

Affinity Mappingⁱ: Connecting SEL to the Curriculum

PREPARATION

- Materials Needed: Chart paper, post-it notes, pens, pencils or markers, multiple copies of the SEL “wheel” and a list of the “sub-competencies”
- Hang and label 2 pieces of chart paper per SEL competency (Self-Awareness, Responsible Decision-Making, Relationship Skills, Social Awareness, and Self-Management. Further, each competency should have these sub-headings (one per sheet): “what we do” and “opportunities to connect”

DISCUSSION / INSTRUCTIONS

This protocol is divided into two distinct activities. The first, “What we do” is a timed activity done individually, *and in silence*. The second is a small group activity. The facilitator should choose the grouping strategy that makes the most sense, i.e. by PLC, grade-level, vertical teams, etc.

ACTIVITY 1: WHAT WE DO

After a brief description of the day’s activities and expectations, as well as a brief discussion with specific examples of possible outcomes, ask the following question: **what specific skills and activities are you already doing that align with a particular SEL competency?** Request that participants write one idea per post-it note and instruct them to work silently and on their own. In addition, have the participants write the grade or class associated with the activity on the post-it, as well.

Take a few minutes for the participants to match their post-it notes on the labeled SEL competencies. Once everyone is seated, ask for a few volunteers to describe one of the activities they recorded.

ACTIVITY 2: OPPORTUNITIES TO CONNECT

Now ask the participants to quickly group up using the grouping strategy you decided upon. Have each group select a recorder, then have the groups do a “gallery walk” of each of the competencies, giving them a few minutes to discuss and take notes about the activities now posted at each station.

Working in small groups, have the participants consider the following guiding questions:

1. **What themes, if any, emerged from the work we are doing so far?**

2. What dimensions are missing from the SEL activities we are currently doing?

Before they begin addressing Question 3, ask questions 1 and 2 to the whole group, once the smaller groups are given an opportunity to discuss each question, so that each of the smaller groups will have an opportunity to hear some of the “big picture” observations before turning to work on the next question.

3. What additional opportunities exist to connect SEL to the curriculum in the form of skills and activities?

Have the participants write their answers to Question 3 on individual post-it notes, giving them ample time to talk and work. Before dismissing the participants, be sure to have them place their responses to Question 3 on the appropriate “Opportunities to Connect” chart paper. The facilitator can choose to debrief the work with the whole group for closure if time permits.

ⁱ Adapted from materials developed by the National School Reform Faculty