors are empowered to respond if an individual student needs support; students are invited to complete written feedback reviewed by their classroom teacher throughout the week, and teachers are empowered to reach out to instructors if an issue arises.

Scale of 1 to 5:

1 2 3 4 5

10. To what degree do our instructors use educational models like the Learning Cycle to structure learning experiences that effectively support student engagement and build skills over time?

Notes:

Example: Beginning each learning experience with an invitation for students to recall and share their prior knowledge, experiences, and ideas related to the topic or skill that will be its focus, which allows students to recognize their existing assets and builds on their lived experiences; ensuring each learning experience ends with a reflection, where students think back on the learning process and the specific SEL skills they developed.

Scale of 1 to 5:

1 2 3 4 5

Specific Opportunities for SEL

A positive learning environment sets the stage for learning (SEL and otherwise). Programs can intentionally identify and sequence opportunities for students to build social and emotional skills within the context of learning experiences in the program.

- 1. To what degree does our organization consistently and intentionally provide opportunities for students to practice social and emotional skills during program learning experiences?**

Notes:

Example: Students participate in several discussions throughout the program, which build skills like self-regulation, listening, and perspective-taking; the organization plans consistent and developmentally appropriate physical challenges (e.g., hiking or challenge courses) for students, which build skills like self-efficacy, self-confidence, and asking for help.

Scale of 1 to 5:

1 2 3 4 5

- 2. To what degree do our instructors explicitly identify key SEL competencies that students can build throughout the program, and consistently guide students to reflect on their growth in these competencies?**

Notes:

Examples: Describing how participating in discussions will help students build skills like curiosity and collaboration, and identifying specific SEL competencies like listening and self-expression that students can call on throughout the learning experience; asking students before a challenging hike, "What skills or character traits will help us to work together and succeed today?"

Scale of 1 to 5:

1 2 3 4 5

3. To what degree does our organization intentionally choose a few key SEL competencies for students to focus on throughout the program, and intentionally sequence activities and experiences so that students have consistent opportunities to build these key competencies over time?

Notes:

Examples: A program focuses intentionally on the skills associated with discussion and collaborative learning environments, building multiple opportunities for this kind of learning into their curriculum and increasing the complexity of the discussions students engage with over time; a program focused on challenge and recreation builds students' self-regulation skills throughout the week, and offers a culminating experience, like a solo sit or a work project.

Scale of 1 to 5:

1 2 3 4 5

4. To what degree do our instructors encourage students to push beyond their comfort zones, and scaffold these challenges appropriately?

Notes:

Example: Offering students language to think about their comfort zones, strengths, and "growth edges"; inviting students to identify goals or possible areas for growth; explaining to students how to receive support if they need it; asking students to identify one skill (i.e. listening, facing challenges, hiking, observing, sharing their ideas) they want to focus on improving that day, then reflecting on this at the end of the day.

Scale of 1 to 5:

1 2 3 4 5

5. To what degree are opportunities for students to practice social and emotional skills embedded into academic learning experiences, such as science investigations, nature explorations, or group work; i.e. not just in challenge courses or during team-building games?

Notes:

Examples: Setting up a science investigation as a collaborative endeavor and prompting students to reflect on how they worked together at its completion; empowering students to make decisions about their learning experience, such as which trail to take, which questions to investigate, or when to take breaks, thus practicing setting goals and making responsible decisions.

Scale of 1 to 5:

1 2 3 4 5

6. To what degree do our instructors offer opportunities for students to work together towards a common goal, and reflect on how they functioned as a team?

Notes:

Examples: Framing science investigations as team challenges; framing challenging hikes or physical experiences as growth opportunities; modeling and encouraging supportive interactions.

Scale of 1 to 5:

1 2 3 4 5

7. To what degree does our organization offer instructors tools to model the social and emotional skills we want students to develop?

Notes:

Example: Instructors are guided to model and “narrate” their thinking when they are using SEL skills that students are learning, e.g. “Let’s see, I have already talked a lot in this discussion. but I know it’s also important to listen to others and hear their perspectives, so I’m going to hold off on my comment for now.”; instructors practice acknowledging and apologizing if they say something unintentionally hurtful.

Scale of 1 to 5:

1 2 3 4 5

8. To what degree do our instructors positively reinforce social and emotional skills that students demonstrate?

Notes:

Examples: Having a necklace or stuffed animal that students pass on to each other if they notice someone demonstrating skills such as positive and supportive interactions, persistence, and empathy during regular programmatic activities; closing each day with a “circle of gratitude,” where students appreciate one another for their positive contributions; celebrating students’ positive actions when they see them.

Scale of 1 to 5:

1 2 3 4 5

Supporting an Equitable, Inclusive, and Culturally Relevant Learning Experience

All SEL resides in a cultural context. Setting up an inclusive learning context with instructional policies that reinforce inclusion is a critical part of supporting students to be at their best in any aspect of a learning experience, including parts focused on SEL.

- 1. To what degree do our instructors intentionally quote, refer to, and share stories of outdoor and environmental leaders from a diverse range of backgrounds?**

Notes:

Example: Deliberately sharing stories and quotes from environmental justice leaders, writers, and scientists of color.

Scale of 1 to 5:

1 2 3 4 5

- 2. To what degree do our instructors intentionally identify a range of ways for students to practice specific SEL skills, and avoid presenting the idea that there is only one normative “way to be.”**

Notes:

Examples: Instead of saying “Listen respectfully,” with an unspoken assumption that this must include behaviors like making eye contact, acknowledge that active listening can look different for different people and across cultures.

Scale of 1 to 5:

1 2 3 4 5

3. To what degree does our organization have clearly communicated and widely understood approaches for how instructors should respond to and address microaggressions, mediate conflict, or intervene when students or chaperones use offensive or hurtful language?

Notes:

Examples: *Setting up a protocol for mediation and training instructors to implement it; stating expectations at the beginning of the learning experience for how students can engage with each other respectfully, and having systems for how to respond when students struggle during a field experience; designating a staff member in a leadership position who is available to support an instructor in navigating a conflict with students or chaperones.*

Scale of 1 to 5:

1 2 3 4 5

4. To what degree does our organization encourage and make space for students to share stories and ideas about themselves and their life experiences?

Notes:

Example: *Consistently including the question “What kinds of experiences or ideas from your life does this remind you of?” in lessons; viewing students sharing their stories and perspectives as an important part of the learning culture, not a distraction from it; using non-instructional times, like lunch and breaks, to encourage students to share about themselves.*

Scale of 1 to 5:

1 2 3 4 5

Outdoor School Setting

Outdoor school life is a unique and seminal aspect of students' experiences at outdoor schools. Organizations can leverage these opportunities for SEL by creating a safe, supportive outdoor school setting, and intentionally scaffolding specific SEL skills students can call upon throughout the program.

1. To what degree does our organization make decisions regarding meal programming with specific, named SEL outcomes in mind?

Notes:

Examples: Meal service is family-style to encourage students to engage in conversation with one another and practice self-awareness and self-management as they share food at the table. Students choose their own seats (allowing for an opportunity to practice self-awareness and self-management) or students are assigned seats (allowing for an opportunity to practice relationship skills with new individuals). School staff or program faculty sit with students, allowing for conversations with members from a range of age groups.

Scale of 1 to 5:

1 2 3 4 5

2. To what degree does our organization leverage the opportunities that arise from students living in close quarters with peers, including peers from a different school or community, to intentionally develop SEL competencies?

Notes:

Examples: Staff or cabin leaders facilitate a discussion about group agreements and offer clear examples of what it will look like for students to follow them; offer and model strategies students can use to deliberately include each other in conversations and activities that occur during unstructured program time.

Scale of 1 to 5:

1 2 3 4 5

3. To what degree are the school, program staff, and/or chaperones who provide overnight supervision given training and support for student SEL during cabin or dorm time?

Notes:

Examples: *The overnight supervisors are offered a range of positive group activities, guidelines, protocols, and so on for scaffolding group conversations during their time with students in the cabin or dorm.*

Scale of 1 to 5:

1 2 3 4 5

4. To what degree does this training clearly communicate policies for how cabin supervisors should respond to address microaggressions, mediate conflict, or step in when students or chaperones use offensive or hurtful language, and describe when cabin supervisors should seek out the assistance of a staff member?

Notes:

Example: *The training contains a clear statement of policy about the expectation for students and adults during the program, including how overnight supervisors should respond if students are not following these expectations, and how to contact a staff member should the situation require it.*

Scale of 1 to 5:

1 2 3 4 5

5. To what degree does our organization provide gear for students who need it and give clear instructions for how students can get what they need as they prepare in their living quarters for a day in the field?

Notes:

Examples: *The program offers to lend water bottles and extra gear to students at the beginning of the field day; the program provides guidance on how students can take responsibility for having weather-appropriate gear; posting cards that describe what students will need to have during the field day.*

Scale of 1 to 5:

1 2 3 4 5

6. To what degree do students have opportunities to provide service to their outdoor school community?

Notes:

Example: *Students have opportunities to work on chores like composting, cabin cleaning, setting up the dining hall before meals, service projects, working in a garden, litter patrol, campfire building, and so on.*

Scale of 1 to 5:

1 2 3 4 5

7. To what degree does our organization have clear policies that positively affirm students' gender identities in the context of outdoor school life?

Notes:

Example: *Students have regular access to gender-neutral bathrooms; the organization offers the option of a mixed-gender or gender neutral cabin for students who identify as nonbinary; the organization makes a sincere attempt to stay current with language used to communicate around gender identity, and reflects this in written and verbal communications; the organization communicates their policies on affirming gender identity to schools ahead of time.*

Scale of 1 to 5:

1 2 3 4 5

Engaging Stakeholders

Understanding the needs, values, and priorities of stakeholders, and using this information to influence decision-making and program policy, is a key to success for RELCs; so is working to communicate your program's signature strengths and practices related to supporting SEL. An effective overall strategy for engaging stakeholders can be described as a feedback loop: organizations must have strategies to communicate their strengths related to SEL with stakeholders at every level, including internal stakeholders, such as instructional staff, leadership, and board members, as well as external stakeholders, such as school administrators, funders, classroom teachers, students, and parents. These same organizations must have clear pathways for seeking the perspectives of their client stakeholders related to their clients' goals and practices for supporting SEL, and the organization must have the capacity to be responsive to this information, using it to inform program design and goals.

Internal Stakeholders

All of the people directly involved in the organization who have a vested interest in its success: instructional and operational staff, management, leadership, and board members.

- 1. To what degree does our organization have a clearly articulated and widely understood vision for what SEL looks like in our program?**

Notes:

Example: A vision statement for SEL is crafted collaboratively by field instructors and leadership, and posted and distributed to all staff members.

Scale of 1 to 5:



2. To what degree do our board members understand and have the ability to communicate about the value of SEL outcomes of our programs and how our programs achieve those outcomes?

Notes:

Example: Board members can articulate: what SEL is, how it is of value, how RELCs are specifically suited to support SEL, the signature strengths of your program, and how your program is intentionally structured to support specific SEL competencies.

Scale of 1 to 5:

1 2 3 4 5

External Stakeholders

All of the people who are served by the organization, such as school administrators, funders, remote audiences, classroom teachers, students, and parents, who are invested in its success, but who don't play a direct role in day-to-day operations.

1. To what degree has our organization identified our local and regional stakeholders?

Notes:

Examples: A program identifies schools, teachers, school district leadership, school administrators, parents, school counselors, PTO/PTA, afterschool programs, neighborhood organizations, and any other organization or group that values and seeks SEL outcomes, as potential stakeholders.

Scale of 1 to 5:

1 2 3 4 5

2. To what degree have we engaged stakeholders in the process of determining shared goals and in shaping programs that meet these agreed upon goals?

Notes:

Examples: An organization sets up designated contacts for discussing SEL at each participating school, and communicates regularly to discuss the organization's SEL goals and how they integrate with those of their stakeholders; the organization has the capacity and goal to be responsive to stakeholders, shifting the program's own goals and priorities if necessary to meet the needs of the identified community stakeholders.

Scale of 1 to 5:

1 2 3 4 5

3. To what degree has our organization tailored specific messages regarding our program's approach to SEL for specific audiences, such as district leaders, parents, classroom teachers, school administrators, and potential funders?

Notes:

Example: An organization finds that a district leader may be more responsive to language about increased student responsibility, a teacher may want to hear about improved teacher-student relationships, and a funder may be interested in practices geared toward inclusion, and crafts specific statements to be used with each.

Scale of 1 to 5:

1 2 3 4 5

4. Recognizing that many districts use other frameworks and language to address SEL, to what degree does our organization's language around SEL align with our stakeholders' language?

Notes:

Example: Learning about the frameworks used by schools to frame SEL growth and learning within their school or district, and using this information to communicate clearly about how the organization supports these existing efforts; building familiarity with similar fields of practice, including "trauma-sensitive schools," "whole student growth," etc.; supporting instructors to develop basic "fluency" with language used to discuss SEL in the different frameworks used by the organization's clients.

Scale of 1 to 5:

1 2 3 4 5

5. To what degree does our promotional material clearly communicate our program's stated SEL outcomes?

Notes:

Example: Organization specifically mentions SEL in promotional materials in reference to stakeholders' goals and outcomes; a program identifies their seminal activities and signature program strengths that support SEL, and ensures that members at all levels of the organization can speak to this.

Scale of 1 to 5:

1 2 3 4 5

6. To what degree does our organization know about and leverage existing local, regional, and national SEL networks and organizations?

Notes:

Examples: Forming a partnership with a local SEL organization that works in the afterschool context; distributing CASEL resources to instructors; prioritizing leadership attendance at SEL-related conferences and events.

Scale of 1 to 5:

1 2 3 4 5

7. To what degree does our organization support and encourage stakeholders to give feedback on our effectiveness in reaching shared SEL goals?

Notes:

Examples: Inviting all participants to complete a program evaluation at the end of their outdoor school experience, offering in-person debrief meetings for the adults before they depart, and convening focus groups after the outdoor school experience to assess impacts on adults and students.

Scale of 1 to 5:

1 2 3 4 5