School Leader SEL Self-Reflection Tool

Thirty prompts on modeling, culture, systems, data and family partnership, with an action plan

For: Principals, assistant principals, deans, instructional leaders and SEL team leads

Before you begin

A leader's social and emotional competence shows up in two places: in how you personally handle emotion, conflict and decisions, and in the conditions you create for everyone else. This tool covers both. It is for your own reflection and planning, not for evaluation, and your ratings stay with you.

- Set aside 30 minutes.
- Rate from the last month of evidence. If you cannot recall an instance, rate 1 or 2.
- After completing it alone, consider asking two or three trusted staff members to rate the same 30 items about you anonymously. The gaps between your ratings and theirs are the most useful data in this exercise.
- Bring the action plan, not the ratings, to your leadership team.

Rating scale

Rating	Meaning
1	Rarely. I cannot think of an instance in the last month.
2	Sometimes. It happens when conditions are easy or when someone prompts it.
3	Often. It happens most of the time, including under pressure.
4	Consistently. It is how this school runs, including in hard weeks.

Modeling

How you demonstrate the five competencies in front of staff, students and families.

Prompt	Rating (1-4)
1. I name my own emotions and mistakes in front of staff when it is relevant, without over-sharing.	
2. I keep my tone steady and my listening open when a staff member brings me bad news or disagreement.	
3. When I am short with someone, I repair it directly and soon.	
4. I open and close meetings with the same practices I ask teachers to use with students.	

Prompt	Rating (1-4)
5. I visibly protect my own boundaries (leaving on time, not emailing late) so staff feel permitted to do the same.	
6. When I make a hard decision, I explain the values and evidence behind it.	

Modeling total (out of 24): ____ Strength: ____ Growth area: ____

Culture

How adults in the building treat each other, and how safe it is to speak, disagree and struggle.

Prompt	Rating (1-4)
7. Staff raise concerns with me directly rather than through back channels.	
8. Disagreement in meetings is treated as useful information, not disloyalty.	
9. We have written staff agreements about how adults communicate, and we revisit them.	
10. New and early-career staff are actively included by colleagues, not just by me.	
11. When a staff member is struggling, colleagues notice and respond before I have to.	
12. Staff receive specific recognition for their work at least weekly, from me or from each other.	

Culture total (out of 24): ____ Strength: ____ Growth area: ____

Systems

How schedules, meetings, professional learning and workload either protect or drain staff capacity.

Prompt	Rating (1-4)
13. Our meeting schedule protects staff planning time, and I have cut a meeting in the last year.	
14. Professional learning on SEL is sustained across the year, with coaching and time to practice, not a single session.	
15. Teachers can take time off in small increments and get reliable classroom coverage.	
16. I ask staff each quarter what tasks to cut or resource, and I answer in writing.	
17. Student behavior systems are consistent across the building, so teachers are not managing alone.	

Prompt	Rating (1-4)
18. Adult SEL is built into existing structures (team time, PLCs, staff meetings) rather than added on.	

Systems total (out of 24): ____ Strength: ____ Growth area: ____

Data

How you learn about staff wellbeing and school climate, and what you do with what you learn.

Prompt	Rating (1-4)
19. We collect anonymous staff wellbeing or climate data at least twice a year.	
20. Results go back to staff within two weeks, with the actions we will take and the ones we cannot.	
21. I track staff absence, coverage requests and mid-year departures and look for patterns.	
22. Exit interviews ask about working conditions, and the themes reach the leadership team.	
23. Self-reflection and wellbeing data are never used in evaluation, and staff know this.	
24. We review student climate and SEL data alongside adult data rather than separately.	

Data total (out of 24): ____ Strength: ____ Growth area: ____

Family partnership

How the school treats families as partners in students' social and emotional development.

Prompt	Rating (1-4)
25. Families hear from the school about their child's strengths, not only about problems.	
26. Communication is available in the languages and formats families actually use.	
27. We ask families what they want for their children socially and emotionally, and it shapes our plans.	
28. Family input is sought before major changes to discipline, schedule or SEL programming.	
29. Staff receive support in holding difficult conversations with families respectfully.	
30. Families know who to contact with a concern and get a response within two school days.	

Family partnership total (out of 24): ____ Strength: ____ Growth area: ____

Reading your results

Area	Total (out of 24)
Modeling	
Culture	
Systems	
Data	
Family partnership	

Two patterns are worth special attention. If modeling is high and systems are low, staff may like you personally while the building exhausts them. If data is low, every other total is a guess, because you have not asked.

Action plan

Choose one area, not necessarily your lowest, where change would matter most for staff and students this semester.

1. **Area:** _____
2. **The prompt I rated lowest in that area:** _____
3. **One structural action I will take within 30 days** (something I will remove, change or resource, not something I will ask staff to do):

_____

1. **One personal action I will take this week** (how I will model the change):

_____

1. **How staff will see it.** The message, meeting or policy change through which the action becomes visible:

_____

1. **How I will know it worked.** The survey item, indicator or conversation I will check in eight weeks:

_____

1. **Who holds me to it,** and the date we review: _____

Eight-week review

Question	Response
Did the structural action happen as planned?	
What did staff say or do differently?	
What did the indicator show?	
Next: extend, adjust or move to a new area?	

Date completed: _____ Next reflection date: _____

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