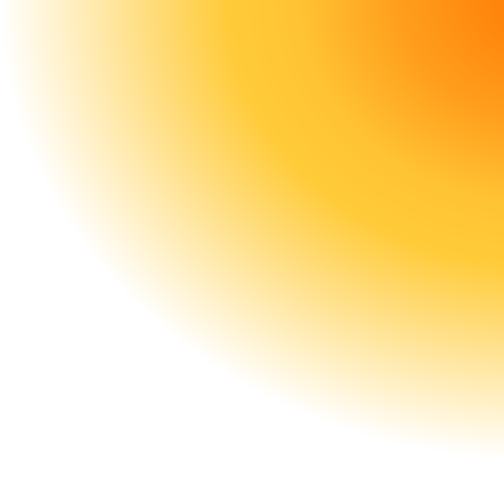
**OREGON’S TRANSFORMATIVE SOCIAL AND EMOTIONAL LEARNING**

# Inner and Outer Masks

The Inner and Outer Masks Activity helps you reflect on how you present yourself to the world and what you keep hidden inside. It invites you to explore the balance between what you reveal and conceal, creating space for self-understanding and empathy toward others. Through reflection, we can better understand ourselves and our students and how we can create a supportive, inclusive learning environment.

There is no right or wrong way to complete this—this is your reflection. Use drawings, colors, symbols or words to express your inner and outer selves.

**Instructions**

1. **Prepare your paper**

* Start with a piece of cardstock.
* Draw an oval shape on each side of the paper.
* Label the front of the paper outer mask and the back of the paper inner mask.

1. **Create your outer mask (5 minutes)**

* Think about what others can see about you, both inside and outside of the classroom. Consider what you choose to show to others.
* Use words, pictures and colors to create your outer mask—this should represent the qualities, emotions and traits you typically show to others.

1. **Outer mask guiding questions**

* How do you think your students, colleagues, or parents perceive you?
* What traits or behaviors do you consciously emphasize in your role as an educator?
* What professional roles or identities do you display most frequently (leader, mentor, disciplinarian)?
* How do you adjust your outer persona depending on the situation or audience (students vs. parents vs. colleagues)?

1. **Create your inner mask (5 minutes)**

* Now, think about aspects of your identity that others do not see. Reflect on what you keep private or hidden, whether consciously or unconsciously.
* Use words, pictures and colors to create your inner mask—this should represent the parts of your identity you typically keep to yourself or do not show others.

1. **Inner mask guiding questions**

* What parts of your identity do you keep private, either consciously or unconsciously?
* What core values or passions guide you but might not always be obvious in your teaching or work with others?
* Are there aspects of your identity (cultural background, family life, past experiences) that you wish you could share more openly?

1. **Reflection and discussion**

* After completing both masks, reflect on the following questions. You can share your reflections with your group or keep them for personal insight.
  + What resonated with you?
  + How does this activity connect to your sense of identity and belonging?
  + How does this activity connect to your practice as an educator?
  + How does your outer identity align or conflict with your inner identity?
  + How does the gap between your outer and inner identity impact your interactions with others?
  + How do you create an emotionally safe and supportive space where students feel comfortable sharing their outer and inner identities?
  + How do your own emotional experiences and self-awareness impact how you relate to your students?