

Welcome!

As you enter the space, please do the following:

01

Rename yourself to reflect the school or district you are representing (name, district)

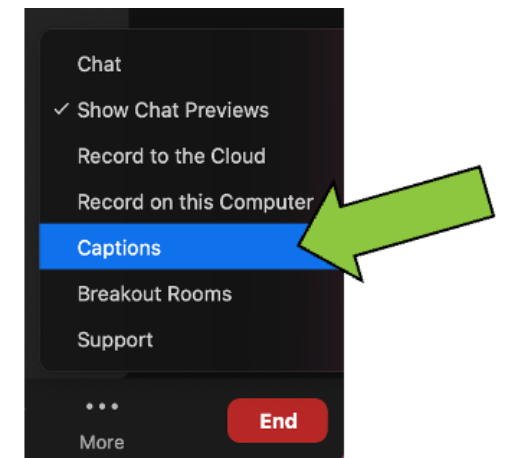


02

Mute your microphone

03

If you would like closed captions, click on the three dots in the bottom right corner and select "captions".





SOCIAL, EMOTIONAL,
& BEHAVIOR ACADEMY

Increasing Buy-In ➤ Through Strategic Communication

Presenter:



Agenda

- 1. Introductions & Activator**
- 2. Getting the Message Across**
- 3. Responding to Tough Questions**
- 4. Breakout**
- 5. Communications Planning**
- 6. Champions and Messengers**
- 7. Questions & Closing**

Group Agreements

- ✓ Engage actively in a way that works for you
- ✓ Share your own experiences and expertise with us
- ✓ Connection
- ✓ Listen with curiosity



Notecatcher



Webinar Note Catcher Increasing Buy-In Through Strategic Communication

Activator Question: What is a key audience with whom you want to share positive messages about SEL? What is a challenge in sharing positive <u>SEL</u> messages?	<ul style="list-style-type: none">
Notes: Getting Your Message Across	<ul style="list-style-type: none">
Whiteboard Activity: What audiences do you message to? What types of questions might you field from these audiences?	Padlet Link: https://padlet.com/todd35/seb-academy-february-webinar-z4z09gxqzjime65e
Notes: Responding to Tough Questions	

Today's Presenters



Jim Vetter

SEB Academy Coach/TA Provider
Executive Director at SEL4US



Lauren Gilman

SEB Academy Coach/TA Provider

RALLY





Activator

Breakout Discussion

What is a key audience with whom you want to share positive messages about SEL?

What is a challenge in sharing positive SEL messages?

Debrief



What key audiences are we thinking about?



What challenges are we experiencing?



What mindsets about SEL exist in our communities?

Getting Your Message Across



**Across audiences, our messages
resonate most when....**

01

We invoke student success and students' need to feel valued and supported.

Every child **should know they are valued.** But when we ban books and discussions about certain groups, we're telling students that they don't belong in their classrooms.

No parent wants their child to grow up too fast or encounter challenging topics before they're ready. But, learning about the world we live in – in age-appropriate ways – **will prepare our children to grow up and be successful** in our complicated world.

We know our kids must learn to work together to be successful outside the classroom. That starts by teaching them about all the diverse people and communities who contribute to our country and school.

We asked respondents what segments of messages resonated most. The larger the font, the more those segments rose to the top for all audiences.

02

We provide assurance about the age-appropriateness of curriculum and the discretion/expertise of teachers.

Teachers are trained to introduce books and lessons at the right times and to help our kids gradually understand complex history and other topics.

46% total found the highlighted segment especially convincing, including 39% of the “opposition.”

No parent wants their child to grow up too fast or encounter challenging topics before they’re ready. But learning about the world we live in — in age-appropriate ways — will prepare our children to grow up and be successful in our complicated world.

43% of the “opposition” found the highlighted segment especially convincing, a reminder to lead with empathy and shared values.

03

We leverage innate skepticism and disdain for political interference in the classroom.

3 in 5 say political groups or elected officials are most responsible for recent disagreements over what's taught in public K-12 schools.

As educators and systems leaders, there is an opportunity to find common ground in the fact that parents share in the belief that extremist politicians should stop meddling in classrooms.

Teachers are trained to introduce books and lessons at the right times and to help our kids gradually understand complex history and other topics. **We don't need extremist politicians** interfering with our kids' education.

48% total found the bolded segment especially convincing, with similar feelings across audience sub-groups.

DO'S

Lead with shared values & highlight successes to **demonstrate what is possible**

Use **plain language**

Lift up skills like **empathy, curiosity, and preparation for success beyond high school**

Highlight the importance of students feeling **valued, accepted and celebrated** for who they are

DON'TS

Avoid feeding into cynicism by focusing only on problems

Don't assume others have the same definition of education jargon (e.g., equity, SEL, etc.)

Avoid relying on pleas to morality or justice alone

Avoid getting trapped in a debate about racism and exclusion

DO'S

Address concerns about **age-appropriateness** directly

Reaffirm your **support for parent-teacher partnership** and parental involvement

Focus on impact first, and invoke “extreme” politicians or “some” politicians when helpful

Ask questions and **lead with curiosity** to find common ground

DON'TS

Avoid feeding into misinformation by dismissing this concern

Don't blindly defend teachers without acknowledging the role of parents and family

Avoid getting partisan and making this a red vs blue issue.

Don't assume that folks have all the information that you do. Disinformation poisoned the well, not values.

**What resonates?
What questions
do we have?**



MESSAGING EXPLAINED

WHAT IS MESSAGING?

- A short statement that communicates your most important needs and values.
- Unified language that organizations or advocates can use to describe the issue, their mission and values.

WHY IS IT IMPORTANT?

- It is the foundation for all communications materials.
- It allows everyone across an issue space to speak in shared and consistent language.

IT MOVES PEOPLE.

Great messaging, especially when new, can feel uncomfortable.

However, it elicits a reaction by connecting your key points to issues that deeply impact your audience.

Great messaging connects with audiences by:

- Meeting audiences where they are.
- Shifting from technical terms to high-level values.
- Providing positive context for local SEL programs and demand.

TO BE A GREAT MESSENGER:

KNOW YOUR MESSAGE

- + Have your messages ready.
- + Practice delivering them smoothly.

KNOW YOUR AUDIENCE

- + What are the values of this particular audience?
- + How might the messages need to be adapted accordingly?

KNOW THE FACTS

- + Always tell the truth, and don't guess.

KNOW YOUR VULNERABILITIES

- + Anticipate tough questions.
- + Know how to pivot.

KNOW THE TONE

- + What is the tone? Urgent, credible? Heavy, light? Are there other unique aspects of your voice?

STAY POSITIVE

- + Don't repeat a negative statement or question.
- + Answer the good faith question you wish you were asked.

HOW DO YOU GET YOUR MESSAGE ACROSS?

Think about how you want to get your message across and what exactly you want people to know.

CONCLUDE FIRST

Flip-flop all you've been taught about making your case from beginning to end.

STATE YOUR HEADLINE

Make your main point clear, and make it compelling, urgent, and quotable.

OFFER CONCRETE SUPPORTING POINTS

Share a quick anecdote, concise example and/or stat that illustrates your point.

END DECISIVELY

Don't wind down your answers – finish strong with a call to action.

RALLY MESSAGING STEP BY STEP

01 MESSAGE

The **overarching idea** you're communicating.

02 STORY

What stories can you incorporate to make your message feel **real** and **relatable**?
Give your message a **human appeal**.

03 STATISTIC

What statistics can you incorporate to make your message feel **urgent** and **wide-reaching**?

04 SOUNDBITE

What sound bites can you incorporate to make your message **more memorable** and **succinct**?

Zooming in on audience

Please open the padlet (in your notecatcher)

Responding to Tough Questions



HOW DO YOU PREPARE FOR DIFFICULT QUESTIONS?

Get into the habit of prepping if you know you'll be walking into a tough conversation.

- **Know the audience:** Tailor your messages to your audience and keep in mind what they're interested in and need to know.
- **Know your message:** Identify three simple messages and prepare to repeat them over and over.
- **Know the facts:** Always tell the truth and don't guess, hypothesize, or exaggerate.
- **Avoid repeating a misconception even when trying to dispel it:** Rather than stating the misconception and why it's wrong, reinforce your key messages and what you want people to know.
- **If possible, screen questions:** This will help you filter out unhelpful questions. You can also take a question framed around a misconception and reframe it to be a broader question that aligns to your key messages.

WHAT ARE THE ATMS?

You can use the ATMS to:

- Answer tough or off-topic questions
- Get an interview or conversation back on track
- Ensure that your message is getting across

Remember, tough questions are not necessarily controversial.

ACKNOWLEDGE



You can answer off-topic questions by acknowledging the question and moving on. “That’s a good question, but.. ” or “I hear that, but what I’m here to talk about is...”

TRANSITION



Transition or bridge from their question to your answer.

MESSAGE



Your message and message supports.

SELL



Sell your message by inserting a closing call to action.

HOW DO YOU TRANSITION BACK TO YOUR MESSAGE?

Address and Transition.

In responding to a question you'd prefer not to answer, you can Address the question and then Transition (or pivot) to your message.



HOW DO YOU TRANSITION BACK TO YOUR MESSAGE?

Address and Transition examples:

- “That may be the case, but...”
- “That’s a good point, but the main consideration is...”
- “We all agree with that, but what’s at issue is...”
- “That’s not my area of expertise, but I can tell you...”
- “Yes. As I said...”
- “While _____ is certainly important, don’t forget that...”
- “Perhaps. It’s important to remember that...”
- “That’s unclear. Let me tell you what we’ve been seeing...”

WHAT IF YOU CANNOT ANSWER A QUESTION?

When you're asked a question you don't know the answer to in an interview, remember to use the ATMs to get back to what you do know.



IN PRACTICE

Think about how you would respond to this question.

“Teachers aren’t therapists. Why are they teaching students social and emotional learning?”

Example Question:

“Teachers aren’t therapists. Why are they teaching students social and emotional learning?”



ACKNOWLEDGE

“I hear your concern...”



TRANSITION

“But the important thing to know is that...”



MESSAGE

“SEL is social and emotional *learning*, and it's focused on helping students build lifelong, future-ready skills – such as communicating effectively, practicing curiosity, staying motivated, and making decisions that benefit themselves and others. This is what good teachers have been doing before SEL had a name.”



SELL

“If you’re interested in learning more about SEL in the classroom, I’d love to share my experiences...”

IN PRACTICE

Think about how you would respond to this question.

“Why is my child’s school wasting time on SEL when it should be focused on academics instead?”

Example Question:

“Why is my child’s school wasting time on SEL when it should be focused on academics instead?”



ACKNOWLEDGE

“I agree that academics are important...”



TRANSITION

“And I’ve seen from research and my experience that...”



MESSAGE

“SEL helps create an environment where students feel seen and supported, which in turn helps them succeed academically and mitigates behavioral issues.”



SELL

“Can I send you some data that shows you the positive impacts that SEL has on academics?”

Breakout 

Breakout Discussion

RALLY

GROUP PRACTICE QUESTIONS

- So what is “SEL” anyway?
- Why should we focus on SEL right now when teachers are already overwhelmed?
- Are you suggesting we should prioritize SEL over academics?
- Why are you trying to teach students “values” that should be taught at home?
- Why aren’t we seeing academic gains in many of the districts that have been implementing SEL, and in many districts academics have declined? Does that mean SEL isn’t working?
- Does SEL promote alternative lifestyles and indoctrinate young children to adopt these lifestyles?
- If the majority of schools are already using SEL, why are we seeing a mental health crisis?
- Do SEL programs teach young people about their gender identity or sexual orientation?
- Do SEL programs teach young people about “social justice” and activism?
- Is SEL tied to a political party/agenda or CRT?

42

Reflection

Share your thoughts in the chat, or unmute and share out



What was challenging about this exercise?



What did you learn that you will be able to use in your school, district, and/or community?



Communications Planning



Click on any of the icons to continue.

INTRODUCTION

MATERIALS



Analyzing Your Situation



Developing Your Message



Choosing and Implementing a Strategy



Identifying Your Audience



Evaluating Your Actions

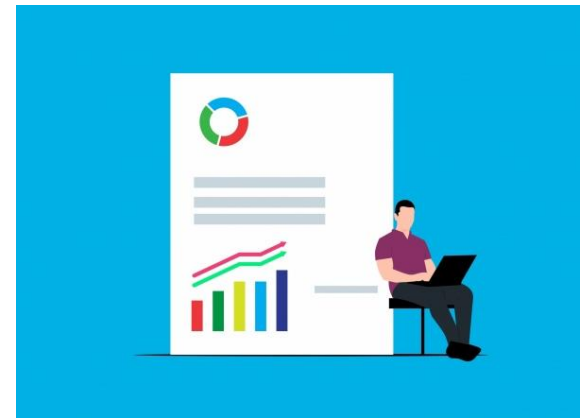
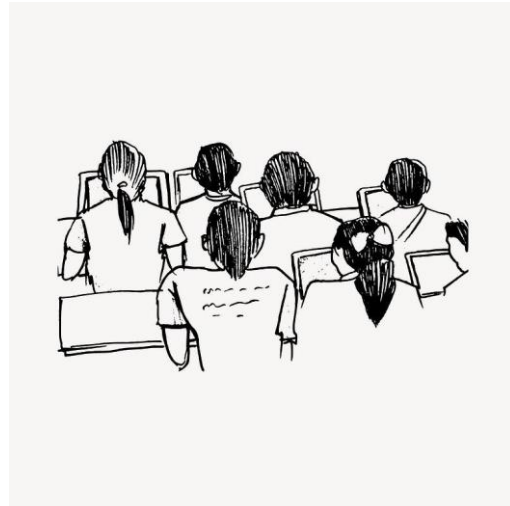
Communications Planning

1. What is your objective?
2. Who is your audience?
3. What is your message?
4. How will you communicate this message?
5. How do you measure its effectiveness?



Example:

Objective	Audience	Message	Channels
Gain support to scale up the implementation of an evidence-based SEL curriculum	<ul style="list-style-type: none">● Principal● School Committee	Use data AND stories to communicate the positive impact of the program	<ul style="list-style-type: none">● Individual conversations● Presentation at School Committee meeting



Champions and Messengers



Messaging is most effective when shared by trusted messengers



Messaging is most effective when repeated by multiple messengers



Don't go it *alone*—build your communications network



Closing and Next Steps





REFLECTION & CLOSING

Please share one insight, takeaway, or piece of information you will bring back to your school.



#SELday

March 8, 2024

SEL Day Is A Global Celebration—

Champions unite
to celebrate SEL



Showcase



Promote

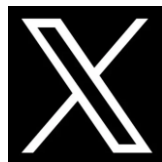


Advocate



Support

In community and
across social media



Leveraging toolkits
and earning badges



Together reaching millions around the world



RESOURCES

Celebrate Social Emotional Learning (SEL) Day - March 8, 2024

<https://selday.org/>

Leading with SEL

<https://leadingwithsel.org/>

MassTAPP Communications Toolkit

http://storyline.hhd.org/masstapp/communications_toolkit/story_html5.html



NEXT STEPS

Peer Sharing Calls

- Promoting Adult Wellbeing
- Data-Informed Decision Making
- Newcomer Populations
- Creating and Building Systems to Identify, Manage, and Monitor Students Needs

Webinar

- **Leading for Change**

Thurs. March 7 from 9:30-11:00 AM

<https://sebacademy.edc.org/upcoming-events>





SOCIAL, EMOTIONAL,
& BEHAVIOR ACADEMY

Complete the feedback survey:

go.edc.org/CommunicationsWebinar



➤ Thank You

