

A background image showing a smiling Black female teacher high-fiving a young Black male student. The teacher is wearing a yellow top, and the student is wearing a black and white striped shirt. They are sitting at a wooden table with a piece of paper on it. The paper has some red and blue markings, including what looks like a plus sign and some circles.

Incorporating SEL and PBIS into Your MTSS Process

TABLE OF CONTENTS

ExecutiveSummary.....2

What is SEL.....2

Three Essential SEL Resources.....3

SMART Goal Setting.....3

Social and Emotional Competency Surveys.....5

Positive Behavioral Interventions and Supports.....6

Conclusion.....8

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Social-emotional learning (SEL) has always been an essential component of a strong Multi-Tiered Systems of Support (MTSS) model. However, this year school districts are making more of an effort to implement or improve their SEL practices. Students and teachers have been impacted by personal trauma, a swinging pendulum of remote, hybrid, and in-person learning, zoom fatigue, and unfinished learning. **Ensuring students are emotionally ready to learn will greatly impact their academic success.**

What is SEL?

Social and Emotional Learning (SEL) reflects the critical role of positive relationships and emotional connections in the learning process and helps students develop a range of skills they need for school and life.

SEL skills include the ability to:

- Set and achieve positive goals
- Feel and show empathy for others
- Establish and maintain positive relationships
- Make responsible decisions
- Understand and manage emotions

All of these skills are necessary—both for educators and students—to function well in the classroom, in the community, and in college and careers.

While many teachers instinctively know that SEL is important, historically schools have been primarily focused on teaching academic content such as reading, math, science, and history, and less intentional about supporting the social and emotional skills that are so important to learning and life success.

There is a growing body of research proving that SEL is fundamental to academic success. That means SEL support must be woven into the work of every teacher in every classroom, after-school, and summer learning program if we truly want to prepare students for college and careers.

Not Just One More Thing

If you are deciding how best to implement SEL processes, what should you consider? Introducing new initiatives or programs may sometimes elicit the response from teachers, “this is just one more thing on top of my already busy day.” This is particularly true if you are using a variety of different resources for each component of your MTSS or RTI process. Instead, look for an all-in-one program that has SEL resources weaved in.

An effective MTSS process includes screening, progress monitoring, instructional interventions, data-driven decision-making, social-emotional learning support, and positive behavioral intervention support. **Providing one consistent solution that supports teachers and students with each part of that process reduces the time spent learning new programs and gathering data from disparate sources.** The focus stays on providing the academic, social-emotional, and behavioral supports students need instead of the documentation required.

Three Essential SEL Resources

In order to support the whole child’s development and growth in the MTSS Framework, Classworks includes three important elements:

1. Student SMART goal setting with embedded student-teacher communication
2. A social and emotional competency survey
3. Daily observations to support effective and transparent positive behavioral and intervention supports (PBIS)

SMART Goal Setting

According to goal setting theory, two people with the same skills and knowledge perform very differently on the same task if they have different performance goals, because their goals ultimately determine their motivation to succeed. Whoever is more driven to succeed will likely do so.

[One longitudinal study](#) looked at the relationship between goal setting and student achievement in over 1200 high school students learning Spanish. The researchers performed a correlational analysis that revealed a statistically

significant relationship between [the process of setting goals](#) and students' proficiency in Spanish.

Let's take a look at what SMART goals are and why they are so valuable. [SMART goals](#) are statements that turn vague intentions into an actionable plan. They provide you with a strategy to achieve your vision by guiding you to set objectives that fit into the "SMART" mold. The SMART acronym exists in a variety of forms, but each one touches on the same fundamental ideas.

Here, SMART goals are defined as Specific, Measurable, Achievable, Relevant, and Time-Bound.

Specific: If a goal isn't explicit and precise, your efforts won't be either. To be specific, a goal should be written with no wiggle room when asking who, what, when, where, or why.

Measurable: If your goal is measurable, there will be some way you can measure your progress at any point along the way.

Achievable: Working toward your goal can either lead to satisfaction, which will [motivate you to push yourself even harder](#)—or it will lead to frustration if you don't see any progress, which can make you want to quit. After taking all other factors into consideration, ask yourself how realistic it is to attain your goal. This will help you determine if it's achievable.

Relevant: It's important that your goals matter to you or else you will be quick to abandon them after hitting an obstacle. If your goal is relevant, you will answer "yes" to these questions: Is working toward this goal worthwhile? Is now the right time? Will achieving this goal move me [closer to my ultimate vision?](#)

Time-Bound: Your SMART goals need a deadline so you stay focused and [prevent other less important tasks from taking priority and becoming a distraction](#). With a sense of urgency, you will know what you can do today, next week, and next month to make progress toward achieving your goal.

Younger learners have the perfect opportunity to build their goal setting skills. These skills will benefit them for the rest of their lives. Developing them now helps students design their futures in whatever unique way is personally meaningful to them. Very young students benefit from learning how to set goals because it gives them the opportunity to experience small wins, which helps them develop self-confidence and belief in themselves.

For each goal set in Classworks the following is established:

- What exactly do you want to accomplish?
- How will you know that you met your goal?
- How will you meet your goal?
- How confident are you in your ability to meet this goal?
- When will you meet your goal?

Answering these questions ensures students are working within the SMART framework for each goal. Classworks SMART goal setting also allows space for an on-going dialogue between students and teachers as students set and achieve their SMART goals.

Goals can be written by students or written by teachers for individuals or groups of students. Setting and achieving goals gives students a greater sense of autonomy in their learning, which leads to higher levels of motivation to succeed.

Social and Emotional Competency Surveys

Student surveys are an excellent tool for supporting the development of the whole student. Educators want to be aware of the discrete skills that contribute to students' overall social-emotional development and well-being. Stating that a student has "behavioral issues" or "poor social skills" is the same as saying a student is "bad at Reading". It doesn't help inform the problem-solving process required to develop a targeted intervention plan.

Classworks' survey helps you measure and support students' development of these discrete skills:

- Relationship Skills
- Responsible Decision-making
- Self-Awareness: Emotion Knowledge
- Self-Awareness: Self-Concept
- Self-Management: Emotion Regulation
- Self-Management: Goal Management
- Self-Management: School Work
- Social Awareness

This survey provides a quantitative score or result, which is used to compare individual students or groups of students to each other. The Classworks survey consists of 40 questions. Students can complete five administrations per testing window. The results of these surveys are used to help students develop SMART goals that support their personal and academic development.

Positive Behavioral Interventions and Supports

Positive Behavioral Interventions and Supports (PBIS) was developed as a multi-tiered framework to teach positive social and cognitive behaviors. PBIS provides strategies for students to engage in the classroom by setting behavioral expectations, positive rewards, and clear consequences. These practices are supported by the physical school environment, effective classroom routines, and behavioral expectations.

When implemented correctly, PBIS promotes a more positive school climate, safer learning environments, and more trusting and respectful student-teacher relationships.

Classworks Observations are an excellent resource when looking for a consistent, easy to use, and transparent platform for the daily observations that are so integral to PBIS.

Why:

- Provides students with more one on one help, support, and intervention
- Holds students accountable on a daily basis
- Provides structure, routine, consistency, and organization
- Promotes self-responsibility
- Improves students' grades and accountability
- Improves student buy-in
- Increases student motivation and effort
- Improves school/home communication

When:

- When students exhibit persistent behavior problems
- When students are very disorganized
- When students consistently fail to compete daily class/school requirements
- When students exhibit persistent emotional difficulties, like frustration, anxiety, etc.
- When students are defiant and oppositional

How:

- Utilize Classworks Observations
- Decide on the main problem behaviors and discuss with the student
- Rate the student for each period, hour, or otherwise designated block
- Email or text parents the link that shows the student's progress. Determine how often you plan to communicate with the parent about the student's progress. Remember, this is a live link in Classworks.
- Review the student's daily behavior and marks with them in a productive manner, discussing how they felt they did, why, and what to change or do differently the next day, etc.

Conclusion

We are all learning together how best to encourage student social-emotional learning alongside academic progress. In order to support the whole child's development and growth, educators need a solution that supports the MTSS framework and provides a complete picture of the student. **The solution should pair SEL and positive behavioral intervention resources with high-quality academic interventions.**

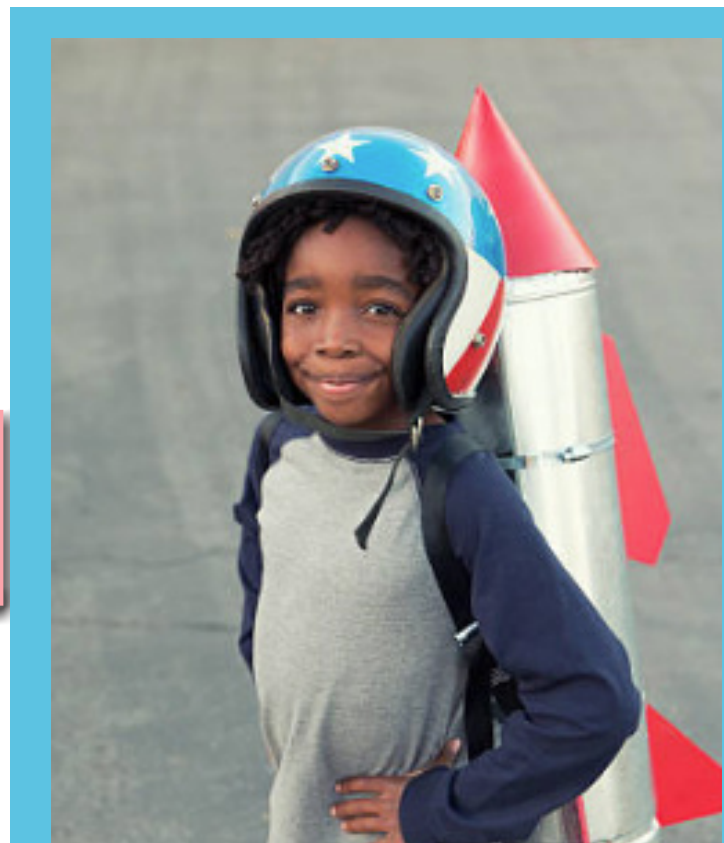
Classworks SEL tools such as SMART goal setting, SEL competency surveys, and observations for PBIS make weaving SEL into a daily or weekly process simple for teachers. When combined with the intervention data, academic screening results, and progress monitoring graphs, **educators are confident they have a holistic view of the student when making important decisions that will help students achieve the best outcomes in school and life.**

ABOUT CLASSWORKS

Since 2003, millions of students have used Classworks to close learning gaps, keep pace, and grow! Our mission is to deliver the most compelling individualized learning experience that helps teachers create an equitable learning environment for students of all abilities and ethnic and social backgrounds.



For more information:
Contact Classworks at help@classworks.com
Call 770-325-5555 or visit www.classworks.com



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