



ALIGNMENT CHART

New York State Social Emotional Learning Benchmarks

■ **Second Step® High School**

About Second Step® High School

Second Step High School is a research-based program for Grades 9–12. It includes pathways with practices for school leaders and educators that are designed to help create a positive school climate, strengthen human skills, and encourage students to develop adaptive mindsets for navigating adolescence successfully. Supplemental classroom-based student activities reinforce skills students build from the schoolwide and educator practices and offer them further opportunities to learn and apply emerging human skills. The practices in this program involve the entire school community and are intended to produce positive schoolwide change.

How the Program Meets the New York Benchmarks

The following tables indicate which specific Second Step practices and activities can help students develop the knowledge, skills, and attitudes needed to meet the New York State Social Emotional Learning Benchmarks. Boxes are checked to indicate that Second Step High School meets a given state benchmark within the identified grade or grade band (for instance, Grades 9–10) when:

1. Students have clear opportunities to actively process the knowledge or practice the skills described in the benchmark through discussion, writing, drawing, or other related activities
2. There are opportunities for school leaders and educators to gather evidence of student learning in relation to the benchmarks



Grades 9-10

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Key Skills and Concepts																											
Pathway 1: Belonging & Connection							Pathway 2: Confidence & Capability						Pathway 3: Agency & Opportunity							Pathway 4: Well-Being & Community							
Co-creating shared expectations that contribute to belonging	Connecting and collaborating with peers to build community	Communicating effectively and sincerely with educators	Using voice to make change in the school community	Understanding not everyone is paying attention to them	Examining effective ways to communicate digitally by practicing digital citizenship skills		Participating in defining success criteria	Analyzing social media messages using media literacy skills	Persisting to master learning objectives	Using feedback and resources to meet success criteria	Applying knowledge of what is in your control when overcoming an obstacle	Using strategies to challenge negative thinking	Directing learning by making choices about what and how to learn	Applying collaborative routines and protocols during academic discussions	Providing educators with actionable feedback to improve learning conditions	Identifying, appreciating, and developing strengths	Understanding how strengths can affect relationships	Experimenting with personally relevant topics and interests	Identifying when mind breaks are necessary and using them to improve engagement and performance	Defining and understanding emotions	Fostering, sharing, and visualizing positive emotions	Analyzing scenarios to understand their digital footprint	Managing difficult emotions and distractions by using refocusing strategies	Reframing difficult situations by using positive self-talk	Navigating strong emotions by practicing gratitude	Demonstrating strategies to create a culture of inclusion, recognition, and value, such as becoming more involved in the school community	Practicing gratitude regularly

Goal	Indicator	Benchmark																										
1. Develop self-awareness that: nurtures and affirms a strong sense of identity, informs decisions about personal actions, and builds a sense of agency.	1A. Identify and understand their emotions and how emotions relate to their actions. Use understanding of emotions to inform actions.	1A.4a. Experience complex thoughts and feelings with awareness of their effect on mind and body.					✓			✓			✓	✓					✓		✓			✓	✓	✓		✓
		1A.4b. Effectively express complex thoughts and emotions with trusted peers or adults.		✓	✓	✓				✓						✓	✓		✓		✓				✓	✓		✓
	1B. Discover and reflect on aspects of personal and group identity such as characteristics, qualities, and interests, including those rooted in culture, ethnicity, race, religion, sexual orientation, gender identity or expression, ability, etc., and identify external resources that support or contribute to identity development.	1B.4a. Build their self-confidence through use of positive self-talk, using affirmations, practicing gratitude, and using personal strengths to problem-solve.										✓	✓				✓	✓	✓		✓			✓	✓	✓		✓
		1B.4b. Identify positive adult role models and support systems. Analyze if and how they contribute to identity development.			✓											✓		✓									✓	✓
	1C. Demonstrate skills related to setting and working toward personal and academic goals.	1C.4a. Develop one or more long-term goals and sequential action steps in working toward them.						✓		✓	✓	✓		✓	✓	✓	✓		✓									
		1C.4b. Monitor progress toward longer-term goals, identifying indicators that align with their priorities, and acknowledging barriers within and beyond their influence.						✓		✓	✓	✓																



Grades 9-10

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		Pathway 1: Belonging & Connection						Pathway 2: Confidence & Capability						Pathway 3: Agency & Opportunity						Pathway 4: Well-Being & Community									
		Co-creating shared expectations that contribute to belonging	Connecting and collaborating with peers to build community	Communicating effectively and sincerely with educators	Using voice to make change in the school community	Understanding not everyone is paying attention to them	Examining effective ways to communicate digitally by practicing digital citizenship skills	Participating in defining success criteria	Analyzing social media messages using media literacy skills	Persisting to master learning objectives	Using feedback and resources to meet success criteria	Applying knowledge of what is in your control when overcoming an obstacle	Using strategies to challenge negative thinking	Directing learning by making choices about what and how to learn	Applying collaborative routines and protocols during academic discussions	Providing educators with actionable feedback to improve learning conditions	Identifying, appreciating, and developing strengths	Understanding how strengths can affect relationships	Experimenting with personally relevant topics and interests	Identifying when mind breaks are necessary and using them to improve engagement and performance	Defining and understanding emotions	Fostering, sharing, and visualizing positive emotions	Analyzing scenarios to understand their digital footprint	Managing difficult emotions and distractions by using refocusing strategies	Reframing difficult situations by using positive self-talk	Navigating strong emotions by practicing gratitude	Demonstrating strategies to create a culture of inclusion, recognition, and value, such as becoming more involved in the school community	Practicing gratitude regularly	
Goal	Indicator	Benchmark																											
2. Use social awareness and interpersonal skills to establish and maintain mutually supportive relationships with individuals and groups and nurture a strong sense of belonging.	2A. Recognize and build empathy for the feelings and perspectives of others.	2A.4a. Reflect on the similarities and differences between their own perspectives and the perspectives of others, including those from different identity groups.		✓			✓		✓							✓	✓	✓									✓		
		2A.4b. Use their communication skills and respectful curiosity to better understand others’ feelings, perspectives, and life experiences.	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓		✓					✓		✓	✓									✓		
	2B. Recognize and affirm individual identities as well as individual and group similarities and differences, including those rooted in culture, ethnicity, race, religion, sexual orientation, gender identity or expression, ability, etc.	2B.4a. Recognize traits of a variety of cultures, including the dominant culture and their own culture, and understand how to negotiate their own identity in multiple spaces.	✓	✓													✓	✓	✓								✓		
		2B.4b. Demonstrate ability to build and sustain meaningful relationships with individuals from different social and cultural groups and speak up with courage when harm has occurred.	✓	✓	✓		✓								✓	✓	✓	✓				✓					✓	✓	
		2B.4c. Reflect on the individual, cultural, and systemic impacts of stereotyping, prejudice, and microaggressions.		✓																							✓		
	2C. Apply a variety of communication and social skills to interact with individuals and groups across lines of difference.	2C.4a. Reflect on the ways requesting and providing support impacts a variety of relationships.		✓	✓	✓			✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓		✓		✓		✓		✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	
		2C.4b. Reflect on their roles, efforts, and experiences across lines of difference in groups.	✓	✓		✓	✓								✓	✓		✓			✓			✓			✓		
	2D. Demonstrate the ability to prevent, manage, or resolve conflicts, including those that involve injustice or are related to culture, ethnicity, race, religion, sexual orientation, gender identity or expression, ability, etc.	2D.4a. Analyze how communication strategies help to navigate conflicts.		✓	✓	✓	✓		✓						✓			✓									✓		
		2D.4b. Apply conflict resolution skills to navigate individual and group relationships in a variety of contexts.		✓	✓	✓	✓	✓								✓		✓							✓	✓	✓		



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			Co-creating shared expectations that contribute to belonging	Connecting and collaborating with peers to build community	Communicating effectively and sincerely with educators	Using voice to make change in the school community	Understanding not everyone is paying attention to them	Examining effective ways to communicate digitally by practicing digital citizenship skills	Participating in defining success criteria	Analyzing social media messages using media literacy skills	Persisting to master learning objectives	Using feedback and resources to meet success criteria	Applying knowledge of what is in your control when overcoming an obstacle	Using strategies to challenge negative thinking	Directing learning by making choices about what and how to learn	Applying collaborative routines and protocols during academic discussions	Providing educators with actionable feedback to improve learning conditions	Identifying, appreciating, and developing strengths	Understanding how strengths can affect relationships	Experimenting with personally relevant topics and interests	Identifying when mind breaks are necessary and using them to improve engagement and performance	Defining and understanding emotions	Fostering, sharing, and visualizing positive emotions	Analyzing scenarios to understand their digital footprint	Managing difficult emotions and distractions by using refocusing strategies	Reframing difficult situations by using positive self-talk	Navigating strong emotions by practicing gratitude	Demonstrating strategies to create a culture of inclusion, recognition, and value, such as becoming more involved in the school community	Practicing gratitude regularly	
Goal	Indicator	Benchmark																												
3. Demonstrate intentional decision-making skills and behaviors that consider social, emotional, and physical safety and well-being in personal, family, school, and community contexts.	3A. Consider individual and collective social, emotional, and physical safety and well-being, as well as social context in making decisions.	3A.4a. Demonstrate personal responsibility by making decisions that support the well-being of self and others.	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓		✓		✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	
		3A.4b. Evaluate how the expectations of different groups, including the expectations of those with social influence, power, and privilege, influence personal decisions and actions.	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓		✓																	✓			
	3B. Apply decision making skills to influence outcomes and strengthen agency in social and academic life.	3B.4a. Generate possible solutions to challenges, anticipate potential consequences of decisions, and take intentional action toward desired outcomes.				✓		✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓								✓			
		3B.4b. Apply decision making skills to establish mutually supportive interpersonal and intergroup relationships.	✓	✓	✓	✓		✓		✓			✓		✓	✓	✓	✓				✓			✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	
	3C. Take action to support the well-being of their school and community, including taking stands against bias and injustice.	3C.4a. Plan, implement, and evaluate their participation in service-learning to improve school culture and climate.	✓	✓	✓				✓							✓	✓		✓			✓						✓	✓	
		3C.4b. Plan, implement, and evaluate their participation in service-learning to build greater social justice within their local community.																✓										✓		



Grades 11-12

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Pathway 1: Belonging & Connection						Pathway 2: Confidence & Capability						Pathway 3: Agency & Opportunity						Pathway 4: Well-Being & Community									
Co-creating shared expectations that contribute to belonging	Connecting and collaborating with peers to build community	Communicating effectively and sincerely with educators	Using voice to make change in the school community	Learning and practicing relationship-repair strategies	Demonstrating ways to avoid making assumptions about others	Participating in defining success criteria	Expanding and using social networks	Persisting to master learning objectives	Using feedback and resources to meet success criteria	Applying strategies for overcoming negative thoughts	Applying reframing strategies to overcome obstacles	Directing learning by making choices about what and how to learn	Practicing digital citizenship strategies to balance time spent online	Applying collaborative routines and protocols during academic discussions	Providing educators with actionable feedback to improve learning conditions	Identifying and appreciating strengths	Understanding how collective strengths contribute to the school community	Experimenting with personally relevant topics and interests	Identifying when mind breaks are necessary and using them to improve engagement and performance	Navigating strong emotions using various strategies	Navigating strong emotions using self-compassion	Practicing digital citizenship skills by examining emotional responses to online photos	Reframing difficult situations by using positive self-talk	Understanding that what is considered "normal" can vary from person to person	Demonstrating strategies to create a culture of inclusion, recognition, and value, such as becoming more involved in the school community	Demonstrating compassion for self and others	Practicing gratitude regularly

Goal	Indicator	Benchmark																											
1. Develop self-awareness that: nurtures and affirms a strong sense of identity, informs decisions about personal actions, and builds a sense of agency.	1A. Identify and understand their emotions and how emotions relate to their actions. Use understanding of emotions to inform actions.	1A.5a. Examine how the expression of their thoughts and emotions in different contexts affects self and others.		✓	✓	✓	✓	✓					✓	✓		✓	✓	✓	✓	✓		✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
		1A.5b. Express their emotions in increasingly complex situations to advocate for their needs and wants.			✓	✓	✓		✓	✓		✓	✓	✓		✓	✓		✓	✓	✓	✓	✓		✓		✓	✓	✓
	1B. Discover and reflect on aspects of personal and group identity such as characteristics, qualities, and interests, including those rooted in culture, ethnicity, race, religion, sexual orientation, gender identity or expression, ability, etc., and identify external resources that support or contribute to identity development.	1B.5a. Implement a plan to build on a personal strength or address a challenge while honoring the value, authenticity, and dignity of self.							✓	✓		✓		✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓				✓				✓		
		1B.5b. Participate meaningfully and assess ways involvement in their community can support identity development and encourage aspirations.	✓	✓	✓	✓			✓	✓			✓		✓	✓	✓	✓	✓		✓			✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
	1C. Demonstrate skills related to setting and working toward personal and academic goals.	1C.5a. Identify personal and systemic resources to mitigate barriers to achieving goals, including those related to oppression, power, and privilege.								✓	✓	✓																	
		1C.5b. Identify and apply strategies intended to address their obstacles in working toward goals beyond high school.			✓		✓		✓	✓	✓		✓				✓		✓	✓	✓		✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓



Grades 11-12

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			Co-creating shared expectations that contribute to belonging	Connecting and collaborating with peers to build community	Communicating effectively and sincerely with educators	Using voice to make change in the school community	Learning and practicing relationship-repair strategies	Demonstrating ways to avoid making assumptions about others	Participating in defining success criteria	Expanding and using social networks	Persisting to master learning objectives	Using feedback and resources to meet success criteria	Applying strategies for overcoming negative thoughts	Applying reframing strategies to overcome obstacles	Directing learning by making choices about what and how to learn	Practicing digital citizenship strategies to balance time spent online	Applying collaborative routines and protocols during academic discussions	Providing educators with actionable feedback to improve learning conditions	Identifying and appreciating strengths	Understanding how collective strengths contribute to the school community	Experimenting with personally relevant topics and interests	Identifying when mind breaks are necessary and using them to improve engagement and performance	Navigating strong emotions using various strategies	Navigating strong emotions using self-compassion	Practicing digital citizenship skills by examining emotional responses to online photos	Reframing difficult situations by using positive self-talk	Understanding that what is considered “normal” can vary from person to person	Demonstrating strategies to create a culture of inclusion, recognition, and value, such as becoming more involved in the school community	Demonstrating compassion for self and others	Practicing gratitude regularly
Goal	Indicator	Benchmark																												
2. Use social awareness and interpersonal skills to establish and maintain mutually supportive relationships with individuals and groups and nurture a strong sense of belonging.	2A. Recognize and build empathy for the feelings and perspectives of others.	2A.5a. Demonstrate empathy for the unique lived experiences of others and their differing perspectives. Practice self-reflection to better understand self and others.	✓	✓	✓		✓	✓								✓	✓	✓	✓		✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	
		2A.5b. Demonstrate empathy and communication skills to work collaboratively across lines of difference in groups.	✓	✓	✓		✓	✓									✓	✓	✓	✓						✓	✓	✓	✓	
	2B. Recognize and affirm individual identities as well as individual and group similarities and differences, including those rooted in culture, ethnicity, race, religion, sexual orientation, gender identity or expression, ability, etc.	2B.5a. Identify community-building strategies that honor contributions and differences of individuals and social and cultural groups across lines of difference.	✓	✓	✓		✓	✓								✓	✓	✓	✓							✓	✓	✓	✓	
		2B.5b. Advocate for the well-being and rights of others and reflect on how the responsibility to stand up to exclusion, prejudice, and injustice contributes to the common good.	✓			✓	✓	✓																		✓	✓	✓	✓	
		2B.5c. Evaluate strategies for being kind to self and others, and for responding to stereotyping, prejudice, and microaggressions.	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓				✓	✓			✓	✓	✓			✓	✓	✓		✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	
	2C. Apply a variety of communication and social skills to interact with individuals and groups across lines of difference.	2C.5a. Reflect on the results of using communication and social skills in daily interactions with peers, teachers, and families and develop strategies to improve in areas that are challenging.	✓	✓	✓		✓	✓		✓		✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓		✓	✓	✓		✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	
		2C.5b. Assess the impact of their participation in groups working to effect community change.	✓	✓		✓	✓			✓							✓		✓								✓	✓		
	2D. Demonstrate the ability to prevent, manage, or resolve conflicts, including those that involve injustice or are related to culture, ethnicity, race, religion, sexual orientation, gender identity or expression, ability, etc.	2D.5a. Self-assess conflict-resolution skills and develop a plan to strengthen them.		✓	✓		✓	✓									✓		✓							✓	✓	✓		
		2D.5b. Practice using negotiation skills to reach solutions that value identities, relationships, and promote social justice.	✓			✓	✓										✓		✓								✓			



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Co-creating shared expectations that contribute to belonging	Connecting and collaborating with peers to build community	Communicating effectively and sincerely with educators	Using voice to make change in the school community	Learning and practicing relationship-repair strategies	Demonstrating ways to avoid making assumptions about others	Participating in defining success criteria	Expanding and using social networks	Persisting to master learning objectives	Using feedback and resources to meet success criteria	Applying strategies for overcoming negative thoughts	Applying reframing strategies to overcome obstacles	Directing learning by making choices about what and how to learn	Practicing digital citizenship strategies to balance time spent online	Applying collaborative routines and protocols during academic discussions	Providing educators with actionable feedback to improve learning conditions	Identifying and appreciating strengths	Understanding how collective strengths contribute to the school community	Experimenting with personally relevant topics and interests	Identifying when mind breaks are necessary and using them to improve engagement and performance	Navigating strong emotions using various strategies	Navigating strong emotions using self-compassion	Practicing digital citizenship skills by examining emotional responses to online photos	Reframing difficult situations by using positive self-talk	Understanding that what is considered “normal” can vary from person to person	Demonstrating strategies to create a culture of inclusion, recognition, and value, such as becoming more involved in the school community	Demonstrating compassion for self and others	Practicing gratitude regularly

Goal	Indicator	Benchmark																										
3. Demonstrate intentional decision-making skills and behaviors that consider social, emotional, and physical safety and well-being in personal, family, school, and community contexts.	3A. Consider individual and collective social, emotional, and physical safety and well-being, as well as social context in making decisions.	3A.5a. Apply critical thinking skills to evaluate social context and systems to inform decisions that support the well-being of self and others.	✓		✓		✓	✓	✓		✓	✓	✓	✓	✓		✓	✓		✓	✓	✓		✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
		3A.5b. Examine how societal expectations shape decisions and actions and vary across groups and cultures.					✓	✓																✓	✓			
	3B. Apply decision making skills to influence outcomes and strengthen agency in social and academic life.	3B.5a. Analyze how current decision-making affects college, career, and personal life choices.			✓	✓		✓		✓			✓							✓	✓		✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
		3B.5b. Evaluate how decision-making regarding equity, diversity, and fairness affects interpersonal and intergroup relationships, and ways decision-making can support civic engagement.		✓		✓	✓	✓																✓	✓	✓	✓	
	3C. Take action to support the well-being of their school and community, including taking stands against bias and injustice.	3C.5a. Participate cooperatively with others to plan, implement, and evaluate civic capstone projects to meet identified school needs.	✓	✓		✓	✓	✓	✓		✓	✓	✓	✓		✓	✓	✓	✓							✓	✓	
		3C.5b. Work cooperatively with others to plan, implement, and evaluate a civic capstone project that addresses a social injustice identified in the local or global community.	✓	✓					✓		✓	✓	✓	✓		✓	✓	✓	✓							✓	✓	