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## How Teacher Implemented Social-Emotional Learning Curriculum Impacts Collective Teacher Efficacy and Influences Teacher Beliefs About Job Satisfaction

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How Teacher Implemented Social Emotional Learning Curriculum Impacts  
Collective Teacher Efficacy and Influences Teacher Beliefs About Job Satisfaction

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How Teacher Implemented Social-Emotional Learning Curriculum Impacts Collective  
Teacher Efficacy and Influences Teacher Beliefs About Job Satisfaction

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Doctorate in Educational Leadership

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of the requirements of  
Doctor of Education in Educational Leadership

National College of Education

National Louis University

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### **Abstract**

“Teachers are the engine that drives social and emotional learning (SEL) programs in classrooms and schools, and their own social-emotional competence strongly influences their students” (Schonert-Reichl, 2017, p. 137). I wanted to examine if teachers benefited from teaching SEL. The purpose of my study was to examine if teachers perceived benefits to their Collective Teacher Efficacy (CTE) and job satisfaction beliefs when they taught SEL. The context of my research was elementary schools in one school district. I conducted surveys with elementary school classroom teachers and counselors. The findings from my study indicated that classroom teachers perceived that their SEL instruction positively benefited their CTE and job satisfaction beliefs. I recommended leaders create SEL leadership teams at the district and school level to implement SEL reforms using an SEL Strategic Action Plan.

## Preface

I have worked in education for 17 years, 16 of those years I have held the role of Certified School Counselor. Of my 16 years, I have taught social-emotional learning (SEL) curriculum as part of my developmental counseling program for eight years. During these eight years of teaching SEL, I experienced personal and professional benefits via the increasing of my own social-emotional competencies. From this experience I became more self-aware and maintained better self-management in my words and behaviors. I grew in my rapport with colleagues, administrators, and parents that indicated my development in social-awareness, relationship skills, and decision-making. The lessons that I taught students and the competencies that I was helping students to develop were also developing in me.

Acknowledging the benefits of social-emotional learning (SEL) in myself, I wanted to examine whether other adults, particularly teachers who taught SEL, had experienced any benefits personally or professionally from teaching SEL. During the eight years that I taught SEL, I worked in an elementary school. For my study, I wanted to start by first examining SEL benefits to classroom teachers in an elementary school context because I was more familiar with the daily operations and expectations of elementary schools. I thought it best to conduct my student in a familiar context to avoid unexpected barriers.

As an educator, I am aware of the stress, health, and job-satisfaction concerns that classroom teachers struggle with. The benefits that I experience from teaching SEL also helped me to manage my stress, to collaborate with grade level teams, and to experience a greater sense of satisfaction at work. I wanted to discover whether elementary

classroom teachers who taught SEL had similar experiences. The results of my study would then be used to inform SEL implementation policies in school districts because the results would show that SEL not only benefited students but teachers as well.

During my dissertation journey, I learned lessons that have enabled me to become a better educator. As a writer, I learned the art of scholarly writing. I have always excelled at writing, but I did not know the nuances of scholarly. I learned to merge my style of writing with the expectations of American Psychological Association (APA) format.

I also learned leadership lessons that I will carry with me through my career. The first leadership lesson that I learned is one that builds upon what I already knew, collaboration is important. My knowledge was stretched to better understand that all stakeholders must have a seat at the discussion table and a voice to give input. As an educational leader, I must have a mobile discussion table that is accommodating and can meet stakeholders where they are so that I can facilitate stakeholder engagement.

The second leadership lesson that I learned is that as a leading learner I must always be willing to learn and to learn alongside those I lead. I must always encourage learning for students and adults. We are educators but learning is our product and one that we must always strive to increase and to produce. Learning also requires input from those I lead, that is the only way that learning will be meaningful.

The leadership lessons that I have learned have also supported my growth as a leader. As a leader I know that I cannot lead by myself and input from a cabinet and stakeholders helps the leader to make the best decisions. I also realize that growth as a

leader does not have a destination; it is a journey. As a leader I am and must always be open to growth so that I can better lead and serve.

My hope for the future is that through teacher preparation programs, professional development, and teaching SEL teachers will be given the opportunities to increase their SEL competencies. SEL competencies will give teachers the tools that they need to better manage their professional and personal lives and equip them with tools to build relationships with students and increase student learning. My goal is to play a role in increasing teacher SEL competencies. The benefits to teachers and to their students are too important to be ignored.

Increasing SEL competencies for teachers and students will give both groups the tools to increase learning in schools. Informing educational leaders, educational lawmakers, and educational policy makers about the benefits of SEL to teachers and students is urgent. Given the unprecedented hardships that teachers are facing, and students are struggling with, now more than ever tools and strategies are needed to support teachers and students. Families and community stakeholder groups must also be informed of SEL benefits; together we can increase the competencies of teachers and their students to facilitate increasing learning and satisfaction in schools.



## Acknowledgements

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I want to express my gratitude to my doctoral cohort, we supported, challenged, and encouraged each other through the most challenging educational experience that we had ever faced. As iron sharpens iron, the members of my cohort helped me to be a better scholar and leader. I especially want to thank my dissertation chair, Dr. Lorrie Butler, for her patience, support, guidance, advice, and commitment to me during my doctoral journey. Thanks also to Dr. Sparks for her teaching and guidance throughout my doctoral experience, for believing in me and the members of my cohort. To my committee members Dr. Sherrell Wilson, and Dr. Christie McMullen, thank you for your review and support of my dissertation paper. To all the professors who shared their knowledge, expertise, and time to facilitate my growth during my doctoral studies, thank you.

## **Dedication**

I dedicate this dissertation to my daughter, Analisa Thorpe. Hard work, perseverance, and passion are the keys to succeeding in life. You are my motivation to keep striving for success, to impact the world and change lives, and to trailblaze a legacy. By completing my doctoral journey, I model for you that you can succeed in doing what your heart and mind wants to do. I love you.

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## Chapter One: Introduction

Throughout this program evaluation, I focused on how teachers implemented Social-Emotional Learning (SEL) curriculum impacted collective teacher efficacy and influenced teacher beliefs about job satisfaction in one school district. The district under study was a suburban district with 111 schools and 4,570 teachers serving over 73,000 students. The mission of the district under study is “to serve every student with excellence as the standard.” As the largest employer in its county, the district under study had the vision to serve its community and enhance students' lives by delivering the highest quality education in a culture of dedication, collaboration, and learning. The school district’s vision is demonstrated through student achievement and community partnerships that enhance the education of students. An appointed superintendent and five elected board members lead the school district.

Research evidence has shown that Social-Emotional Learning (SEL) benefits students' academic achievement and social and emotional development (Schonert-Reichl, 2017, p. 138). Skills learned from SEL instruction result in long-term benefits in self-regulation and social skills that positively impact students' personal and professional lives (CASEL, 2023). My focus in this program evaluation was to determine whether teachers implemented SEL curriculum impacts collective teacher efficacy and influence teacher beliefs about job satisfaction in one school district.

Investing in teaching quality is critical to the success of schools. Teachers have the highest impact on students and achievement (Hattie, 2016). According to Visible Learning research, Collective Teacher Efficacy (CTE) significantly influences student achievement (Donohoo et al., p. 41, 2018). However, teacher attrition and burnout are

major concerns for school educators (Sass et al., 2010, p. 1). In the district under study, I observed that since the Coronavirus 2019 (COVID-19) pandemic, teachers and educators have expressed significant increases in stress and stress-related symptoms. School leaders must strategically implement initiatives to increase teacher retention, attract high-quality teacher candidates, and support teacher well-being.

SEL instruction provides skills that benefit students into adulthood by improving their SEL competencies. According to the Collaborative for Academic, Social, and Emotional Learning (CASEL), there are five competencies that children and adults can enhance through SEL instruction 1) Self-awareness, 2) Self-management, 3) Social awareness, 4) Relationship skills, and 5) Responsible decision-making (CASEL, 2023). Learning the five competencies in schools can promote a safer, healthier, and more collaborative learning environment for teachers and students. School leaders aim to create a positive school climate that fosters and promotes learning for students and educators (The Interstate School Leaders Licensure Consortium, 2011). Such a thriving environment may only exist where students and teachers possess the skills to navigate social and emotional concerns.

### **Purpose of the Program Evaluation**

In my study, I aimed to assess the impact of teacher-taught social-emotional learning (SEL) curriculum on collective teacher efficacy and its influence on teacher job satisfaction in elementary schools. The research on the benefits of SEL is extensive. My review of SEL research shows SEL benefits for pre-school through 12th-grade students (Jones & Kahn, 2017, p. 9) Learning is the product of schools; SEL instruction allows students to access their learning better. Classroom teachers are primarily responsible for



student learning. Since the rising trend of teachers leaving the profession, a new focus has emerged on retaining teachers in classrooms (Sass et al., 2010, p. 212).

Teaching is one of the most stressful occupations in the United States; teacher stress impacts their well-being, work attitudes, on job satisfaction and is linked to student achievement results (Greenberg et al., 2016, p. 3). Teacher stress reduces teaching performance and student outcomes. Teachers are more likely to leave their profession when facing chronic work-related stress (Greenberg et al., 2016, p. 2). School leaders are responsible for promoting a positive school culture and encouraging the well-being of students and employees. Teachers with strong teacher efficacy know their efforts will positively impact student learning. Moreover, when teams of teachers collectively share a strong belief about their teacher efficacy, research has shown that they have the most significant influence on increasing student achievement (Donohoo et al., 2018, p. 41).

Effective teachers have strong pedagogical practices and create a positive classroom climate with a shared value of care, respect, learning, and responsible behaviors (Jennings & Greenberg, 2009, p. 492). To promote a positive classroom environment, teachers must have support. These supports are quality professional development, time, resources to collaborate with colleagues and students, and healthy well-being (Miles & Franks, 2008, p. 23). SEL researchers and advocates champion SEL as providing students with skills to develop their social and emotional well-being. CASEL maintains that SEL is for adults and students. In my study, I examined whether teachers who teach SEL see benefits for themselves. I wanted to know if, through their teaching experience, they saw benefits to their CTE and job satisfaction.

District leaders prioritize students' social and emotional learning in the district under study. In the Strategic Plan 2019-2024, the district articulated interventions under a multi-tiered systems of support (MTSS) to meet students' social and emotional needs as an objective of the Academic Excellence goal (citation withheld to preserve confidentiality). The Strategic Plan also listed strategies for SEL implementation in schools across the district. The district's Strategic Plan had a goal for an Exceptional Workforce. The focus was to "develop employee knowledge and participation in professional development for professional growth." My review of the goal showed that professional development was more geared towards advancement in the organization and less about supporting the emotional well-being of the teaching staff.

I intended to use this evaluation and findings for two main reasons. First, I plan to influence policy changes for social-emotional learning instructional requirements by the Elementary Leading Department in the district under study. Second, I will promote training and support for classroom teachers on SEL curriculum, to increase the fidelity of SEL instructional practices.

### **Rationale**

My rationale for conducting this study of the SEL program came from my experience teaching SEL and my growing concern about teacher burnout and stress. I taught a social-emotional learning curriculum to students in kindergarten through sixth grade in one elementary school, and I improved my social-emotional competencies. As a certified school counselor, I worked with students on their social-emotional development and self-regulation skills. I also worked with teachers to identify strategies to help students with social and behavioral concerns. Long before district leaders implemented

Conscious Discipline to help teachers develop skills to work with students, I supported teachers emotionally and provided strategies for building and repairing rapport with their students. I saw firsthand the stress teachers felt and understood their frustrations with maintaining a positive climate conducive to classroom learning.

I knew the benefits I received from teaching SEL to students, and I knew that teachers who taught SEL would also experience benefits in their personal and professional lives. School leaders are responsible for student learning and achievement, but teachers are responsible for instructing students. When teachers experience high stress, struggle with the high demands of teaching, and have low social-emotional competencies, this results in classroom management problems, poor teacher performance, and increased teacher attrition (Greenberg et al., 2016, p. 4). Interventions that address teachers' social-emotional competencies have improved teachers' well-being and lessened teacher stress; teachers reported enjoying their jobs more when their students are engaged and successful (Stephanie et al., 2017, p. 8).

## **Goals**

The intended goal of my study was to examine how the teacher taught SEL curriculum impacts teachers. I wanted to determine if there is evidence of the benefits of teachers teaching. In my study, I will identify the relationship between teacher-taught social-emotional learning on collective teacher efficacy and the influence on teacher job satisfaction beliefs. In my study, I will also add evidence to the body of research on SEL and influence policy changes for social-emotional learning instructional requirements in my school district.

My program of study directly impacts student learning. Less stressed teachers can help students develop social-emotionally and maintain positive classroom learning cultures. Social and emotional development is integral to academic growth and how learning takes place in classrooms (Stephanie et al., 2017, p. 5). I analyzed quantitative and qualitative data and determined the benefits of teacher taught SEL instruction on teachers.

### **Research Questions**

The overarching question that drove this research study is: How does teacher implemented SEL curriculum impact collective teacher efficacy and influence teacher beliefs about job satisfaction? I identified four related research questions to drive my research. These were:

1. Does teacher-implemented SEL curriculum influence teachers' belief systems about job satisfaction?
2. Does teacher-implemented SEL curriculum impact teachers' beliefs about their classroom management?
3. Does teacher-implemented SEL curriculum influence teachers' beliefs about their impact on students' learning and social-emotional development?
4. Does teacher-implemented SEL curriculum impact collective teacher efficacy beliefs?

### **Conclusion**

I completed a study to see how SEL impacted teachers. The findings will be used to advocate for policy changes for SEL instruction and teacher training in a suburban school district. The next chapter focuses on the literature related to SEL and CTE. I will

review the literature by themes. These themes are: 1) Teachers' beliefs about social-emotional learning (SEL), 2) The impact of teacher self-efficacy (SE) and collective teacher efficacy (CTE), 3) The impact of school climate on teachers' beliefs, and 4) The impact of SEL and CTE on teachers' job satisfaction.

## Chapter Two: Review of the Literature

As educators prepare students for life, they teach academic instruction and behavioral expectations. Teachers are also responsible for teaching Social-Emotional Learning (SEL) to assist students with their social emotional development. To teach SEL and academic subjects, teachers must have competencies in these subject areas. What teachers teach also impacts them as learners and their pedagogy.

Research since the 1970s shows that when a group of people believe in their unified success, their unified belief positively impacts their success (Bandura, 1977, p. 477; Donohoo et al., 2018, p. 40). This unified thinking that leads to success is known as collective efficacy. When teachers embody this belief system, collective teacher efficacy (CTE) is a factor that affects students' academic success (Donohue et al., 2018, p. 42) and influences teachers' beliefs about their jobs. A review of the literature revealed four themes: 1) The impact of SEL and CTE on school climate and teacher job satisfaction. Teachers' beliefs about social-emotional learning (SEL), 2) Teachers' beliefs about social-emotional learning, 3) The impact of teacher self-efficacy (SE) and Collective Teacher Efficacy (CTE) and 4) Teachers' SEL competencies. Classroom teachers' beliefs on SEL, SE, CTE, and the school climate shape how teachers perceive satisfaction in their roles.

For this literature review, I searched for multiple scholarly articles on classroom teachers and SEL implementation, collective teacher efficacy and teacher beliefs, and SEL, CTE, and teacher job satisfaction. I used books, the database hosted by the Elton B. Stephens Company (EBSCO), research articles from the Collaborative for Academic,

Social, and Emotional Learning (CASEL), and the database hosted by Journal Storage (JSTOR) with scholarly works written between 2008 and 2019.

### **The Impact of SEL and CTE on School Climate and Teacher Job Satisfaction**

Teaching is a stressful profession. Researchers have identified school climate as one of the leading causes of teachers' stress (Greenberg, 2017, p. 3). Research on school climate indicates that school climate influences all members of the school community, and teachers' beliefs about the school climate where they work have predicted teachers' sense of stress, teaching efficacy (TE), and job satisfaction (Collie et al., 2012, p. 1189). Collie et al. investigated if teachers' perceptions of SEL and their school climate impacted teachers' sense of stress, TE, and job satisfaction by surveying 664 elementary and secondary teachers from British Columbia and Ontario, Canada. Their data supported the idea that having a positive school climate is essential to teachers' and students' well-being and that educational leaders should strive to maintain a positive school climate on their campuses. Teachers' perceptions of their working conditions influence their well-being and motivation. Therefore, teachers' social-emotional competencies are essential to their relationships with students, effective classroom management, healthy classroom environment, and effective SEL implementation (pp. 1196-1197).

Years of research have provided significant data that shows how SEL impacts students and student learning, but emerging research is showing that SEL impacts teachers also (Collie et al., 2012, p. 1191). In their book, *The Strategic School*, Karen Hawley Miles, and Stephen Frank (2008) argued that if school leaders want to improve student learning they must invest in teaching quality. Research showed that “the quality of teaching trumps any other factor in predicting improved student performance” (Miles

& Frank, 2008, p. 23). Educators and school leaders should focus on how SEL impacts teachers to improve quality teaching. Research data supported that SEL positively influenced three variables for teachers: teacher stress, teaching efficacy, and job satisfaction; these variables relate to student motivation and achievement (Collie et al., 2012, p. 1198).

Strong Teacher Efficacy (TE) leads to strong Collective Teacher Efficacy (CTE) beliefs for teachers. In a study on how CTE and teachers' emotions impact their job satisfaction in schools, researchers found that "teacher's SE had positive effects on their perceptions of school CTE, which in turn, influenced teacher' job satisfaction (Stephanou et al., 2013, p. 272). In the study conducted by Stephanou et al., 268 elementary school teachers completed scales to assist the researchers' investigation of three areas. These areas were "1) teacher beliefs about their job satisfaction, experienced emotions at school, self-efficacy, and school collective efficacy beliefs, 2) the influential role of self-efficacy in the school collective-efficacy beliefs and its impact on school collective-efficacy beliefs on job satisfaction and emotions, and 3) the effect of self and collective efficacy beliefs on the impact of job satisfaction on emotions" (p. 268). The study implied that teachers' recognition and regulation of their emotions are essential to their professional lives (p. 274).

Poorly managed teacher stress is connected to weak performance by students, academically and behaviorally. Teachers' stress impacted teachers' health and job satisfaction and was linked to teacher performance, teacher turnover, and student academic outcomes (Greenberg, 2017, p.3). In a research brief Greenberg created for Pennsylvania State University and the Robert Wood Johnson Foundation, he stated that



there is evidence from research that suggests that the programs that have shown positive outcomes for improving student behavior and student SEL may also improve teacher functioning (p. 8). In one study Greenberg cited, the researchers conducted a randomized control trial of 350 Kindergarten through fifth grade teachers across 27 urban schools. Teachers who were trained to implement an SEL curriculum reported greater efficacy for managing student behaviors and higher levels of personal accomplishment compared to the teachers in the control group (p. 8).

SEL competencies are important for teachers as they provide the tools for teachers to use when managing their stress. Self-awareness, Social awareness, Cultural awareness, Prosocial values, and Self-management are the five SEL competencies that some researchers have suggested teachers need to enjoy their jobs and maintain a healthy learning environment and classroom climate (Jennings & Greenberg, 2009, p. 495). Teachers with strong SEL competencies have the tools to foster positive academic and behavioral outcomes for their students. Jennings and Greenberg conducted a review of educational research on the importance of teachers' social and emotional competence and well-being in establishing and sustaining positive student-teacher rapport, effective classroom behavior management, and successful SEL program implementation (Jennings & Greenberg, 2009, p. 491). Teachers need to foster a positive learning environment to teach academics and SEL competencies to students; effective classroom management, positive teacher – student, and positive student-student rapport are essential components of a positive classroom climate. Researchers Jennings and Greenberg proposed a model known as the prosocial classroom, where teachers' social-emotional competence is

developed and maintained so that effective classroom management, positive student-teacher relations, and effective learning can occur (p. 515).

The effects of the Coronavirus disease 2019 (COVID-19) pandemic impacted all areas of human life and significantly affected how educators provided educational supports to students. Researchers conducted a rapid needs assessment to investigate the impact of COVID-19. A sample of 430 participants from elementary, middle, and high school in two high poverty school districts completed surveys (Nadeem et al., 2022, p. 312). The results of this study showed that students experienced the loss of a relative more so than teachers due to COVID-19, teachers were concerned about the direct and indirect trauma that their students experienced without appropriate mental health supports and teachers had substantial concerns about the loss of instruction for their students (p. 315). The researchers also investigated the levels of support that teachers received from their school and district leaders. The results indicated that teachers received more support from their school leaders than their district leaders about how to navigate distance learning and contacting students; however, teachers did not receive guidance on how to support students' SEL needs which were vital to due to the trauma that students had experienced (p. 315).

The financial cost of teacher attrition to school districts runs into the thousands and millions of dollars (Sass et al., 2010, p. 212). With the high cost of teacher turnover and the fact that classroom teachers are the number one factor in student achievement, school leaders should prioritize supporting classroom teachers' emotional health. Teacher job satisfaction is connected to teacher retention and attrition. Researchers Sass, Seal, and Martin conducted a study to investigate the relationships between the causes of teacher

job satisfaction and teachers leaving the education profession (p. 200). A total of 479 certified teachers who taught in elementary, middle, and high school participated in the study; the researchers collected data from five scales that were administered to the participants (p. 204). The findings from this study suggested that teachers need supportive school leaders who foster teacher participation in decision-making and provide opportunities for professional development. Also, when teachers experience greater levels of efficacy related to student engagement, they tended to have fewer student stressors and reduced job dissatisfaction (p. 211-212).

Teachers need professional development to implement SEL instruction. The professional development will increase their social-emotional competencies and the fidelity of their SEL instruction. Researchers conducted a study on the outcomes of the BEST-in-CLASS intervention, a program designed to increase teachers' effective use of strategies as they worked with young children with problem behaviors. In this study, researchers conducted a four-year multisite cluster randomized trial with 186 early childhood teachers; 92 teachers were assigned the BEST-in-CLASS intervention program and 94 were assigned to the comparison group but each teacher only participated in the study for one year (Conroy et al., 2019). Their research revealed that teachers who participated in the program improved their sense of SE, were more effective in handling problem behaviors, and had overall better classroom quality (Conroy et al., p. 31, 2019).

Bracket et al. (2019) conducted a study on the benefits to teachers and students when implementing the Recognizing, Understanding, Labeling, Expressing, and Regulating (RULER) SEL curriculum. The RULER curriculum provides an adult personal and professional learning phase before curriculum implementation. In one study,

“47 teachers participated by completing surveys before and after training and either volunteered to receive 30 hours of RULER training or be in the comparison eLearning group” (p. 155). The study showed that teachers in the RULER group reported a significant increase in work engagement, positive teacher-student interactions, and a significant decrease in teacher burnout (p. 155). In a second study using a RULER training group and a comparison group; the researchers found 54 teacher participants in the RULER group reported higher vigor, dedication, work engagement, and higher emotional intelligence scores (p. 156).

The COVID-19 pandemic resulted in increased stress for teachers and students and showed that the need for SEL for students and teachers to be prioritized. In an article from the Northwest Journal of Teacher Education, based on the review of recent research and scholarly articles, the authors recommend that to “create a foundation of well-being for teachers and students starts with SEL curriculum in teacher education programs” (Katz et al., 2020, p.1). The loss of instruction and unaddressed trauma from the pandemic years are still a concern for students, teachers, school leaders, families, and the community. Teachers need to have social emotional competencies (SEC) to deal with the stress and high emotions within themselves and in their classrooms and to teach their students SEL skills. A review of state standards for SEL instruction in teacher preparation programs indicate that only six states had high standards for SEL; most states had some coverage of SEL competencies in their teacher certification programs but states still lacked a systematic plan or requirement for college and university compliance (p. 3). To transform teacher educational programs into institutions that prepare educators for the physical and psychological demands of teaching, state policies for teacher preparation

programs must be established to ensure compliance for SEL preparation. To “establish the foundational knowledge for culturally responsive SEL implementation that promotes equity, State higher educational leaders must require teacher education programs to go beyond their current approach and provide more formal training in SEL including the implementation and assessment of such programming to support the next generation of educators” (p. 9).

Researchers found that increasing teacher SEL competencies also impacted teacher self-efficacy beliefs. In 2016, a school-based randomized control study was conducted to test the impact of two prevention programs on teachers. A total of 350 kindergarten through fifth grade teachers completed five scales and one survey; teachers either participated in the group that implemented a behavior intervention program with training or a group that was trained on an integrated program using the behavior intervention program and an SEL curriculum (Domitrovich et al., 2016, p. 325).

Researchers found that teachers who participated in the integrated program experienced a positive impact on their personal accomplishment and a higher SE for behavior management and SEL (p. 333).

Teachers who are committed to their professions are important in providing the stability of a high-quality learning experience for students. Teachers who are dissatisfied with their jobs pose a risk of leaving the profession, which is costly and can negatively impact student achievement goals for school administrators and district leaders. In one study the researchers investigated the impact of school climate and SEL on teacher commitment. A sample of 664 public school teachers participated by completing online questionnaires; the results showed that two school climate variables (student relations and

collaboration with colleagues) and stronger beliefs and integration of SEL predicted teacher commitment (Collie et al., 2011, p. 1034). The researchers suggested that teachers may be more willing to commit to teaching and a particular school if the school leaders foster a positive school climate and implemented the social-emotional learning curriculum on their school campus (p.1044).

Engaging in effective SEL practices can improve teacher effectiveness, teacher and student well-being, and effective classroom management. There is also promising evidence that discipline policies in schools incorporate SEL core principles can shift race and gender disparities in carrying out disciplinary actions (Jones & Kahn, 2017, p. 8). Teachers with SEL competencies who model and teach SEL competencies to their students foster a supportive and caring learning environment. There is compelling evidence that supporting SEL in schools benefits all stakeholders. Supporting SEL and academic development is wise use of public resources and provides long-term social and economic benefits to students, educators, families, and the community (Jones & Kahn, 2017, p. 11).

In an article about integrating social and emotional learning (SEL) into academic content, the authors identified two concerns 1) classroom management as an ongoing struggle that interferes with teaching and learning and 2) classroom management is also an area that is lacking in many education preparation programs (EPPs). To address these concerns the authors presented techniques that both pre-service and practicing teachers can learn to integrate social and emotional learning (SEL) and academic content. The authors suggest that when teachers integrate SEL in their academic instruction, overtime teachers will have more manageable classrooms (Taylor et al., 2023). The authors further

suggest that from their article faculty in EPPs can gain insight on the importance of SEL and academic content integration and become more knowledgeable on how to teach the integration of SEL and academic content in teacher education curriculum.

The authors stated that SEL instruction should be explicitly taught. Social skills lessons encompass varying categories of skills that are critical to navigating social situations. Some of these social skills include communication, problem solving, resolving conflict, and working cooperatively, which are important to successfully interacting in society. The authors identify that pre-service and practicing teachers can help guide students in applying positive social skills across school settings, but that they are limited by time, schedules, and support. The authors subscribe to the solution offered by the Collaborative for Academic, Social, and Emotional Learning (CASEL), which “involves embedding the explicit social skills lessons into a broader lesson addressing academic content” (Taylor et al., 2023, p. 39).

To integrate SEL into academic content, the authors proposed one strategy, that of expanding existing lesson plan templates to include intentional spaces to think about SEL and academic integration. The authors recommended that in EPPs, pre-service teacher candidates can intentionally plan for social skills instruction within the context of the academic lesson plan using their prescribed strategy. The authors further pointed out that learning objectives for a lesson plan always target an academic skill or concept, and within every content area standard are prerequisite or associated social skills.

To further make their point about how SEL can be integrated into academic content, the authors pointed out the alignment of social skills requisites in department of education standards by referring to an example from the Common Core State Standards

Initiative (CCSSI). The authors demonstrate how the CCSSI included specific standards that linked pre-requisite social skills to effectively learning academic content in the classroom. The authors gave an example of from the English/language arts standards, where “the strand entitled Speaking and Listening for Kindergarten students included three comprehension and collaboration objectives that described how students will participate in collaborative conversations with diverse partners” (Taylor et al., 2023, p. 41). As such, the authors concluded that CCSSI explicitly lays out how social skills were associated with classroom learning activities.

In conclusion the authors stated that when SEL is explicitly interwoven and embedded into core curriculum content there are many benefits that help student. Educator preparation programs can better train pre-service teachers to take the time to intentionally plan SEL into academic content within lesson planning. By providing this training, EPPs can better prepare teacher candidates to foster classroom environments that support emotional and behavioral success for all students.

In 2021, researchers conducted a meta-analysis study to investigate the impact of social and emotional learning interventions on the symptoms of teacher burnout. In this meta-analysis study 13 empirical studies were investigated. The methodology of this study followed the preferred reporting items for systematic reviews and meta-analyses (PRISMA) guidelines.

There were seven criteria for the 13 studies included in the meta-analysis. 1) “The studies were required to have the full-text version available and to have been published in psychology or education peer-reviewed journals or with ProQuest Dissertation and Theses, after 1995” (Oliveira et al., 2021, p. 1784). 2) Studies that had sufficient



information reported to estimate the effect sizes of the interventions' impacts. The researchers did not apply any language constraints to their selections. 3) Studies that included in-service teacher participants from pre-kindergarten to 12th grade. 4) Studies that provided empirical research (with quasi-experimental or experimental designs) on the impact of a SEL intervention. 5) The studies were required to assess the impact of interventions on teachers' burnout levels. 6) To test for meta regression effects, covariates were selected in accordance with socio-demographic and intervention features.

To conduct their search the researchers conducted systematic screening using the EBSCOhost web, b-ON, SCOPUS, SciELO, and ProQuest Dissertation and Theses databases. They also used Advance and Boolean search options to narrow the search based on their eligibility criteria. The data from the 13 selected studies were then synthesized using four general criteria, 1) intervention, 2) participants, 3) outcomes, and 4) study design. The researchers performed their data analysis using a meta-analysis approach with a random effects model for 13 studies addressing the impact of SEL interventions on in-service teachers' burnout levels.

The results of this meta-analysis study showed that when addressing intrapersonal social-emotional competencies (SEC), SEL interventions had a medium positive and significant effect on personal accomplishment and a medium negative and significant effect on emotional exhaustion. The researchers concluded that SEL intervention appears to have contributed to promoting teachers' sense of personal accomplishment, which is a dimension of burnout (Oliveira et al., 2021). The researchers also stated that their results reinforce the potential of SEL interventions for teachers to withstand burnout and the promotion of developing teachers' intra-personal SEC within teacher training programs.

In an article published in 2018, the authors conducted a case study to examine how one independent school in California used assessment data to build a positive school climate and strengthen the emotional intelligence of students and all community members. The school, over several years, used multiple school climate and emotional quotient assessments to improve individual and classroom success and positive schoolwide climate. The authors of this case study used a three-part benchmarks framework for schoolwide implementation of social emotional learning (SEL) to analyze three areas. The first area was student and adult competencies, second area was classroom practices, and the third area was whole school approaches, including school climate and administrative team leadership.

The authors referred to the social and emotional competencies of students and adults as emotional intelligence (EQ) or EQ competencies. The authors defined Emotional intelligence (EQ) as the knowledge and skills needed to combine thinking and feeling to make optimal decisions. They also describe Social Emotional Learning (SEL) as the process through which both children and adults acquire and effectively apply the skills of understanding emotions, using emotions, positive goal setting, maintaining positive relationships, and responsible decision making (Stillman et al., 2018).

For this case study the authors used a theoretical framework that was based on two separate but related frameworks. The first model was the Six Seconds Emotional Intelligence model, which provided a useful action plan for learning and practicing emotional intelligence in daily life. The second model was also created by Six Seconds and uses Benchmarks that describe the integration of SEL into a school. The Benchmarks

provided a guide for school leaders to assess individual development of EQ competencies in adults and youth, classroom, and schoolwide practices. The Benchmarks comprised of rubrics for school leaders to describe, measure, and analyze their current levels of SEL implementation and devise plans for further development on their campuses (Stillman et al., 2018).

The primary method used by the authors in the research of this case study was interpretive analysis of observed practices and assessment results. Applications and findings from the case study showed that teachers used the assessment data to engage in focused, evidence-based discussion and decision-making and built awareness of the overall EQ strengths of the whole team. Teachers also learned and developed their own EQ competencies, and they used student assessment data to create personalized education plans for students (Stillman et al., 2018). The teachers also shared students' plans with their families and provided updates during parent teacher conferences.

At the end of the case study the authors arrived at three conclusions. 1) The study showed that data from social-emotional and school climate assessments can be strategically used to enhance positive outcomes for students and teachers. 2) Data from the assessments can be used to create a supportive and engaging learning community that is imbued with emotional intelligence. 3) School leaders can use multifaceted social-emotional assessments for youth, adults, and school climate guides to integrate SEL and provide rich opportunities to help all stakeholders to grow and thrive (Stillman et al., 2018).

### **Teachers' Beliefs about Social-Emotional Learning**

Social-emotional learning is how adults and children develop their social and

emotional competencies in five areas: self-awareness, self-management, social awareness, relationship skills, and responsible decision-making (Bridgeland et al., 2012, p. 4). These SEL competencies make up the life skills people need to navigate successful social and professional relationships and to be productive members of society. I found in the research that teachers worked to prepare students for advancement in their careers and life beyond high school. They understood and valued social-emotional learning for all students. More than 75% of teachers who participated in a national survey believed that there should be a greater implementation of SEL in schools. Their belief was due to the positive effect of SEL on workforce readiness (87%), school attendance, and graduation rate (80%), life success (87%), college preparation (78%), and academic success (75%) (Bridgeland et al., 2012, p. 5).

SEL instruction provides benefits to classroom climate, teacher-student rapport, and peer group relationships. In 2012, a national survey was conducted to investigate the role and value of SEL in schools. There was a total of 605 classroom teachers, from pre-school to 12<sup>th</sup> grade, who participated in the survey. The results indicated that 94% of teachers said teaching SEL will improve relationships between teachers and students and reduce bullying (Bridgeland et al., 2012, p. 17). Teachers also benefit from SEL. Teacher SEL competences are essential because it is critical in classroom SEL delivery. "Teachers with strong SEL competencies have more positive relationships with students, manage their classrooms more effectively, and implement SEL programs targeted to students with greater fidelity" (Jones et al., 2013, p. 63).

In a review of research on SEL and teachers, applied developmental psychologist and professor, Kimberly A. Schonert-Reichl examined the findings of SEL and teachers.

Her review of the research indicated that for teachers to develop their pedagogy to teach SEL they “need to know how to explicitly teach SEL skills; they also need the knowledge, dispositions, and skills to for maintaining a safe, caring, supportive, and responsive learning environment” (2017, p. 142). School leaders should support the development of teachers’ SEL competencies to optimize classroom performance and student SEL benefits (p. 21).

Teachers and school principals have endorsed SEL instruction in schools. This endorsement was captured in a national teacher survey in 2012 and a national principal survey in 2017 commissioned by the Collaborative for Academic, Social, Emotional Learning (CASEL) and in a separate survey commissioned by McGraw-Hill in 2018, (Hamilton et al., 2019, p. 3). In a study conducted in 2018, 15,719 teachers and 3,530 principals responded to the American Educator Panels, a set of surveys for educators. The key findings indicated that “elementary teachers and principals indicated that prioritizing SEL was very important for students to develop and apply SEL skills in schools” (Hamilton et al., 2019, p. 8).

Support for SEL is widespread amongst school principals because of the years of research and the positive beliefs held by teachers. Teachers and principals believe that SEL provides skills to students in their school careers and adult lives. Most survey respondents also agreed that SEL could improve student engagement, achievement, and schoolwide climate (Hamilton et al., 2019, p. 19).

In an article written in 2012, researchers conducted a study to assess teachers’ beliefs about social and emotional learning (SEL). The study was conducted in two phases. In phase one the researchers created and administered a survey measure to

participants and in phase two of the study the researchers provided evidence for the scale that they created by examining subsample of teachers implementing an SEL program as part of a randomized controlled trial (Bracket et al., 2012).

The authors were interested in teachers' beliefs because they are the primary deliverers of SEL programming, and "their attitudes about and support for SEL can affect the adoption, sustainability, and impact of such programs" (Brackett et al., 2012, p. 220; Bowden et al., 2003). The researchers believed that teachers' beliefs are key indicators of their perceptions and judgments, and that these perceptions have an impact on teachers' teaching practices (Brackett et al., 2012; Pajares, 1992). By assessing teachers' beliefs about SEL, the authors are adding to the body of knowledge surrounding SEL and SEL impact on teachers and students.

In phase one of the study, the researchers presented and examined three variables teachers' comfort with teaching SEL, teachers' commitment to learning about SEL, and teachers' perceptions about whether their school culture supports SEL. Phase one of the study also involved item development and obtaining evidence of validity from both exploratory and confirmatory analyses of the original items in the sample pool of questions. In phase two of the study, the researchers focused on validating the scales with measures related to teacher effectiveness, support from school leaders, and implementation quality looking at participants' attitudes and student enjoyment of the SEL program (p. 221).

Participants were teachers at catholic school students, a total of 935 teachers who had attended an SEL workshop sponsored by the authors of this article. The pool of participants was represented by teachers from 62 schools. Of the participants, 90% were

women, 94% were laypeople (i.e., not ordained as nuns or priests). Of the teachers, nine percent taught prekindergarten, 51% taught grades kindergarten to fourth, and 40% taught fifth to eighth grade. Approximately 53% of the teachers had taught 11 or more years and 37% had taught less than 11 years. Teacher education ranged from associate degree or high school diploma to the doctorate level (p. 222).

The authors developed their survey items by reviewing key theoretical and research publications on factors affecting implementation of SEL programming and of school-based prevention programs. Their survey consisted of 25 randomly ordered items that included in the instructions an established definition of SEL to ensure that all teachers had the same conception of SEL in mind when answering the questions (Brackett et al., 2012; Zins et al., 2004). Teachers were then administered the survey that was created by the authors.

After completing an exploratory factor analysis, the results yielded a three-factor solution. The researchers identified these factors as “Comfort (comfort with teaching SEL), Commitment (desire to develop SEL skills), and Culture (school support for SEL instruction)” (Brackett et al., 2012, p. 223). The researchers also completed a confirmatory factor analysis, the results showed that the three-factor structure was viable.

In phase two of the study the researchers wanted to validate the scales and included measures related to teacher effectiveness (e.g., teacher burnout) as well as measures assessing implementation quality. The authors defined burnout as “a conceptualized as a three-dimensional construct: emotional exhaustion, depersonalization, and reduced personal accomplishment” (Brackett et al., 2012, p. 227; Maslach, 2003). In phase two there were 88 participants, who taught fifth- and sixth

grade from the 62 schools. Forty-one teachers taught in schools randomly assigned to use the RULER SEL curriculum and 47 teachers taught in control schools. Teachers who participated in the study also participated in training to use the RULER program (p. 227). The results from phase two indicated that teachers who reported that their schools were open to and supportive of SEL instruction reported less emotional exhaustion and greater perceived administrator support (p. 277).

The goal of the researchers was to develop and validate a tool for researchers and practitioners to assess teachers' beliefs about SEL. The two primary findings that emerged from the study were "(a) teachers' beliefs about SEL can be differentiated into three relatively distinct domains that can be measured reliably and (b) there is evidence for the validity of the scales" (Bracket et al., 2012, p. 229). In their conclusion the authors reiterated that their study, using a large ethnically diverse sample of teachers, demonstrated that teachers' beliefs about SEL could be partitioned into the three relatively distinct reliable and valid scales (Comfort, Commitment, and Culture). They also provided evidence that their assessment tool for teacher SEL belief was both parsimonious and easy to administer (Brackett et al., 2012).

### **The Impact of Teacher Self-Efficacy (SE) and Collective Teacher Efficacy (CTE)**

Teachers who have self-confidence and believe their efforts can make a difference in their jobs have a high feeling of teacher self-efficacy. "Teacher self-efficacy (SE) beliefs have been shown to predict teacher aspirations, job satisfaction, and reduction in teacher burnout" (Brown et al., 2019, p. 148). At the school organizational level, SE is Collective Teacher Efficacy (CTE) and occurs when teachers believe that together they can impact courses of action and success.



In a mixed-method study to explore factors that enhanced teachers' collective efficacy (CE) beliefs, 91 teachers completed questionnaire surveys and nine of the teachers who completed the questionnaires also participated in an interview. A finding from this study showed that teachers who participated in decision-making roles on their school campus had higher CTE and that teachers with higher CTE scores had students with higher academic achievement scores (Brown et al., 2019, p. 152). From the interview responses, the researchers identified four themes that show how CTE is developed and increased for teachers. These themes are communication from school leaders, support from school leaders on professional development for teachers, collaborative support from school leaders and colleagues, and guidance from school leaders on how to manage stress and enhance resilience (Brown et al., 2019, pp. 153-156). CTE beliefs are associated with increased teacher commitment to students, their behavior, and achievements and mediating teachers' work-related stress (Brown et al., 2019, p. 148).

In his article on how CTE develops, Peter Dewitt (2019) described SE "as the confidence that teachers have in themselves, whereas CTE is the confidence that teachers have in their group to make a difference for students" (p. 32). John Hattie's meta-analyses on CTE indicates that it has the most influence on increasing student achievement (Donohoo et al., 2018, p. 40; Hattie, 2014). CTE positively influenced classroom teachers through a positive school climate and improved instruction and learning. Teachers face enormous stress in their work lives; however, this is mitigated by CTE because when faced with complex challenges, teachers working in a culture of efficacy show intensified persistence and a firm resolve (Donohoo et al., 2018, p. 42).

A culture of collective efficacy is demonstrated when administrators, teachers, and faculty collaborate to achieve significant learning. If school leaders facilitate a school culture that supports an open-collegial environment, the result is that teachers will feel more supported when receiving feedback, coaching, and directed behaviors (Thornton et al., 2020, p. 175). CTE impacts teachers' behaviors, efforts, innovative planning, persistence, willingness to work with difficult students, commitment to the job, and student efficacy, and student collective efficacy within the school (Bandura, 1977; Thornton et al., 2020).

In a study to assess the mediating role of CTE beliefs on teacher stress and job satisfaction, Klassen (2010) had 951 elementary and secondary teachers completed surveys about their CTE beliefs (p. 343-344). The results suggested that teachers' CTE beliefs about managing student behavior relieved job stress related to students' behaviors and positively increased job satisfaction in that area (p. 350). The implications of this study suggested that while individual teachers may possess classroom management strategies that alleviate their stress from student behaviors, "Teachers' beliefs in their collective capabilities to manage student behavior provides some relief of the negative effects that job stress has on satisfaction from teaching" (p. 350). CTE resulted in teachers showing more commitment to school organizational initiatives and pedagogy development. In schools where efficacy was present, teachers demonstrated a greater commitment to students; students were less likely to be removed from classrooms or suspended from school due to misbehavior, and teachers were more likely to remain in the profession (Donohoo, 2018, p. 339).

Teachers SE and CTE directly affect their behaviors, efforts, innovation planning, persistence, willingness to work with challenging students, and commitment to teaching (Thornton et al., 2020, p. 179). Research also showed that the way to increase CTE is to increase teachers' involvement in decision-making and leadership. Through this collaboration, the impact of increasing CTE showed a positive influence on increasing CTE beliefs and reducing teacher burnout and stress (Brown et al., 2019, p. 156). Educational leaders should desire a positive school climate where teachers are supported to mitigate their stress and believe their efforts can have influence in student learning. Thornton et al.'s data showed that by helping teachers connect their CTE beliefs to student outcomes and increase teacher engagement in decision-making, school leaders can facilitate a positive school climate.

### **Teacher SEL Competencies**

In an article written in 2023 about how to help with teacher burnout, the authors Dr. Isbell and Dr. Miller, discussed the rate of teacher attrition and proposed that personal and professional support from educational stakeholders can alleviate this problem. The authors pointed out that “support through social-emotional learning provides teachers with the necessary skills to manage stressors, reduce burnout, and improve retention” (Isbell et al., 2023, p. 20). The authors' argument is that teachers' well being matter and a focus on improving their social emotional well-being is critical to avoid worsening concerns of teachers leaving the profession.

The authors' argument for supporting teachers' well-being is linked to their review of recent research around school climate and the stress that teachers are experiencing in the post-pandemic school environment. Dr. Isbell and Dr. Miller argued

that by improving teachers' social-emotional development, educators can mitigate the stress that teachers feel as they deal with their students' academic, behavioral, and social-emotional needs. To defend their argument, the authors cited works from other researchers. The authors presented the argument that "teachers' social and emotional competency is related to the quality of the classroom environment and teacher-student relationships" (Isbell et al., 2023, p. 21; Jennings & Greenberg, 2009; Jones et al., 2013). They also stated that "when teachers display more positive emotions in their classrooms, student engagement, motivation, behavior, well-being, and learning improve" (Isbell et al., 2023, p. 21; Brackett et al., 2016).

The authors also discussed two opposing viewpoints that could be presented against improving teachers' social-emotional learning (SEL). The first oppositional point was the financial cost for an SEL initiative, and the second oppositional point was that SEL had become a politically charged point of contention amongst some stakeholder groups (Isbell et al., 2023). The authors also discussed counterarguments to the opposing viewpoints. The first counterargument that the authors presented looked at the financial cost; "according to The Learning Policy Institute, it costs districts roughly \$20,000–\$30,000 for each teacher who leaves the profession and an annual total of approximately \$8.5 billion nationally" (Isbell et al., 2023, p. 22; Hillard, 2022). The authors also argued that "estimates suggest that schools and districts spend approximately \$640 million annually on SEL products and programs" (Isbell et al., 2023, p. 22; Krachman & Larocca, 2017).

The second counterargument that the authors present is that the public pushback to SEL seems to stem largely from a definitional misunderstanding. Since the focus

should be on supporting teacher well-being, we should focus on the underlying concern with human development and flourishing rather than with the term (SEL) itself, the authors suggest that perhaps we need to use a different term. The authors' conclusion is that to take care of teacher well-being a forward-looking approach is needed that will transform educational shift at multiple levels. First, teacher preparation programs must include SEL coursework with faculty experts. Second, school districts must provide ongoing professional development and foster school cultures that value the feelings of teachers and students. And third, "if we want teachers to stay in the classroom, we must create a multi-layered environment that acknowledges, cares about, and fosters teachers' well-being" (Isbell et al., 2023, p. 23).

In another article written in 2023, the authors discussed the pervasive concern of teacher stress and its impact on teacher well-being and student achievement. The authors also discussed some misconceptions about teachers' well-being. They also proposed a new framework of individual and systemic interventions to support teacher well-being by providing teachers with opportunities to increase their social-emotional competencies.

The authors made the point that teacher burnout is not a new concern, the problem has existed for over three decades. The problem of teacher burnout was exacerbated by the Coronavirus 2019 (COVID 19) pandemic which led to teachers experiencing increased responsibilities and lack of support (Lee et al., 2023; NEA 2022). According to the authors, "research has indicated that the level of stress and burnout experienced by teachers resulted in many adverse outcomes including social and emotional difficulties, lowered job performance, high teacher turnover, and individuals choosing to leave the

profession early” (Lee et al., 2023; Brunsting et al., 2022). The authors further indicated that teacher burnout affects all stakeholders in the educational system.

The authors identified four misconceptions that they discussed. The first misconception was that SEL is good for students but does not apply to teachers. The authors made the counterpoint that “the five core competencies of SEL self-awareness, self-management, social awareness, relationship skills, and responsible decision-making are not limited to children, but also form the cornerstones of productive social, emotional, and occupational health at any age or stage of development and are part of adult well-being” (Lee et al., 2023; CASEL 2022).

The second misconception was that teachers alone are responsible for their own well-being. The authors countered that because of the seriousness of this issue, school leaders and administrators must coordinate a comprehensive approach to address teacher well-being. The third misconception was that teachers should keep school and home lives separate. To counter this misconception, the authors pointed out that to be their authentic selves, teachers should feel that they can be the same person at school as at home. The authors further pointed out that “according to researchers, while it is necessary for teachers to set boundaries to establish a healthy work–life balance, administrators should allow teachers some flexibility in how teachers conduct themselves in their classrooms and honor their passions, within reason” (Lee et al., 2023, p. 55; Brady et al., 2021; Wilfong et al., 2021).

The fourth misconception was that a heavy workload for teachers should be expected. The authors countered with data from research where teachers were interviewed. The data showed that the workload itself was not the main problem; it was

the nature and purpose of the work that they were doing. main detractor was the nature and purpose of the work. Teachers valued work that was focused directly or indirectly on making teachers better educators so that they could help their students lead better lives (Lee et al., 2023; O'Brien and Guiney, 2021).

To solve the concern of teacher burnout and attrition, the authors of the article proposed the “three Cs”— Connection, Control, and Capacity. Connections refers to the meaningful interactions amongst human beings, which we need because we are social beings. The authors suggest that when an interaction results in connection, educators felt that they belonged and were valued; therefore, school leaders should create systemic changes that promote teacher connections. Control refers to teachers’ feelings of competency or self-efficacy, their confidence as teachers. The authors recommend that to help teachers with their feelings of control and to mitigate teacher shortages, school leaders should enact changes so that teachers are paid “fair compensation for all education-related responsibilities” (Lee et al., 2023, p. 59). They also recommend that school leaders should give more decision-making power to teachers regarding the professional development and training opportunities that they attend. Capacity refers to teachers’ ability to effectively deal with situations and stressors, reflected by their self-awareness and self-management. The authors recommend that to help teachers to develop their capacity school leaders should provide teachers with opportunities to increase their social-emotional competencies through SEL initiatives (Lee et al., 2023). Teachers will then be able to develop coping strategies and resilience and receive social support to improve their well-being and job satisfaction.

In an article published in 2021, the researchers conducted a study by reviewing scholarly articles. The authors discussed four main topics, 1) teachers' social-emotional competencies (SEC) including teachers' well-being and career motivation, 2) teacher-student relationships, 3) classroom management, and 4) the effectiveness of SEL implementation. They also made a recommendation for teacher education program in Vietnam to include developing teacher SEC.

The researchers stated that "SEC is recognized as important and teachable characteristics of any individuals, and it should be acquired by both children and adults" (Dung and Zsolnai, 2021, p. 133; Greenburg et al., 2017). The authors believed that well-being contributes to teachers' personal and professional lives. By promoting SEC training, the researchers believed that teachers will be helped to maintain their wellbeing and career motivation. The researchers pointed out that teachers with positive emotional experiences have resilient motivation and feel more equipped to deal with the complex demands of teaching (Dung and Zsolnai, 2021).

Teacher and student rapport is crucial to the creating of a positive and supportive learning environment. The authors contended that teachers' well-being and their skills for dealing with the diverse needs of students could strongly impact teacher-student relationships (Dung and Zsolnai, 2021). Therefore, it is important for teachers to develop their SEC skills so that they can have a better relationship with the students in their classrooms.

The researchers recognized that effective classroom management is built on the relationship between the classroom teacher and the students. The authors cited research from Jennings and Greenburg (2009), which points out that "when SEL skills are used



effectively, they create a cyclical mechanism or “feedback loop” that, when positive, led to better outcomes for everyone, but when negative, led to teacher burnout” (Dung & Zsolnai, 2021, p. 136; Jennings & Greenburg, 2009). SEL implementation promoted effective classroom management and helped teachers to avoid burnout.

The researchers reported that in schools, classroom teachers provided the SEL instruction to their students more than other instructors. In this role, teachers served as excellent role models for positive social and emotional activities. When teachers have high SEC, they are more likely to be confident and can help their students to develop their SEC skills (p. 136).

After discussing the four main findings, the researchers that advocated for a new approach; teachers developing SEC skills in their teacher preparation programs in Vietnam. The authors pointed out that in teacher preparation programs in Vietnam, there was a concern with students matriculating into education programs. The authors attributed the growing concern of student matriculation to pre-service teacher education programs. They point out that the teacher preparation programs do not provide pre-service teachers with the needed knowledge and skills to improve their own SEC or how to implement SEL initiatives necessary for their student (p. 138.) The researchers recommend that embedding SEC and SEL coursework in teacher preparation programs will help to improve teacher well-being and provide teachers with the skills to teach their students SEC and SEL skills.

In his article Brian Stipp (2019) discussed the research that he conducted to examine the elements of a teacher preparation course and the results of a mixed-methods evaluation conducted to examine the influence of the course on participants. The teacher

preparation course was entitled Classroom and Individual Emotional and Behavioral Supports (CIEBS). The course had four modules: School-wide Positive Behaviour Supports (SWPBS), Trust-based Relational Intervention (TBRI), Non-violent Crisis Intervention (NCI), and a practicum experience (Stipp, 2019).

The pre-service course, CIEBS was created as a semester long course to enhance teachers' social and emotional learning skills and teacher efficacy. The goal of the course was to provide teacher students with "knowledge about the impact an individual's environment has on learning, tools that will enhance their teacher efficacy, and preparedness for providing SEL support" (p. 206). Another intent of the program is to prepare teacher-students with skills and knowledge to support students that have experienced trauma.

The course design comprised of specified weekly intervals for instruction in each of the four modules. Instruction over three weeks covered School-Wide Positive Behaviour Intervention and Supports (SWPBS). Instruction over four weeks covered Trust-Based Relational Intervention (TBRI). Instruction over four weeks covered the Nonviolent Crisis Intervention (NCI) system. The fourth module was also delivered over four weeks, and involved observation, hands-on participation, and shadowing teachers who teach students with disabilities. Pre-service teachers received instruction on behavior intervention supports, tools and knowledge for working with traumatized students, and knowledge of student escalation stages and strategies for de-escalation (Stipp, p. 206).

Dr. Stipp's research design included four research questions, one quantitative question and three qualitative questions. The researcher thought to answer four questions:

- 1) To identify the differences between changes in student teachers' efficacy for classroom

management and preparation for dealing with stress (2) To identify the ways that participants' knowledge of SEL techniques were impacted through the course? (3) to identify which elements of the CIEBS course impacted student teachers' knowledge and sense of preparedness to handle student stress? (4) To identify what experiences course participants attributed their changes in teacher efficacy, classroom management, and preparation for dealing with student stress (p. 208).

The study was conducted with students enrolled in the course and a control group of student teachers. Two quantitative tools were administered to both the treatment and the controlled participant groups. The Teacher sense of self-efficacy for classroom management (TSSE- CM), a subscale of the Ohio State Teacher Sense of Self-Efficacy Scale (TSSE) was administered to identify whether the CIEBS course influenced skills in classroom management. The other quantitative tool used was a Likert scale survey, adapted with author's permission, of the Teachers' preparedness in dealing with their students' stress (TPDSS). Both the treatment and control participants also completed responses to situational vignettes. Participants in the treatment group also participated in focus group and individual interviews. Both the treatment and control group participants completed a pre-test before the start of the course and a post-test during the final week of the CIEBS course (p. 208-209).

The researcher presented the findings of his study in the format of answering his research questions. Results from the TSSE-CM and the TPDSS provided the answer to research question one (What were the differences between changes in efficacy for classroom management and preparedness for dealing with students' stress between the treatment and control groups?). Dr. Stipp shared that "after the semester-long CIEBS

course, the group-wide data showed substantial growth in the TSSE-CM and TPDSS scales among the treatment group, and little observable change among the control group” (Stipp, 2019, p. 210).

The researcher used the results of the vignette responses to answer research question 2 (In what ways were the participants’ knowledge of SEL techniques impacted through the course?). The results from the vignettes showed stagnation in response from the control group. However, the results from the treatment group showed a 90% increase in SEL solutions and the quality of the response after the participants participated in the CIEBS course.

Dr. Stipp highlighted that the focus group responses “responses partially answered research question two (In what ways were the participants’ knowledge of SEL techniques impacted through the course?). However, the focus group responses answered his third research question (Which elements of the CIEBS course impacted PSTs’ knowledge and sense of preparedness to handle student stress?), and his fourth research question (To what experiences do individual course participants attribute their changes in teacher efficacy for managing the classroom and sense of preparedness for handling student stress?) (p. 212). The results showed that participants’ preparedness for dealing with student stress and efficacy for classroom management increased over the course.

Dr. Stipp wrote about the implications of his study. He indicated that “an important implication of the study is that active pedagogies (i.e., role playing and field work with students) are important to use when teaching SEL content specifically to preservice teachers” (p. 215). Dr. Stipp also wrote about the impact of his study. He noted that at a time when researchers are identifying a gap between teachers’ preparation

to teach SEL and their instruction of SEL “the evaluation of CIEBS comes at an opportune time for the teacher preparation community, as interest in SEL training for teachers and pre-service teachers is on the rise” (p. 215).

Dr. Stipp concluded his article by pointing out that he wanted to investigate whether the CIEBS course was helpful in providing SEL and Self-efficacy skills and knowledge for participants. His data showed that the CIEB course accomplished its goal in building participants skills and confidence in their abilities to teach SEL. Dr. Stipp asserted that the “CIEB taught pre-service teacher candidates that education is more than reading and writing; that understanding students’ brains and behaviors and building relationships is, ‘a big part of education also” (p. 216). This study adds to the body of research knowledge that teacher preparation programs can and should include coursework to develop teachers’ SEL competencies and pedagogical skills to meet the SEL needs of their students.

In 2019, Dr. Kimberly A. Schonert-Reichl authored a special issue article reviewing the articles written by Social-Emotional Learning (SEL) pioneers. The purpose of her article was to make 3 observations raised collectively (a) social and emotional competencies predict children’s success in school and in life, (b) social and emotional competencies are malleable (i.e., they can be taught and assessed), and (c) explicit attention to context is foundational to the promotion of SEL. She also provided some suggestions for advancing SEL work, including (a) understanding and promoting teacher well-being, and (b) integrating SEL into teacher preparation. For this literature review, only the parts from Dr. Schonert-Reichl’s article that pertain to advancing SEL work will be discussed.

Dr. Schonert-Reichl made a strong argument for teacher education programs to include coursework in SEL. She cited research work that implies that the next steps in SEL studies should “include a better understanding of the ways in which the preparation of educators leads to high-quality implementation of SEL programming” (Schonert-Reichl, 2019, p. 228; Jones et al., 2019). To have effective SEL interventions and skill development, SEL learning must be conducted in classroom environments that are safe, caring, supportive, and well managed. Dr. Schonert-Reichl asserted that teachers must have the competencies and knowledge to create these classroom environments to effectively implement SEL programs (p. 227).

Dr. Schonert-Reichl suggested that classroom teachers are the driving force behind SEL implementation and practices in classrooms and schools. Therefore, teacher well-being cannot be ignored in this process. Dr. Schonert-Reichl pointed out that “Teachers’ own SEL competence and well-being plays a critical role in influencing the learning context and the infusion of SEL into classrooms and schools (Schonert-Reichl, 2019, p. 227; Jones et al., 2013). Teachers require professional development and support for effect SEL implementation to benefit themselves and their students.

Stress contagion is another factor to consider in support of SEL coursework and professional development for pre-service teachers and current teachers. Dr. Schonert-Reichl pointed out that research showed that stress is contagious. In one research, data showed that “in classrooms where teachers reported feeling stressed, higher numbers of their students experienced higher levels of externalizing problems (e.g., fighting, impulsivity), interpersonal issues (e.g., resolving problems), and internalizing problems (e.g., anxiety and sadness)” (Schonert, 2019, p. 227; Milkie and Warner, 2011). Schonert-

Reichl also reported research data also pointed to positive outcomes when teachers received training on emotional and behavioral factors impacting classroom, they felt more confident and equipped with strategies to manage their classrooms and to foster a positive climate (Schonert-Reichl, 2019; Alvarez 2007).

Dr. Rebecca J. Collie and Dr. Nancy E. Perry (2019) co-authored a research article where they proposed a framework for cultivating teacher thriving. In their article the authors refer to “cultivating teacher thriving” as “identifying the essential role that teachers’ social–emotional competence (SEC) plays in helping them to thrive at work and beyond” (Collie et al., 2019, p. 699). The authors also discussed the use of professional development to help teachers develop their social emotional competency (SEC) and thrive at work.

The authors used the teacher thriving to focus on two ideas, harm reduction and wellness promotion. The authors also proposed social-emotional competence (SEC) is the underlying factor that supported teacher thriving; “it is by way of SEC that teachers are able to apply various personal capacities and utilize contextual supports to help them to thrive at work” (Collie et. al., 2019, p. 700). All education stakeholders should prioritize teachers thriving in schools.

According to the authors, teacher well-being is a multidimensional construct that refers to positive and healthy functioning in the workplace, which can be viewed as job-satisfaction and teachers’ emotional commitment to their job (Collie et al., 2019; Meyer et al., 1991). The authors also suggest that to help teachers, the focus should not just be on increasing teacher resilience and buoyance, an emphasis on increasing their SEC is

more important so that they can have tools to fare well and improve their psychological functioning (p. 701).

Collie and Perry promoted a five part framework for cultivating teacher thriving. The six parts are 1) Buoyancy and well-being outcomes, 2) Iterative process of SEC development, 3) Need-support promotes the iterative process, 4) The salience of different contexts in impacting teachers' SEC development 5) The impact of individual differences on SEC development.

The authors described the need for buoyance as helping teachers to bounce back from “everyday” setbacks and challenges at work. They also discuss promoting well-being by supporting teachers to further improve their psychological functioning at work. In their framework, the authors indicated that buoyancy and well-being outcomes are promoted by the iterative process, which is the second part of the framework. The outcomes from teacher buoyancy and well-being also help to support the iterative process, which the authors claim to have a reciprocal relationship (p. 703).

Collie and Perry indicated that the basic psychological need perceived social–emotional autonomy, perceived social–emotional competence, and perceived relatedness are the three components that form an iterative process and that reflects SEC development (Collie et. al., 2019). The first component/need is social–emotional autonomy, which reflects teachers' sense that they have choice in how to be socially and emotionally competent at work. The second component/need is perceived social–emotional competence. This involves teachers' feelings of effectiveness in their social and emotional interactions at work and their perception that they can express their social and emotional capacities (Collie et al., 2019, p. 704; Ryan et al., 2017). The third



component/need is perceived relatedness, which involves teachers' perceptions of feeling supported, sense of belongingness, and care for others within their work environment (Collie et al., 2019; Ryan et al., 2017). The authors also included in their iterative process a description of socially and emotionally competent behaviors or strategies. These strategies are "practicing mindfulness, applying cognitive reappraisal to rethink negative emotions, resting, setting constructive goals, adaptive help seeking, and problem solving" (Collie et al., 2019, p. 706; Mansfeld et al., 2016).

The authors indicated that three types of need-support play an important role in promoting the iterative process of social and emotional competence development; these three types of need support were established in self-determination theory (Collie et al., 2019; Ryan et al., 2017). The first type of need-support is autonomy-support for SEC, which is seen in contexts where leaders foster teachers' empowerment and self-initiation in the social and emotional situations. The second type of need-support is competence support, which is demonstrated by leaders providing support and structure in relation to the social-emotional professional development domains (Collie et al., 2019; Skinner et al., 1993). The authors claimed that professional learning that relates to teachers' social-emotional interactions and experiences at work can help teachers to further develop their perceived social-emotional competence (p. 707). The third type of need-support is relatedness support, which is indicated by leaders who are inclusive and caring, and who show interest in and provide emotional support to teachers. The authors cited research that supported the argument that when teachers feel that school leaders are inclusive and care about them, they feel connected to the leaders in the organization (Collie et al., 2019; Ryan et al., 2017; Skinner et al., 1993).

In their framework, Collie and Perry discussed how teachers' experiences in certain contexts impact their SEC development. The authors pointed out that for teachers, multiple school-related contexts are relevant to their SEC and each school-related context has interrelationship influences that all contribute to the SEC development for teachers (p. 708). Collie and Perry described three contexts that had the most influence on the iterative process of teachers SEC development.

The three contexts discussed were the classroom as a context, the school as a context, and the school district as a context. The classroom context is most influenced by the teachers and students but impacted by school policies. The authors described the classroom context as embedded with the social-emotional values, norms, and beliefs of class (e.g., how helpful students are to each other). The authors described the school context as the social and emotional climate among all school community members as they interact throughout the school. The school culture of valuing teacher-student-admin rapport is seen in the school context. The authors describe the school district context as one that reflects the broader social-emotional systems in place in the school system. The extent to which students' and teachers' SEC is prioritized and their social-emotional well-being supported is reflected in the school context (Collie et al., 2019; Weissberg et al. 2015).

In their framework, the authors also considered that the extent to which teachers progress through the SEC framework is impacted by other factors. These other factors are stage in career, personal characteristics, and environmental factors. Also, when teachers experience adversity in either the classroom, school or district contexts, development of their SEC was impacted. The authors also noted that it was important to understand that

when teachers experience adversity there is a reciprocal relationship in the framework. The authors meant that teachers' use of socially and emotionally competent behaviors, and their buoyancy and well-being, will also impact their interpretations of contextual adversity and the extent to which such experiences impact them negatively (p. 709). The more developed teachers' SEC is, the less likely they are to perceive their adversities as detrimental to their well-being (Collie et al., 2019; Fredrickson, 2001).

In their article, the authors also considered the role of professional development in the framework. The authors recommended that professional learning is embedded through need-support that school leaders provide to teachers. By supporting the SEC professional development, school leaders ensure that teachers develop knowledge and skills for SEC. Training in SEC development is important for teachers to thrive and essential for helping teachers to effectively model and teach SEC to students (Collie et al., 2019, p. 709; Collie 2017).

### **Conclusion**

My review of the literature showed that SEL and CTE beliefs impact students and teachers positively. SEL instruction is more beneficial to teachers when school leaders offer professional development to develop teacher competencies; this also increases the influence of CTE. Improving CTE beliefs and providing SEL support for teachers impacts school climate and teachers' job satisfaction, thereby positively impacting student achievement.

### **Chapter 3: Methodology**

For this study, my purpose was to assess the impact of teacher-taught social-emotional learning (SEL) curriculum on collective teacher efficacy and its influence on teacher job satisfaction in elementary schools. In this chapter I described the procedures I used for collecting and analyzing my data. I identified the participants, the ethical considerations, and the study's limitations.

#### **Research Design Overview**

In my study, I examined if elementary school teachers who teach social-emotional learning curricula believe their instruction impacts their beliefs about job satisfaction and collective teacher efficacy. I used a semi-structured survey that included Likert scale responses and open-ended questions. I used a mixed-methods approach by collecting both qualitative and quantitative data. I used the Likert scale responses for my quantitative data and the open-ended questions for my qualitative data.

My quantitative and qualitative data findings provided information about classroom teachers' perceptions about the benefits of teaching social-emotional learning I used three focuses to study how teacher-taught social-emotional learning curricula benefit teachers' job satisfaction and influence their collective teacher efficacy beliefs. The first focus that I used was impact evaluation. Impact evaluation considers “what the direct and indirect program impacts are over time on participants and other stakeholders” (Patton, 2012, p. 184). I used the impact evaluation focus to describe the SEL instructional benefits to classroom teachers.

The second focus that I used was knowledge focus. Knowledge focus or lessons learned considers “what can be learned from this program’s experiences and results to

inform future efforts” (Patton, 2012, p. 185). Through the knowledge focus evaluation, I gathered results to share with stakeholders to inform future policies.

The third focus that I used was summative evaluation. Summative evaluation is to consider whether “the program should be continued, to what level, and whether there is merit and worth in the program” (Patton, 2012, p. 187). With the summative evaluation focus, I described how the SEL instruction that benefits teachers impact students.

My overarching research question that drove this program evaluation was: How does teacher implemented SEL curriculum impact collective teacher efficacy and influence teacher beliefs about job satisfaction? My related research questions were:

1. Does teacher implemented SEL curriculum influence teachers' belief systems about job satisfaction?
2. Does teacher implemented SEL curriculum impact teachers' beliefs about their classroom management?
3. Does teacher-implemented SEL curriculum influence teachers' beliefs about their impact on students' learning and social-emotional development?
4. Does teacher implemented SEL curriculum impact collective teacher efficacy beliefs?

### **Participants**

There were two stakeholder groups in my study. Both groups were from the one district under study. The first group was 20 teachers in two elementary schools. The classroom teachers included teachers from kindergarten, first, second, third, and fifth grades. There were 19 female teachers and one male teacher. Teachers' ages ranged from 25 to 60 years of age. The teachers' years of experience teaching ranged from 4 to 33

years. The second group was 12 elementary-certified school counselors in 12 schools. The school counselors were all female, and their ages ranged from 25 to 50 years. Certified school counselors' years of experience ranged from five years to 20 years of experience.

A total of 17 classroom teachers completed surveys. The teachers taught grades kindergarten, first, second, third, and fifth. There was one teacher who taught kindergarten, four teachers who teach first grade, four teachers who teach second grade, three teachers who teach third grade, and four teachers who teach fifth grade. I obtained informed consent and completed surveys from four certified school counselors who signed and returned their completed surveys.

### **Data Gathering Techniques**

I implemented a mixed-methods research design using semi-structured surveys with Likert Scale questions and Open-ended questions.

### ***Quantitative Data***

I collected school district extant data from three sources, the School Safety Dashboard, the State Department of Education School Grades, and School Improvement Plan portals and websites (Citation withheld to preserve confidentiality). I used discipline data for in-school and out-of-school suspensions for a trend review for school years 2017-2018, 2018-2019, 2019-2020, 2020-2021, and 2021-2022. I also used student academic achievement data in English Language Arts (ELA) and Mathematics (Math) to review trend data for school years 2017-2018, 2018-2019, 2019-2020, 2020-2021, and 2021-2022.

I created and administered two surveys, one for classroom teachers and another for school counselors. The surveys were emailed to all participants, who then emailed them back to me after completion. The surveys for classroom teachers consisted of 12 Likert scale questions and seven open-ended questions for a total of 19 questions using Microsoft Word (Appendix A). The surveys for school counselors consisted of five open-ended questions using Microsoft Word (Appendix B). I also included a question on the surveys inviting participants to take part in a follow-up focus group interview on a volunteer basis.

I requested the school's name on the surveys from school counselors to identify the schools I wanted to include in my study. I replaced the names of the schools with code identifiers once I received them for confidentiality. I used coding identifiers (numbers and letters) on classroom teacher surveys. All surveys are stored in a locked folder on my personal computer to protect the privacy of all participants.

### ***Qualitative Data***

I used the responses to open-ended survey questions to determine SEL instructional benefits to teachers and students from the classroom teachers' point of view. I could only research the classroom teachers and school counselors who responded to their principals' emails to participate in my study. I submitted my application to the district office for research approval with a list of the schools and the number of classroom teachers and school counselors who had agreed to participate in my study.

### **Data Analysis Techniques**

I conducted a trend review of five years of extant data on student and teacher population, academic achievement, and student disciplinary action for the school district

under study. I compiled the aggregate data to summarize student academic performance and student and teacher population trends. I examined the student discipline data to identify underlying trends and patterns over five years. By reviewing the data trends in the school district, I identified students' strengths and weaknesses (Bambrick-Santoyo, 2010, p. 41).

I analyzed the survey data to determine how the results related to the overarching questions from my program of study. I quantified the Likert Scale questions to capture participants' opinions by grouping the questions under three topics 1) student academic benefits, 2) student behavior benefits, 3) and teacher benefits. I characterized the open-ended survey questions to identify consistent phrases, experiences, and themes from participants' responses. To analyze the open-ended survey question, I grouped the commonly themed responses to capture patterns of teacher beliefs (James et al., 2008, p. 89).

### **Ethical Considerations**

I made every effort to conduct this study with ethical considerations for all participants. I requested permission from the school principals and obtained written consent before contacting participants for this study. I provided all participants with an informed notice of consent, including the intent of the study and how they would participate. I also advised participants that at any point, they could remove themselves from participating without adverse consequences. All participants voluntarily participated in this study.

I used code modifiers and excluded citations and names to ensure the confidentiality of the participants. I did not request their names, sex, or age on the



surveys, and the work location question on the school counselors' survey was converted to a coding identifier when returned to me. The data I collected did not impact any of the participants' evaluations. There were no anticipated risks to participants in this program evaluation beyond that of everyday life.

### **Limitations**

One limitation of the study was the small sample of participants. The COVID-19 pandemic and the high task demand and stress on school personnel contributed to the unwillingness of participants to sign up for more tasks. I emailed 14 school principals to obtain permission for their faculty to participate in my study. Of the 14 emails sent, seven principals responded that their staff could participate, but only six signed the informed consent. Only two schools had teachers who volunteered to participate in the study.

Due to the delay in getting permission to do the study in the school district, there was a delay in sending out informed consent and surveys. The goal of using two surveys was to investigate if teacher beliefs changed from the beginning of the school year to the end of the school year. However, sending out the second survey, which was the same as the first survey at such a late point in the school year would not provide comparative results for my investigation. The lack of comparative results was a limitation of my study because I was unable to examine if teacher beliefs remained the same, increased, or decreased during the school year.

Another limitation is that none of the teachers who returned their surveys indicated they wanted to participate in the focus group interview. Due to the lack of participants for the focus group interview, this part of the study was eliminated. By eliminating this part of the study, I was not able to fully examine CTE beliefs from grade

level teachers. Also, I was unable to capture the depth of qualitative data that I anticipated gathering at the design of the study.

### **Conclusion**

I collected both quantitative and qualitative data sets for my research program. The study's limitations affected the sample of participants, but the data collected was useful for completing my analysis. The data collected provided information to analyze teacher beliefs about SEL instructional benefits to their students, teacher efficacy and collective teacher efficacy, and job satisfaction. The data collected was also adequate for recommending future studies and policy implications.

## Chapter Four: Results

Through the findings from my program evaluation, I provided answers to my research questions about how teachers implemented SEL curriculum impacted collective teacher efficacy and influenced teacher beliefs about job satisfaction. teacher beliefs about SEL instruction, which benefited them in an elementary school setting. I analyzed survey responses from classroom teachers and school counselors' responses in this section. I presented extant data on academic performance and discipline for the two schools in the study. I presented my interpretations, judgments, and recommendations, and provided a chapter conclusion.

### **Findings: Certified School Counselor Data**

The survey for certified school counselors had five questions to ascertain information about the SEL instructional model at their school. All school counselor participants answered the first question and second questions. In Question one, I asked the school's name where the school counselor worked. All school counselors worked at an elementary school in the school district under study. In Question two, I asked, "Is SEL implemented at your school?" All participants responded *Yes*.

In Question three, I asked "What is the SEL instructional model at your school?" All participants responded that SEL was taught by classroom teachers in their classrooms and by school counselors/social workers at separate times. The school counselors did not indicate that the other options for SEL instruction were implemented. The other options were 1) SEL is taught only by classroom teachers, 2) SEL is co-taught by classroom teachers and school counselors/social workers, and SEL is only taught by school counselors/social workers.

In Question four, I asked “How often is SEL instruction provided weekly?” All participants responded to this question, and three responded that classroom teachers provided SEL instruction weekly for 20-30 minutes. The other respondent stated that SEL instruction was delivered by classroom teachers for one hour a week. For school counselor or social worker SEL instruction, three participants stated that SEL instruction was delivered weekly for 30 minutes to small groups; and one participant stated that SEL instruction was delivered twice a week for a total of one hour to small groups.

In Question five, I asked “Is there another SEL instructional model at your school than the options listed?” The results showed that two of the four school counselors reported a SEL model based on individual student needs or classroom needs based on classroom teacher requests. The other two participants did not indicate that any other SEL instructional models were implemented at their schools.

To summarize the findings from the certified school counselors, all school counselors worked at an elementary school and SEL was implemented in their schools. The classroom teachers and school counselors or social workers taught SEL in their schools. The range of time that classroom teachers taught SEL was between 20 minutes and one hour. In three schools, school counselors or social workers taught SEL instruction once a week for 30 minutes and in one school they taught SEL instruction twice a week for 30 minutes each session. In two of the four schools, SEL instruction was also provided to individual students and to classrooms based on teachers’ requests.

### **Findings: Classroom Teacher Survey Data**

The survey for classroom teachers had three parts; part one had three questions to gather demographic information, part two had 12 Likert scale questions, and part three

had four open-ended questions. I instructed teachers to complete the survey based on the students they were teaching. Classroom teachers rated each of the Likert scale questions using a scale of 1-5, where 1 is not beneficial, 2 is a little beneficial, 3 is somewhat beneficial, 4 is beneficial, and 5 is very beneficial.

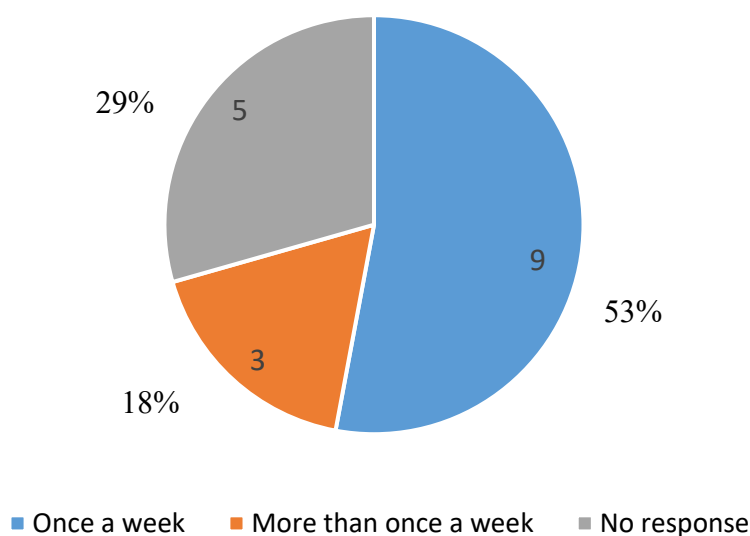
In part one of the surveys, I asked three questions. In Question 1, I asked: How many years have you been teaching? For question one, the range of responses was four years to 33 years of teaching. The mean for the number of teaching years was 20 years, and the median was 20 years.

In Question 2, I asked: How many years have you previously taught SEL in your classroom? For question two, the range of the responses was zero years to 19 years. The mean for the number of years previously teaching SEL in the classroom is six years and the median is three years.

In Question 3, I asked: What is the SEL instructional schedule for your classroom? For this question, nine participants responded once a week, three participants responded more than once a week. A total of five participants did not respond to this question. The results are depicted in Figure 1.

**Figure 1**

*Question 3: Classroom Teacher Responses to the SEL Instructional Schedule for their Classroom*



*Note.* N = 17

***Likert Scale Responses***

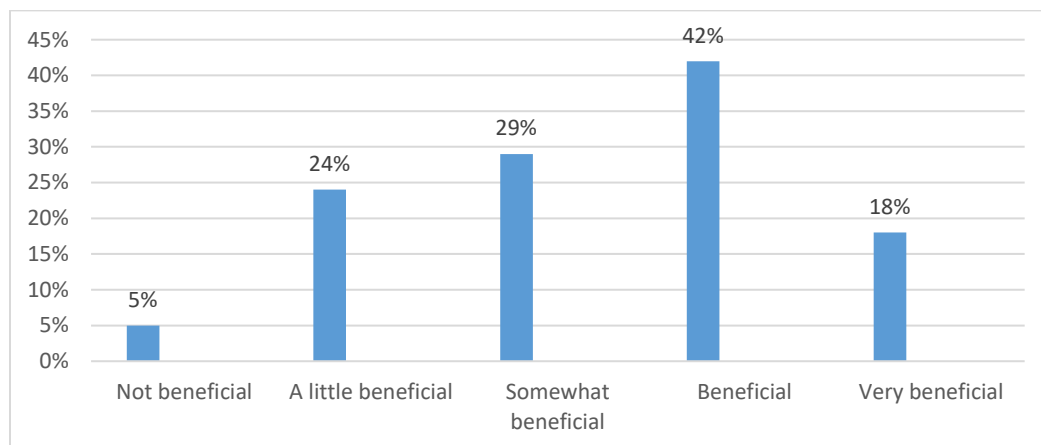
In part two of the survey, I created 12 statements requiring Likert Scale responses (statements 4-15). I asked the participant to complete the Likert scale items using a rating scale of 1-5, where 1 is not beneficial/no benefits, 2 is a little beneficial, 3 is somewhat beneficial, 4 is beneficial, and 5 is very beneficial rate the impact of your SEL teaching on different areas. Of the 17 classroom teacher participants, 15 responded to each of the 12 Likert Scale statements, and two responded to 11.

For item 4, 17 participants responded to the statement: My SEL curriculum instruction on my students' classroom behaviors. Of the participants responding, 5% stated SEL instruction was not beneficial, 24% stated it was a little beneficial and 29% stated it was somewhat beneficial for student classroom behavior. The remaining

participants (42%) responded that SEL instruction was beneficial (24%) or very beneficial (18%) for student classroom behavior (Figure 2).

## Figure 2

*Statement 4: My SEL Curriculum Instruction on My Students' Classroom Behaviors*

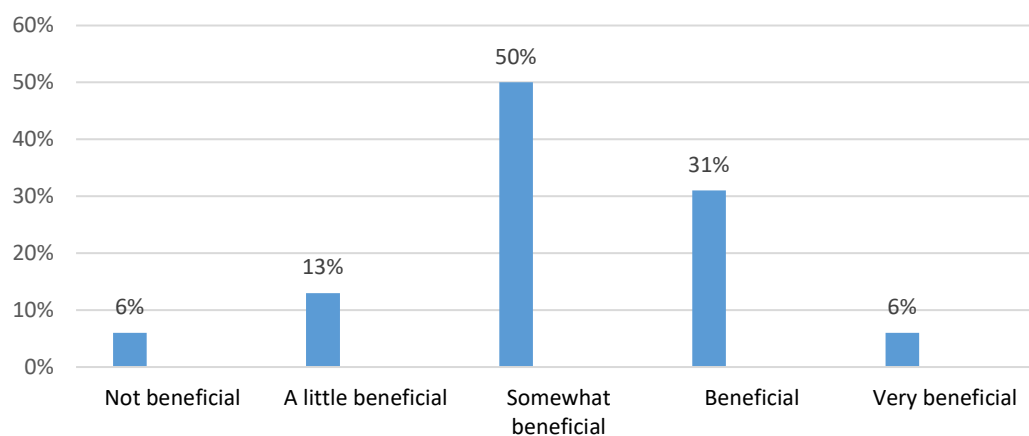


*Note.* N = 17

Sixteen participants rated statement 5: My SEL curriculum instruction on my response to instructional stressors. Of the participants responding, 6% (1) stated SEL instruction was not beneficial, 13% (2) stated it was a little beneficial and 50% (8) stated it was somewhat beneficial for student classroom behavior. Of the remaining five participants, 31% (4) responded that SEL instruction was beneficial, 25% (1) responded that it was very beneficial (6%) for student classroom behavior (Figure 3).

**Figure 3**

*Statement 5: My SEL Curriculum Instruction on My Response to Instructional Stressors*



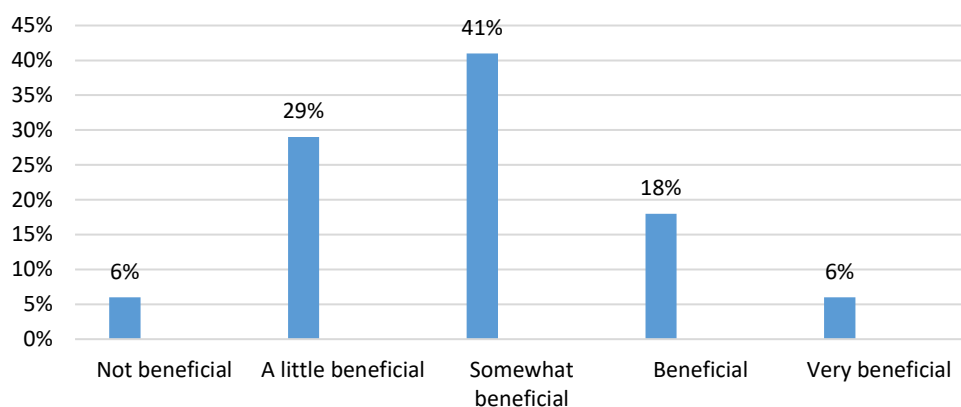
*Note.* N = 16

In Statement 6, I asked participants to rate the benefits of SEL instruction on student academic performance. Seventeen participants responded to Statement 6: My SEL instruction on my students' academic performance. Of the participants responding, 6% (1) stated SEL instruction was not beneficial, 29% (5) stated it was a little beneficial and 41% (7) stated it was somewhat beneficial for student classroom behavior. Of the remaining participants, 18% (3) responded that SEL instruction was beneficial and 6% (1) that it is very beneficial for student classroom behavior (Figure 4).



**Figure 4**

*Statement 6: My SEL Curriculum Instruction on My Students' Academic Performance*

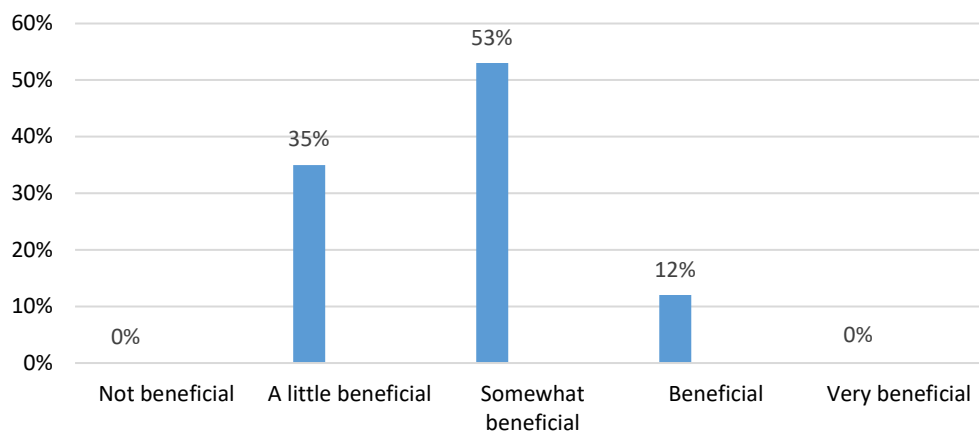


*Note.* N = 17

I asked participants to rate the benefits of SEL instruction on the teacher's time to teach. Seventeen participants responded to statement 7: My SEL instruction on my time to teach. Of the participants responding, 0% stated SEL instruction was not beneficial, 35% stated it was a little beneficial and 53% stated it was somewhat beneficial for student classroom behavior. The remaining participants (12%) responded that SEL instruction was beneficial (12%) or very beneficial (0%) for student classroom behavior (Figure 5).

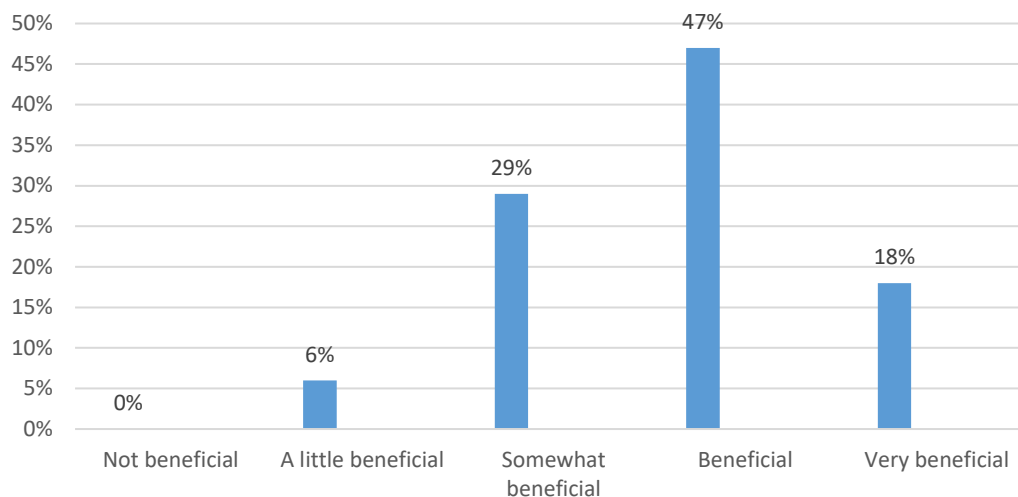
**Figure 5**

*Statement 7: My SEL Curriculum Instruction on My Time to Teach*



*Note.* N = 17

Seventeen participants selected a response to Statement 8: My SEL instruction on my rapport with my students. Of the participants responding, 0% stated SEL instruction was not beneficial, 6% stated it was a little beneficial and 29% stated it was somewhat beneficial for student classroom behavior. The remaining participants (65%) responded that SEL instruction was beneficial (47%) or very beneficial (18%) for student classroom behavior (Figure 6).

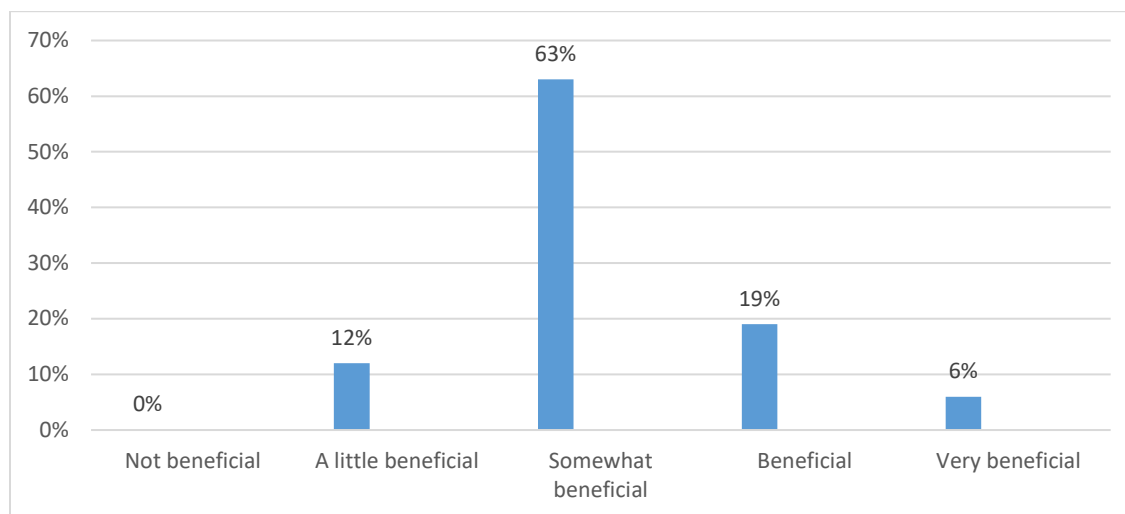
**Figure 6***My SEL Curriculum Instruction on My Rapport with My Students*

*Note.* N = 17

In statement 9, 16 participants rated the benefit of: My SEL instruction on my pedagogical/instructional approach. Of the participants responding, 0% stated SEL instruction was not beneficial, 12% stated it was a little beneficial and 63% stated it was somewhat beneficial for student classroom behavior. The remaining participants (25%) responded that SEL instruction was beneficial (19%) or very beneficial (6%) for student classroom behavior (Figure 6).

**Figure 7**

*Statement 9: My SEL Curriculum Instruction on my Pedagogical/Instructional Approach*



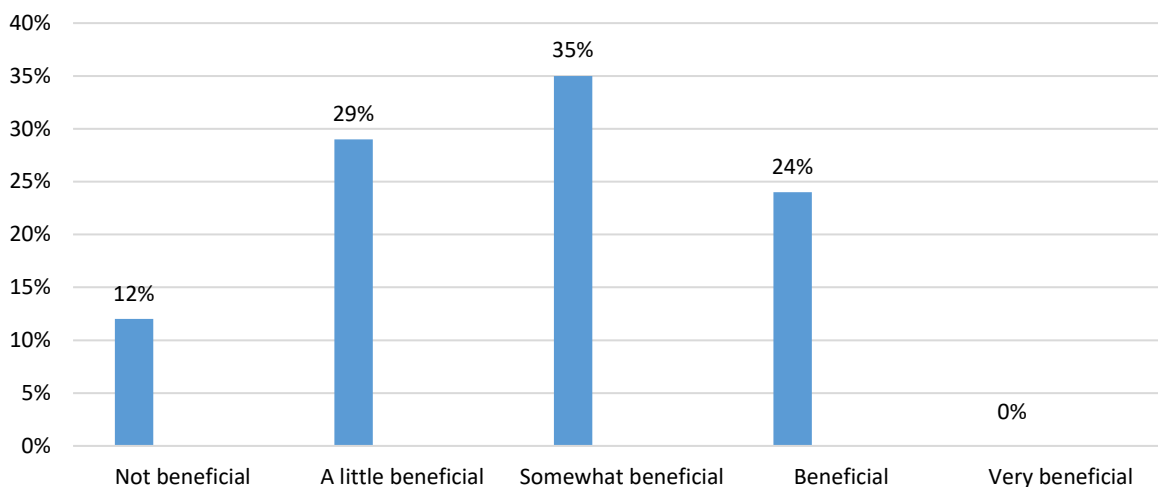
*Note.* N = 16

In Statement 10, 17 participants responded to the benefit of: My SEL instruction on my self-directed professional development. Of the participants responding, 12% (2) stated SEL instruction was not beneficial, 29% (5) stated it was a little beneficial and 35% (6) stated it was somewhat beneficial for student classroom behavior. The remaining participants (24%) responded that SEL instruction was beneficial 24% (4) or very beneficial 0% (0) for student classroom behavior (Figure 8).

**Figure 8**

*Statement 10: My SEL Curriculum Instruction on My Self-Directed Professional*

*Development*

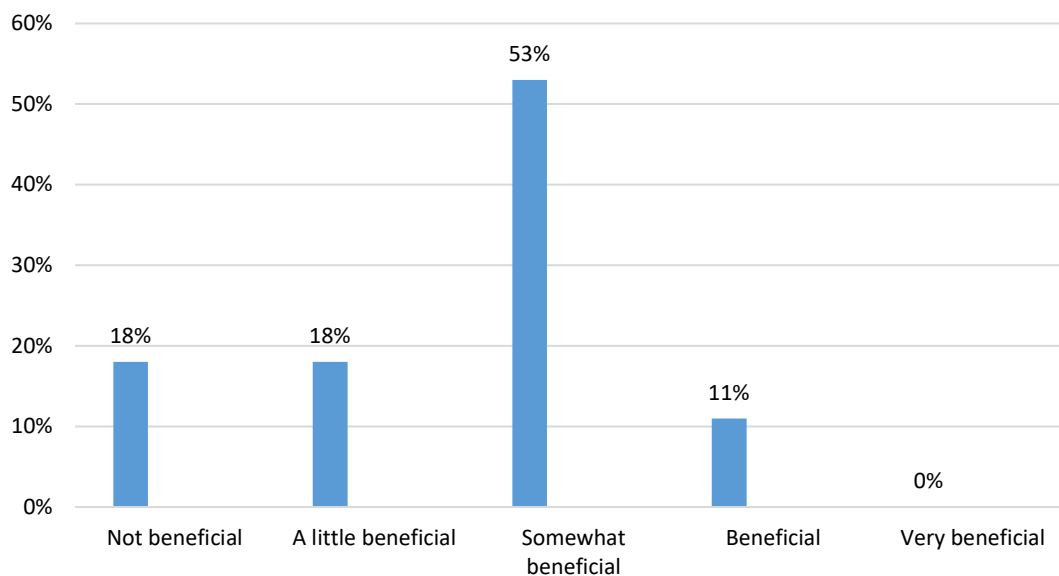


*Note.* N = 17

In statement 11, 17 participants responded to the benefit of: My SEL instruction on my job satisfaction. Of the participants responding, 18% (3) stated SEL instruction was not beneficial, 18% (3) stated it was a little beneficial and 53% (9) stated it was somewhat beneficial for student classroom behavior. The remaining participants (11%) responded that SEL instruction was beneficial 11% (2) or very beneficial 0% for student classroom behavior (Figure 9).

**Figure 9**

*Statement 11: My SEL Curriculum Instruction on My Job Satisfaction*

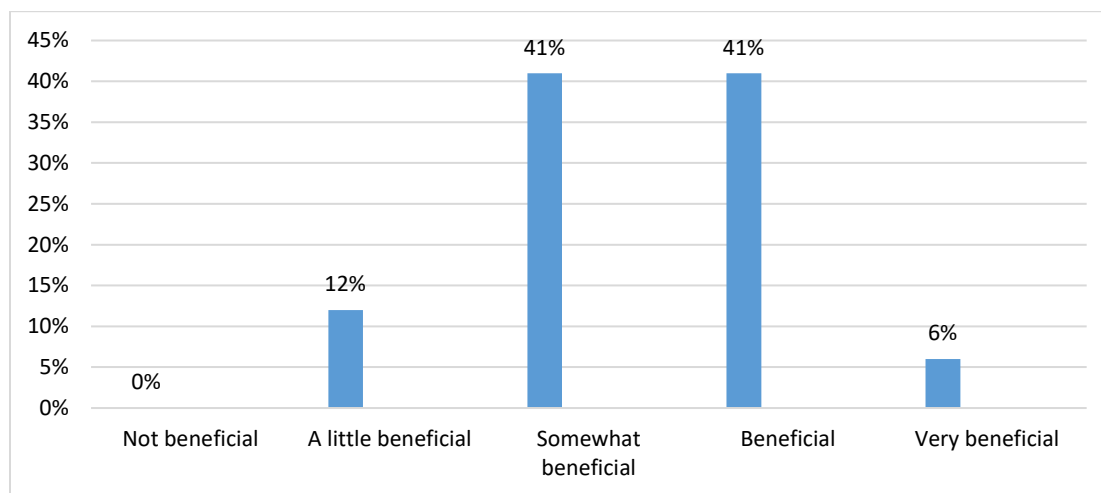


*Note.* N = 17

I asked participants to respond to how beneficial SEL instruction is on classroom management in Statement 12. For Statement 12, seventeen participants rated the statement: My SEL instruction on my classroom management. Of the participants responding, 0% stated SEL instruction was not beneficial, 12% (2) stated it was a little beneficial and 41% (7) stated it was somewhat beneficial for student classroom behavior. The remaining participants (47%) responded that SEL instruction was beneficial: 41% (7) beneficial or very beneficial 6% (1) for student classroom behavior (as referred to in Figure 10).

**Figure 10**

*Statement 12: My SEL Instruction on My Classroom Management*

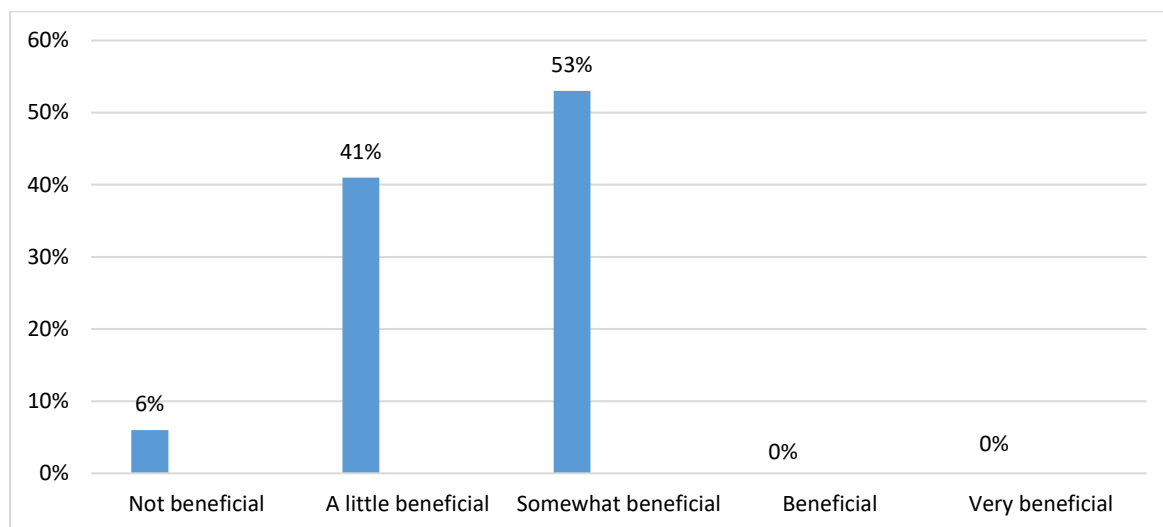


*Note.* N = 17

Seventeen participants rated Statement 13: My SEL instruction on my classroom management skills. Of the participants responding, 6% (1) stated SEL instruction was not beneficial, 41% (7) stated it was a little beneficial and 53% (9) stated it was somewhat beneficial for student classroom behavior. None of the participants rated this statement as beneficial or very beneficial (as referred to in Figure 11). Based on the response, 94% of the participants indicated that there were some benefits (“a little benefit” and “somewhat beneficial”) from SEL instruction in their classroom management skills.

**Figure 11**

*Statement 13: My SEL Curriculum Instruction on My Job-Related Coping Skills*



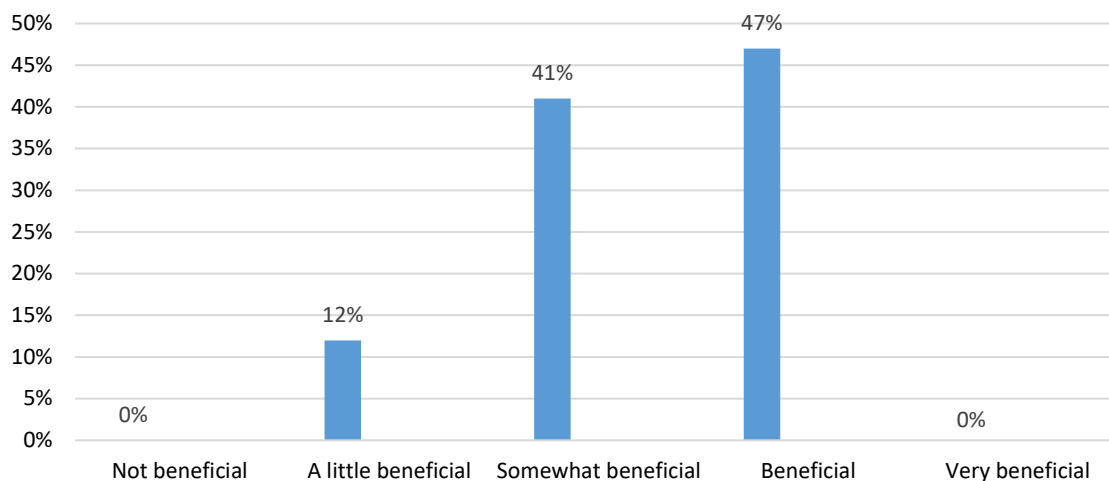
*Note.* N = 17

There were 17 participants who rated Statement 14: My SEL instruction on my students' social-emotional growth. Of the participants responding, 0% stated SEL instruction was not beneficial, 12% (2) stated it was a little beneficial and 41% (7) stated it was somewhat beneficial for student classroom behavior. The remaining participants responded that SEL instruction was beneficial 47% (8) for student classroom behavior and very beneficial was selected by 0% (Figure 12).



**Figure 12**

*Statement 14: My SEL Curriculum Instruction on My Student's Social-Emotional Growth*

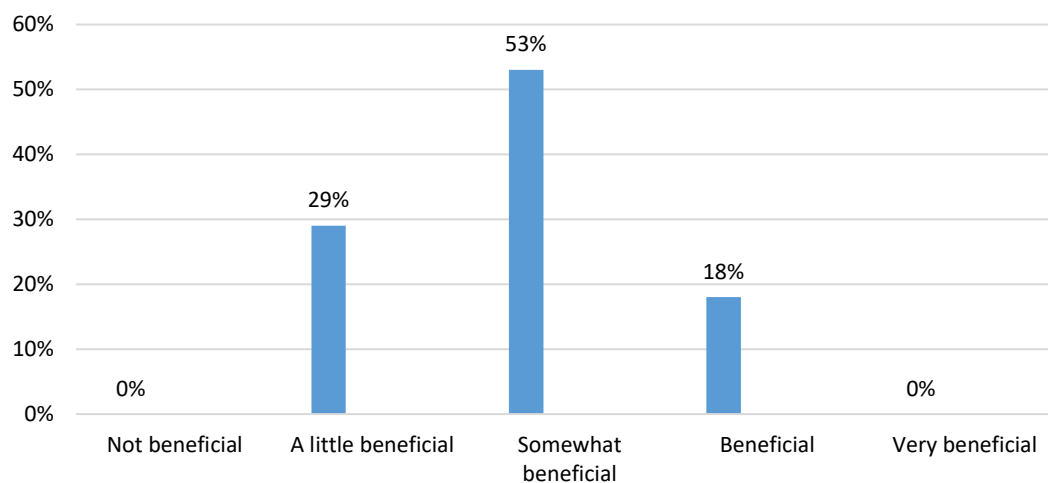


*Note.* N = 17

There were 17 participants who responded to Statement 15: My SEL instruction on my beliefs about the collective efforts of my team to impact student learning. Of the participants responding, 0% stated SEL instruction was not beneficial, 29% (5) stated it was a little beneficial and 53% (9) stated it was somewhat beneficial for student classroom behavior. The remaining participants 18% responded that SEL instruction was beneficial 18% (3), and 0% selected very beneficial for student classroom behavior (Figure 13)

### Figure 13

*Statement 15: My SEL Curriculum Instruction on My Beliefs about Collective Teacher Efficacy*



*Note.* N = 17

### ***Open-ended Question Responses***

In Question 16, I asked: Is Social-Emotional Learning important? Why, or why not? All 17 classroom teacher participants responded, and 100% of them responded that yes, Social-Emotional Learning is important. The three themes that emerged from their responses are: 1) SEL is important because students learn skills to solve their problems, 2) SEL teaches skills to help people manage their emotions, 3) SEL helps students to be better learners because they can manage their emotions and solve social problems.

Question 17 had two parts, did you receive formal or informal training to teach SEL, and “Have you received continued training support after the initial training?” All 17 participants responded to question 17; 76% responded Yes to receiving some training, and 24% responded *No* to receiving formal or informal training. As for receiving continued training support after initial training, 71% of the participants responded *Yes*

and 29% responded *No*.

Question 18, “How can Social-Emotional Learning implementation benefit you, the teacher?” All participants responded to this question, and I identified four common themes from the responses: 1) Teachers can learn tools and strategies to help regulate his/her own emotional well-being, 2) The teacher can learn tools/strategies to deal with stress; one participant’s response was, “SEL gives me ideas/tools to use with students as well as myself, to help regulate my emotional health”, 3) SEL will help the teacher to understand the students better and to be more compassionate, 4) SEL will help the teacher to create a more positive learning environment in the classroom.

Question 19, “What results would you expect to see if all classroom teachers implemented Social-Emotional Learning for their students?” Out of the 17 participants, 16 responded to this question, I identified five common themes: 1) students and teachers would have the tools to manage their emotions better, 2) There would be fewer behavior problems and students would be more motivated to learn, 3) Students would be more successful and have more learning gains, 4) Students and teachers would be happier, and there would be a positive school environment, 5) Teachers would have more time to teach. Some response from participants were “more academic growth” “less behavior problems” “positive peer relationships and classroom environment and increased learning gains.” The quotes show that teachers expect positive effects from SEL instruction in three major areas, better behaviors, increased academic performance, and positive classroom environment. These positive effects would lead to increased learning gains and success for classroom teachers.

### ***Extant Data***

I collected five years of student and teacher population data, academic achievement data, and student disciplinary action data for the school district under study. One of the goals of SEL is to support the social and emotional needs of students so that they can access their learning and strive academically. SEL is especially important because prior to the start of my study, the nation faced the COVID-19 pandemic, which affected students emotionally and academically. Globally, educators are working on ways to increase students' learning gains and to address students' emotional needs because of the trauma they faced during the pandemic. By examining extant data for academic results and school suspension rates, I can review the trends in students' academic performance and behaviors over the past five years.

In the 2021-2022 school year, there were 72,566 students and 4,535 classroom teachers with a 16:1 student-teacher ratio. In the 2020-2021 school year, there were 70,996 students and 4,579 classroom teachers with a 16:1 student-teacher ratio. In the 2019-2020 school year, there were 73,962 students and 4,515 classroom teachers with a 16:1 student-teacher ratio. In the 2018-2019 school year, there were 73,734 students and 5,420 classroom teachers with a 14:1 student-teacher ratio. In the 2018-2017 school year, there were 73,524 students and 5,433 classroom teachers with a 14:1 student-teacher ratio (Citation withheld to preserve confidentiality).

The State Department of Education gave a performance grade to the school district under study based on student achievement scores on annual standardized testing for three of the five years I collected data. Due to the impact of Covid-19 on instructional practices and student learning, state leaders did not measure school district performance

on annual standardized testing over two school years: 2019-2020 and 2020 -2021. The school district received an A for the 2017-2018 school year. The school district received an A for the 2018-2019 school year. For the 2021-2022 school year, the school district received a B grade.

From the 2017-2018 school year to the 2021-2022 school year, the school district under study participated in the annual state standards assessment except for the 2019-2020 school year. Like all school districts nationwide, this district was closed in the last months of the 2020 school year due to the COVID-19 pandemic. I collected this school district's English Language Arts (ELA) and Mathematics (Math) student academic achievement data over four years. I collected data for students' ELA and Math achievement scores from the 2017-2018, 2018-2019, 2020-2021, and 2021-2022 school years.

Student achievement scores are measured on a five-point performance scale. Level one indicates inadequate performance on the assessment of grade-level standards. Level two indicates satisfactory performance on the assessment of grade-level standards. Level three indicates satisfactory performance on the assessment of grade-level standards. Level four indicates proficient performance on the assessment of grade-level standards. Furthermore, level five indicates mastery of grade-level standards.

On the 2018 ELA state assessment, 16.8% of the students scored a level one, 22.9% scored a level two, 26.5% scored a level three, 22.6% scored a level four, and 11.2% scored a level five. On the 2019 ELA state assessment, 16% of the students scored a level one, 22.5% scored a level two, 26.9% scored a level three, 23.8% scored a level four, and 10.8% scored a level five. The ELA state assessment was not administered in

2020. On the 2021 ELA state assessment, 20.2% of the students scored a level one, 22.5% scored a level two, 25.5% scored a level three, 22.3% scored a level four, and 10.4% scored a level five. On the 2022 ELA state assessment, 20.4% of the students scored a level one, 21.9% scored a level two, 25% scored a level three, 22.3% scored a level four, and 10.4% scored a level five (See Table 1).

**Table 1**

*Students ELA Achievement Data: Five-Year Review of Annual State Assessment*

Year	Level 1	Level 2	Level 3	Level 4	Level 5
2021-2022	20.4%	21.9%	25.0%	22.3%	10.4%
2020-2021	20.2%	22.5%	25.5%	22.1%	9.7%
2019-2020	No data	No data	No data	No data	No data
2018-2019	16.0%	22.5%	26.9%	23.8%	10.8%
2017-2018	16.8%	22.9%	26.5%	22.6%	11.2%

*Note.* 2018 ELA state assessment data

On the 2018 Math state assessment, 20.2% of the students scored a level one, 18.4% scored a level two, 29% scored a level three, 20.4% scored a level four, and 11.9% scored a level five. On the 2019 Math state assessment, 19.8% of the students scored a level one, 17.7% scored a level two, 28.7% scored a level three, 20.7% scored a level four, and 13% scored a level five. The Math state assessment was not administered in 2020. On the 2021 Math state assessment, 27.9% of the students scored a level one, 18.2% scored a level two, 26.9% scored a level three, 17.7% scored a level four, and 9.3% scored a level five. On the 2022 Math state assessment, 26.2% of the students scored a level one, 17.4% scored a level two, 26.8% scored a level three, 18.8% scored a level four, and 10.7% scored a level five (See Table 2).

**Table 2***Students ELA Achievement Data: Five-Year Review of Annual State Assessment*

Year	Level 1	Level 2	Level 3	Level 4	Level 5
2021-2022	26.2%	17.4%	26.8%	18.8%	10.7%
2020-2021	27.9%	18.2%	26.9%	17.7%	9.3%
2019-2020	No data	No data	No data	No data	No data
2018-2019	19.8%	17.7%	28.7%	20.7%	13.0%
2017-2018	20.2%	18.4%	29.0%	20.4%	11.9%

*Note.* 2018 Math state assessment data (source redacted)

***Disciplinary Action Data***

I collected discipline data for the school district under study to review disciplinary actions from 2017-2018 to 2020-2021. The disciplinary action data for the school year 2021-2022 was not published at the time of review. The data showed the percentage of students grouped by males and females who received disciplinary actions for misconduct. The categories of disciplinary actions were one or more in-school suspensions (ISS), one out-of-school suspension (OOSS), two or more OOSSs, and expulsions without educational services (EWES).

In the 2017-2018 school year, the total percentage of students enrolled in the school district was 48.3% female and 51.7% male. The percentage of students who received one or more ISS was 30% female and 70% male. The percentage of students who received one OOSS was 29.9% female and 70.1% male. The percentage of students who received two or more OOSSs was 25.4% female and 74.6% male. The percentage of students who received EWES was 100% male. (See Table 3)

**Table 3**

*2017-2018: Percentage of Female and Male Students Receiving Disciplinary Action*

Gender	Enrollment	One or more ISS	One OOSS	Two or more OOSS	EWES
Female	48.3%	30%	29.9%	25.4%	0%
Male	51.7%	70%	70.1%	74.6%	100%

*Note.* School district data 2017-2018 school year (source redacted)

In the 2018-2019 school year, the total percentage of students enrolled in the school district was 48.3% female and 51.7% male. The percentage of students who received one or more ISS was 34.7% female and 65.3% male. The percentage of students who received one OOSS was 33.4% female and 66.6% male. The percentage of students who received two or more OOSSs was 27.3% female and 72.7% male. The percentage of students who received EWES was 25.9% female and 74.1% male. (See Table 4)

**Table 4**

*2018-2019: Percentage of Female and Male Students Receiving Disciplinary Action*

Gender	Enrollment	One or more ISS	One OOSS	Two or more OOSS	EWES
Female	48.3%	34.7%	33.4%	27.3%	25.9%
Male	51.7%	65.3%	66.6%	72.7%	74.1%

*Note.* School district data 2018-2019 school year (source redacted)



In the 2019-2020 school year, the total percentage of students enrolled in the school district was 48.4% female and 51.6% male. The percentage of students who received one or more ISS was 32.6% female and 67.4% male. The percentage of students who received one OOSS was 32.3% female and 67.7% male. The percentage of students who received two or more OOSSs was 24.4% female and 75.6% male. The percentage of students who received EWES was 28.6% female and 71.4% male. (See Table 5)

**Table 5**

*2019-2020: Percentage of Female and Male Students Receiving Disciplinary Action*

Gender	Enrollment	One or more ISS	One OOSS	Two or more OOSS	EWES
Female	48.4%	32.6%	32.3%	24.4%	28.6%
Male	51.6%	67.4%	67.7%	75.6%	71.4%

*Note.* School district data 2019-2020 school year (source redacted)

In the 2020-2021 school year, the total percentage of students enrolled in the school district was 48.4% female and 51.6% male. The percentage of students who received one or more ISS was 31.5% female and 68.5% male. The percentage of students who received one OOSS was 32.7% female and 67.3% male. The percentage of students who received two or more OOSSs was 27.6% female and 72.4% male. The percentage of students who received EWES was 12.5% female and 87.5% male. (See Table 6)

**Table 6**

*2020-2021: Percentage of Female and Male Students Receiving Disciplinary Action*

Gender	Enrollment	One or more ISS	One OOSS	Two or more OOSS	EWES
Female	48.4%	31.5%	32.7%	27.6%	12.5%
Male	51.6%	68.5%	67.3%	72.4%	87.5%

*Note.* School district data 2020-2021 school year (source redacted)

## **Interpretation**

To interpret the results, I considered the Likert scale and open-ended questions from the classroom teacher surveys, the questions from the counselor surveys, and extant data on academic and disciplinary action results. To analyze the Likert scale response questions, I grouped the questions under three topics 1) student academic benefits, 2) student behavior benefits, 3) and teacher benefits. I grouped the open-ended survey questions under themes to analyze and understand the results of this data. I conducted a trend review to interpret the data from extant academic and disciplinary action results.

The survey data showed that teachers perceived SEL instruction positively impacted students' academic performance. The responses of 59% of the survey participants indicated that SEL positively impacted students' academics. The data also showed that SEL instruction significantly benefited students socially, emotionally, and behaviorally. The most significant benefit from responses I placed in the student behavior grouping is that their classroom teacher's SEL instruction significantly impacted teachers' and students' rapport.

The data showed that teachers believed that their SEL instruction benefitted them personally. The results showed that their SEL instruction was more beneficial to teachers managing their instructional stressors and impacting their pedagogical approach. The results also showed that their SEL instruction, while beneficial, was less significant on teachers' job satisfaction and overall coping skills, CTE beliefs, and their desire to pursue professional development opportunities. Most (76%) of the teachers indicated overall that their SEL instruction was somewhat beneficial and beneficial from their response choices.

The open-ended classroom teacher surveys showed that all participants believe that classroom teacher SEL instruction is important to students. Classroom teacher SEL instruction is necessary because 1) teachers will teach students problem-solving skills, 2) students will learn to manage their emotions, and 3) students will become better learners. The results for training indicate that 76% of participants felt that they received some training to teach SEL, while 71% said that they received continuous training to manage their classrooms. The training they received primarily focused on providing tools and strategies to work with students with disruptive classroom behaviors.

The data showed that classroom teachers believe their SEL instruction can benefit them: Teachers can learn the skills and strategies for self-regulation. When teachers learn how to use self-regulation strategies, they can model these strategies and guide their students through emotionally difficult situations. Teachers can learn the tools and strategies to deal with stress. As teachers learn strategies to deal with frustrations, they can model and guide their students when dealing with stressful social and academic situations.

SEL teaches strategies for social awareness social awareness and relationship skills. Teachers' SEL instruction will help them better understand their students' needs. Teachers' SEL instruction will help them create a positive learning environment. These SEL lessons will help teachers and students to develop good rapport, a healthy working relationship, and a positive classroom environment.

The data showed that classroom teachers believed if they implemented SEL, results could be seen in five ways: 1) Both teachers and students would have the tools to

manage emotions, 2) Students would have the tools to better manage their emotions, solve problems, and persevere through difficult academic and social situations, 3) Students would be more successful socially and make more academic learning gains, 4) Students and teachers would be happier, and the classroom environment would be more positive, 5) Teachers would have more time to teach.

The data from the open-ended survey questions from school counselors described the SEL implementation models in their school. The data from the school counselors is important because it showed that SEL is being taught in elementary schools. Three models of service were described: 1) SEL curriculum taught by classroom teachers in their classrooms for 20-30 minutes weekly, 2) school counselors or social workers teach the SEL curriculum at a separate time taught by classroom teachers for 30 to 60 minutes weekly, 3) SEL lessons were provided to students individually, based on their needs.

The academic data showed a parallel trend for ELA and Math; student performance results were higher pre-COVID-19 and lower post-COVID-19. More students scored at levels three, four, and five on the state assessment during the two school years before COVID-19, 2017-2018 and 2018-2019. During the two school years after COVID-19, 2020-2021 and 2021-2022, more students scored at level one, and fewer scored at levels three, four, and five than in previous years. As the nation dealt with the trauma and uncertainties of the COVID-19 pandemic, students were faced with the same concerns but without the academic and SEL support of their teachers and school counselors that they had pre-COVID-19. The COVID-19 pandemic hurt students' social-emotionally and negatively impacted their academic performance on state testing.

The disciplinary action data showed no significant change in the percentage of students receiving disciplinary actions over four years. More male students, by percentage, receive disciplinary actions than female students. Expulsions without Education Services (EWES) is the one area that showed a percentage fluctuation. In the 2017-2018 school years, 100% of the students that received this disciplinary action were male. The percentage of males and females receiving this action in 2018-2019 was 74.1% male and 25.9% female; and in 2019-2020, 71.4% male and 28.6% female. The year after COVID-19, the numbers again increased for males, showing that 87.5% of males and 12.5% of females received EWES as a disciplinary action for their behavior in 2020-2021.

Of the five rating options on the Likert scale survey questions, the two options that were most selected by participants when responding were either *somewhat beneficial* or *beneficial*. I identified three areas from the open-ended survey questions that showed areas for SEL improvement: 1) Teachers did not perceive that they received professional development training in the SEL curriculum to promote their confidence, 2) Classroom teachers expressed fidelity concerns when delivering SEL instruction, 3) Without a set schedule for SEL instruction, teachers indicated that they sometimes struggled with how to fit the lessons into their week.

The findings from this study are significant because the data shows that classroom teachers believe their SEL instruction benefits their students and themselves. Teachers believe that their SEL instruction benefits their students academically and behaviorally and benefits them in how they handle stress and their pedagogy. Teachers also believe that SEL instruction impacts job satisfaction and CTE beliefs.

These findings mean that when teachers teach SEL to their students they also perceive benefits to themselves personally and professionally. Therefore, when school leaders invest in SEL instruction for the students they are also supporting teachers and positively impacting their job satisfaction and CTE beliefs. The findings further indicate that teachers believe that increasing SEL competencies for students and teachers leads to a positive learning environment, academic growth for students, and tools to manage social and emotional stressors.

The results showed that when teachers teach SEL there is a positive impact to their CTE beliefs and a positive influence over their job satisfaction beliefs. The results also indicated that when teachers teach SEL they believe that there is a positive impact on their students' behaviors and their ability to manage their classrooms. Of the teachers who were surveyed, 70% believed that their instruction helped with their students' behaviors and 88% believed that their instruction helped with their classroom management. The data collected showed that teachers who taught SEL believed that their instruction positively benefited their students' learning and social-emotional development. Of the teachers surveyed, 65% believed that their SEL instruction impacted the learning of their students and 88% believed that their instruction helped their students' social-emotional growth. The results also indicated that teachers believed that their SEL instruction strengthened their CTE beliefs. Of the teachers surveyed, 71% believed that their instruction strengthened their CTE beliefs.

A limitation in the findings is that without the data from the focus group interviews, I was unable to dig deeper into discovering how teachers' SEL instruction impacted their CTE beliefs. Another limitation, which resulted from my inability to

interview teachers in a focus group, is that I did not find out SEL professional development opportunities impacted their SEL instruction and their pedagogy. While there were limitations to my study, the findings provided substantive data for my program evaluation to show that SEL benefited teachers and that the district under study should prioritize SEL instruction to increase teachers CTE and job satisfaction beliefs.

### **Judgments**

My overarching research question was: How do teachers implement SEL curriculum impact CTE and influence teacher beliefs about job satisfaction? The results from this study indicate that the impact of teacher taught SEL on teacher CTE is beneficial. Teachers also reported that their SEL instruction also benefited their job satisfaction. Therefore, the data support a positive relationship between teacher taught SEL and teachers' beliefs about CTE and job satisfaction. The data support that teachers expected their SEL instruction to impact student learning positively. The results also showed that teachers saw a benefit from their SEL instruction on their students' academic performance.

### **Recommendations**

Based on the results of this study, classroom teachers believe that their SEL instruction is beneficial to their students and them. My review of the 4 C's indicates that changes to school SEL implementation schedules are needed. Professional development offerings to learn the SEL curriculum and to develop teachers' social-emotional well-being would further benefit teachers' job satisfaction and CTE beliefs. The findings imply that SEL instruction by classroom teachers offers benefits to teachers and students

and should be prioritized in the master schedule of elementary schools to improve fidelity in the program delivery.

One change that needs to be made is for school leaders to design an SEL block in the master schedule so that classroom teachers can effectively deliver Tier one SEL instruction. Along with creating the schedule, classroom teachers should have a documented timeline for delivering SEL instruction to ensure fidelity in using the SEL block for SEL instruction. If the expectation is 30 minutes weekly, teachers' plan books should also reflect this time in their schedules. A set schedule for SEL delivery based on a master schedule alleviates teachers' concerns about finding time to teach SEL lessons. I chose the issue of the SEL block of time as the first change because the solution is one that school leaders can implement and support.

### **Conclusion**

In this chapter, I reviewed the data collected from my study, interpreted, and analyzed the findings to determine how my data supported my research questions. The data showed that classroom teachers believed that their SEL instruction had benefits for their students and themselves. In the next chapter, I will describe my plan to improve classroom teacher SEL instructional practices and recommend policy changes to support improved SEL implementation.



## Chapter Five: As-Is and To-Be

My overarching research question was: How does teacher-implemented Social-Emotional Learning (SEL) curriculum impact CTE and influence teacher beliefs about job satisfaction? The results from my study indicated that the impact of teacher taught SEL on teacher CTE is beneficial. Teachers reported that their SEL instruction also benefited their job satisfaction. Therefore, the data support that there is a positive relationship between teacher taught SEL on teachers' beliefs about CTE and teachers' beliefs about job satisfaction. The data supported that teachers expected their SEL instruction to impact student learning positively. The results also showed that teachers saw a benefit from their SEL instruction on their students' academic performance.

The data suggested that while teachers know the benefits of SEL and agree that their students will benefit from being taught, they struggled to implement SEL instruction with fidelity due to time constraints. The results also indicated that teachers did not perceive that they received the professional development training needed to teach SEL. From the results, I concluded that teachers believe that teaching SEL benefits them. In this chapter, I analyze the results of my study to determine the “As-Is” of the district under study and identify my “To-Be” ideal future for the district (Wagner et al., 2006). These analyses are depicted in Appendix C and D, respectively.

### **As-Is**

I reviewed how teacher-taught SEL benefits classroom teachers using the 4 C's “As-Is” approach. By analyzing the four areas, context, culture, conditions, and competencies, I could think systematically about the challenges that faced the district under study (Wagner et al., 2006, p. 98).

### ***Contexts***

My review of the context highlighted two ways that educators taught SEL to students. The context is defined as “the *skill demands* all students must meet to succeed as providers, learners, and citizens and the particular aspirations, needs, and concerns of the families and community that the school or district serves. Context also refers to the larger organizational systems within which we work, and their demands and expectations, formal and informal” (Wagner et al., 2006, p. 104). In the district under study, all kindergarten through sixth-grade students received SEL instruction. The first approach was a Tier 1 delivery model, and the second was a Tier 2 delivery model.

Classroom teachers provided Tier 1 SEL instructional delivery to students in their classrooms. The curriculum used was the same for all kindergarten through sixth grade students in the same school. School counselors provided Tier 2 SEL instructional delivery to the lowest 20-25% of students in a grade level who had significant behavioral and or social-emotional concerns. The curriculum used for Tier 2 SEL instruction was sometimes the same as the one used for tier one SEL instruction. School counselors and school administrators decided the choice for the SEL curriculum.

### ***Culture***

I analyzed the culture to see how educators implemented SEL instruction and the factors influencing implementation practices. Culture is defined as “the shared values, beliefs, assumptions, expectations, and behaviors related to students and learning, teachers and teaching, instructional leadership, and the quality of relationships within and beyond the school. Culture refers to the invisible but powerful meanings and mindsets held individually and collectively throughout the system” (Wagner et al., 2006, p. 102).

I discovered nine key points impacting the culture around classroom teacher SEL instruction.

First, teachers, school leaders, and district leaders verbally supported SEL initiatives in schools and shared the belief that SEL added value to students' social and academic development. Second, school administrators determined how teachers implemented SEL in their schools. Third, the expectation was that the assistant principals were responsible for curriculum distribution, including SEL curriculum; however, school counselors assisted with the curriculum selection process. Fourth, the belief was that classroom teachers or guidance counselors were expected to teach SEL instruction to students. Fifth, teachers had many high-demanding and time-consuming tasks, which often conflict with the fidelity of their SEL instructional practices.

The sixth key point is that teachers believed that SEL instruction was needed and beneficial to their students. Seventh, teachers believed that SEL instruction helped to build and maintain good relationships in the classroom. Eight, SEL instructional goals primarily focused on students, and there were no goals for teacher development. And the ninth key point was that parent and community engagement with SEL initiatives were lacking.

I determined from these nine points that the culture around SEL is one where administrators, teachers, and school counselors believed in the benefits of SEL instruction. However, the administrators, teachers, and school counselors did not have a guide or plan to implement SEL and often struggled to implement SEL instruction with fidelity. A lack of fidelity in SEL instruction meant that students were not receiving SEL instruction if teachers needed that time to complete other tasks with their students. With a

primary focus only on students' SEL competencies, teachers' SEL competencies were not addressed and impacted SEL instruction. The culture around SEL also did not include family engagement, which is an essential part of educating students.

### ***Conditions***

I analyzed the conditions of SEL implementation to examine how they impact the delivery of classroom teacher instruction. The conditions are defined as “the external architecture surrounding student learning, the tangible arrangements of time, space and resources” (Wagner et al., 2006, p. 100). I identified three conditional factors. The first condition is that there was no set schedule for teaching SEL in the master schedule of schools. Teachers were given suggestions for when to teach SEL, but ultimately it was up to each teacher to determine when and how to fit SEL instruction time in their weekly schedules.

Second, classroom teachers were expected to teach SEL instruction to students every week without a specific amount of time requirement. Instead, teachers were given a range between 20 and 30 minutes that they should spend instructing students in SEL. Third, school administrators were solely responsible for providing SEL curriculum for each classroom teacher, which was costly.

### ***Competencies***

I analyzed the classroom teacher competencies to identify factors that impact their instructional delivery of SEL curriculum. Competencies are defined as “the repertoire of skills and knowledge that influences student learning. Teachers at every level of the system need to develop competencies regularly through ongoing development opportunities. Competencies are most effectively built when professional development is

focused, job-embedded, continuous, constructed, and collaborative” (Wagner et al., 2006, p. 99).

I found three factors that affected classroom teacher competencies. First, teachers received some professional development opportunities to learn and develop instructional practices for the SEL curriculum they must teach. From my survey, 76% of the teachers reported that they had received some training and 24% reported that they did not receive any training for SEL instruction. Teachers did not feel confident about effectively teaching some components of the SEL curriculum. Teachers received professional development to support classroom management and academic practices, but they did not receive professional development to increase competencies for their own social-emotional needs.

### **Envisioning the Success To-Be**

I envisioned the “To-Be” context, culture, conditions, and competencies of an SEL instructional model that benefits students and the teachers who teach SEL (Appendix D.). As part of my “To-Be” vision, I considered the involvement of stakeholders. Stakeholders are essential to the success of all educational initiatives, including SEL implementation (Mackey & Ragan, 2022, p. 135). In my ideal “To-Be,” district leaders will partner with school-based leaders to prioritize SEL implementation and best practices. Communication among all stakeholders will facilitate an SEL implementation model that correctly articulates the value of SEL and promotes implementation with fidelity. My “To-Be” analysis presents a context, culture, conditions, and competencies that will improve areas of SEL implementation that work well and provide a better model for areas that are not working.

### *Future Contexts*

The vision for my future context is one where administrators systemically plan SEL implementation based on a three-level, multi-tiered system of support (MTSS) in elementary schools. Teachers and school leaders implement the three-tiered support model for core subjects in the district under study. All stakeholders would easily understand a similar context for SEL delivery. All classroom teachers, school counselors, and social workers will teach SEL with fidelity. Classroom teachers will teach SEL to all students under the Tier 1 model. School counselors and social workers will teach SEL to students identified for Tier 2 and Tier 3 supports.

The recommendation for "maximum benefit from SEL is for students to receive explicit SEL instruction from a high-quality and developmentally appropriate curriculum for a minimum of 20-30 minutes two to three times per week" (Mackey & Ragan, 2022, p. 5). My vision for a successful Tier 1 instructional model is for all kindergarten through sixth-grade students to receive SEL at least two to three times per week due to time constraints within the school week. For instructional fidelity, all classroom teachers should use the same curriculum specific to each grade level. By using the same curriculum, specific to grade level, teachers can collaborate and plan their lessons vertically and horizontally across grade levels. Classroom teachers will teach tier one SEL curriculum to all their students.

Tier 2 SEL supports are a second level of scaffolded supports for students, building on the Tier one SEL instructional model, is designed for Tier 2 SEL supports. Educators will identify students for support from varied sources, teacher observations, parent input, social and behavioral checklists, and checklists from the curriculum maker.

Students selected for Tier 2 SEL support would fall in the lowest 20% of students needing social, emotional, and behavioral support in a grade level. School counselors or social workers will teach students identified for Tier 2 supports, drilling down into the curriculum used for tier one to identify specific skills to meet the needs of students in Tier 2 groups. Instructional delivery for Tier 2 groups will be grade-level specific for 30 minutes once or twice weekly. All students in a Tier 2 SEL group will receive tier one SEL instruction from their classroom teacher.

Tier 3 support for SEL instruction will be an intensive support level to meet students' social, emotional, and behavioral needs. Students that need Tier 3 SEL support will be from the lowest 5% of students needing support. School counselors or social workers will teach Tier 3 SEL instruction, and the instruction will incorporate mental health support if required. The group size for Tier 3 SEL instruction will not exceed five students and will last 30 minutes once a week. The curriculum used for tier three may be the same or different than those used for Tiers 2 and 3; students' needs will determine the curriculum used.

### ***Future Culture***

The five stakeholder groups that shape a successful SEL implementation model are district leaders, school-based leaders, SEL instructors (classroom teachers/school counselors/social worker), families, and community members. My vision for a thriving culture for SEL implementation requires collaboration and relational trust, whereby each stakeholder group understands its roles and obligations and the roles and responsibilities of the other stakeholder groups (Bryk et al., 2002, p. 20). The successful culture of SEL implementation is one where there is a shared vision for expectations, values, leadership,

and instructional practices that enhance SEL learning (Wagner et al., 2006). All stakeholders will participate in a culture of collaboration on SEL initiatives.

The expectation is that district SEL leaders will work collaboratively with school SEL leaders to implement SEL best practices in schools. Both leadership teams will support SEL instructors throughout the implementation process. Teachers, school counselors, and social workers who teach SEL will feel supported and valued as they carry out their SEL instructional duties.

Everyone who teaches SEL to students, classroom teachers, school counselors, and social workers will know and understand what SEL is and how SEL benefits students and educators. Everyone who teaches SEL will prioritize SEL instructional time because of the SEL instructional requirements and the benefits to the students and the instructors. School administrators, classroom teachers, school counselors, and social workers will engage families in clear and transparent communication about the SEL initiatives and goals for the school. Families and community members will feel included in the process to implement SEL in elementary schools. The result of the SEL initiative will be a culture where teachers and students will have the skills to deal with social, behavioral, academic stress, and emotional concerns facilitating a positive school environment.

### ***Future Conditions***

For the vision of my “To-Be” conditions, I considered the “external architecture surrounding student SEL learning, the tangible arrangements of time, space, and the resources needed to effectively implement SEL” (Wagner et al., 2006, p. 101). Essential to successful conditions are a plan for finances, school board approval, allocated time to teach SEL, professional development, and SEL curriculum options.



Each school's administrators will create a master schedule with an SEL instructional block for each grade level. Having a designated time to teach SEL will ensure that teachers will teach SEL with fidelity and will no longer be responsible for carving out time from their tight schedules. School leaders will gain input from classroom teachers when determining the time of day for the SEL block and the length of time to teach SEL during the block. The district leaders will collaborate with the school leaders from each school to provide and promote SEL professional development opportunities for teachers and staff.

School leaders and teachers will include families in discussing and identifying students to participate in Tier 2 and Tier 3 SEL groups. Educators will share SEL progress monitoring with families in parent teacher conferences and through progress report cards. Each school and district staff will host opportunities to keep all stakeholders knowledgeable about the process and procedures of the SEL implementation.

### ***Future Competencies***

My vision for competencies starts with "effectively building professional development that is focused, job-embedded, continuous, constructed, and collaborative" (Wagner et al., 2006, p. 99). Professional development is at the heart of a successful SEL implementation. Besides SEL curriculum selection, providing social-emotional learning opportunities to educate teachers and staff is the most important factor in SEL implementation (Mackey & Ragan, 2022, p. 7). The district leadership team will select an SEL curriculum from SEL developers that includes training in their program. Teachers, school counselors, and social workers must receive professional development incorporating the five CASEL competencies that benefit students and educators. The five

CASEL competencies are Self-awareness, Self-management, social awareness, Responsible decision-making, and Relationship skills (CASEL, 2023).

The school leadership team will partner with the office of professional development to ensure that professional development trainers at the district level receive training from curriculum developers. The district-level trainers will then collaborate with SEL curriculum developers to provide ongoing training and support for teachers and staff. At the school level, leaders will plan for teachers to receive training and support for continuous improvement. School leaders will provide teachers with opportunities to collaborate through classroom visits, horizontal and vertical teacher planning, and SEL professional learning communities (Mackey & Ragan, 2022, p. 137).

Teachers will gain confidence when continuous and collaborative opportunities to learn and practice SEL competencies are in place. As teachers gain confidence and develop CTE, they will positively impact student learning and achievement. CTE development happens when teachers have influence over instructionally relevant school decisions and have a voice in their professional development (Goddard et al., 2004, p. 10; DeWitt, 2019, p. 33). Teachers and students will increase their SEL competencies and will have the skills to solve their social and emotional problems.

## **Conclusion**

My “As-Is” analysis provided an analysis of how educators implement SEL in the district understudy. The five main areas for SEL implementation improvements were 1) commitment to SEL, 2) vision and policy development for successful SEL implementation districtwide, 3) financing SEL implementation, 4) Curriculum selection,

and 5) ongoing professional development to increase SEL competencies. In my “To-Be” analysis, I outlined a plan for school and district leaders to use to improve all five areas.

There will be challenges and perhaps turnovers in leadership team membership on the path to instituting the SEL changes. Implementing change requires focus, clarity, and monitoring, but sustaining the changes will require the leadership teams to refocus their energies and recommit to the vision of the implementation along the way (Reeves, 2009). The SSELLT, supported by the DSELLT, must also be committed to building school wide SEL cultures in their schools. As each school establishes its SEL culture, the culture of SEL practices will be further anchored in the school district. To sustain SEL changes, the leadership teams will need to build relationships. Effective communication, teamwork, and problem-solving are critical components of sustaining and embedding SEL practices into the culture (Mackey & Ragan, 2022, p. 140).

## **Chapter Six: Strategies and Actions, Implications, Policy Recommendations**

Reflecting on my “As-Is” analysis, I identified three key areas that I must address through my “To-Be” recommendations to address my questions. My examination of how teacher implemented SEL curriculum impacts collective teacher efficacy and influences teacher beliefs about job satisfaction revealed that time to teach, instructional fidelity, and professional development opportunities were the main barriers to a successful SEL implementation. In this chapter, I will conduct a macro analysis to address the identified organizational concerns, create strategic plans, and make policy recommendations to enhance SEL implementation in the school district under study.

I determined that several essential components are needed to plan and execute the initiative of improving SEL implementation in the district under study. I will develop a strategic plan that will include a guiding vision statement, strategic steps to chart the reform journey, and a policy recommendation that will unite the school district in the reformation process for SEL once the school board approves. To support my strategies and actions, I will create an eight-step change process for SEL implementation using recommendations from John Kotter’s eight-stage process of creating major change (2012) and other scholarly authors.

### **Step One: Establish a Sense of Urgency**

The first step in the change process is establishing a sense of urgency. I will meet with several educator groups to discuss the urgency of promoting teacher well-being and the opportunity to support teachers by increasing their SEL competencies and pedagogy through SEL instruction. The current state of teacher attrition and the shortage impacting district leaders’ ability to provide teachers in all classrooms is visible across news

stations and social media. Visible crises are very helpful in catching people's attention and organically conveying a sense of urgency (Kotter, 2012, p. 47). The Rand Corporation researched teacher turnover rates. Their results indicated that "by the end of the 2021-2022 school year, teacher turnover rates had increased by 4% over pre-pandemic levels reaching ten percent nationally, with rates around 12% to 14% in urban districts and districts with high poverty and predominantly students of color" (Diliberto & Schwartz, 2022, p. 1).

I will arrange to meet key leaders from the district office. I must consider how the school district context, the rules and norms, and constraints will heavily influence my SEL improvement work (Murphy, 2016, p. 21). Therefore, I will arrange to meet with the superintendent, the district leaders of elementary learning and labor relations, the teachers' union, and district leaders in student services to discuss the need to support classroom teachers' well-being. I will communicate how teacher attrition rates are a significant concern for student learning and the functioning of schools. I will also share that teacher instruction of SEL presents a significant opportunity to impact student learning, teacher job satisfaction, and CTE beliefs.

I will incorporate the data from my study and the implications of my findings. I will start with the educational leaders in the district who have a vested interest in teacher job satisfaction efforts. It is also from these district leadership groups that I will seek members for the guiding coalition, the District SEL Leadership Team (DSELLT).

## **Step Two: Create a Guiding Coalition**

The second step in the change process is to create a guiding coalition. A guiding coalition is needed because no individual can do all the required. The guiding coalition will need to create the right vision, communicate it to groups of people, overcome all barriers, design, and acknowledge short-term wins, sustain the acceleration of the initiative, and establish new initiatives deep in the organization's culture (Kotter, 2012, p. 53). The guiding coalition, the DSELLT, oversees all the intricate details of the change initiative to ensure success. The selection of the members for the DSELLT is vital to the team's functioning; the stakeholders and I will expect members to work collaboratively and as a team guided by the initiative's vision.

From the First Who concept, it is essential to get the right people for the district SEL leadership team, within the social constraints of implementing an SEL change initiative (Collins, 2005, p. 13). The First Who concept refers to establishing a team of the right people to work on the SEL change process, before focusing on a plan of what to change. District leaders and I will appoint members of the DSELLT from the following departments of educational groups: the elementary learning office, the student's services department, elementary school counselors, school social workers, school psychologists, and the professional development office to serve on the team. Three fundamental points for selecting people for this appointment are 1) the more selective the process, the more attractive the position will become; 2) a passion for implementing SEL instructional practices with integrity and fidelity; and 3) a commitment to SEL implementation (Collins, 2005, p. 17). The people selected will be decision makers with authority to act, those with knowledge of resources for contacts, time, or money, SEL experts, those who

have expertise in carrying out change initiatives, and people who have a vested interest personally and or professionally (Block, 2018, p. 123).

Improving SEL implementation in the district and working together will be an adaptive challenge for the DSELLT. Their work will be unprecedented, and each member will be required to adapt personally and professionally to carry out the vision; the team will create all strategic plans and implementation steps while in the act of working on them (Drago-Serverson et al., 2013, p. 14; Wagner et al., 2006, p. 18). I will facilitate the work with the team. To ensure the team works collaboratively, I will encourage the members to grow and learn professionally by pooling their efforts, energy, and expertise towards common goals and purposes (Drago-Severson et al., 2013 p. 128).

### **Step Three: Develop a Strategic Vision**

The third step in the change process is to develop a strategic vision. A strategic vision is essential because it will clarify for the DSELLT the direction of where to go to reform SEL implementation; the strategic vision will also motivate and coordinate the team's actions (Kotter, 2012, p. 71). The strategic vision will start with a vision statement, including the CASEL competency framework. The DSELLT will agree upon the vision statement; however, one suggestion for the vision statement is: "To provide rich social-emotional learning experiences for students and to increase self-awareness, self-management, social awareness, decision-making skills, and relationship skills competencies for all students and educators in the district under study."

Having a vision is especially critical during major educational transitions (Murphy, 2016, p. 3). Providing a well-rounded rigorous education for students in the post-pandemic times is a period of major transitioning in education. The needs of

students extend beyond core academics, and educators must provide social-emotional learning experiences for students to have full access to their academic learning. “Vision refers to three distinct but related areas: the mission (values and purpose), goals (providing direction), and expectations (establishing specific targets)” (Murphy, 2016, p. 3). The DSELLT will guide the SEL implementation process using a strategic plan that includes an overarching vision statement, a clear mission statement, goals, and expectations.

The mission of the DSELLT is to provide a multi-tiered system of support to meet the social-emotional learning needs of all students in the district. Phase one of the strategic plan is successfully implementing SEL practices in elementary schools. Phase two will be the successful implementation of SEL practices in secondary schools for complete implementation across the school district and all schools by 2026.

The DSELLT will also work on a timeline for implementation for phase one (SEL elementary schools). The team will do research for curriculum resources over the summer months. Administrators at each elementary school will appoint members to the School SEL Leadership Team SSELLT by the end of August 2023. The district and each school based SEL leadership teams will begin collaboration meetings in September of 2023. Curriculum acquisition will conclude by December 2023, and initial professional development will begin in January 2024. The DSELLT will start communicating the change vision in October and seek board approval for the SEL policy change in November 2023. The DSELLT will expect full elementary implementation for the school year 2024-25 with phase two, the entire secondary implementation, accomplished in the 2025-2026 school year.



The strategic plan addresses financing, teaching time, curriculum resources, and professional development to increase educator competencies. To address the financing concerns, the chief financial officer of the district and the district leaders responsible for the school budget will plan to invest funds from the district budget. The leadership team will use these funds to acquire SEL curriculum resources, provide teachers and staff professional development opportunities, and possibly hire experts in SEL implementation practices. District leaders can improve SEL learning and teaching without the need for new funding sources by reallocating existing resources (Odden, 2012, p. 46).

District leaders can use the American Rescue Plan Act of 2021 (ESSER) funds for SEL initiatives, including purchasing SEL curriculum materials (source withheld to protect anonymity). The DSELLT will also research grant opportunities to provide a third funding source for SEL implementation. The district and school SEL leadership teams will collaborate to secure grant funds to purchase SEL curriculum resources should the need for extra funding arise.

To address the time to teach concerns, the DSELLT will direct leadership teams of all elementary schools to designate time in their school's master schedule for SEL implementation. The DSELLT will also ensure that support staff from the office of scheduling and programming are available to support school administrators through this process. During their ongoing collaboration meetings, the SSELLT must monitor time to teach concerns and communicate with the DSELLT.

To address the professional development concerns, DSELLT will partner with the department of professional development to address training concerns. The DSELLT, when conducting research for SEL curricula, will ensure that curriculum options selected

for possible instruction include a training component. The curriculum makers must offer direct face-to-face, online, or train-the-trainer training programs. By collaborating with the professional development department, the DSELLT will ensure that district trainers receive training to provide professional development opportunities for SEL. This plan will eliminate the cost associated with the maker of the curriculum training school staff if the price is in addition to the SEL materials. Web-based training will allow teachers and school staff to train in a self-paced model and refresh their learning when needed.

#### **Step Four: Communicate the Change Vision**

The fourth step in the change process is communicating the vision to stakeholders. Momentum for the change vision is attained when there is a shared value to reform SEL implementation; the shared knowledge of the goals and the direction of the implementation model will help motivate and coordinate the actions that will enable success (Kotter, 2012, p. 87). The DSELLT will create a strategic communication plan to communicate with stakeholders. Communication is the foundation for building trusting relationships and sharing the change vision, which will unite stakeholders in understanding what SEL is and how SEL will benefit students and teachers (Lubelfeld & Polyak, 2017). The first goal of the communication plan is to establish the definition of SEL, uniting stakeholders on a unified description. SEL is “the process through which all young people and adults acquire and apply the knowledge, skills, and attitudes to develop healthy identities, manage emotions and achieve personal and collective goals, feel and show empathy for others, establish and maintain supportive relationships and make responsible and caring decisions” (CASEL, 2023; Mackey & Ragan, 2022, p. 1).

The definition of SEL and the strategic plan for reforming SEL implementation are the key targets that the DSELLT will communicate to stakeholders. The communication plan is to use all modes available to transparently communicate the change vision for the SEL implementation plan in the school district.

The DSELLT will schedule and facilitate meetings with district leadership groups from elementary learning, student services, and the office of professional development. DSELLT members will attend training for elementary school social workers, school counselors, and school psychologists to share the strategic plan for the SEL implementation. They will also make presentations for the teachers' union, school principals, assistant principals, and school board members on the strategic plan for the reformed SEL initiative. The DSELLT will create a video presentation of the strategic plan for SEL that will communicate information on the district website and Facebook page. They will include a written copy of the strategic plan in the district newsletter with the option for translation into other languages.

The SSELLT for each school will also communicate the DSELLT presentation on their schools' websites and Facebook pages and include the written copy in their school's newsletters and school advisory council meetings. The DSELLT will provide a quick guide document with the definition of SEL and a shortened version of the written strategic plan for teachers to communicate at parent-teacher organization (PTO) meetings and in teachers' newsletters, class dojo pages, and other teacher/parent communication modes. The DSELLT will provide a contact number and an email address so concerned stakeholders can reach team members to address concerns or give input.

### **Step Five: Enable Action by Removing Barriers**

The fifth step in the change process is to enable action by removing barriers. This step in the change process is described as empowering as the DSELLT will plan to remove obstacles for the employees who are ready to begin the SEL implementation process but face obstacles (Kotter, 2012, p. 106). I have grouped barriers into two categories: those impacting district-level implementation and those directly affecting school-level implementation. I have identified six obstacles that could present the SEL implementation plans and timeline. The district-level barriers are Financing, Defining SEL, SEL controversy, and District/School alignment on SEL definition of success and accountability. The school-level barriers are time and teacher burnout due to initiative overload.

To address the district-level barriers, the DSELLT will draft a plan of action. The goal for financing is to allocate funds from the district budget, use ESSER funds for SEL materials, and help schools to seek out and write grants to obtain funding not provided through the district budget or ESSER funds. The plan for defining SEL is to use the CASEL definition, which articulates clearly the five competencies that SEL targets. The DSELLT, through transparent communication, will convey to all families the curriculum options recommended and list the skills to be taught during SEL instructional time. The fourth barrier is district/school alignment on the definition of success and accountability. To address this barrier, the DSELLT will prepare a rubric based on five competencies to measure success and accountability. The DSELLT will communicate directly with school administrators on the rubric for monitoring success and accountability at their schools.

The DSELLT will guide each school's SSELLT to address the barriers at the school level. The first barrier is time to teach, which the DSELLT will address by allocating time within schools' master schedules. The second barrier is teacher burnout due to initiative overload. To address this concern, the SSELLT must facilitate the participation of teachers and staff in the planning discussion of the SEL implementation at the school. Allowing teachers and staff to participate in the discourse will enable intellectual inquiry and engagement to bring about authentic and sustainable improvement in SEL instructional delivery (Wagner et al., 2006, p. 68).

The team will not know all the obstacles and barriers to SEL implementation at the start of the process. The DSELLT and the SSELLT will have to engage in self-reflection practices to identify and respond to emerging concerns. Both leadership teams must reflect on their procedural practices while acknowledging that the SEL implementation process is an adaptive challenge they will resolve as their teams work through the improvement process.

### **Step Six: Generate Short-Term Wins**

The sixth step in the change process is to generate and celebrate short-term wins. "Major change takes time and sometimes lots of time. Convincing evidence of some progress is needed to sustain the engagement and efforts of the teachers and staff working to bring about the change" (Kotter, 2012, p. 123). As goals are set and accomplished, the DSELLT and SSELLT must celebrate the win and acknowledge the people whose efforts brought success. To celebrate the wins, the SEL leadership team can acknowledge schools and individuals via newsletters, emails, social media, and providing certificates, food, spirit days and leaving early vouchers that staff can use instead of their sick time.

The DSELLT can celebrate when each of its targets is achieved. An example of a large win is a consolidated list of ten CASEL-vetted SEL curricula that are developmentally appropriate and will meet the needs of the diverse elementary student population. An example of a short-term win would be when the DSELLT creates a vision statement with all in agreement. An example of generating a win is to set a date for the elementary school principals to submit the names of all the members appointed to their SSELLT. The DSELLT can celebrate a short-term win with the school leaders when they submit their SSELLT team members. The DSELLT and the SSELLT will create opportunities for short-term wins as part of their strategic plan to encourage teachers and staff and to provide immediate feedback to reinforce effective practices and modify ineffective practices (Reeves, 2009, p. 92).

### **Step Seven: Sustain Acceleration**

The seventh step in the change process is to sustain acceleration. A task of the DSELLT is to maintain urgency during the implementation process while celebrating the short-term wins to keep the momentum going. Completing the entire change process will take time; if the DSELLT and the SSELLT fail to communicate that the mission is still urgent before the job is done, critical momentum will be lost, and a decline in success will result (Kotter, 2012, p. 139).

Building on step six, celebrating short-term wins, becomes essential in sustaining acceleration. Jim Collins (2005) described how to create momentum in his description of the Flywheel Effect. The small successes in the SEL implementation process will breed support and commitment, which will generate even greater success and support until the flywheel of the SEL implementation picks up speed and momentum (p. 24). The

members of the leadership teams and educators will feel motivated if there are wins along the way to convey that hard work is working to meet the goals of the vision.

Having motivated and committed members on the DSELLT and the SSELLT is essential to sustaining momentum in the SEL reform process. The members of leadership teams must remain focused on the initiative's vision to the point of ignoring distracting agendas. The DSELLT's purpose is to implement SEL to benefit students, teachers, and staff; sustaining this initiative requires a focus on what matters and lasts for the benefit of all (Hargreaves & Fink, 2006, p. 53). Sustaining acceleration is critical to SEL practices becoming embedded in the district and school culture.

### **Step Eight: Institute Change**

The eighth step is to institute change. The goal of instituting the SEL change process is to transform the initiative from implementation to culturally relevant, embedding SEL practices into the culture in the district under study. The district's culture is important because it entrenches the members of the school district to specific norms and values that define how members of the school district do things. The district's culture is very powerful to the organization's functioning; if the changes in SEL practices do not become anchored into the district's culture, all the hard work and efforts will come undone (Kotter, 2012, p. 157).

There will be challenges and perhaps turnovers in leadership team membership on the path to instituting the SEL changes. Implementing change requires focus, clarity, and monitoring, but sustaining the changes will require the leadership teams to refocus their energies and recommit to the vision of the implementation along the way (Reeves, 2009). The SSELLT, supported by the DSELLT, must also be committed to building school

wide SEL cultures in their schools. As each school establishes its SEL culture, the culture of SEL practices will be further anchored in the school district. To sustain SEL changes, the leadership teams will need to build relationships. Effective communication, teamwork, and problem-solving are critical components of sustaining and embedding SEL practices into the culture (Mackey & Ragan, 2022, p. 140).

### **Policy Statement**

The policy that I recommend will be specific to the district under study. The policy will state that “All elementary schools in the district will implement SEL instructional practices for all students in kindergarten through sixth grade where students shall receive SEL instruction for a minimum of 40 minutes to a maximum of 150 minutes weekly.” The policy will also state that, “A district-level SEL leadership team must be established to oversee a SEL Strategic Action Plan and to collaborate with established school based SEL leadership teams for successful SEL practices in each elementary school throughout the district.” With the successful implementation of the SEL initiative, other school districts wanting to implement SEL successfully will be able to replicate these practices. The plan is for the district SEL leadership team to collaboratively plan with school based SEL leadership teams to strategically implement SEL instruction in each elementary school while removing the barriers that impede successful teaching practices. By removing the barriers of time and financing and providing continued professional development opportunities, teachers will increase their SEL and students' SEL competencies.

I recommend this policy because my research findings indicate that teachers believe that when they teach SEL, there are benefits to themselves and their students. Finding the time to teach the SEL curriculum and receiving ongoing training in SEL



practices and curriculum are the obstacles that have prevented teachers from completing SEL instruction with fidelity. I also recommend the policy because, with the increasing rate of teacher burnout due to stress and job dissatisfaction, teachers need job-embedded practices to improve their health and increase their CTE beliefs. Teachers who are less stressed and have healthy SEL competencies can better increase CTE beliefs and instruct SEL to their students, thereby increasing students' SEL competencies and academic achievement (Collie et al., 2012, p. 1198).

My policy will effectively persuade district and school-based leaders, teachers, and staff to consistently focus on SEL implementation in the school district. The policy will establish the strategic plan and actions that the DSELLT, SSELLT, and teachers will follow. With a governing policy in place and a strategic plan focused on improving SEL competencies for students and teachers, I envision that the problems identified by my evaluation will be addressed and SEL implementation will have a better chance of success.

### **Analysis of Needs**

I will analyze my policy recommendations from four distinct disciplinary areas to inform decision-makers' considerations. I will examine my policy recommendations from an economic, political, legal, moral, and ethical perspective and provide a deeper understanding of how policy recommendation addresses the concern of implementing teacher taught SEL practices with fidelity. My analysis of the four disciplines will also consider the impact on the role of staff, students, families, and the community.

### *Economic Analysis*

There are two significant areas to consider when discussing the economic impact of my policy recommendations. The first is the financial cost of prioritizing SEL instruction in the school district. The second is the impact on student learning and achievement when classroom teachers are satisfied with their job and have increased CTE. The financial cost associated with SEL implementation is part of the strategic plan outlined by the DSELLT. The policy's three revenue sources are 1) a reallocation of the operational budget, 2) the use of ESSER funds, and 3) grant writing to supplement any financial needs. The research data on SEL benefits to classroom teachers indicate that teachers experience less stress, greater teaching efficacy, and greater job satisfaction (Collie et al., 2012, p. 1198). Teachers who are less stressed, enjoy their jobs, and have strong CTE beliefs can impact students' academic and social-emotional gains (DeWitt, 2019, p. 34).

Teachers and staff need professional development opportunities and access to quality SEL curricula to increase their SEL and students' SEL competencies. Students need teachers with high SEL competencies to provide a warm, content-rich learning environment. As students build their skills in the five SEL competencies, self-management, self-awareness, social awareness, relationship skills, and decision-making skills, they will have better relationships with their families and be better prepared for college and career. As successful students and adults, the burden on families will be reduced. Schools prepare students for life beyond kindergarten through 12<sup>th</sup> grade. Investment in social-emotional learning for students, teachers, and staff is an investment in the successful future of the community.

### *Political Analysis*

School districts governed by school boards have become “political places in which parents, students, teachers, and administrators constantly struggle over resources, status, and ideological commitments” (Horsford et al., 2019, p. 99). In the district under study, the voter-elected school board has decision-making authority on all policy recommendations. I have observed that the politically polarized landscape of our nation has influenced school board membership and educational policy decisions nationwide.

SEL has become a widely discussed topic of political agendas that have polarizing views. The five SEL competencies created by CASEL have remained the central focus for SEL goals. The controversy stems from certain topics discussed in specific SEL curricula. The DSELLT must choose SEL curricula that are high-quality programs that are comprehensive, uniform, research-based, and effective (Mackey & Ragan, 2022, p. 3). The policy recommendation requires the DSELLT to consider the recommendations from CASEL’s vetted evidence based SEL recommendations list. By diligently researching the SEL curriculum recommended by CASEL, the DSELLT can select SEL curriculum options for our school district based on the content, development appropriateness, and cost.

CASEL provides 48 well-implemented evidence based SEL programs recommended in its program guide for schools to use in their SEL initiatives (CASEL, 2023). Using the CASEL program guide, the DSELLT can use a three-step process to identify SEL curricula that align with the district’s SEL priorities. By transparently communicating with stakeholders, the DSELLT will provide teachers with high-quality SEL resources to teach their students confidently. Students will receive evidence based

SEL instruction. Families and the community will know the SEL goals and resources and can participate in the discussion of what is best for SEL student learning.

### ***Legal Analysis***

School district leaders must consider legal implications for a policy proposal that would implement SEL initiatives using the ARP ESSER funds. “The ARP ESSER Fund includes three State-level reservations for activities and interventions that respond to students’ academic, social, and emotional needs” (US Department of Education, 2021). The DSELLT can use the funds to establish SEL implementation systems that engage educators, students, families, and the community.

It is the responsibility of the DSELLT and the SSELLT to implement SEL systematically and to maintain accountability with stakeholders. The DSELLT and SSELLT will be accountable for how they use ARP ESSER funds. The strategic plan will be documentation of how the district used ESSER funds and how they engaged stakeholders. Educators regularly communicate with students and families about academic goals, strengths, and needs; they will extend this communication system to include discussion about SEL goals, strengths, and needs. Educators will also have community-based agencies in the continuum of support for students' SEL needs to provide wrap-around support for mental health concerns. Systems will also be established for all stakeholders to reflect on SEL goals, review data, and obtain input to continuously improve SEL initiatives (CASEL, 2021).

### ***Moral and Ethical Analysis***

My moral and ethical analysis of my policy recommendation is rooted in our responsibility as educators to provide a high-quality, well-rounded education to students

safely and meaningfully. As educators, the ethical emphasis of the work is to protect students from harm (James et al., 2008, p. 26). To such an end, the DSELLT, all school leaders, and those who work directly with students are responsible for ensuring that students receive a well-rounded education that includes skills that support their social-emotional well-being. It is also the role of families and the community to hold educators accountable for providing direct social-emotional support to students and information to their families and the community on how to support students' social-emotional well-being.

Teachers have the most direct influence on students' learning gains and academic performance (Miles & Franks, 2008). In further ethical and moral consideration of my policy recommendation, educational leaders must enable the highest qualified teachers to instruct students. To meet students' varied academic, social, emotional, and behavioral needs, teachers need to receive professional development in SEL to develop their own SEL competencies and teach students the skills to develop their SEL competencies. By teaching students SEL skills and strategies, educators help them access their academic learning and develop the social, emotional, and behavioral skills they will need to navigate their lives in and after high school.

## **Conclusion**

In my program evaluation, I aimed to assess the impact of teacher-taught social-emotional learning (SEL) curriculum on collective teacher efficacy and its influence on teacher job satisfaction in elementary schools. I wanted to answer one central question and four supporting questions through my research and program evaluation. The main

question was how does teacher implemented SEL curriculum impact collective teacher efficacy and influence teacher beliefs about job satisfaction?

I also wanted a more profound understanding, so I sought answers to four additional questions: 1) Does teacher implemented SEL curriculum influence teachers' beliefs about job satisfaction? 2) Does the teacher implemented SEL curriculum impact teachers' beliefs about their classroom management? 3) Does teacher-implemented SEL curriculum influence teachers' beliefs about their impact on students' learning and social-emotional development? 4) Does the teacher implemented SEL curriculum impact collective teacher efficacy beliefs?

My evaluation process addressed my purpose by answering the questions I investigated. My evaluation results indicated that teachers implementing the SEL curriculum felt that their instruction positively impacted their CTE beliefs (100% of participants) and job satisfaction beliefs (82% of participants). My results also showed that a teacher-implemented curriculum benefitted teachers in their classroom management and positively impacted teacher beliefs about how their SEL instruction helped their students to develop SEL skills.

My strategic plan and analysis process addressed my purpose by providing solutions to the problems I identified in my evaluation process. The three main problems identified by my evaluation results are 1) teachers did not teach SEL to their students with consistency and fidelity due to a lack of a scheduled time for SEL instruction, 2) Teachers did not feel they received adequate professional development training to improve their SEL competencies, develop their pedagogy, or teach any specific SEL

curriculum, 3) Through my As-Is analysis, I identified that the issue of financing a districtwide SEL initiative for elementary schools was a concern and needed.

I had three goals for my study. My first goal was to determine if the evidence supported that SEL benefited teachers. My second goal was to examine how the teacher taught SEL curriculum impacted teachers' beliefs on CTE and job their job satisfaction beliefs. My third goal was to add evidence to the body of research on SEL and recommend policy changes for social-emotional learning instructional requirements in the district under study.

My research results and "As-Is" analysis provided relevant information to the questions I sought to answer in my program evaluation. The results confirm that teachers believe that SEL benefits them and their students. The results also showed that teachers believed that their SEL instruction positively impacted their CTE and job satisfaction beliefs. My results will add to the body of evidence for SEL benefits; teachers believe that SEL does offer them benefits in their pedagogy, student impact, and personally. I made recommendations for improving SEL instructional practices through my strategic plan, policy recommendations, and decision-making analysis.

My organizational change plan does address the issues raised by the program evaluation. I provided a strategic plan following John Kotter's (2012) eight-step change process outline. I outlined strategies in my strategic plan to address the concerns identified from my program evaluation, time to teach, professional development for teachers and educators who instruct the SEL curriculum, and financing SEL district-wide elementary implementation. The plan also includes a step to seek board approval on the

policy recommendations for district leaders to implement the SEL initiative to maximize learning for teachers and students.

The policy I advocate addresses the issues raised in my program evaluation and organization change plan in two main ways. First, through the policy statement, I recommend that the district SEL leadership team collaboratively works with school based SEL leadership teams to follow the SEL Strategic Action Plan to implement SEL instruction in every elementary school. Second, I recommend that the DSELLT and the SSELLT work collaboratively to remove the barriers of time, financing SEL implementation, and providing ongoing professional development opportunities to teachers that will increase their SEL and students' SEL competencies.

Through my research, I discovered that further studies are needed to determine if SEL implementation benefits teachers in other ways. Studies are also needed to see if SEL implementation benefits middle and high school teachers. Additional information is also needed to determine the extent of SEL benefits for teachers when the barriers of time to teach, financing, and professional development are removed. With more information about how SEL impacts teachers, researchers and lawmakers can use the body of evidence on the benefits of SEL to change state and federal policies and laws on SEL instructional requirements in schools nationwide.



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## **Appendices**

Appendix A: Teacher Survey

Appendix B: Guidance Counselor Survey

Appendix C: As-Is

Appendix D: To-Be

Appendix E: Strategies and Actions

## Appendix A

### Teacher Survey Questions

1. How many years have you been teaching? \_\_\_\_\_
2. How many years have you previously taught SEL in your classroom? \_\_\_\_\_
3. What is the SEL instructional schedule for your classroom? \_\_\_\_\_

**When making the selections below, refer to the current year. Using a rating scale of 1-5, where 1 is not beneficial/no benefits and 5 is very beneficial rate the impact of your SEL teaching on the following areas:**

- 1 = not beneficial,      2 = a little beneficial,      3 = somewhat beneficial,  
4 = beneficial,      5 = very beneficial**

4. My SEL curriculum instruction on my students' classroom behaviors. \_\_\_\_\_
5. My SEL curriculum instruction on my response to instructional stressors. \_\_\_\_\_
6. My SEL instruction on my students' academic performance. \_\_\_\_\_
7. My SEL instruction on my time to teach. \_\_\_\_\_
8. My SEL instruction on my rapport with my students. \_\_\_\_\_
9. My SEL instruction on my pedagogical/instructional approach. \_\_\_\_\_
10. MY SEL instruction on my self-directed professional development. \_\_\_\_\_
11. My SEL instruction on my job satisfaction. \_\_\_\_\_
12. My SEL instruction on my classroom management. \_\_\_\_\_
13. My SEL instruction on my job-related coping skills. \_\_\_\_\_
14. My SEL instruction on my students' social-emotional growth. \_\_\_\_\_
15. My SEL instruction on my beliefs about the collective efforts of my team to impact student learning. \_\_\_\_\_

**Please provide written responses to questions 15 – 18.**

16. Is Social-Emotional Learning important, why, or why not?
17. Did you receive any formal or informal training to teach SEL? Have you received continued training support after the initial training?
18. How can Social-Emotional Learning implementation benefit you, the teacher?
19. What results would you expect to see if all classroom teachers implemented Social-Emotional Learning for their students?

I will be conducting a focus group interview to learn more about the benefits of your SEL instruction. If you are willing to participate in the interview, please provide your name and contact information.

## Appendix B

### School Counselor Survey Questions

1. Is SEL implemented at your school? \_\_\_\_\_  
If yes, please complete questions two through four.
2. What is the SEL instructional model at your school? Please select one response.  
SEL is taught only by classroom teachers. \_\_\_\_\_  
SEL is taught only by classroom teachers in their classrooms and by school counselors/social workers at a separate time. \_\_\_\_\_  
SEL is co-taught by classroom teachers and school counselors/social workers. \_\_\_\_\_  
SEL is only taught by school counselors/social workers. \_\_\_\_\_
3. How often is SEL instruction done weekly? Number of days per week and for how long.  
By classroom teacher.  
By classroom teacher and school counselor/social worker at separate times.  
By classroom teacher and school counselor/social worker co-teaching together.  
By school counselor/social worker
4. Is there another SEL instructional model at your school than the options above?  
If yes, please describe this model.

## Appendix C

### As-Is Analysis

<b>As-Is 4 Cs Analysis</b>	
<b>Problem:</b> The teaching of SEL with fidelity by teachers who have received the preparation to instruct SEL successfully.	
<b>Context</b>	<p>Tier one SEL delivery</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Taught by classroom teacher to classroom students.</li> <li>• All teachers in the same school use the same curriculum.</li> </ul> <p>Tier two SEL delivery</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Taught by a school counselor to the lowest 20% of students with behavior and social-emotional problems.</li> <li>• Curriculum may be the same or different than what is used for tier one.</li> </ul> <p>All students in kindergarten through 6<sup>th</sup> grade should receive SEL instruction.</p>
<b>Culture</b>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1) All educators verbally supported SEL initiatives in schools.</li> <li>2) School administrators determined SEL implementation in their schools.</li> <li>3) The assistant principal and or the school counselor select curriculum.</li> <li>4) Teachers and guidance counselors taught SEL lessons.</li> <li>5) Teachers' job demands impacted the fidelity of SEL delivery.</li> <li>6) Teachers believe that students need SEL instruction.</li> <li>7) Teachers believed that SEL instruction helped students and teachers to have a good rapport.</li> <li>8) SEL instructional goals are only student focused.</li> <li>9) Lack of family and community engagement.</li> </ol>



<b>Conditions</b>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"><li>1)No set SEL schedule in the school master schedule.</li><li>2)Classroom teachers were expected to teach SEL instruction to students every week without a specific amount of time.</li><li>3)School administrators are solely responsible for providing SEL curriculum for each classroom teacher, which was expensive.</li></ol>
<b>Competencies</b>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"><li>1)Teachers did not receive professional development to develop their instructional competencies for the SEL curriculum that they taught.</li><li>2)Teachers lacked the confidence to teach specific SEL lessons.</li><li>3)Professional development for teachers primarily supports classroom management and academic practices but not teachers' social emotional needs.</li></ol>

## Appendix D

### To-Be Analysis

<b>TO-BE 4 Cs Analysis</b>	
SEL instruction will be a priority for students and teachers in elementary schools throughout the school district. SEL instructors will receive training to develop their SEL competencies and receive the support of resources of time and materials necessary to implement SEL instructional practices with fidelity.	
<b>Context</b>	<p>All kindergarten through sixth-grade students will receive SEL instruction two to three times weekly for Tier 1 support, once or twice weekly for Tier 2, and once weekly for Tier 3.</p> <p>Tier 1 SEL delivery</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Taught by teachers to students in their classrooms.</li> <li>• All teachers use the same curriculum in school.</li> </ul> <p>Tier 2 SEL delivery</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Taught by a school counselor or social worker to the lowest 20% of students with behavior and social-emotional problems.</li> <li>• Taught to students in addition to what is taught in tier one.</li> <li>• Curriculum may be the same or different than what is used for tier one, depending on the skills that students need.</li> </ul> <p>Tier 3 SEL delivery</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Taught by a school counselor or social worker to the lowest 5% of students with behavior and social-emotional problems.</li> <li>• Taught to students in addition to what is taught in Tier one and tier two.</li> <li>• The curriculum may be the same or different than what is used for tiers one and two and include a component to address mental health concerns.</li> <li>• The group size for instruction will be five or less students.</li> </ul>

<b>Culture</b>	<p>Everyone who teaches SEL to students will know what SEL is and understand how SEL benefits students and educators.</p> <p>All stakeholders will share the belief that SEL is important for students and adults.</p> <p>District leaders and school leaders will work collaboratively to support SEL practices in elementary schools.</p> <p>Administrators, teachers, school counselors, and social workers who teach SEL will prioritize SEL instruction time.</p> <p>All stakeholders will collaborate on SEL initiatives.</p> <p>Personnel who teach SEL will feel supported.</p>
<b>Conditions</b>	<p>A set schedule for SEL will be built into the school master schedule.</p> <p>School and district staff will host opportunities to inform families and the community about SEL initiatives in schools.</p> <p>Teachers will meet with students and families to discuss SEL goals</p>
<b>Competencies</b>	<p>Teachers, school counselors, and social workers will receive professional development to develop and enhance their instructional and personal SEL competencies.</p> <p>Teachers will have confidence to teach and expand their pedagogy in SEL instruction.</p> <p>Teachers and students will increase their SEL competencies and will have the skills to deal with social, behavioral, and emotional concerns.</p> <p>Professional development for teachers, school counselors, and social workers will incorporate the CASEL five competencies that benefit students and educators: Self-awareness, Self-management, Social-awareness, Responsible decision-making, and Relationship skills (CASEL, 2023).</p>

## Appendix E

### Strategies and Actions Chart

Strategies	Action Steps
1) Establish a Sense of Urgency	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Hold conversations with the superintendent, the office of instructional leading and learning, labor relations, the teachers' union, and student services on the need to support classroom teachers' wellbeing.</li> <li>• Communicate that teacher attrition rates are a major concern for student learning and the functioning of schools.</li> <li>• Communicate that teacher instruction of SEL presents a major opportunity to impact student learning, teacher job satisfaction and CTE beliefs.</li> </ul>
2) Create a Guiding Coalition	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Create a guiding coalition of members from the elementary leading and learning office, students' services department, representatives from elementary school counselors, school social workers, school psychologists, and professional development office to serve on the committee. The guiding coalition will be known as the district SEL leadership team (DSELLT)</li> <li>• Facilitate the work of the DSELLT)</li> </ul>
3) Develop a Strategic Vision	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The DSELLT will develop a strategic vision.</li> <li>• The vision will include language from the CASEL five competence wheel.</li> </ul>
4) Communicate the Change Vision	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The DSELLT will create a strategic communication plan to communicate with stakeholders.</li> <li>• Meetings with district leadership groups (elementary learning, student services, office of professional development), school social workers and school counselors, school psychologists, the teachers' union, school principals, assistant principals, and the school board.</li> <li>• Communicate information on the district website, newsletter, and Facebook page.</li> <li>• Communicate on schools' websites, Facebook pages, and school newsletters and in school advisory council meetings.</li> <li>• Communicate at PTO meetings and through teachers' newsletters and class dojo pages, and other teacher/parent communication modes.</li> </ul>

5) Enable Action by Removing Barriers	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The DSELLT will create a strategic plan to address organizational barriers.</li> <li>• The DSELLT will collaborate with the SSELLT to create strategic plans to address school-level barriers</li> </ul>
6) Generate Short Term Wins	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Acknowledge the wins.</li> <li>• Create the wins.</li> <li>• Visibly acknowledge schools and reward people.</li> </ul>
7) Sustain Acceleration	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Hire, promote, and develop people to carry out the plan.</li> <li>• Build capacity</li> </ul>
8) Institute Change	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Implement, progress monitor, reflect, redirect</li> </ul>