Self-Management & Agency

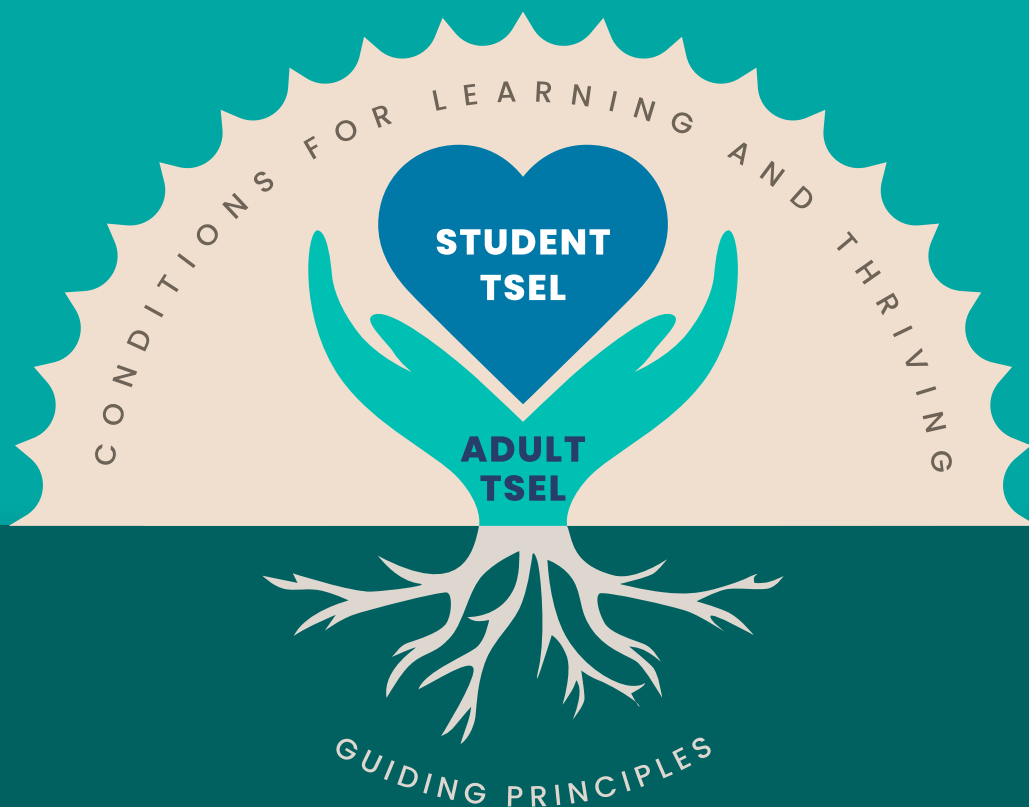

CONDITIONS FOR LEARNING AND THRIVING

STUDENT TSEL

ADULT TSEL

GUIDING PRINCIPLES

The following resource is designed to support a structured facilitation session based on content from the eight asynchronous Transformative Social and Emotional learning (SEL) professional learning modules. Each session seeks to develop collective understandings of Transformative SEL practices and competencies in a group setting. School and district facilitators are to adapt this guidance to lead groups of educators in lesson-planning, reflection, and more.

This Collaborative Learning Session (CLS) is scheduled to take 60 minutes, with optional extension activities that would lengthen the session up to 90 minutes.

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Learning Module Overview

The Self-Management & Agency Module supports educators to use management strategies to build personal and collective agency that lead to achieving goals and aspirations. Grounded in Oregon's Transformative SEL Standard 2, this module guides participants to define key concepts, reflect on their significance and begin building a toolbox of practices to strengthen both individual and collective practice. Through reflection prompts, practical strategies and optional extension activities, educators engage from a place of authenticity as well as with compassion and empathy, identifying actionable ways to foster self-management and agency in their classrooms and school communities.

Participation in the Self-Management & Agency Module is not required for participation in the CLS, but it is highly recommended.

Adaptive Facilitation

The agenda, activities and resources included in this guide are intended to spark inspiration in facilitators. Facilitators may adapt these materials to better suit the context of educators they are supporting. This guide refers to the Transformative SEL Facilitator Spark Tool which facilitators can use to scaffold reflection, integration and activity planning.

## Transformative SEL Guiding Principles

Figure 1. Guiding Principles

Guiding Principles (Figure 1) represent the roots of the Transformative SEL learning ecosystem (Figure 2), serving as the foundational values and beliefs that can lead to fruitful interactions, communication and decision-making.

A transformative approach to facilitating each Collaborative Learning Session (CLS) will attend to the Guiding Principles. Facilitators can embed **culturally responsive** education in sessions by affirming and honoring the knowledge, experiences and cultures that adults

Figure 2. Transformative SEL Framework
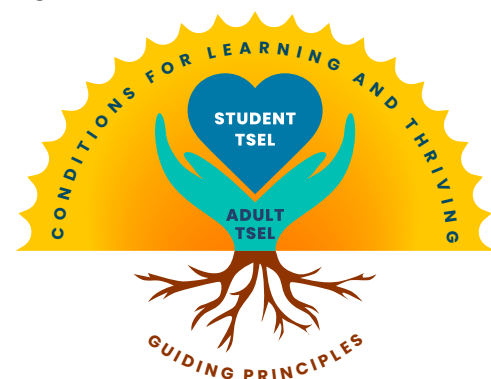
bring to the space. Opportunities for dialogue and relationship-building are built into each session so that participants can learn more about each other and facilitators can harness the collective wisdom present in each session. A **community responsive** approach ensures that facilitators give educators time to check in, challenge and engage with the content as needs, interests and tensions become apparent. Facilitators can uplift their own learning journeys with the content while supporting educators to engage in productive discourse pertaining to mindset shifts. Facilitation that is **strengths-based** affirms the perspectives and contributions of participants as assets for deepening Transformative SEL learning. These sessions represent unique opportunities for collaborative, reciprocal learning and problem-solving that humanizes the concepts through applied activities and scenarios. Facilitators can be **trauma-informed** by prioritizing trust-building activities that promote positive relationships, while also creating transparent, predictable and positive routines for new learning to regulate participants' brains, minds and bodies. Facilitation that is **grounded in neuroscience and the science of learning and development** builds on evidence about neuroplasticity and neurodiversity to appreciate and build on each adult's potential for learning while encouraging participants to show up as their authentic selves. When facilitated with these principles in mind, each CLS can spark curiosity in educators, encouraging continued exploration and iteration in the classroom.

Signature Practices

Figure 3. Signature Practices

Inclusive Welcome   Engaging Strategy   Intentional Close

A transformative approach to SEL is an ongoing process and practice of how adults and students show up for one another throughout the learning ecosystem. This guide describes how facilitators can use Signature Practices (Figure 3) as an entry point to putting the Guiding Principles into action throughout each CLS. In response to frequently asked questions such as "What does SEL look like?" and "How can we start?", the Collaborative for Academic, Social, and Emotional Learning (CASEL) developed three Signature Practices: **Inclusive Welcome**, **Engaging Strategies** and **Intentional Close**. Facilitators will interweave each practice into learning experiences for adults, opening each session with an Inclusive Welcome that builds community and sets the stage for learning, embedding Engaging Strategies throughout the session to support adults in connecting content to their own learning experiences, and closing sessions with opportunities for reflection, shared sense-making or identifying next steps through an Intentional Close.

Preparing for the Self-Management & Agency Session

As you prepare your group to engage in a visualization exercise, arrange the room so that participants can find a position that feels comfortable. When you are asking for volunteers to share their insights, offer participants choice about how deeply they want to engage in reflection. For the second half of the session, participants will have the choice of where and how to engage, so plan ahead as to how you will set up the three distinct zones.

Agenda and Participant Tool

Materials

- Blank paper
- Chart paper
- Sticky notes
- Markers
- Visualization exercise: A Day in Our School
- Print: Reflection Questions
- Print: Core Reflection Prompts

Learning Goals

- Explore self-management strategies by making choices and engaging in reflection.
- Develop a foundation for building agency for students throughout the learning community.

Agenda

TIME	SIGNATURE PRACTICE	LEARNING PROGRESSION AND FACILITATOR GUIDANCE	MATERIALS
10m	Inclusive Welcome	**Visualization Activity** Welcome participants and thank them for attending the workshop. After giving participants the chance to introduce themselves, share that the session will start with a brief visualization activity. **Facilitator tips:** ◉ Emphasize that participants control how they share insights ◉ Invite participants to take whatever position feels most comfortable (closing their eyes, sitting, standing, a lowered gaze) ◉ Note that this is just an opening reflection—we'll build on these insights throughout the session. **[Read Visualization Script out loud]** Thank participants for engaging in this visualization exercise. Encourage participants to keep these images and reflections in mind. The purpose of this exercise was not just to imagine an ideal scenario, but to identify concrete steps to take—individually and collectively—to foster greater agency throughout our educational community. Ask for volunteers to share a key insight from their visualization before moving on to the next activity. Lead into the purpose and goal of the workshop. Ground the remainder of the workshop in the following information by sharing the language of Standard 2: "Use management strategies to build personal and collective agency that lead to achieving goals and aspirations." The goal of this session is to build on educators' knowledge and experience in order to cultivate these qualities for their learners.	Visualization exercise: A Day in Our School

| 20m | Engaging Strategy | **Reflecting on Your Visualization Experience** | Chart paper with |

Individual Reflection

Place five questions around the learning space. Time each portion of this Engaging Strategy, making an announcement to your group when it's time to switch to the next activity.

Ask participants to take 5–7 minutes to individually reflect on the following questions, giving them the option to write down their answers or silently contemplate them:

1. What specific elements of your visualization stood out most strongly to you?
2. What differences did you notice between this ideal environment and our or your reality?
3. What is one small change you could implement in your specific role that moves you closer to this vision?
4. How might your actions influence others in your school community to develop stronger self–management and agency?
5. What support would you need to help make this vision more of a reality?

Small Groups

Ask participants to choose two questions that resonated with them the most. Guide participants to walk to the part of the room with the first question they would like to discuss. Share that each group will spend 3 minutes discussing their responses.

After 3 minutes, ask participants to move to the part of the room with the second question that resonated with them and repeat the protocol.

Whole Group

Invite participants to head back to their seats and participate in a brief discussion of what came in their reflections and what resonates most with them around this standard.

| 20m | **Engaging Strategy** | **Agency in Action: Choose Your Path**

Take 2 minutes to arrange the room into three distinct zones: |
Blank paper
Chart paper
Sticky notes
Markers |

Agency in Action: Choose Your Path

Take 2 minutes to arrange the room into three distinct zones:

Arrange the room with three distinct zones:

- ◉ **Reflection Zone:** Individual tables with reflection prompts
- ◉ **Collaboration Zone:** Small group tables with chart paper and markers
- ◉ **Creation Zone:** Open space with various materials (sticky notes, paper, markers)

Introduction

Share that the next 15 minutes are dedicated to experiencing self-management and agency firsthand. Participants will choose how they engage with this challenge. After identifying one barrier to student agency in their context and developing a strategy to address it, participants will have freedom to choose their approach—work independently in the Reflection Zone, collaborate with colleagues in the Collaboration Zone or create something entirely different in the Creation Zone.

Share that this task requires both choice and self-management as participants will produce something shareable within 15 minutes by planning their approach, monitoring their own progress, and adjusting as needed. Emphasize that this deliberate practice of management mirrors exactly what we hope to develop in our students.

As your group works through the activity, circulate around the room while refraining from directing participants, only supporting when asked.

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10m	Intentional Close	**Intentional Close**	
		Ask participants to quietly contemplate three questions, with 10 second pauses in between each question:	
		1. How did having choice affect your engagement with the task?	
		2. What self-management strategies did you employ to complete the work?	
		3. How might your students respond to similar freedom of choice?	
		Pairs Invite participants to share reflections with a partner nearby. Ask participants to notice the connections between their experiences with this guiding question, taking 3–4 minutes each to respond:	
		⊙ What similarities or differences do you observe in how you each approached the task and what you are taking away?	

Facilitator Spark Tool

Each Collaborative Learning Facilitator Guide provides specific, useful strategies to use with K–12 educators and staff. CLS agendas are written with a range of staff audiences and learning contexts in mind. Facilitators may need to adapt portions of the agendas for timing, learner familiarity with session context and group sizes or spaces. The Facilitator Spark Tool is intended to support facilitators as they integrate Transformative SEL into their professional learning practices. This tool offers reflective prompts, planning tools and adaptable strategies that align with CASEL's Three Signature Practices and Oregon's Transformative SEL Guiding Principles. By centering educators' identities, experiences and well–being, the tool helps foster professional spaces that model the competencies we aim to cultivate in students.

Extension Guidance and Activities

To support self-management and agency development, these resources offer practical strategies. Though classroom-focused, the approaches are relevant for all educational roles. Offer participants time to explore one or more of the following resources to consider how these practices might enhance their student interactions and promote agency.

- ◉ Zeiser, K., Scholz, C., & Cirks, V. (2018, October). Maximizing Student agency: Implementing and measuring student-centered learning practices. American Institutes for Research. https://www.air.org/project/maximizing-student-agency-implementing-and-measuring-student-centered-learning-practices (In this 56-page study, skip to page 17 for the purpose of accessing strategies that could be applied in your educational community.)

- ◉ Collier, K. (2023, March 28). Empowering students by cultivating agency. Edutopia. https://www.edutopia.org/article/framework-cultivating-student-agency-elementary-school/

- ◉ Filion, M. (2024, August 21). 5 ways to promote student agency in the elementary classroom. Edutopia. https://www.edutopia.org/article/student-agency-elementary-school-5-strategies

- ◉ The Social Emotional Teacher: Self-management in the classroom. https://www.thesocialemotionalteacher.com/self-management-in-the-classroom/ (A teacher blog offering self-management strategies for students and teachers and includes activities for K–2 students.)

Resources and Support Materials

- ◉ Oregon Department of Education. (2023). *Oregon's Transformative Social and Emotional Learning Framework & Standards*. https://www.oregon.gov/ode/educator-resources/standards/SEL/Documents/ODE_Oregon%27s%20Transformative%20SEL%20Framework%20%20Standards_FINAL%20(2).pdf

A Day in Our School Guided Visualization

Pause for 5–15 seconds between each of the following paragraphs.

Good morning, everyone. Thank you for joining us today as we explore self-management and agency in our educational community. This opening exercise is designed to help us connect with our vision for our school environment.

I invite you to take a deep breath in . . . and slowly exhale. Take another deep breath in . . . and release. Allow your body to relax and your mind to become present in this moment.

Now, I'd like you to visualize a typical day at our school, but not just any day—imagine the ideal day where self-management and agency are thriving throughout our community.

As you arrive at school, what do you notice about the environment? What does it feel like to enter this space? What sounds do you hear? What energy do you sense?

Now, focus on your specific role in the school. Whether you're a teacher in a classroom, a counselor meeting with students, a cafeteria staff member serving meals, an administrator making decisions, or support staff maintaining our facilities—visualize yourself in your workspace.

In this ideal environment, how are you demonstrating self-management? What choices are you making? How are you prioritizing your tasks and managing your time? Notice how it feels to be fully engaged yet balanced in your work.

Now, expand your awareness to the students around you. What does student agency look like in this environment? How are students making choices, taking initiative, and directing their own learning or activities? What specific behaviors do you observe that demonstrate their self-management skills?

Consider your role in supporting this agency. What are you doing—or perhaps not doing—that allows others to exercise their own agency? How are you creating space for autonomy while providing appropriate guidance?

In this ideal environment, how are different members of our school community—teachers, administrators, support staff, and students—working together to create a culture of agency? What kinds of interactions do you observe? How are challenges being addressed?

As you continue through this ideal day, what obstacles to agency arise, and how are they overcome? What systems or practices are in place that support everyone in maintaining their self-management skills even during difficult moments?

Before we conclude this visualization, take a moment to notice how you feel in this environment. What emotions are present for you? What satisfaction do you derive from your role in this community where agency and self-management flourish?

Now, slowly bring your awareness back to this room. When you're ready, gently open your eyes if they were closed, and take a moment to ground yourself in the present.

Reflection Questions

Take 5–7 minutes to reflect on the following questions. You may write down your answers or simply contemplate them:

1. What specific elements of your visualization stood out most strongly to you?

2. What differences did you notice between this ideal environment and our/your reality?

3. What is one small change you could implement in your specific role that move us closer to this vision?

4. How might your actions influence others in our school community to develop stronger self-management and agency?

5. What support would you need to help make this vision more of a reality?

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Core Reflection Prompts

for "Agency in Action: Choose Your Path"

Choose ONE of the following prompts to explore deeply during your 15-minute reflection time. The goal is to develop something concrete that you can share and potentially implement in your classroom.

Remember: Depth over breadth. It's better to thoroughly explore one idea than to touch briefly on several.

Identifying a Specific Barrier

Identify one concrete barrier to student agency in your classroom or school. What specifically limits students' ability to make meaningful choices or take ownership of their learning? Describe how this barrier manifests and impacts student engagement.

Developing a Practical Solution

Design one practical, implementable strategy to increase student agency in your context. What would it look like in action? How would it work within your existing structures while creating more space for student voice and choice?

Personal Connection to Agency

Reflect on when you feel most empowered in your professional work. What specific conditions or factors contribute to your sense of agency? How might you intentionally create similar conditions for your students?

Implementation Planning

Outline one specific change you could implement tomorrow to enhance student agency. What would you need to prepare? How would you introduce it to students? What would success look like after one week?