# SEL and Mental Health Multi-Tiered Systems of Support: Self-Reflection Rubric

This tool is designed to help school/district teams work in collaboration with their technical assistance (TA) provider to reflect on their current SEL and mental health multi-tiered systems of support (MTSS). This tool will also support in action planning and monitoring progress throughout involvement in the Academy. The rubric is based on the SEB Academy SEL & Mental Health MTSS visual shown below (see MTSS Definitions section for detailed explanations of each element).
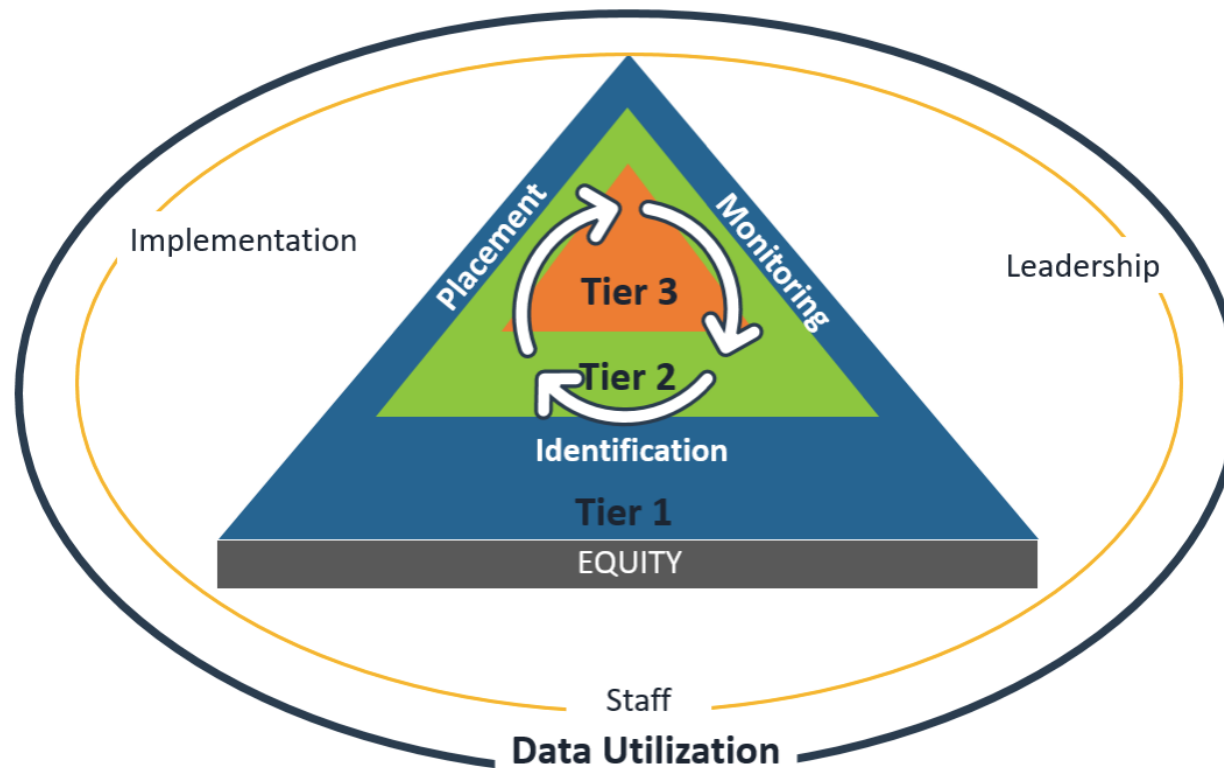
This self-reflection tool examines the many variables involved in a comprehensive MTSS for SEL & Mental Health including Equity, Tiered Supports, Identification, Placement & Monitoring Process, Drivers of Effectiveness (leadership, implementation & staff) and Data Utilization. The tool is therefore detailed, thorough, and lengthy. To increase focus and support the creation of realistic next steps, **teams are encouraged to work with their TA Provider to complete the Equity section and _one_ additional section of their choice using the following rating system**:

0 = Not at all

1 = Barely - needs significant work

2 = Somewhat – needs refinement

3 = Totally- consistently and effectively in place, just needs to be sustained

Equity

	0 = Not at all 1 = Barely - needs significant work 2 = Somewhat – needs refinement 3 = Totally - consistently and effectively in place, just needs to be sustained
Adults in the building have a shared understanding and vision when it comes to advancing equity through a MTSS for SEL and mental health, where each student feels a sense of belonging, physical and psychological safety to express their identity and has an unobstructed path towards achieving their academic and life goals.	0 1 2 3
The school's/district's understanding and commitment to equity considers the various ways in which students may experience marginalization, including, but not limited to race, ethnicity, culture, religion, sexual orientation, gender identity, and socioeconomic status.	0 1 2 3
The school/district has clearly stated and shared equity values or commitments and shared definitions for terms such as equity, oppression, and anti-racism.	0 1 2 3
School/district leadership overtly and consistently expresses commitment to equity and enables others in the building to work towards equity in your MTSS for SEL and mental health.	0 1 2 3
The school/district culture allows for challenging and productive conversations about existing inequities and approaches to address them, including ways to incorporate anti-racism education into SEL programs and practices.	0 1 2 3
Decisions about SEL & Mental Health programs and practices incorporate perspectives of various groups in the school community, including, but not limited to, different racial, ethnic, and cultural groups, LGBTQ+ students, and students with disabilities.	0 1 2 3
The school/district works to ensure that those implementing and supporting SEL and Mental Health interventions represent various student groups in the school community, including different racial, ethnic, and cultural groups, LGBTQ+ individuals, and individuals with disabilities.	0 1 2 3
SEL & Mental Health data is collected, interpreted, and used by individuals representing the diversity of the school community.	0 1 2 3
Culturally Responsiveness	
SEL programs and practices are culturally responsive and affirming for students of all backgrounds	0 1 2 3
Staff are trained on topics including anti-racist education, implicit bias, and culturally responsive practices and how these apply to SEL and Mental Health.	0 1 2 3
SEL competencies and Mental Health strategies consider students' cultural values, beliefs, and traditions.	0 1 2 3

SOCIAL, EMOTIONAL, & BEHAVIOR ACADEMY

EDC Education Development Center

MASSACHUSETTS DEPARTMENT OF ELEMENTARY AND SECONDARY EDUCATION

Reflection

Based on these ratings, what do you see as strengths, gaps, and opportunities to promote equity through your MTSS for SEL and Mental Health?

Strengths	
Gaps	
Opportunities	

Tiered Supports

0 = Not at all	1 = Barely - needs significant work	2 = Somewhat – needs refinement	3 = Totally - consistently and effectively in place, just needs to be sustained

Tier 1: Universal Support through Classroom & School Programs, Practices, & Policies[i]

SEL efforts throughout the district/school are guided by an SEL framework.	0 1 2 3
SEL efforts are horizontally aligned within grades and vertically aligned across grades.	0 1 2 3
Evidence-based explicit SEL instruction is implemented consistently in developmentally appropriate, culturally responsive ways.	0 1 2 3
SEL practices are integrated into instructional content and teaching strategies in all classes, academic and otherwise.	0 1 2 3
Schoolwide and classroom learning environments are supportive, culturally responsive, trauma-informed and focused on building relationships and community.	0 1 2 3
Discipline policies and practices are instructive, restorative, developmentally appropriate, and equitably applied.	0 1 2 3
Mental Health Literacy is integrated into district's/school's Health Education program.	0 1 2 3

Tier 2: Targeted Support

Teachers provide targeted social and emotional supports in the classrooms for specific students, as needed.	0 1 2 3
Staff provide additional targeted support (e.g., lunch groups, check-in/check-out) outside of the classroom for specific students, as needed.	0 1 2 3
The school/district has a list, which is kept up to date, of Tier 2 supports available both in and outside of classrooms.	0 1 2 3
Tier 2 interventions are appropriately staffed and staff leading Tier 2 support have proper training, time in their schedule to plan and deliver these supports and receive coaching/feedback.	0 1 2 3
Tier 2 interventions are implemented consistently and offered in the same way across multiple iterations.	0 1 2 3

SOCIAL, EMOTIONAL, & BEHAVIOR ACADEMY

EDC Education Development Center

MASSACHUSETTS DEPARTMENT OF ELEMENTARY AND SECONDARY EDUCATION

Tier 3: Intensive Support	
The school/district staff provide intensive mental health supports (e.g., one-on-one counseling, referral to outside mental health provider) to students with elevated mental health needs.	0 1 2 3
The school/district has a list, which is kept up to date, of Tier 3 interventions available both in school and through outside referral.	0 1 2 3
The school/district staff match students with intensive community-based mental health supports, as needed, and these community-based supports are made available inside or outside the school building.	0 1 2 3
The school/district has a process for referring students to outside mental health providers as needed.	0 1 2 3
Student identified as having Tier 3 mental health needs access services either by school staff or outside partners.	0 1 2 3

Reflection

Based on these ratings, what do you see as strengths, gaps, and opportunities to improve the way you provide SEL and Mental Health support across the 3 tiers?

Strengths
Gaps
Opportunities

SOCIAL, EMOTIONAL, & BEHAVIOR ACADEMY

EDC Education Development Center

MASSACHUSETTS DEPARTMENT OF ELEMENTARY AND SECONDARY EDUCATION

Identification, Placement, and Monitoring

0 = Not at all	1 = Barely - needs significant work	2 = Somewhat – needs refinement	3 = Totally - consistently and effectively in place, just needs to be sustained

Identification

All adults in the building understand what supports are available and how to refer students who might benefit from additional Tier 2 and 3 supports at a given time	0 1 2 3
Students and families understand how to request Tier 2 and 3 support when a student might benefit from them	0 1 2 3
A range of data (e.g., SEL assessment, universal mental health screeners) are consistently collected and reviewed to enable a data-driven process for identifying students with SEL/mental health needs	0 1 2 3
A clear process is in place within the school/each school in the district by which an individual or team receives and reviews referrals and other data to identify students who might benefit from Tier 2 and 3 supports at a given time	0 1 2 3

Placement

The school/each school in the district has a clearly identified team that reviews data for identified students and places them with appropriate Tier 2 and/or 3 supports	0 1 2 3
Team meets regularly and has appropriate processes to effectively place students with Tier 2 and/or 3 supports (e.g., recurring meetings, organized agenda, protocols, list of available services)	0 1 2 3
Team has effective communication channels to communicate with students, families, staff, and community-based providers about the Tier 2 and 3 supports, as appropriate and following privacy guidelines	0 1 2 3

Progress Monitoring

Team involved in identifying and placing students also has appropriate processes and protocols for monitoring the progress of students who have been placed with Tier 2 and/or 3 supports	0 1 2 3
The team has consistent access to the data they need to monitor students' progress	0 1 2 3
Team has process for re-assigning students or removing students from Tier 2 and/or 3 supports based on students' progress and in a manner that best supports students' needs and growth	0 1 2 3

SOCIAL, EMOTIONAL, & BEHAVIOR ACADEMY

EDC Education Development Center

MASSACHUSETTS DEPARTMENT OF ELEMENTARY AND SECONDARY EDUCATION

Reflection

Based on these ratings, what do you see as strengths, gaps, and opportunities for improvement in your identification, placement, and monitoring process for students with SEL and Mental Health needs?

Strengths
Gaps
Opportunities

Drivers of Effectiveness

0 = Not at all	1 = Barely - needs significant work	2 = Somewhat – needs refinement	3 = Totally - consistently and effectively in place, just needs to be sustained

Commitment from Leadership

School/district leadership demonstrates commitment to creating and sustaining a multi-tiered system of supports for SEL and mental health.	0 1 2 3
School/district leadership articulates a clear vision for a multi-tiered system of support for SEL and mental health.	0 1 2 3
School/district shares clear goals for promoting students' social and emotional growth and supporting students' mental health needs.	0 1 2 3
School/district leadership provides the support and backing to those tasked with carrying out the various elements of an effective multi-tiered system of supports for SEL and mental health.	0 1 2 3

Staff Competency

All staff understand the importance and need for a multi-tiered system of support for SEL and mental health.	0 1 2 3
All staff can articulate their role within the multi-tiered system of support for SEL and mental health.	0 1 2 3
All staff receive professional development and ongoing support throughout the year to support their role in the multi-tiered system of support for SEL and mental health.	0 1 2 3

Effective Implementation

Educators implementing SEL and mental health supports understand the rationale behind the supports they are being asked to provide.	0 1 2 3
There is successful cooperation and collaboration among different players (e.g., administrators, teachers, clinicians) to effectively implement SEL and mental health supports.	0 1 2 3
SEL and mental health supports are monitored to ensure they are being effectively implemented (e.g., lesson completion tracking, classroom observations), supported is provided, and corrections are made when needed.	0 1 2 3

SOCIAL, EMOTIONAL, & BEHAVIOR ACADEMY

EDC Education Development Center

MASSACHUSETTS DEPARTMENT OF ELEMENTARY AND SECONDARY EDUCATION

Reflection

Based on these ratings, what do you see as strengths, gaps, and opportunities for improvement in your drivers of effectiveness?

Strengths
Gaps
Opportunities

Comprehensive Data Use

0 = Not at all	1 = Barely - needs significant work	2 = Somewhat – needs refinement	3 = Totally - consistently and effectively in place, just needs to be sustained

Data Utilization

The school/district collects data that captures students' strengths and areas of growth related to social and emotional competencies (i.e., SEL assessment).	0 1 2 3
The school/district collects data about students' mental health needs (i.e., universal mental health screening).	0 1 2 3
The school/district mental health staff and/or mental health community partners use data collection tools to identify specific mental health needs (i.e., mental health diagnostic tools).	0 1 2 3
SEL and mental health data is appropriately (e.g., in compliance with HIPPA and FERPA)[ii] shared with stakeholders.	0 1 2 3
Data is used to inform and evaluate SEL programs and practices (Tier 1), including which to implement and the impact of implemented programs and practices.	0 1 2 3
The school/district teams use data to identify, place, and monitor students with SEL and/or mental health needs.	0 1 2 3
Data is disaggregated by groups including, but not limited to, racial, ethnic, and cultural groups, LGBTQ+ students, English learners, and students with disabilities.	0 1 2 3

Reflection

Based on these ratings, what do you see as strengths, gaps, and opportunities for improvement of data utilization?

Strengths	
Gaps	
Opportunities	

Overall Reflections

Based on this rubric, when looking at our current SEL/Mental Health supports in the context of the MTSS framework…

Our greatest areas of **strengths** are:

The areas that show the most significant **gaps** are:

The areas where there are most promising **opportunities** for improvement are:

SOCIAL, EMOTIONAL, & BEHAVIOR ACADEMY

EDC Education Development Center

MASSACHUSETTS DEPARTMENT OF ELEMENTARY AND SECONDARY EDUCATION

MTSS Definitions

Social and Emotional Learning: Social-emotional learning (SEL) is a process whereby young people and adults build strong, respectful, and lasting relationships that facilitate co-learning. In a school setting, students should be supported to develop their individual competencies, skills, and mindsets in a way that is personally meaningful and relevant. SEL requires and enables a critical examination of the root causes of inequity and encourages youth and adults to develop collaborative solutions that lead to personal, community, and societal well-being.[iii]

Mental Health: Mental health (MH) is a state of emotional, psychological, and social well-being. Supports designed to foster mental health exist along a continuum—from promotion of positive mental health for all children and adults, to treatment for those with mental illness. In a school setting, universal mental health supports are rooted in evidence-based practice and focus on trauma-sensitive approaches, the development of social and emotional competencies, and a whole school culture that fosters mental wellness. Educators play a critical role in identifying, supporting, and/or referring students to mental health interventions. [iv]

Intersections of SEL and Mental Health: Social and emotional learning and mental health supports are intertwined. Social-emotional learning equips students with the mindsets, skills, and competencies needed to develop and enhance resilience, emotion and behavior regulation, relationships with others, and positive coping strategies—skills essential for mental health and mental well-being. Mental health supports are most often used to help students who are showing signs of challenges related to emotional and social well-being, trauma, stress, depression, or anxiety. Effective evidence-based social-emotional learning can help to foster emotional intelligence, strengthen conflict resolution skills, and prevent mental health problems.

Equity: Educational equity means that each child receives what they need to develop to their full academic and social potential. Equitable systems and policies within a school are those that enable all members of the school community to thrive; that recognize and address structural inequities; and that build upon the strengths and assets of students and others in the school community.[v]

Tier 1: Tier 1 refers to all the supports that benefits all students. Depending on the context, all students may refer to all students in the district (e.g., a district-wide effort to promote stronger relationships between students and trusted adults), in the school (e.g., school-wide assembly focused on specific SEL themes), or in the classroom (e.g., a classroom-based curriculum). Furthermore, Tier 1 supports can come in all kinds of forms—standalone curricula, classroom-based SEL practices, school-wide initiatives including those designed to engage families, etc.[vi]

Tier 2: Tier 2 refers to supports that target students who might be struggling with social-emotional competencies or have low to moderate mental health needs. Tier 2 supports are often times offered in small groups, either inside or outside the classroom, but can also include mentoring or other forms of individual supports that focus on low to moderate needs and therefore not intensive in their nature.[vi]

Tier 3: Tier 3 refers to supports designed to address significant mental health needs, including diagnosed mental health disorders. These supports are intensive and are often times provided individually or in very small groups. While Tier 2 supports are offered by people with different roles in the school (e.g., classroom teachers, guidance counselors, school adjustment counselors), Tier 3 interventions are usually offered by licensed mental health providers. [vi]

Leadership Vision and Commitment: MTSS is a cohesive, school- or district-wide system of supports. For the system to work well, it requires the full commitment from the school and/or district leadership, as well as a clearly articulated vision for MTSS. In particular, effective leadership for MTSS requires leaders who understand the benefits of an MTSS framework, communicate to their entire staff a clear vision of MTSS, and lead their staff in developing structures (e.g., forming an MTSS coordinating team) and processes (e.g., protocols for identifying and referring students for Tier 2 and 3 support placement). [vi]

Staff Competency: Staff competency refers to staff demonstrating their commitment to playing their part in the MTSS system, as well as possessing the knowledge and skills required of them to play their part well. In the case of SEL and mental health, this includes everyone's commitment to helping students develop social and emotional competencies, while helping to identify, refer, and/or address students' mental health needs. To achieve optimal staff competencies, schools and districts must provide professional development and ongoing support to the different professional roles involved in a school and district setting. [vi]

Effective Implementation: Effective implementation includes identifying and selecting evidence-based programs, practices and policies at all three tiers, as well as process for ensuring that these supports are well-implemented. Good implementation consists of finding a balance between maintaining fidelity to the support's core components, while adapting to fit with students' need and local context. Steps that schools and districts can take to ensure effective implementation including providing ongoing training and support to staff on the specific supports they are implementing, measuring and monitoring fidelity, and engaging in ongoing mid-course corrections and continuous improvement. [vi]

Data Utilization: Every decision involving MTSS should be informed by data. To do so effectively, it is important to ensure the school and/or district is collecting the right type of data, using well-designed data collection tools, ensuring that educators have access to the data they need to make data-informed decision, articulating clear expectations for how data will be utilized to support MTSS decision-making, and providing ongoing support to educators to meet these expectations.

---

[i] Adapted from CASEL's Indicators of Schoolwide SEL.

[ii] For more information, see Joint Guidance on the Application of the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA) And the Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Act of 1996 (HIPAA) To Student Health Records

[iii] The SEL definition was modified from the following source: CASEL. (2020). "SEL As a Lever for Equity and Social Justice." Accessed August 2020 from https://casel.org/wp-content/uploads/2020/06/SEL-as-Lever-for-Equity-Slides.pdf

[iv] The Mental Health definition was modified from the following sources: U.S. Department of Health & Human Services, Accessed August 2020 from mentalhealth.gov/basics/what-is-mental-health and Innovating Minds, Accessed August 2020 from https://resources.innovatingmindscic.com/resources/definition-of-a-whole-school-approach-to-mental-health

[v] The Equity definition was modified from the following sources: National Equity Project, Accessed August 2020 from https://www.nationalequityproject.org/education-equity-definition and MA DESE MTSS Blueprint, Accessed August 2020 from https://matoolsforschools.com/resources/mtss-blueprint

[vi] Adapted from the Massachusetts Department of Elementary and Secondary Education's Multi-Tiered System of Support Blueprint.

SOCIAL, EMOTIONAL, & BEHAVIOR ACADEMY

EDC Education Development Center

MASSACHUSETTS DEPARTMENT OF ELEMENTARY AND SECONDARY EDUCATION