



COMMENTS ON THE COMMON CORE STATE STANDARDS

Below is CASEL's public commentary on the draft of the Common Core State Standards for English Language Arts and Literacy in History/Social Studies and Science. These represent comments inserted into the online survey that the National Governors Association and the Counsel of Chief State School Officers have provided.

Include General SEL Standards in Core Competencies

CASEL recommends that the Common Core State Standards incorporate established learning standards in social and emotional learning (SEL) as a critical set of competencies that promote academic achievement. Social and emotional learning is the process of developing the core competencies of self-awareness, self-management, social awareness, relationship skills, and responsible decision making that hard science has demonstrated have a significant impact on academic achievement (Please see the 'Research Summaries' at www.casel.org for evidence of impact of SEL on academic achievement). The State of Illinois and other states have Social and Emotional Learning Standards as part of each state's core K-12 curriculum. (www.isbe.state.il.us/ils/social_emotional/standards)

NOTE: CASEL is conducting a state scan of SEL policies. For more information contact www.info@casel.org)

Summary of Illinois Social and Emotional Learning Standards

Goal 1: Develop self-awareness and self-management skills to achieve school and life success

Learning Standards:

- A: Identify and manage one's emotions and behavior.
 - B: Recognize personal qualities and external supports.
 - C: Demonstrate skills related to achieving personal and academic goals.
- Identification of feeling words

Goal 2: Use social awareness and interpersonal skills to establish and maintain positive relationships

Learning Standards:

- A: Recognize the feelings and perspectives of others.
- B: Recognize individual and group similarities and differences.
- C: Use communication and social skills to interact effectively with others.
- D: Demonstrate an ability to prevent, manage, and resolve interpersonal conflicts in constructive ways.

Goal 3: Demonstrate decision-making skills and responsible behaviors in personal, school, and community contexts.

Learning Standards:

- A: Consider ethical, safety, and societal factors in making decisions.
- B: Apply decision-making skills to deal responsibly with daily academic and social situations.
- C: Contribute to the well-being of one's school and community

Specific subskills that are articulated in the standards include:

1. *Self-awareness:*

- Accurate self-perception
- Self-efficacy

2. *Self-management:*

- Goal setting
- Self-discipline and self-motivation
- Organizational skills

3. *Social Awareness:*

- Perspective taking
- Appreciating diversity

4. *Relationship Skills:*

- Communication (listening, speaking, writing)
- Social engagement
- Working cooperatively
- Resolving conflicts
- Helping/seeking help

5. *Responsible Decision Making*

- Problem identification
- Situation analysis
- Solving problems
- Reflection
- Evaluation

Include SEL Competencies in English language arts and literacy

There is a natural correlation between the Common Core Standards in English Language Arts and Literacy in History/Social Studies and Science and Social and Emotional Learning Standards, and CASEL recommends that the correlation be acknowledged along with correlations to history, social studies, and science.

Examples of recommended language that will help to create the link between social and emotional skills and language arts and literacy are suggested below:

- Page 1, last paragraph, after sixth sentence below: They [students] reflexively demonstrate the cogent reasoning and use of evidence that is essential to both private deliberation and responsible citizenship in a democratic republic. [Add] They exhibit the social and emotional skills of self-awareness, self-management, social awareness, interpersonal relationship skills, and responsible decision making that contribute to their success in school and life in a global society. [End]

- Page 4, paragraph 2, second sentence under "They demonstrate independence": Students [add] employ social and emotional skills of self-efficacy and sense of self-confidence to[end] independently discern a speaker's point of view and request clarification if something is not understood.
- Page 4, paragraph 8, second sentence under "They come to understand other perspectives and cultures." Students [add] use social and emotional skills to[end]actively seek to understand other perspectives and cultures through reading and listening, and they are able to communicate effectively with people of varied backgrounds.
- Page 5, paragraph 5, second sentence under Speaking and Listening: Flexible communication and interpersonal skills: Students [add] use essential social and emotional skills to [end] learn to sift through and evaluate multiple points of view, listen thoughtfully in order to build on and constructively question the ideas of others while contributing their own ideas, and, where appropriate, reach agreement an common goals through teamwork.

Reading K-5

- Page 14, bottom of the page under "Literary Nonfiction , History/Social Studies, and Science and Technical Texts": Includes biographies and autobiographies, books about history, social studies, science, the arts, [add] social and emotional learning [end], and digital media sources on a range of topics.
- Page 29, second paragraph, second sentence: What follows is one example that uses domain-specific nonfiction titles across grade levels to illustrate how curriculum designers and classroom teachers can infuse the English language arts block with rich, age-appropriate content knowledge and vocabulary in history/social studies, science, [add] social and emotional learning[end], and the arts.

Writing K – 5

Under Text Types, consider highlighting the social and emotional dimension of characters in literature. Examples include writing narratives in which they:

- Grade 3, #3b: Employ dialogue and description of characters' [add] social and emotional [end] behaviors, thoughts, and feelings.
- Grade 4, #3b: Use narrative techniques such as dialogue and description to develop events and show the characters' [add] social and emotional [end] responses to events.
- Grade 5: #3b: Use narrative techniques such as dialogue, pacing, and description to develop events and show characters' [add] social and emotional [end] behaviors and responses.

Speaking and Listening K-5

On page 20, second sentence at the top of the page, consider acknowledging that the skills highlighted in this section are social and emotional competencies. For example:

- They offer a focus for instruction in each year to help ensure that students gain adequate exposure to a range of skills and applications, including [add] essential social and emotional skills of self-awareness, self-management, social awareness, relationship and communication skills, and responsible decision making. [end]

Language on page 26, under Vocabulary Acquisition and Use:

- Grade 3, #5a: Build real-life connections between words and their use (e.g., [add] differentiate between words such as "mad" and "frustrated" when describing emotions. [end])
- Grade 4, #5b: Define relationships between words (e.g., how [add] a word such as "angry" is like and unlike "enraged" when describing emotions.
- Grade 5: #5b: Define relationship between words (e.g., how [add] the word "smirk" is like and unlike "smile" when describing an emotional expression.
- It may be worth acknowledging that listening, speaking, reasoning, sustaining concentration, and problem solving (all skills articulated in these standards) are fundamental social and emotional skills. Consider adding the following:

Reading, Grades 6+

- Page 33, Grades 9 - 10 students, Craft and Structure, #6: Analyze a case in which the author's work takes a position or stance on a social issue [add] or demonstrates social and emotional skillfulness (e.g., courage, honesty, integrity, perseverance, etc.) [end] and describe how the author carries out that purpose.

Writing, Grades 6+

It is worth noting that, under Text Types and Purposes, reasoning and understanding relationships between cause and effect, both of which are key social and emotional skills, are articulated throughout the standards. A critical domain of social and emotional learning in critical and higher order thinking skills.

It is also worth noting that discussing in small groups, setting clear goals, asking relevant questions, communicating effectively, listening, and presenting logical reasoning are fundamental social and emotional skills. This is another example of the correlation between the Common Core Standards for English Language Arts and Literacy in History/Social Studies and Science, and Social and Emotional Learning Standards. That link could be inserted as follows:

- Page 45, Grades 6, 7, and 8, Comprehension and Collaboration, #1: Initiate and engage actively in [add] social and emotional skills [end], such as group discussion on grade (6, 7, and 8) topics, texts, and issues being studied in class.

Speaking and Listening, Grades 6+

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Reading and Writing in History and Social Studies, Grades 6+

- Page 52, consider adding the following insert to Literary Nonfiction: Includes the subgenres of exposition and argument in the form of personal essays, speeches, and opinion pieces, essays about art and literature that also address [add] social and emotional issues [end], memoirs, journalism, and historical, scientific, and economic accounts written for a broad audience.

ELA, Appendix A:

- Page 35, first paragraph , last sentence, consider inserting the following sentence: An example would be learning vocabulary to express feelings that is taught through an evidence-based social and emotional learning curriculum; integrated into language arts, history and social studies, and the arts; and practiced throughout the school day to become part of student vocabulary.

ELA – Additional Comments

The results of scholarly research on social and emotional learning indicate that it has a significant impact on raising school grades and standardized achievement test scores to impact academic achievement (casel.org/sel/meta.php). The Social and Emotional Learning Standards that have been developed in Illinois correlate with the Common Core State Standards for English Language Arts and Literacy in History/Social Studies and Science. CASEL recommends imbedding Social and Emotional Learning Standards into the Common Core State Standards for English Language Arts and Literacy in History/Social Studies and Science where appropriate to optimize learning. If that is not possible, CASEL recommends acknowledging this correlation when referring to learning standards from other disciplines that reflect and reinforce Common Core State Standards for English and Language Arts. A full description of the Illinois Social and Emotional Learning Standards can be found at: www.isbe.state.il.us/ils/social_emotional/standards.