



Program Roll-Out Decision Guide

Purpose: This guide is designed to help school and district leaders make key decisions to roll out the Second Step® Elementary and Middle School programs in their school(s).

Key decisions:

1. What implementation model will we use?
2. Who will teach the weekly Second Step lessons?
3. When will the lessons be taught?

How to use this guide:

1. Review the core information about each program.
2. Review the best practices and considerations for each key decision.
3. Discuss the best plan for your school(s).
4. Document your decisions.

Core Program Information

Program	Elementary Digital	Middle School	Elementary Kit
Format	Fully digital License gives schoolwide access to all grades (K-8) Requires: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Internet access • Classroom projection capability • Audio/speakers 	Fully digital License gives schoolwide access to all grades (K-8) Requires: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Internet access • Classroom projection capability • Audio/speakers 	Physical kit One grade-level kit required for each classroom Lesson media available online or on CD/DVD Requires: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Internet access (if using online media) • Classroom projection capability • Audio/speakers
Lessons	1 lesson per week per grade 20 total weekly lessons per grade <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Grades K-1: 15–20 minutes per lesson • Grades 2-5: 25–30 minutes per lesson 	1 lesson per week per grade 26–27 lessons per grade <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Grades 6-8: 25–30 minutes per lesson 	1 lesson per week per grade 22–25 lessons per grade <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Grades K-1: 20–25 minutes per lesson • Grades 2-3: 20–30 minutes per lesson • Grades 4-5: 30–40 minutes per lesson

1. What implementation model will we use?

Best Practice: Second Step® Elementary and Middle School are Tier 1, universal SEL programs designed to build foundational social-emotional skills and competencies for all students in a school. Best practice is to implement the program schoolwide with all students in all grades.

Options	Considerations	Team Notes	Decision
<p>Best Practice: Schoolwide Implementation (All Grades)</p>	<p>Why this is best practice: Schoolwide implementation provides students and staff with opportunities to practice the skills, language, and concepts in all aspects of the school day, and to apply, generalize, and reinforce skill use throughout the school environment.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provides consistent skills, expectations, and norms for everyone in the school community <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Common language facilitates shared understanding and easier communication for adults and students – Students encounter consistent messaging and reinforcement with adults and their peers to build their skills throughout the school environment • Enables a schoolwide pacing guide, providing support and accountability from building administrators • Shared staff responsibility builds community and increased SEL awareness among the adults in a building • Meets mandate(s) for universal SEL instruction • Enables the school to benefit from the alignment between Second Step programs and other schoolwide frameworks, such as PBIS and MTSS, through full integration with common language and reinforcement throughout the school • Engages all families—all Second Step® programs include supports for families, from weekly communications and book lists to free resources 		

Options	Considerations	Team Notes	Decision
Pilot Program by Grade	<p>All piloting models:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Set the foundation for schoolwide implementation the following year • Present an opportunity to develop champions to support an extended implementation • Provide Tier 1 SEL instruction for students in the pilot grade(s) only • Consider equity implications of a limited implementation: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – The program’s positive impact is limited to students who participate in the pilot – The documented positive impact on teachers who facilitate SEL lessons is likewise limited to participating educators – Only some teachers carry the implementation load on behalf of the school, which may lead to feelings of inequity and stress • Limit opportunities to develop schoolwide Second Step language and skills • Limit opportunities to engage all families in schoolwide SEL • Limit availability of student SEL data to drive supports and interventions at all tiers 		
	<p>Pilot in one or more LOWER grades: -</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Sets the foundation for skills among the younger students in a school and continued growth for them in subsequent years as the program expands to upper grades <p>Elementary Considerations:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Buy-in and engagement may be easier with early elementary teachers, who are more accustomed to taking time for SEL – Early years educators may already use structures or have more flexibility to include SEL in their daily schedules <p>Middle School Consideration:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Provides an SEL boost to support a successful early middle school experience 		
	<p>Pilot in one or more UPPER grades:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provides social-emotional skills for the older students in the school, who may model skills and set the tone for younger students <p>Elementary Consideration:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Provides an SEL boost to support the transition to middle school <p>Middle School Consideration:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Provides an SEL boost to support the transition to high school 		

Options	Considerations	Team Notes	Decision
<p>Pilot with Volunteer Teachers Only</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • May build momentum for schoolwide implementation the following year • Develops champions among people who are already amenable to SEL • Readiness is built in, so success is likelier • Success stories from volunteer teachers may interest or motivate others, increasing readiness for full schoolwide implementation to follow • Scope of the pilot is dependent upon the number of volunteers • Provides Tier 1 SEL for the students in pilot classrooms only • Consider equity implications of a limited implementation: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – The program's positive impact is limited to students who participate in the pilot – The documented positive impact on teachers who facilitate SEL lessons is likewise limited to participating educators – Only some teachers carry the implementation load on behalf of the school, which may lead to feelings of inequity and stress • Limits opportunities to develop schoolwide Second Step language and skills • Limits opportunities to engage all families in schoolwide SEL • Limits availability of student SEL data to drive supports and interventions at all tiers 		

Program materials considerations: Program material needs vary by implementation model.

Schoolwide Implementation Model		
	If you have a:	You'll need:
Digital Programs	K-5 School	One schoolwide license (1-, 3, or 5-year)
	6-8 School	One schoolwide license (1-, 3, or 5-year)
	K-8 School	One schoolwide license (1-, 3, or 5-year)
Kit Program	K-5 School	One classroom kit for each teacher One K-5 Principal Toolkit for each school
Piloting Models		
Digital Programs (K-8)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Please contact us for piloting information (800-634-4449; email: support@cfchildren.org) 	
Kit Program (K-5)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Each teacher needs a classroom kit and one K-5 Principal Toolkit for the school. 	

2. Who will teach the weekly Second Step lessons?

Best Practice: It's strongly recommended that classroom teachers facilitate the Second Step lessons with their students. Teachers can integrate and reinforce Second Step concepts and objectives into all aspects of the day. Teachers will also be able to hone their own SEL competencies.

Options	Considerations	Team Notes	Decision
<p>Best Practice: Teacher-Facilitated Lessons</p>	<p>Why this is best practice: Second Step lessons are designed to be teacher-delivered. Teachers familiar with Second Step lessons can integrate social-emotional skills and concepts across subject areas and throughout the day, and leave counselors free for other SEL work.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Classroom teachers have maximum opportunities to reinforce skills using the ARR model (Anticipate, Reinforce, and Reflect) Adults who teach the lessons learn along with their students and have opportunities to practice and build their own social-emotional skills Counselor is available as a schoolwide SEL leader to coordinate and support SEL program efforts, provide coaching, and model lessons and skills Counselor is available to co-teach lessons with classroom teachers who want or need support Counselor is available for Tier 2 and Tier 3 work to reinforce social-emotional skills 		
<p>Counselor-Facilitated Lessons</p>	<p>Counselor-delivered lessons can be a viable solution, particularly in the first year(s) of implementation.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Teachers have opportunities to see lessons modeled and learn the content if they stay in the classroom during counselor-led lessons Counselors have experience facilitating classroom lessons with SEL content Counselor-delivered lessons may meet counselors' comprehensive counseling job element to include American School Counselor Association domains and mindsets <p>If you decide on counselor-facilitated lessons, we strongly recommend creating a plan to move toward teacher-facilitated lessons.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> It's logistically challenging for a counselor to deliver weekly Second Step lessons in every classroom while maintaining their other responsibilities Scheduling issues can result in students receiving partial program content at an inconsistent cadence, creating inequitable access to learning Students don't benefit from all adults in the school modeling and reinforcing SEL Students may equate social-emotional skills and strategies with counselor time only, rather than applying them to all parts of the school day With a limited number of adults familiar with the content, students have fewer opportunities for skill practice Teachers may be less familiar with the content, reducing the likelihood of skill reinforcement throughout the school day and school building 		

3. When will the lessons be taught?

Best Practice: Explicit Second Step instruction occurs during a dedicated day and time each week, schoolwide.

Options	Considerations	Team Notes	Decision
<p>Best Practice: Designated Day and Time Schoolwide</p>	<p>Why this is best practice: Having schoolwide Second Step instruction occur during a dedicated day and time each week—such as advisory, extended homeroom, or the first 30 minutes of Monday morning—yields the following benefits:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provides consistency for all students and staff • Demonstrates that the Second Step program is a schoolwide priority for staff and students • Offers a predictable schedule and ease of scheduling for schoolwide support and monitoring • Creates opportunities to plan schoolwide engagement activities around lesson day <p>Elementary Kit Consideration: Schoolwide pacing coincides with the K–5 Principal Toolkit to align and layer Second Step monthly themes and weekly skills in the morning announcements, assembly scripts, and staff meeting activities.</p>		
<p>Day: Designated Schoolwide Time: Designated by Grade Level</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Having a designated day demonstrates that the Second Step program is a schoolwide priority • Creates opportunities to plan schoolwide engagement activities around lesson day • Grades will likely stay together on pacing, but schoolwide pacing could go out of sync • Requires more coordination to schedule building and/or district monitoring and support activities/ observations. <p>Elementary Kit Considerations:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Grade-level pacing may fall out of sync with the schoolwide Principal Toolkit monthly themes, weekly announcements, and staff meeting activities 		

Options	Considerations	Team Notes	Decision
<p>Day: Designated Schoolwide Time: Teachers' Choice</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Having a designated day demonstrates that the Second Step program is a schoolwide priority Creates opportunities to plan schoolwide engagement activities around lesson day Grades will likely stay together on pacing, but schoolwide pacing could go out of sync Requires more coordination to schedule building and/or district monitoring and support activities <p>Elementary Kit Considerations:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Grade-level pacing may fall out of sync with the schoolwide Principal Toolkit monthly themes, weekly announcements, and staff meeting activities 		
<p>Day: Teachers' Choice Time: Teachers' Choice</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Provides teacher autonomy May ease creation of a master schedule at the school level Coordinating supports and accountability for teacher implementation schedules could be challenging with varying Second Step lesson times Teachers may perceive Second Step lessons to be expendable when schedules are tight May create an inequitable situation for students if some teachers teach the program as intended while others choose to skip or rearrange lessons Difficult to maintain schoolwide pacing—individual classes may become extremely out of sync <ul style="list-style-type: none"> If classes are out of sync in the scope and sequence and students are learning different content at different times, the benefits of schoolwide skills and language may be diluted If classes are out of sync with one another on content, schoolwide engagement and reinforcement activities become less relevant for students <p>Elementary Kit Considerations:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Principal Toolkit monthly themes, weekly announcements, and staff meeting activities may not match grade-level lesson pacing 		

Please visit secondstep.org for more resources to support your implementation or contact us via email at support@secondstep.org.