

Foundation Document for Social and Emotional Learning K-12

Foundation Document
for
Social and Emotional Learning K-12
in
Newfoundland and Labrador



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The vision of the Department of Education is:

Building an educational community in Newfoundland and Labrador that fosters safe, inclusive, and healthy learning environments for all educators and students in the early learning, K-12 and post-secondary education systems.

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Social and Emotional Learning in K-12 Curriculum

Purpose of Document

The *Foundation Document for Social and Emotional Learning in Newfoundland and Labrador (2021)* provides a framework for social and emotional learning (SEL) K-12 curriculum in Newfoundland and Labrador. This document's primary purpose is to guide the inclusion of social and emotional learning (SEL) in future curriculum development in all subject areas. Curriculum writers will use this foundation document to reflect

- SEL key stage curriculum outcomes (KSCOs) in specific curriculum outcomes (SCOs), and
- relevant SEL pedagogy in the focus for teaching and learning for SCOS.

This document describes:

- the vision, nature and focus of social and emotional learning
- the underlying principles of social and emotional learning
- the curriculum framework for social and emotional learning for kindergarten to grade 12.

Vision

The social and emotional learning curriculum will promote and encourage all students to develop knowledge, skills and attitudes to enable them to be successful learners and healthy individuals. Students will be able to respond critically and creatively to make informed decisions regarding healthy choices that will benefit themselves, others, and the environment.

The Newfoundland and Labrador Department of Education believes in providing all students the opportunity to develop social and emotional competencies that promote health and well-being of self and others.

The Nature of Social and Emotional Learning

The Joint Consortium for School Health (2016) affirms that "health and education are interdependent: healthy students are better learners, and better educated individuals are healthier" (para. 4). Embedding social and emotional learning in curricula and using a comprehensive school health approach, is critical to improving well-being and thus educational outcomes. When examining how to embed social and emotional learning into curricula, it is important to understand that health and well-being is more than the absence of problems and/or risk. Well-being is influenced by the development of SEL skills, attitudes and behaviours and their use within all environments. This shift in thinking focuses on the individual and their increased capacity to be healthy and well.

Education provides a critical context for building individual capacity through explicit teaching of social and emotional skills. As children move into their early and later teen years, schools may play an even greater role than the home context in influencing youth, given the powerful influence that teacher support and peer networks have within the educational settings (Stewart, 2008; Stewart et al., 2004). Given the number of formative years students spend in

school environments, the educational context provides unparalleled opportunities for providing activities and initiatives related to well-being. Social and emotional competence is most likely achieved when teaching and learning occurs in all settings where students spend their time – home, school and community. Curriculum development is the anchor for the teaching of social and emotional competencies; connections need to occur across all environments and with all partners.

“The educational community is increasingly focused on the development of students’ social and emotional learning (SEL) competencies and the link between SEL and improved educational attainment and achievement” (Yoder, 2014, p. 1).

The Focus of Social and Emotional Learning



The Department of Education has adopted the definition for social and emotional learning from the Collaborative for Academic and Social and Emotional Learning (CASEL). CASEL defines social and emotional learning as “the process through which all young people and adults acquire and apply the knowledge, skills, attitudes to

- develop healthy identities,
- manage their emotions,
- achieve personal and collective goals,
- feel and show empathy for others,
- establish and maintain supportive relationships, and
- make responsible and caring decisions.” (retrieved from <https://casel.org/what-is-sel/>).

Social and emotional learning (SEL) encompasses five distinct but integrated competencies. The competencies, self-awareness, self-management, social awareness, relationship skills and responsible decision-making, have been adopted as the basis for the development of social and emotional learning outcomes in Newfoundland and Labrador. These competencies are the SEL foundational skills referred to throughout this document.

Principles Underlying Social and Emotional Learning

Guiding principles support the development of essential skills which positively contribute to the social, emotional, spiritual, physical, and cognitive development of an individual.

These guiding principles include

- adopting a focus on the “whole child” as the goal of education;
- a commitment to equity through a focus on student diversity. This includes designing learning and learning environments that respect student abilities ensuring all students derive the greatest possible benefit from the teaching and learning process;
- strong, progressive instructional pedagogy that fosters an understanding of the many dimensions that contribute to an individual’s health and well-being. Social and emotional learning begins with a foundation built upon CASEL’s five competencies introduced in the early years and refined throughout a student’s entire educational and life experience. Through the development of fundamental skills in the early years, students are able to apply these skills, attitudes and behaviours to a wide variety of situations;
- building capacity of adults and students through intentional focus on relationship-centered learning environments and offering research-based learning experiences that cultivate core social and emotional competencies;
- continuous improvement practices from the use of data guided decision making with the aim of enhancing the quality of student social and emotional learning opportunities; and
- a focus on partnerships within the school community to provide an inclusive culture whereby everyone in the school – students, educators, administrators, support staff, and parents feel that they belong, can realize their potential, and contribute to the life of the school. In an inclusive culture, diverse experiences and perspectives are seen to enrich the school community.

The Rationale for Social and Emotional Learning

Social and emotional skills have been shown to influence many important life outcomes, but also to influence the development and use of cognitive skills. (OECD (2017), p.4) Teaching and supporting the development of social and emotional learning competencies creates a context for all facets of learning. Durlak et al (2011) report key benefits of improved academics by 11 percent, increased positive mindset/attitudes, increased skill development and positive behaviours (p.417).

Setting the Context for Social and Emotional Learning

Newfoundland and Labrador uses a systems approach to embedding social and emotional learning in its education system. Social and emotional learning is anchored in the *Safe, Healthy and Inclusive Schools Policy* and the *Responsive Teaching and Learning Policy*; together forming the foundation of a comprehensive school approach to health and wellness for all. The SEL pillar in *Responsive Teaching and Learning Policy* speaks to the development of the foundational skills required for improved student outcomes within safe, inclusive, healthy environments.

Research clearly indicates that healthy students are better learners. In order to be healthy and well, students and teachers need to acquire skills, attitudes and behaviours that promote wellness. This is where SEL comes in. SEL builds our capacity to be better at life and learning. Making these connections supports us in understanding and valuing “why” we need to deepen our understanding of SEL. Once these connections are clearly understood, developing these competencies in all learners is easily interwoven into learning and life experiences.

A responsive, safe, inclusive and healthy school and classroom environment focus on

- strong universal instruction, and
- prevention and early intervention.

In addition to the policy component, a comprehensive school health approach to social and emotional learning focuses on additional components of physical and social environments, teaching and learning and partnerships and services.

Physical and Social Environment

The physical and social environments are the learning environments in a school. These environments must focus on

- cultural, social and emotional safety;
- intentional and interconnected collaboration,
- positive relationships that promote connectivity and belonging;
- responsive teaching and learning; and
- trauma-sensitive practices.

This shift in focus may result in a change in the perspective, values and/or beliefs, structures and procedures that may have previously defined the culture of the school.

Teaching and Learning

The presence of the SEL pillar in the *Responsive Teaching and Learning Policy* focuses on students by

- making a link between building social and emotional competence and learning in universal instruction;
- teaching foundational skills in the areas of self-awareness, self-management, social awareness, relationship skills and responsible decision making; and
- using data to determine
 - if changes to the optimal learning environment or teacher practice are needed to support the development of foundational skills in SEL or
 - if students need intervention in addition to universal instruction.

The presence of the SEL pillar in the *Responsive Teaching and Learning Policy* focuses on adults by

- promoting SEL for adults focused on increasing adult capacity to be healthy, to be engaged, to have meaningful relationships and connections and to embrace a growth mindset;
- providing collaborative opportunities to refine their skills and practices;
- providing opportunities to be activators and collaborators in their own learning; and
- recognizing that adults who are good at learning have increased capacity to be good at life.

Partnerships and Services

Partnerships are critical to learning and wellness. A partnership exists between

- educators and the school community within school development teams;
- educators within teaching and learning and service delivery teams;
- educators and community members within program planning teams; and
- educators and outside service providers with the coordinating supports for children and youth processes.

Teams pave the way for partners to work together. At its core an effective team has

- a clear understanding of the purpose of the partnership and the language used to communicate among partners;
- clear procedures for partners to collaboratively collect, share and use data to inform universal instruction and to plan for interventions and the resources required to provide the further identified interventions; and
- shared values (that might focus on the importance of relationships, learning, engagement, and safety).

School Culture and Climate

To set the context for SEL we must examine where it fits in with what we already know about schools. For many years researchers have looked at how the climate of a school influences learning. A school climate defines the way students and adults work together in a physical environment, guided by a cultural context and a shared set of values and beliefs. CASEL defines SEL as “the process through which all young people and adults acquire and apply the knowledge, skills, and attitudes to develop healthy identities, manage emotions and achieve personal and collective goals, feel and show empathy for others, establish and maintain supportive relationships, and make responsible and caring decisions.”(retrieved from <https://casel.org/what-is-sel/>).

School climate and SEL have been studied and talked about as separate concepts when in fact, they are interconnected; one directly influences the other. Understanding this connection is critical to understanding “why” schools are focusing on SEL to set the context for learning in a school.

Adults, like students, need continual opportunities to develop their own social-emotional learning through collaborating with one another, to build relational trust and efficacy. In order to grow, individuals need to be comfortable with being uncomfortable. This can only happen when the environment is safe and there is a clear understanding of how people are to interact with one another. The establishment of group norms sets a tone that is conducive to the risk taking required for authentic learning to occur.

SEL plays an important role in classroom and overall school climate. How teachers build relationships with students, how students build relationships with each other, and how conflict and discipline are addressed all impact a school climate. How individuals interact with each other influences how they feel about the environment. How we interact sets the context, impacts the environment and creates a foundation for learning. A welcoming school culture where all members of the school community are valued encourages all individuals to realize their potential, and contribute to the life of a school. When the values of all members of the school community are respected and diversity is honoured; engagement and the building and maintaining of healthy relationships becomes embedded in the culture of a school.

Reicher (2010) asserts that “The multifaceted role of SEL yields preventative potential in inclusive school settings through modifications of input and content, teaching strategies and processes, as well as the improvements of learning environments” (p. 213).

Pedagogical Considerations for an Optimal Learning Environment

The term 'pedagogy' refers to much more than just teaching and learning. It is a term that encompasses how teachers care, educate, lead and guide children. It refers to how teachers support children's development in a learning environment through the careful design and planning of the environment, interactions and activities. It also includes how teachers create a sense of belonging by building nurturing and respectful relationships with children and their families.

We know that SEL skills are required to learn and to be successful in learning; this is true for students and adults. For the development and refinement of SEL foundational skills, adults, as well as students, must be engaged in meaningful learning opportunities where they can be activators and cultivators of their own learning. Strengthening connections among all learners in any learning environment allows for the provision of authentic experiences to use, practice and receive feedback on the SEL foundational skills. Learning environments that provide such opportunities are critical to the development of SEL competence in all learners.

Effective SEL pedagogy often incorporates four elements represented by the acronym SAFE

- Sequenced: connected and coordinated activities to foster skills development;
- Active: active forms for learning to help students master new skills, attitudes and behaviours;
- Focused: emphasizes developing personal and social skills; and
- Explicit: targets specific social and emotional skills/outcomes.

Varied instructional approaches and practices support social and emotional pedagogy. Some examples are

- balanced instruction
- classroom discussions play-based learning
- competency building -- modeling, practicing, feedback and coaching
- cooperative learning
- inquiry based learning
- restorative practice
- self-reflection and self-assessment
- student-centered teaching and discipline
- trauma informed practice
- 21st century learning

A critical aspect of pedagogy is teacher modelling. Teachers who effectively model social and emotional skills, attitudes and behaviours are more apt to develop supportive relationships, focus on student strengths, and support students in developing the social and emotional competence necessary for success in school and life (Yoder, 2014).

In universal instruction, the development of SEL foundational skills is critical to interactive, engaging, and collaborative teaching and learning opportunities that occur throughout a school day.

Universal instruction in SEL provides opportunities for meaningful and explicit SEL instruction focused on the development of foundational skills: self awareness and self-management, social awareness, relationship building and decision making. As curricula is renewed, outcomes focused on these foundational skills will be embedded to support the explicit SEL instruction for students. It is important to recognize that teaching and learning of these foundational skills occurs in all curricula areas.

Universal instruction is focused on providing rich and diverse learning opportunities. Universal instruction employs the principles of universal design for learning by setting up safe, healthy and inclusive environments that remove barriers to learning. Through differentiated instruction, methods and approaches are varied based on our growing knowledge of our learners. In the universal tier, the SEL pillar uses knowledge of both students and their context to support the development of skills, attitudes and behaviours in all learners.

Universal instruction in SEL informs the teaching and reteaching, as required, of outcomes, skills, attitudes and behaviours across all curriculum areas focusing on the five competencies discussed earlier. Universal instruction involves whole class instruction, and small and independent learning opportunities. It occurs during every minute of the school day.

Optimal Learning Environments

The optimal learning environment is the environment where teaching and learning best occurs. In optimal learning environments there are common environments, another learning environment and combination of both. Within the optimal learning environment there is an interplay between the physical environment and the social environment.

The learning environment is often referred to as “The Third Teacher”. This concept comes from the Reggio Emilia preschools in Northern Italy, founded by Loris Malaguzzi after World War II. It means that children learn as much from their environment as they do from teachers and their peers.

This concept, according to Dr. Carol Anne Wien (2008), “Speaks to the capacity of the environment to engage and shape learning interactions” (p.9).

In fact, the environment literally sets the stage for learning, so teachers must take the time to examine how the environment supports teaching and learning. The following questions can be used to guide this examination:

- Can students see themselves reflected in the learning space?
- Does the common learning environment promote independence or dependence?
- How are students represented in the classroom?
- Is the common learning environment set up to meet the needs of students or the needs of teachers?
- Is what we know about students reflected in the physical spaces?

Outdoor Spaces for Learning

“Socially and emotionally, children benefit from the peace that the natural environment brings. They are free to run, jump, and explore the world around them with their friends or by themselves. Children gain a new appreciation of nature and the natural world by being a part of it. This can lead to a deepening of respect for all that the world has to offer and a sense of responsibility to be a good steward of the natural environment” (Department of Education and Early Childhood Development (EECD), 2016).

Providing regular and frequent opportunities for children to learn, play, explore, interact, and create in natural, outdoor spaces can positively influence their social and emotional learning. Outdoor spaces allow for freedom of expression and movement that can differentiate learning in ways not possible indoors.

Safe Spaces

“Designated places or relationships in which student concerns or needs may be shared and explored in a timely manner without fear

of reprisal, stigmatization or loss of respect are critical to student well-being" (Morrison and Peterson, 2013, p.51).

In a school, this might look like placing "buddy benches" or "yellow benches" or creating Gender/Sexuality Alliances (GSAs) within learning environments to open up spaces to facilitate positive interpersonal interactions among students and school personnel. It is important to use key aspects of a learning environment to enhance students' social, emotional, physical and academic development.

Instructional Design for Social and Emotional Learning

Social and emotional learning (SEL) is not a separate, stand-alone curriculum. The key stage curricula outcomes for social and emotional learning use an instructional design that is layered. The layers of skills instruction embedded within curricula and teacher practice are enveloped in a carefully designed safe, healthy and inclusive environment. No one curricular area or teacher is solely responsible for its implementation. Rather, social and emotional learning is permeated into all aspects of school life. Additionally, curriculum writers in all subject areas use the key stage outcomes described in this document. In this way, SEL competencies become part of all subject areas and are present in all curricular areas.

Research supports "a three pronged approach:(to SEL) direct instruction of skills, infusion of those skills into traditional academic subjects like math and reading, and changing broader school practices in areas like discipline to create an environment that fosters students' development" (Blad, 2018).

Social and emotional learning competencies are presented in this document at key stage grades 3, 6, 9 and 12 to describe a continuum of learning. A continuum outlines the sequence of skill development in a particular area. It informs observation and discussion of students' growth and learning. The continuum of learning acknowledges developmental considerations from early childhood through adolescence. Educators continually use data to identify where a student is in their skill development in each area, and can trace backward or forward on the continuum to determine how best to support and/or extend student learning.

SEL is at the heart of responsive teaching and learning as it is rooted in

- celebrating and affirming diversity,
- creating and maintaining flexible common learning spaces that encourage students' creativity and autonomy,
- creating safe and supportive environments,
- fostering and modeling restorative problem-solving practices,
- maintaining a sense of calm, and
- modeling and supporting a relational approach.

Diverse Cultural Perspectives

Recognizing the variety of cultural experiences from which students are approaching their education and communities is important. Students' cultures are unique to their own values, beliefs and perspectives. Cultural variations arise from differences between worldviews and cultural understandings. Variations are also attributed to the different value placed on family, education, religion, gender, sex, and community and/or skill development. Providing a variety of pedagogical approaches within teaching and learning builds on diversity and provides a rich educational experience for all learners.

*Supports for
Foundational Skill
Development in Social
and Emotional Learning*

*Universal Design for
Learning*

*Play-Based Learning/Inquiry
for Learning*

Universal Design for Learning (UDL) according to CAST (2018), is a “framework to improve and optimize teaching and learning for all people based on scientific insights into how humans learn”. UDL guidelines advocate for multiple means for students to be engaged, for information to be presented, and for students to respond or demonstrate knowledge and skills. Applying the principles of Universal Design for Learning, removes barriers to learning, utilizes research, designs and innovates solutions to make education more inclusive and effective. “Universal Design for Learning … is being applied to new curriculum development to provide flexible access for students of all abilities and to ensure that curriculum goals such as social and emotional learning are reinforced across subjects” (Government of Newfoundland and Labrador, 2017, p. 6).

Universal design for learning provides a blueprint for developing goals, methods, materials, and assessments that works for everyone. The goal is not a single, one-size-fits-all solution, but, rather, flexible approaches that customize learning for individual needs, strengths, and interests. Specifically, the guiding principles of UDL provide multiple means of representing learning, acting and expressing thinking and communication, and engaging in learning. UDL ensures students’ wellness is at the center of learning with a focus on their interests, stamina, persistence, motivation, and ability to monitor and manage their learning.

Henniger (2013) asserts that the connections between play and physical, social, and emotional well-being is clear. It helps students deal with self-regulation, emotional literacy, problem solving, trauma, unfamiliar concepts, and overwhelming experiences. As well, play gives students numerous opportunities to feel good about themselves. Because there is no right or wrong way to play, children have successful experiences that positively influence their self-concept (pp.134-142).

Children learn best in environments where teachers support connections between emotional and cognitive development. A shared goal for social and emotional learning and play-based learning is positive relationships. According to the National Scientific Council on the Developing Child (2004), “Young children experience their world as an environment of relationships, which affect virtually all aspects of development” (p.1). Fostering positive relationships with children, youth, and their families is probably the single most important thing teachers can do to facilitate transitions and build a strong foundation for learning. Secure relationships support children as they develop skills and attributes necessary for learning, taking risks, and developing strong peer social connections and healthy friendships. A play-based approach to learning inspires children to play, explore, and learn about the world around them with confidence. A play-based approach sets the stage for students to learn about the world around them through inquiry.

Tiered Approach to Learning

A tiered approach to learning is based on the premise that with strong universal instruction for all students, most will achieve the expected outcomes. In a tiered approach, there are three tiers: universal instruction, targeted intervention, and intensive intervention.

The universal tier includes curriculum instruction and safe, healthy and inclusive schools initiatives. If data indicates that universal instruction is not sufficient, educators intervene with evidence based, tiered interventions, either targeted and/or intensive, at an early stage. Based on this data, students who require additional teaching, modelling, feedback and/or interaction in addition to universal instruction, will receive targeted and/or intensive intervention. Interventions provided are evidenced-based and student-centered.

For some students, tiered interventions alone are not enough. Within the responsive teaching and learning environment, these students require comprehensive assessment to inform individualized programming (accommodations, sustained intensive intervention, modified prescribed course, alternate course, or alternate curriculum).

A tiered approach to learning involves all teachers, all students, and all learning. Within a collaborative and inclusive learning environment, a tiered approach incorporates quality instruction in social and emotional learning for all students.

Restorative Practices

Restorative Justice in Education is defined by Evans and Vaandering (2016) as a theoretical framework that facilitates the development of learning communities which nurture the capacity of people to engage with one another and their environment in a manner that supports a culture of respect, dignity and mutual concern for all individuals. It is a way of thinking and being that is not new, but comes from ancient and contemporary Indigenous cultures. It emphasizes the importance of healthy, nurturing relationships, just and equitable learning environments, transforming conflict and repairing harm.

With restorative practice in mind, Newfoundland and Labrador's Department of Education *Safe and Caring Schools Policy*, focuses on building, maintaining and restoring respectful and supportive relationships throughout the school community - among students, among adults and with students and adults. Being in a relationship "with" means individuals collaborate to learn, to problem solve, to be culturally responsive and to take responsibility for their actions. Relationship "with" puts the relationship first, supporting individuals to be heard, understood and engaged.

In the RTL policy, educators use a tiered approach to support the building, maintaining and repairing of relationships. Restorative practice includes

- universal instruction that focuses on building and maintaining relationships;
- targeted interventions that focus on repairing relationships through problem-solving; and
- intensive interventions that focus on restoring relationships when conflict causes harm.

Curriculum Framework

Introduction

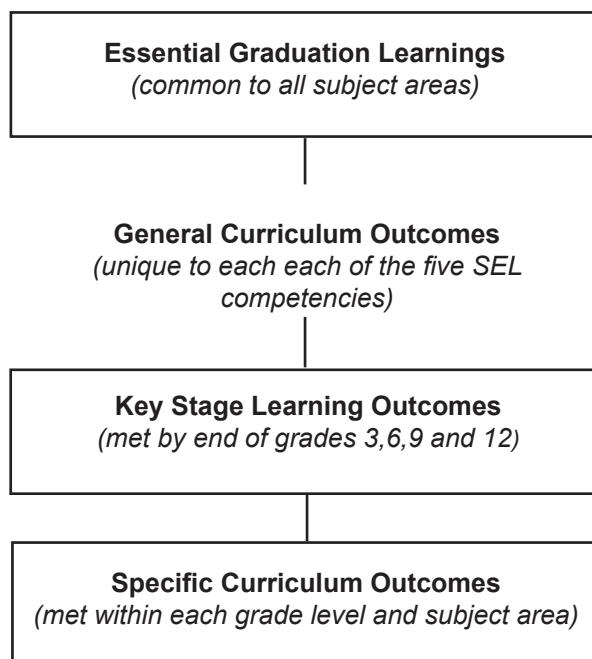
There are multiple factors that impact education including technological developments, complex social and environmental interactions (locally and globally), and increased emphasis on accountability. These factors point to the need to carefully consider the role education plays in the lives of our children. Educators have a responsibility to support children's academic, social, and emotional learning.

The Newfoundland and Labrador Department of Education believes that curriculum design with the following characteristics will help educators address the needs of students:

- Curriculum guides must clearly articulate what students are expected to know, understand, and be able to do by the time they graduate from high school.
- There must be purposeful, ongoing assessment to inform responsive teaching and learning.

Outcomes Based Education

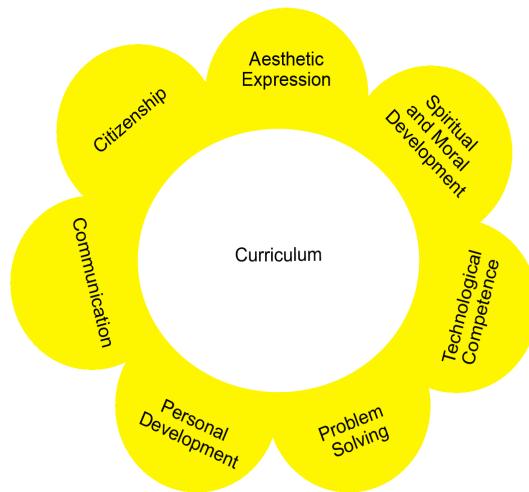
The K-12 curriculum in Newfoundland and Labrador is organized by outcomes and is based on The Atlantic Canada Framework for Essential Graduation Learning in Schools (1997). This framework consists of Essential Graduation Learnings (EGLs), General Curriculum Outcomes (GCOs), Key Stage Curriculum Outcomes (KSCOs) and Specific Curriculum Outcomes (SCOs). Social and emotional learning outcomes presented in this document are used to inform curriculum development in all areas. As such, academic (content specific) and social and emotional outcomes are integrated at the onset of curriculum development.



Essential Graduation Learnings

Essential Graduation Learnings (EGLs) provide vision for the development of a coherent and relevant curriculum. The EGLs are statements that offer students clear goals and a powerful rationale for education. The EGLs are delineated by general, key stage and specific curriculum outcomes.

Achievement of the EGLs will prepare students to continue to learn throughout their lives. EGLs describe expectations not in terms of individual subject areas but in terms of knowledge, skills and attitudes developed throughout the curriculum. They confirm that students need to make connections, develop abilities, and transfer skills across diverse learning environments, enabling them to participate in and enjoy life, work, and study.



Aesthetic Expression – Graduates will be able to respond with critical awareness to various forms of the arts and be able to express themselves through the arts.

Citizenship – Graduates will be able to assess social, cultural, economic and environmental interdependence in a local and global context.

Communication – Graduates will be able to think, learn and communicate effectively by using listening, viewing, speaking, reading and writing modes of language(s), and mathematical and scientific concepts and symbols.

Problem Solving – Graduates will be able to use the strategies and processes needed to solve a wide variety of problems, including those requiring language, and mathematical and scientific concepts.

Personal Development – Graduates will be able to continue to learn and to pursue an active, healthy lifestyle.

Spiritual and Moral Development – Graduates will demonstrate understanding and appreciation for the place of belief systems in shaping the development of moral values and ethical conduct.

Curriculum Outcomes

Technological Competence – Graduates will be able to use a variety of technologies, demonstrate an understanding of technological applications, and apply appropriate technologies for solving problems.

Curriculum outcomes are statements that articulate what students are expected to know, understand and be able to do in each program area in terms of knowledge, skills, and attitudes. Social and emotional learning outcomes provide learning milestones for students across key stages. Social and emotional competencies are applied in all facets of life.

Curriculum outcomes may be subdivided into General Curriculum Outcomes, Key Stage Curriculum Outcomes, and Specific Curriculum Outcomes.

SEL Competencies and GCOs

General Curriculum Outcomes (GCOs)

Social and emotional learning has a set of GCOs which describe the knowledge, skills and attitudes students are expected to demonstrate as a result of their cumulative learning experiences within curricula. GCOs serve as conceptual organizers or frameworks which guide study within a program area. Social and emotional learning GCOs are embedded in content-specific programs. As stated previously, Newfoundland and Labrador has adopted CASEL's competencies for fostering social and emotional learning. For each of CASEL's five competencies, there are corresponding GCO's.

Self-awareness: The abilities to understand one's own emotions, thoughts, and values and how they influence behavior across contexts. This includes capacities to recognize one's strengths and limitations with a well-grounded sense of confidence and purpose. Such as:

- Integrating personal and social identities
- Identifying personal, cultural, and linguistic assets
- Identifying one's emotions
- Demonstrating honesty and integrity
- Linking feelings, values, and thoughts
- Examining prejudices and biases
- Experiencing self-efficacy
- Having a growth mindset
- Developing interests and a sense of purpose

GCO 1. Demonstrate an awareness of one's interests, values and strengths that contribute to a positive self-concept.

GCO 2. Identify and monitor one's emotions, thoughts and behaviours.

GCO 3. Recognize the connections among emotions, thoughts and behaviours.

Self-management: The abilities to manage one's emotions, thoughts, and behaviors effectively in different situations and to achieve goals and aspirations. This includes the capacities to delay gratification, manage stress, and feel motivation and agency to accomplish personal and collective goals.

Such as:

- Managing one's emotions
- Identifying and using stress management strategies
- Exhibiting self-discipline and self-motivation
- Setting personal and collective goals
- Using planning and organizational skills
- Showing the courage to take initiative
- Demonstrating personal and collective agency

GCO 4. Regulate emotions, thoughts and behaviours.

GCO 5. Set and work toward personal and learning goals.

Social awareness: The abilities to understand the perspectives of and empathize with others, including those from diverse backgrounds, cultures, and contexts. This includes the capacities to feel compassion for others, understand broader historical and social norms for behavior in different settings, and recognize family, school, and community resources and supports.

Such as:

- Taking others' perspectives
- Recognizing strengths in others
- Demonstrating empathy and compassion
- Showing concern for the feelings of others
- Understanding and expressing gratitude
- Identifying diverse social norms, including unjust ones
- Recognizing situational demands and opportunities
- Understanding the influences of organizations and systems on behavior

GCO 6. Develop the ability to take the perspective of and empathize with others.

GCO 7. Demonstrate an understanding that all individuals belong and have inherent worth.

GCO 8. Understand that social and ethical norms in home, school and community are relevant to culture.

Relationship Skills: The abilities to establish and maintain healthy and supportive relationships and to effectively navigate settings with diverse individuals and groups. This includes the capacities to communicate clearly, listen actively, cooperate, work collaboratively to problem solve and negotiate conflict constructively, navigate settings with differing social and cultural demands and opportunities, provide leadership, and seek or offer help when needed.

Such as:

- Communicating effectively
- Developing positive relationships
- Demonstrating cultural competency

- Practicing teamwork and collaborative problem-solving
- Resolving conflicts constructively
- Resisting negative social pressure
- Showing leadership in groups
- Seeking or offering support and help when needed
- Standing up for the rights of others

GCO 9. Use relationship skills to interact with others in all environments.

GCO 10. Demonstrate the ability to build, maintain and restore relationships.

Responsible decision-making: The abilities to make caring and constructive choices about personal behaviour and social interactions across diverse situations. This includes the capacities to consider ethical standards and safety concerns, and to evaluate the benefits and consequences of various actions for personal, social, and collective well-being.

Such as:

- Demonstrating curiosity and open-mindedness
- Learning how to make a reasoned judgment after analyzing information, data, and facts
- Identifying solutions for personal and social problems
- Anticipating and evaluating the consequences of one's actions
- Recognizing how critical thinking skills are useful both inside and outside of school
- Reflecting on one's role to promote personal, family, and community well-being
- Evaluating personal, interpersonal, community, and institutional impacts

GCO 11. Apply decision-making skills to decisions about personal behaviour and social interactions.

GCO 12. Apply ethical standards, safety concerns and social norms to decision making.

GCO 13. Evaluate consequences of decisions on the well-being of self and others.

Key Stage Curriculum Outcomes (KSCOs)

Key Stage Curriculum Outcomes (KSCOs) found on pp. 24-33 are delineations of GCOs and summarize what is expected of students at each of the four key stages of Grades Three, Six, Nine and Twelve. These key stages represent students' cumulative learning to that point.

Specific Curriculum Outcomes (SCOs)

SCO's set out what students are expected to know, understand, and be able to do as a result of their learning experiences at a specific grade level. Specific social and emotional learning outcomes span all curricula. In this way, social and emotional goals are integrated and aligned with academic goals, enabling students to develop the skills they need for diverse learning contexts.

SEL Competence: Self-Awareness		
General Curriculum Outcomes (GCOs)	Key-Stage Curriculum Outcomes (KSCOs)	
	By the end of grade 3, students will be expected to	By the end of grade 6, students will be expected to
1. Demonstrate an awareness of one's interests, values and strengths that contribute to a positive self concept.	1.3.1 Identify likes and dislikes 1.3.2 Identify personal strengths and challenges 1.3.3 Develop skills to support a positive self concept 1.3.4 Develop and articulate a sense of self 1.3.5 Recognize that all individuals have value, self-worth and voice 1.3.6 Understand that there are aspects of themselves they can and cannot change	1.6.1 Identify personal qualities that contribute to experiencing success 1.6.2 Recognize how one's values, likes, or dislikes affect choices 1.6.3 Reflect on one's strengths and challenges 1.6.4 Understand the concept of growth mindset and its value 1.6.5 Understand that minds and bodies are diverse
2. Identify and monitor one's emotions, thoughts, and behaviours.	2.3.1 Develop and use an emotion vocabulary 2.3.2 Recognize and accurately label one's emotions 2.3.3 Recognize they can have more than one emotion at a time 2.3.4 Recognize factors that affect one's emotions and thoughts 2.3.5 Recognize how emotions physically feel and present in one's body 2.3.6 Understand that individuals experience a range of emotions and thoughts	2.6.1 Use a broad range of emotion vocabulary 2.6.2 Distinguish among intensity levels of one's emotions and reactions 2.6.3 Differentiate similar emotions based on one's verbal and non-verbal cues 2.6.4 Verbalize one's emotional triggers and use strategies to manage response
3. Recognize the connections among emotions, thoughts and behaviours.	3.3.1 Understand the role the brain plays in emotions 3.3.2 Connect emotion vocabulary to feelings, behaviour and health 3.3.3 Recognize how situations trigger emotions, thoughts and behaviours 3.3.4 Recognize that strategies are used to manage one's emotions and thoughts	3.6.1 Understand the relationship between the brain and emotions 3.6.2 Understand and articulate how an emotion presents in the body 3.6.3 Distinguish between reactive and responsive behaviours 3.6.4 Recognize conflicting emotions 3.6.5 Monitor the internalization of thoughts and feelings 3.6.6 Explain connections between physical and emotional responses

SEL Competence: Self-Awareness		
General Curriculum Outcomes (GCOs)	Key-Stage Curriculum Outcomes (KSCOs)	
	By the end of grade 9, students will be expected to	By the end of grade 12, students will be expected to
1. Demonstrate an awareness of one's interests, values and strengths that contribute to a positive self concept.	1.9.1 Recognize and use personal qualities to contribute to being a successful member of one's community 1.9.2 Apply self-reflection techniques to realize one's potential 1.9.3 Use and reflect on experiences to contribute to self-awareness 1.9.4 Understand the role of self-worth and self-confidence in contributing to a growth mindset 1.9.5 Know the importance of having a healthy mind and body	1.12.1 Use personal qualities to be a contributing member of one's community 1.12.2 Use meaningful tools and strategies to continue self-learning 1.12.3 Use one's sense of self-worth and self-confidence to maintain a growth mindset 1.12.4 Use awareness of self to make career and life choices 1.12.5 Develop and maintain a healthy mind and body 1.12.6 Recognize the importance of lifelong self-learning
2. Identify and monitor one's emotions, thoughts and behaviours.	2.9.1 Use a broad range of emotion vocabulary 2.9.2 Recognize and monitor one's emotional state 2.9.3 Recognize that emotions, values, and beliefs contribute to personal growth	2.12.1 Understand that identifying, monitoring and regulating a broad range of emotions is a lifelong skill
3. Recognize the connections among emotions, thoughts and behaviours.	3.9.1 Understand the role that brain development plays in emotions 3.9.2 Recognize the importance of self-reflection 3.9.3 Analyze factors that influence emotions and thoughts 3.9.4 Understand how thoughts, beliefs, and values influence feelings and behaviour 3.9.5 Recognize that one's emotions and thoughts influence decision making	3.12.1 Use self-reflection to consider how one's emotions impact perceptions 3.12.2 Explain how thoughts, beliefs, and values influence feelings and behaviour 3.12.3 Explain connections between one's emotions, thoughts, and decision making

SEL Competence: Self-Management		
General Curriculum Outcomes (GCOs)	Key-Stage Curriculum Outcomes (KSCOs)	
	By the end of grade 3, students will be expected to	By the end of grade 6, students will be expected to
4. Regulate emotions, thoughts and behaviours.	4.3.1 Understand there are different motives for behaviour 4.3.2 Use reflection to identify one's motivation for behaviour 4.3.3 Develop and use strategies to foster self management 4.3.4 Develop and understand the value of positive thinking 4.3.5 Recognize that thoughts and feelings can be communicated in different ways 4.3.6 Engage in using health promoting behaviours	4.6.1 Use self-reflection to understand one's motivation for behaviour 4.6.2 Assess one's environment and the potential influence of it on emotions, thoughts and behaviour 4.6.3 Assess situations and apply self-regulation strategies appropriate to the context 4.6.4 Use and monitor effective self-regulation and coping strategies 4.6.5 Identify ways to develop and maintain a growth mindset 4.6.6 Use positive thoughts and behaviours in daily interactions to advocate for oneself 4.6.7 Understand the connection between perseverance, optimism and positive mental health
5. Set and work toward personal and learning goals.	5.3.1 Understand the concepts of motivation, self-discipline and perseverance as they relate to goals 5.3.2 Understand the process for setting, working towards and accomplishing relevant goals 5.3.3 Develop a process to monitor achievement of goals 5.3.4 Develop organizational skills to support personal and learning goals	5.6.1 Understand the relationship between positive attitude, self-motivation, and goal setting 5.6.2 Develop a process for setting, working towards and accomplishing goals 5.6.3 Use organizational skills to support personal and learning goals 5.6.4 Use one's knowledge of self-motivation to set personal and learning goals

SEL Competence: Self-Management		
General Curriculum Outcomes (GCOs)	Key-Stage Curriculum Outcomes (KSCOs)	
	By the end of grade 9, students will be expected to	By the end of grade 12, students will be expected to
4. Regulate emotions, thoughts and behaviours.	4.9.1 Develop an awareness of motivation for behaviour in self and others 4.9.2 Use impulse control strategies to contribute to positive relationships, learning, and life success 4.9.3 Use healthy coping skills 4.9.4 Understand the role of attitude in the success of relationships, learning, and life 4.9.5 Respond critically to messages in one's environment that could influence thinking and behaviour related to one's self image 4.9.6 Develop skills that promote hope and optimism	4.12.1 Monitor and align personal impulse control strategies as they relate to learning and life success 4.12.2 Reflect on and align one's healthy coping skills with learning and life success 4.12.3 Reflect on how one's attitude influences success in relationships, learning, and life 4.12.4 Regulate one's thinking and behaviours by engaging in ongoing monitoring of one's response to one's environment 4.12.5 Demonstrate skills that promote hope and optimism
5. Set and work toward personal and learning goals.	5.9.1 Understand the relationship between positive attitude, self-motivation, and goal setting 5.9.2 Set, monitor and adjust goals for personal and learning achievement 5.9.3 Use organizational skills to support personal and learning goals 5.9.4 Understand self-motivation and use it to achieve personal and learning goals	5.12.1 Demonstrate an understanding that goal-setting contributes to lifelong success 5.12.2 Independently set, monitor and adjust personal and learning goals for lifelong success 5.12.3 Use organizational skills to support personal and learning goals for lifelong success 5.12.4 Use and monitor self-motivation strategies to achieve personal and learning goals for lifelong success

SEL Competence: Social Awareness		
General Curriculum Outcomes (GCOs)	Key-Stage Curriculum Outcomes (KSCOs)	
	By the end of grade 3, students will be expected to	By the end of grade 6, students will be expected to
6. Develop the ability to take the perspective of and empathize with others.	6.3.1 Recognize that others may have different viewpoints and experiences 6.3.2 Recognize that there is a diversity of feelings and responses to different viewpoints and experiences 6.3.3 Identify verbal, non-verbal, situational and cultural cues that indicate how others may feel 6.3.4 Develop relational skills to support another's emotional experience	6.6.1 Recognize how emotions and behaviours affect others 6.6.2 Respond to other's emotional experiences empathetically 6.6.3 Demonstrate understanding of diversity of opinions, customs, beliefs and identities
7. Demonstrate an understanding that all individuals belong and have inherent worth.	7.3.1 Identify and respect the uniqueness of individuals 7.3.2 Recognize human qualities that cross all cultures and groups	7.6.1 Understand the connection between belonging and inherent worth. 7.6.2 Understand the concept of cultural relevance
8. Understand that social and ethical norms in home, school and community are relevant to culture.	8.3.1 Identify influences on one's and other's sense of belonging 8.3.2 Identify one's role within groups 8.3.3 Identify culturally relevant personal support networks 8.3.4 Develop an awareness of the connection between rules and ethical norms	8.6.1 Recognize the qualities of a positive role model 8.6.2 Recognize that individuals are members of groups that create and support a sense of belonging 8.6.3 Identify ethical norms within groups to which they belong

SEL Competence: Social Awareness		
General Curriculum Outcomes (GCOs)	Key-Stage Curriculum Outcomes (KSCOs)	
	By the end of grade 9, students will be expected to	By the end of grade 12, students will be expected to
6. Develop the ability to take the perspective of and empathize with others.	6.9.1 Analyze similarities and differences between their own and others' perspectives 6.9.2 Analyze social situations and formulate appropriate responses to those situations 6.9.3 Reflect on how one's emotions and behaviours affect others	6.12.1 Understand the importance of focusing on similarities of people rather than differences of opinions, customs and beliefs 6.12.2 Evaluate the effects of societal and cultural norms on personal interactions and responses 6.12.3 Evaluate how emotions and behaviours impact others
7. Demonstrate an understanding that all individuals belong and have inherent worth.	7.9.1 Recognize that all people belong and have inherent worth 7.9.2 Demonstrate respect for all individuals, social and cultural groups	7.12.1 Demonstrate in words and actions that all people belong and have inherent worth 7.12.2 Understand how advocacy for the rights of others contributes to realization of the belonging and inherent worth of all 7.12.3 Assess how stereotypical thinking and prejudicial thoughts impact sense of belonging and inherent worth.
8. Understand that social and ethical norms in home, school and community are relevant to culture.	8.9.1 Recognize that social norms vary across cultures 8.9.2 Understand how social and ethical norms affect the sense of belonging of self and others 8.9.3 Develop an awareness and use of supports available through social networks	8.12.1 Evaluate one's support system and its contribution to learning and life success 8.12.2 Challenge social norms that influence their own and others' sense of belonging

SEL Competence: Relationship Skills		
General Curriculum Outcomes (GCOs)	Key-Stage Curriculum Outcomes (KSCOs)	
	By the end of grade 3, students will be expected to	By the end of grade 6, students will be expected to
9. Use relationship skills to interact with others in all environments.	9.3.1 Identify and use characteristics of attentive listening 9.3.2 Communicate emotions to others effectively 9.3.3 Respond to others' verbal, non-verbal, situational and cultural cues 9.3.4 Practice how to give and receive authentic compliments and constructive feedback 9.3.5 Identify and practice ways to work and play respectfully with others	9.6.1 Use active listening skills to facilitate effective communication with others 9.6.2 Practice cooperative behaviours 9.6.3 Give and accept authentic compliments and constructive criticisms
10. Demonstrate the ability to build, maintain and restore relationships.	10.3.1 Understand the benefits of setting and communicating boundaries for themselves and others 10.3.2 Develop skills to establish and maintain friendships 10.3.3 Recognize how friendships are influenced 10.3.4 Recognize that conflict is a natural occurrence and there are many ways to resolve it 10.3.5 Develop a process to solve problems with and without adult support 10.3.6 Identify characteristics of social responsibility	10.6.1 Understand the role consent plays in relationships 10.6.2 Understand the characteristics associated with friendships 10.6.3 Recognize and practice healthy social behaviours when interacting with others 10.6.4 Recognize the need to approach conflict with a restorative mindset 10.6.5 Use strategies to maintain healthy relationships 10.6.6 Recognize there are different types of relationships and that relationships change over time 10.6.7 Advocate for their own and others' needs and interests

SEL Competence: Relationship Skills		
General Curriculum Outcomes (GCOs)	Key-Stage Curriculum Outcomes (KSCOs)	
	By the end of grade 9, students will be expected to	By the end of grade 12, students will be expected to
9. Use relationship skills to interact with others in all environments.	9.9.1 Engage in and practice reflective listening skills 9.9.2 Use communication skills to encourage and affirm themselves and others 9.9.3 Offer and accept constructive criticisms in order to grow and learn 9.9.4 Use skills to resolve conflicts restoratively	9.12.1 Use assertive communication skills to advocate for self without negatively impacting others 9.12.2 Use communication to empower themselves and others 9.12.3 Evaluate one's ability to use communication skills to resolve conflicts restoratively
10. Demonstrate the ability to build, maintain and restore relationships.	10.9.1 Understand the role consent plays in relationships 10.9.2 Understand the characteristics associated with healthy sexual relationships 10.9.3 Understand the characteristics associated with healthy intimate relationships 10.9.4 Monitor how one responds to social influences that impact relationships 10.9.5 Demonstrate an ability to be true to self in relationships 10.9.6 Use coping strategies to deal with ending relationships 10.9.7 Evaluate and apply a restorative mindset to navigate conflict 10.9.8 Engage with others to be socially responsible	10.12.1 Understand and evaluate the role consent plays in relationships 10.12.2 Understand the characteristics associated with healthy sexual relationships 10.12.3 Understand the characteristics associated with healthy intimate relationships 10.12.4 Independently seek out and participate in a healthy social network 10.12.5 Use skills to prevent and resolve interpersonal conflicts restoratively 10.12.6 Collaborate with community members to achieve socially responsible goals

SEL Competence: Responsible Decision-Making		
General Curriculum Outcomes (GCOs)	Key-Stage Curriculum Outcomes (KSCOs)	
	By the end of grade 3, students will be expected to	By the end of grade 6, students will be expected to
11. Apply decision-making skills to decisions about personal behaviour and social interactions.	11.3.1 Understand that actions have outcomes 11.3.2 Use a decision-making model to make informed decisions 11.3.3 Explore and choose effective personal strategies for making decisions 11.3.4 Understand societal expectations of personal behaviour and social interaction	11.6.1 Choose actions and behaviours that consider one's self-interest and those of others 11.6.2 Use effective strategies for making decisions
12. Apply ethical standards, safety concerns, and social norms to decision making.	12.3.1 Create a personal code of ethics to use in decision making 12.3.2 Understand and use one's personal code of ethics to guide decision making 12.3.3 Understand the importance of safety guidelines when making decisions	12.6.1 Continue to develop and evaluate one's use of a personal code of ethics 12.6.2 Identify culturally relevant social norms used in making decisions 12.6.3 Develop and apply safety guidelines when making decisions
13. Evaluate consequences of decisions on the well-being of self and others.	13.3.1 Identify positive and negative risk behaviours 13.3.2 Understand that decisions have consequences 13.3.3 Understand that consequences affect self and others 13.3.4 Recognize potential influences on decision making	13.6.1 Use knowledge pertaining to risk to guide decision making 13.6.2 Understand personal responsibility for decision making 13.6.3 Predict the impact on the well-being of self and others when making decisions 13.6.4 Monitor the role of influences such as peers, media, and culture in making decisions 13.6.5 Develop strategies to manage the role of influences such as peers, media, and culture in making decisions

SEL Competence: Responsible Decision-Making		
General Curriculum Outcomes (GCOs)	Key-Stage Curriculum Outcomes (KSCOs)	
	By the end of grade 9, students will be expected to	By the end of grade 12, students will be expected to
11. Apply decision-making skills to decisions about personal behaviour and social interactions.	11.9.1 Apply ethics to decision making 11.9.2 Assess effectiveness of one's strategies for making decisions	11.12.1 Assess one's ethical responsibility in decision making 11.12.2 Apply effective strategies for making decisions
12. Apply ethical standards, safety concerns, and social norms to decision making.	12.9.1 Use ethical standards in making decisions about personal behaviour and social interactions 12.9.2 Apply social norms when making decisions about personal behaviours and social interactions 12.9.3 Apply a safety perspective to decision making about personal behaviour and social interactions	12.12.1 Use ethical standards in making decisions about personal behaviour and social interactions 12.12.2 Evaluate social norms used in making decisions about personal behaviours and social interactions 12.12.3 Assess the influence of a safety culture on personal behaviour and social interactions
13. Evaluate consequences of decisions on the well-being of self and others.	13.9.1 Assess consequences of engagement in risk behaviour 13.9.2 Consider the impact on self and others when making decisions 13.9.3 Analyze strategies used to manage the effect of influences such as peers, media, and culture on decisions	13.12.1 Assess personal engagement in risk behaviour and its impact on the well-being of self and others 13.12.2 Evaluate consequences of decisions and their impact on the well-being of self and others 13.12.3 Evaluate strategies to manage the role of influences such as peers, media, and culture in making decisions

Assessment and Evaluation

Assessment in Social and Emotional Learning

In the social and emotional curriculum framework for kindergarten to grade 12, learning occurs in five competency areas – self-awareness, social awareness, relationship skills, decision making and self-management. Assessment is the process of gathering information on student learning. Assessing the process of learning is critical and occurs in the varied learning environments where natural interactions occur. Assessment, therefore, must be frequent, well planned and well organized so that teachers are able to assist each individual in meeting the required curriculum outcomes.

How learning is assessed and evaluated and how results are communicated send clear messages to students and others about what is valued.

Teachers use their professional judgement, knowledge and specific criteria to determine student performance in relation to the learning outcomes. The analysis of ongoing learning data (formative evaluation) informs the design and delivery of developmentally appropriate instructional activities. A key component of formative assessment is providing ongoing feedback to learners. Students should be encouraged to use feedback to monitor their own process through goal setting, co-constructing criteria and other self and peer assessment strategies. As students are engaged in the assessment process, they become more motivated to learn.

It is important that students know the purpose of the assessment, and the assessment criteria being used. The following criteria should be considered:

- Assessment tools must measure what they intend to measure.
- Criteria used in the assessment should be shared with the students so that they know the expectations.
- Evidence of student learning should be collected through a variety of methods.
- Feedback should be descriptive and specific to individual students.
- Learning outcomes and assessment criteria should combine to provide a clear target for students to work towards.
- Provide the rationale for undertaking a particular approach to assessment at a particular point in time.

Evaluation involves the weighing of the assessment information against a standard in order to make a judgement about student achievement.

Assessment can be used for different purposes:

1. Assessment for learning guides and informs instruction.
2. Assessment as learning focuses on what students are doing well, what they are struggling with, where the areas of challenge are, and what to do next.
3. Assessment of learning makes judgements about student performance in relation to curriculum outcomes.

1. Assessment for Learning

Assessment *for* learning involves frequent, interactive assessments designed to make student learning visible. This enables teachers to identify learning needs and adjust teaching accordingly.

Assessment *for* learning is not about a score or mark; it is an ongoing process of teaching and learning:

- Pre-assessments provide teachers with information about what students already know and can do.
- Self-assessments allow students to set goals for their own learning.
- Assessment *for* learning provides descriptive and specific feedback to students and parents regarding the next stage of learning.
- Data collected during the learning process from a range of tools enables teachers to learn as much as possible about what a student knows and is able to do.

2. Assessment as Learning

Assessment *as* learning involves students' reflecting on their learning and monitoring their own progress. It focuses on the role of the student in developing metacognition and enhances engagement in their own learning. Students can

- analyze their learning in relation to learning outcomes,
- assess themselves and understand how to improve performance,
- consider how they can continue to improve their learning, and
- use information gathered to make adaptations to their learning processes and to develop new understandings.

3. Assessment of Learning

Assessment *of* learning involves strategies designed to confirm what students know in terms of curriculum outcomes. It also assists teachers in determining student proficiency and future learning needs. Assessment *of* learning occurs at the end of a learning experience and contributes directly to reported results. Traditionally, teachers relied on this type of assessment to make judgements about student performance by measuring learning after the fact and then reporting it to others. Used in conjunction with the other assessment processes previously outlined, assessment *of* learning is strengthened. Teachers can

- confirm what students know and can do;
- report evidence to parents/guardians, and other stakeholders, of student achievement in relation to learning outcomes; and
- report on student learning accurately and fairly using evidence obtained from a variety of contexts and sources.

Involving Students in the Assessment Process

Students should know what they are expected to learn as outlined in the specific curriculum outcomes of a course as well as the criteria that will be used to determine the quality of their achievement. This information allows students to make informed choices about the most effective ways to demonstrate what they know and are able to do.

It is important that students participate actively in assessment by co-creating criteria and standards which can be used to make judgements about their own learning. Students may benefit from examining various scoring criteria, rubrics, and student exemplars.

Students are more likely to perceive learning as its own reward when they have opportunities to assess their own progress. Rather than asking teachers, “What do you want?”, students should be asking themselves questions:

- What have I learned?
- What can I do now that I couldn’t do before?
- What do I need to learn next?

Assessment must provide opportunities for students to reflect on their own progress, evaluate their learning, and set goals for future learning.

Assessment Tools

Assessment instruments are used to gather information for evaluation. Information gathered through assessment helps teachers determine students’ strengths and needs, and guides future instruction. In planning assessment, teachers should use a broad range of tools to give students multiple opportunities to demonstrate their knowledge, skills, and attitudes. The different levels of achievement or performance may be expressed as written or oral comments, ratings, categorizations, letters, numbers, or as some combination of these forms.

Teachers are encouraged to be flexible in assessing student learning and to seek diverse ways students might demonstrate what they know and are able to do. The grade level and the activity being assessed will inform the types of assessment tools a teacher will choose.

Samples of Assessment Tools

- Anecdotal Records
- Case Studies
- Career Portfolios
- Classroom/Student Checklists
- Conferences
- Debates
- Exemplars
- Demonstrations
- Goal Setting
- Graphic Organizers
- Literacy Profiles
- Observation
- Photographic Documentation
- Portfolios
- Presentations

- Projects and Investigations
- Questioning
- Quizzes
- Reflective Journals
- Responses to texts/activities
- Role plays
- Rubrics
- Self and peer assessment
- Technology Applications: Podcasts, Audio/Video Clips
- Tests

Assessment Guidelines

Assessments should measure what they intend to measure. It is important that students know the purpose, type, and potential marking scheme of an assessment. The following guidelines should be considered:

- Collect evidence of student learning through a variety of methods; do not rely solely on tests and paper and pencil activities.
- Develop a rationale for using a particular assessment of learning at a specific point in time.
- Provide descriptive and individualized feedback to students.
- Provide students with the opportunity to demonstrate the extent and depth of their learning.
- Set clear targets for student success using learning outcomes and assessment criteria.
- Share assessment criteria with students so that they know the expectations.

Evaluation

Evaluation is the process of analyzing, reflecting upon, and summarizing assessment information, and making judgements or decisions based on the information gathered. Evaluation is conducted within the context of the outcomes, which should be clearly understood by learners before teaching and evaluation take place. Students must understand the basis on which they will be evaluated and what teachers expect of them.

During evaluation, the teacher interprets the assessment information, makes judgements about student progress, and makes decisions about student learning programs.

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