



Success Bound’s Approach to SEL Integration

The Success Bound [curriculum framework](#) is grounded in the science of adolescent development to support learning in three primary areas: foundational skills development, identity and cultural development, and high school & postsecondary exploration. Since social and emotional competencies serve as the foundation for achieving academic and personal goals, Success Bound uses an integrated approach to social & emotional learning by adhering to [CASEL’s components for SEL integration](#):

- Fostering academic mindsets
- Aligning SEL and academic objectives
- Using interactive instructional practices and structures to promote SEL

| SEL Integration Components | CPS Success Bound Elements |
|---|--|
| Fostering academic mindsets | Lessons focus on goal-setting, progress monitoring, and self-advocacy skills to develop growth mindset, foster a sense of agency, and engage in asset-based future thinking |
| Aligning SEL and academic objectives | Lessons are aligned to CASEL and state SEL standards, to various postsecondary standards and frameworks, and to ASCA Mindsets and Behaviors. Regular use of reflection activities are incorporated to promote meta-cognition |
| Using interactive instructional practices and structures to promote SEL | Lessons prioritize use of discussions (both small and whole group) and cooperative learning structures to engage students and promote collaboration. A discussion resource is provided to enhance accessibility, particularly for diverse and multilingual learners. |

Is Success Bound considered an SEL curriculum?

No. Like [evidence-based SEL programs approved by CASEL](#), Success Bound is grounded in principles of adolescent development and has demonstrated positive impact on student outcomes. However, a rigorous scientific evaluation is currently in development. In alignment with the characteristics of effective SEL approaches, Success Bound incorporates the four elements represented by the acronym [SAFE](#):



SUCCESS BOUND
SELF DISCOVERY. BOLD PATHS.

- Sequenced: Unit themes and topics are cohesive across grade levels, while lessons are differentiated with coordinated activities to support students' skill development throughout the middle grades
- Active: Student-centered instruction and engaging learning strategies are used to help students practice and learn new skills
- Focused: Integration notes are included in lesson plans to specifically address how activities promote development of personal and social skills
- Explicit: In addition to the five main competencies of Self-Awareness, Self-Management, Social Awareness, Relationship Skills, and Responsible Decision-Making, specific capacities from the [CASEL framework](#) are identified in each lesson to target specific skills and mindsets

Further, each Success Bound lesson is designed to reflect the [SEL 3 Signature Practices](#):

| SEL Signature Practice | Success Bound Element |
|-------------------------------------|--|
| Inclusive Welcome | Each lesson begins with a Do Now activity to engage students, set a purpose for learning, and build connection within the classroom community. |
| Engaging Strategies | A balance of interactive and reflective learning activities support both individual and collective learning through routines such as Turn & Talk, Think-Pair-Share, Jigsaw, Gallery Walk, and 3-2-1 Reflection. |
| Intentional Close | Each lesson concludes with an exit slip or closing activity that illuminates individual or collective understandings and experiences related to the lesson purpose. In addition, guidance on suggested next steps are provided to support instructors in helping students connect their learning to past and future lessons, as well as to other contexts. |

Is there research to support an integrated approach to SEL?

While not currently considered an evidence-based SEL program according to the [CASEL program guide](#), Success Bound's approach to SEL integration is research-based. While SEL programs that directly teach skills in isolation are generally found to be beneficial to children, these types of stand-alone programs have not been found to be as effective with teenagers (Yeager, 2017). This age group benefits from an integrated approach to SEL that focuses on creating positive climates and developing mindsets to help students connect SEL skills to their values and identities. Further, students report that a lack of social and emotional skill development contributes to feeling unprepared for life after high school (Atwell et al., 2018). Thus, Success Bound is designed to integrate SEL skill development within the context of



postsecondary preparation, foundational skills, and identity development that is developmentally-appropriate for adolescents.

The Success Bound curriculum is designed to meet the criteria outlined by the Remaking Middle School Initiative: “A middle school curriculum should invite students to meaningfully explore their myriad identities and speak to the diversity of their peers. It should also include opportunities for young adolescents to explore postsecondary education and career options, ensuring they can navigate the many possibilities of their future selves” (Bishop & Downes, 2019). Both the curriculum and the professional learning offered are centered on teaching practices found to be effective with middle and high school students: cultivating positive relationships, providing opportunities for student voice and choice, and incorporating personalized student supports (Srinivasan, 2019). Across the Success Bound units and lessons, educators will find a balanced integration of each of the five CASEL competencies with two caveats: 1.) Unit 3 contains more explicit teaching of SEL skills; 2.) Unit 6 is focused on the High School Application process (for districts where this is applicable) and in service of completing the associated deliverables, SEL skills, while still present, may be less emphasized in comparison to other units.

Citations:

- Atwell, M. N., Bridgeland, J. M., DePaoli, J. L., & Shriver, T. P. (2018). *Respected: Perspectives of youth on high school and social & emotional learning*. CASEL Report by Civic with Hart Research Associates.
- Bishop, P. A., and Downes, J. M. (2019). Working paper: Optimizing teaching and learning in the middle grades. *Remaking Middle School Series*. University of Virginia Curry School of Education and Human Development. Youth-Nex.
- Srinivasan, M. (2019). *SEL every day: Integrating social and emotional learning with instruction in secondary classrooms*. W. W. Norton & Company.
- Yeager, D. S. (2017). Social-emotional learning programs for adolescents. *Future of Children, Princeton-Brookings*, 27(1): 31-52.