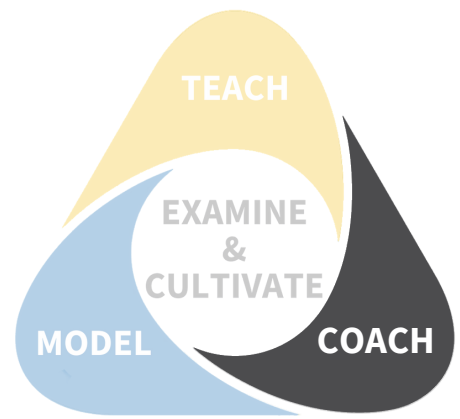


# TRANSFORMING EDUCATION'S SEL Integration Approach Companion Guide

**COACH** students as they practice, generalize, and apply their skills and mindsets in a variety of complex, new, planned, and unplanned situations.



## RESEARCH SHOWS

*Coaching* is a powerful tool to support students in utilizing their social and emotional skills and competencies across multiple contexts.<sup>1</sup> At its core, coaching is about the “facilitation of learning using active listening and inquiry and providing appropriate challenge and support.”<sup>2</sup> In fact, coaching is an important extension of the shift in teachers’ role in the last two decades from instructor to facilitator.<sup>3</sup>

There are two primary ways coaching can enhance social-emotional development. First, it encourages students to actively engage with learning material to enhance their skill-building rather than being passive observers of instruction, which can reinforce lessons learned and modeled in the classroom.<sup>4</sup> Second, coaching can guide students to practice their emerging habits in a variety of contexts, enabling students to generalize and apply their learning beyond the classroom.<sup>5</sup> As such, when implemented thoughtfully, coaching can increase students’ ability to apply SEL to their own lives across many contexts, thus making SEL personally meaningful and relevant to their own goals. It can also promote a strength-based and equitable approach to SEL, by meeting students where they are at and empowering them to own their learning, rather than promoting a dominant narrative or way of thinking.<sup>6</sup>

Coaching for SEL is easily integrated into academic content. For example, during project-based learning, when students encounter a challenge, they can be coached around problem-solving and conflict-resolution skills.<sup>7</sup> By incorporating student voice and choice into coaching, it can empower students to enact their agency.<sup>8</sup> Finally, when educators engage in consistent coaching, the practice can become habitual, normative, and deeply embedded in educators’ repertoire.<sup>9</sup>

## QUESTIONS TO CONSIDER



- In what ways do students already showcase social-emotional competencies and mindsets in the classroom? Outside of the classroom? Consider the many ways that these competencies can be demonstrated, even if they’re different from your own.
- When and how are students given opportunities to safely practice social-emotional skills? What scaffolds and supports are offered to them?
- How do adults engage with students to help them make choices that might adjust their approaches to challenging situations?
- How do students engage with each other when offering feedback?

### READ

[Checking In: Helping Students "Catch Themselves"](#)

[Protocols for Critique and Feedback](#)

### WATCH

[Talking it Out: A Restorative Conversation](#)

[Class Meetings: A Classroom Problem-Solving Tool](#)

### LISTEN

[A Teachable Moment: Have a Go](#)

[5 Ways to be an Unforgettable Teacher](#)

# TRANSFORMING EDUCATION'S

## SEL Integration Approach Companion Guide

*“The art of **coaching** is doing, thinking, and being: doing a set of actions, holding a set of beliefs, and being in a way that results in those actions leading to change.”*

**ELENA AGUILAR**

*The Art of Coaching: Effective Strategies  
for School Transformation*



### LOOK FORS

#### Educators who coach students...

##### **Plan for regular practice by:**

- Scheduling instructional activities that provide authentic opportunities for students to practice social-emotional skills.
- Reinforcing concepts that have previously been taught and modeled; students are not expected to be proficient in areas they have not been taught or have only limited practice.
- Building a shared vocabulary regarding social-emotional competencies and mindsets that youth and adults can use during their interactions.

##### **Embrace unplanned opportunities by:**

- Being open to unexpected coaching moments and flexibly adjusting time to make room for important SEL-focused conversations.
- Leveraging teachable moments as opportunities for conversation, learning, and constructive feedback rather than as opportunities to blame, shame, or punish students.
- Acknowledging moments of celebration (when students are demonstrating command or growth in a social-emotional competency or mindset) and missed opportunities (difficult situations when students could try an alternate approach).

##### **Provide individualized, relevant opportunities for growth by:**

- Offering choices on how and when students want to “retry” an action, choice, or decision.
- Differentiating practice opportunities by providing sentence stems, anchor charts, or other scaffolds.
- Highlighting connections across contexts to help students generalize their learning and understand that SEL is relevant beyond the classroom setting (e.g. home, recess, after-school activities).

##### **Focus on feedback by:**

- Designating time for reflection for both youth and adults.
- Articulating specific details about what is observed and how it connects to social-emotional competencies and strategies.

# TRANSFORMING EDUCATION'S

## SEL Integration Approach Companion Guide: References

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