



Professional Learner Tip Sheet (Read This First)

SEL Competencies for School, Work, and Life

Congratulations on taking the initiative to engage in these professional learning modules to support social and emotional learning for yourself and your students!

Your colleagues at the New Jersey Department of Education are happy to provide these modules with the hope that they will enhance the good work being done by dedicated educators, and ultimately help equip students with the competencies they need for life and learning. Each module focuses on a core social and emotional competency and provides guidance on how to integrate support for that competency into your classroom practices.

There is a lot of information in the modules! This tip sheet was created to help you strategize how to get the most out of them.

The following are a few different possible ways to use the modules. Choose an approach that best meets your learning environment and needs.

- View the narrated video, pausing as needed to review information and complete the learning activities. The video can be used by an individual or a group.
- Use the slide deck, accompanied by the facilitation guide with a complete script, for in-person facilitation in a group setting. The guide includes facilitation notes to encourage meaningful engagement and discussion among participants.
- Use the handouts to complete activities prompted in the facilitation guide and slide deck. The activities are designed to dig deeper into the content and apply it to real-life contexts.

Before beginning your course of learning, consider the following steps.

1. **Enlist learning partners.**

Learning is an inherently social act. So, even though you can use the modules on your own, you are likely to get more out of them by engaging with the modules in a professional learning community, in a small group of interested colleagues, or with a partner. The material will be enhanced by diverse perspectives. If you do engage in the modules as an individual working on your own, discuss your learning with colleagues.

2. Schedule your learning time realistically.

The modules are rich with information, and although the facilitation guide provides estimates of the minimum time required for each section, exploring each concept may take longer than these estimates indicate. In a group setting, each module may span several meetings, and there are multiple possible ways to engage with the content, each of which can take a different amount of time, including:

- Viewing the video recording without pausing;
- Viewing the video recording, pausing for discussion and/or to complete the activities;
- Having a facilitator deliver the content to a group, using the facilitation guide, without pausing; or, ideally,
- Having a facilitator deliver the content to a group, pausing for discussion and to complete the activities.

3. Customize your approach according to your learning needs.

How you focus your time and energy in these modules may be guided by how much previous experience you or your colleagues have had with the topics and by any other school improvement efforts you may currently be undertaking. You can structure your use of the modules according to your learning needs or those of your staff. Ideally, you can place extra focus on content that aligns with your school improvement efforts.

4. Continue learning to enhance your practice.

Remember to revisit materials at any time to bolster your understanding. Perhaps you or your group want to focus on integrating support for one competency for some time before moving on to the next. Or perhaps you want to get an overview of all of the competencies, but along the way, identify one or two areas to return to that are a priority in your school or grade level. Each module contains a list of further resources to aid your learning.

5. Spread the word and grow your professional learning team.

As you shift from learning the material to incorporating new practices into your teaching, continue to touch base with a learning partner or group. You can also share your implementation efforts with others and encourage additional colleagues to engage with the modules and resources. The systemic impact of social and emotional learning depends on consistent reinforcement by educators throughout the system. Share your good news as you experience the benefits of integrating social and emotional learning in your classroom.

The learning modules, “Social and Emotional Competencies for School, Work, and Life,” were provided through a collaborative effort by the [New Jersey Department of Education](#), the [Mid-Atlantic Comprehensive Center at WestEd](#), and the [Center on Great Teachers and Leaders at the American Institutes for Research](#).