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Secondary Teacher Needs to Support Social and Emotional Learning in the Classroom

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This is to certify that the doctoral study by

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has been found to be complete and satisfactory in all respects,
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Walden University
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Abstract

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Ryeneshia A. Hutchinson

MEd, Auburn University at Montgomery, 2018

BS, Alabama State University, 2014

Project Study Submitted in Partial Fulfillment

of the Requirements for the Degree of

Doctor of Education

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Abstract

Survey data from students in Grades 9–12 at L High School (a pseudonym) in an urban

district in the southeastern United States suggested that students lack social and

emotional learning (SEL) competencies. Efforts to address SEL at the study site have

been ineffective. The purpose of this basic qualitative study was to explore secondary

teachers' perceptions of why the efforts to address SEL have been ineffective and to

determine what supports teachers believe are needed to address SEL at L High School.

The research questions were used to explore teachers' views on the implementation of

SEL, support needed for SEL, and teachers' prior training on SEL. Vygotsky's social

learning theory and the core competencies of the Collaborative for Academic, Social, and

Emotional Learning framed this study. Voluntary, in-person interviews with eight

teachers at the study site were recorded and analyzed. Thematic analysis was used to

identify themes among the responses: (a) inadequate implementation of the current SEL

program, (b) lack of student and teacher buy-in to current SEL program, (c) relationship

building programs would be better for student population to address SEL, (d) resources

with guidance on implementing and incorporating SEL in lesson plans for course and

daily interactions are needed, and (e) lack of formal training on the topic of SEL provided

to teachers at the study site by the district. A professional development project was

created to provide teachers with support and resources to implement the SEL program or

make instructional changes to support the development of SEL competencies in students.

The results may influence positive social change by preparing teachers to positively

affect the social and emotional competence of secondary students which could lead to the

improvement of social relationships, behaviors, and academic outcomes.

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Dedication

I dedicate this study to my son, Dru Yasir. I will always strive to show you that the universe is the limit because I never want you to feel like your level of success is determined by how far you can see. You will not always be able to see what is ahead or what the end looks like, but trust your gut and keep pushing, Son. Momma loves you!

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Section 1: The Problem

The Local Problem

The problem explored in this study was that efforts to address social and emotional learning (SEL) at the study site had been ineffective. The purpose of this basic qualitative study was to explore secondary teachers' perceptions of why the efforts to address SEL have been ineffective and to determine what supports teachers believe are needed to effectively address SEL at the study site. The school has been unable to improve SEL competencies of the student body despite the implementation of SEL improvement programs. SEL is a process in which children can develop and apply the knowledge, attitudes, and skills necessary to understand and manage emotions (Jagers et al., 2019). Students who possess competence in the main constructs of SEL can interact with others, monitor, and control cognitive processes, and regulate emotions and behaviors (Ahmed et al., 2020). In recent years, SEL has risen to the forefront of education by being recognized as a direct link to academic development (Schonert-Reichl, 2019). When children do not possess social and emotional competence, they do not have the ability to regulate their emotions; therefore, they lack the ability to use higher level mental processes (Jones-Schenk, 2019). Social and emotional competence also equips students with the ability to make good decisions and avoid negative behaviors (Burroughs & Barkauskas, 2017). The implementation of practices to influence positive social and emotional development has reduced the frequency of negative behavior problems (Alzahrani et al., 2019).

At L High School (a pseudonym) in an urban district located in the southeastern United States, surveys were distributed to students in Grades 9–12. The data collected from the surveys suggested that the students lacked some SEL competencies, and the deficiency had increased over the course of two school years. SEL competence was measured when students completed the surveys as freshmen and sophomores and then repeated as sophomores and juniors during the next school year. In addition to the lack of SEL competencies among the student body, the school also experienced an increase in behavioral problems, according to state discipline data (Alabama State Department of Education, 2017, 2018, 2019). Effective SEL implementation has been shown to contribute to the decline of students' behavior problems (Alzahrani et al., 2019). The problem explored in the current study was that efforts to address SEL at the study site had been ineffective. This study addressed the gap in practice of the lack of effective SEL at the study site by exploring why, from the teachers' perspective, the efforts to address SEL have been ineffective and to determine what supports teachers perceive as needs to effectively address SEL at the study site. The effective implementation of social and emotional programs could address the lack of SEL competencies and may mitigate further increases of behavioral issues, such as defiance, harassment, and disobedience, as well as poor academic performance, cheating, and failure to complete assigned work.

SEL improves the SEL skills of students, reduces symptoms of depression and anxiety, supports improved academics and behaviors, and leads to better lifetime outcomes by reducing societal costs related to public assistance and police intervention (CASEL, 2020). Other methods such as mindfulness interventions have not been reported

to yield the same results (CASEL, 2020). The need for effective implementation of SEL education has been recognized by organizations in the educational community such as Yale University, which is the reason for the development of the RULER program (RULER, 2021). The Yale University for Emotional Intelligence created RULER as a program for use by other educational agencies as a systematic approach to SEL (RULER, 2021). RULER is an acronym representing the five skills of emotional intelligence: recognizing emotions in oneself and others, understanding the causes and consequences of emotions, labeling emotions with a nuanced vocabulary, expressing emotions in accordance with cultural norms and social context, and regulating emotions with helpful strategies (RULER, 2021).

The RULER program features opportunities for adults in education to participate in personal and professional opportunities; tools to assist in building a common language and infusing aspects of emotional science into leading, teaching, and learning; and tools of measurement that support quality implementation and evaluation among other constructs to support SEL-infused school policies and practices (Brackett et al., 2019). The implementation of RULER in over 2,000 schools internationally and domestically shows that districts all over the world recognize the benefits of SEL education and improving the level of social and emotional competence of their students (Brackett et al., 2019). The use of RULER in schools has had positive outcomes in academic performance, work habits. social development, and emotion understanding (Brackett et al., 2019).

Effective SEL programs should have a direct effect on improving the SEL competencies of students, but when implemented programs are not used effectively, they cannot. The local problem was that the efforts to address SEL at the study site had been ineffective despite the implementation of SEL programs. The purpose of this basic qualitative study was to explore secondary teachers' perceptions of why the efforts to address SEL have been ineffective and to determine what supports teachers believe are needed to effectively address SEL at the study site.

Rationale

Social and emotional competence plays a vital role in the development of students (Huynh et al., 2019). State data portals showed several behavioral problems among the school district in which the study site is located (Alabama State Department of Education, 2017; Alabama State Department of Education, 2018; Alabama State Department of Education, 2019; Alabama State Department of Education, 2021). The study site experienced an increase of behavior problems over the course of 4 years, despite the site having no behavior issues for at least 2 years prior to the 2016–2017 school year. Table 1 shows the number of disciplinary actions taken in recent years and the reason for the action. The data show that over the course of four academic school years the discipline problems had steadily increased. According to the trend displayed in the table, if the increase in discipline problems continues, by the end of the 2022–2023 academic year discipline problems could rise to at least 18 incidents from a school that once stood at zero incidents per year. There was no data for the 2020–2021 school year. Due to COVID-19 restrictions, students participated in virtual learning.

Table 1.

School Discipline Data

School year	Number of behavior incidents	Reason
2016–2017	1	Defiance of authority
2017–2018	4	Disobedience, persistent, willful
		Unauthorized communication device
		Harassment
2018–2019	4	Disobedience, persistent, willful
		Harassment
2020–2021		COVID-19 closure
2021–2022	9	Vandalism
		Defiance of authority
		Disobedience, persistent
		Sexual harassment
		Tobacco possession
		Behavior code

School survey data at the study site showed a lack of characteristics related to social and emotional competence that declined over the course of one school year. The surveys asked students to rank how confident they were in areas related to their education, confidence, connections, stress, well-being, and motivation. The data collected from these surveys are represented in Figure 1 and Figure 2.

Figure 1.

Survey Data From Year 1

2017-18 (Freshmen and Sophomores)

	Risk Profile	Intermediary Profile	Success Profile
Education	9%	6	85%
Confidence	40%	9%	51%
Connections	26%	17%	57%
Stress	40%	21%	40%
Well-Being	38%	11%	51%
Motivation	13%	13%	74%
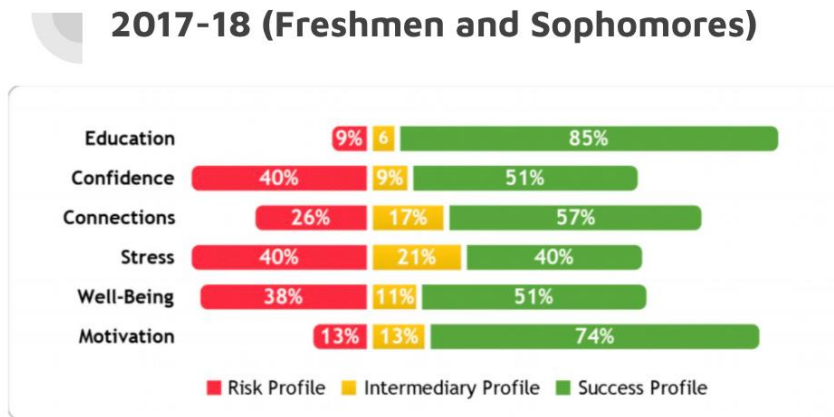
Figure 2.

Survey Data From Year 2

2018-19 (Sophomores and Juniors)

	Risk Profile	Intermediary Profile	Success Profile
Education	14%	6	79%
Confidence	51%	6	43%
Connections	30%	14%	56%
Stress	44%	17%	38%
Well-Being	40%	17%	43%
Motivation	13%	29%	59%
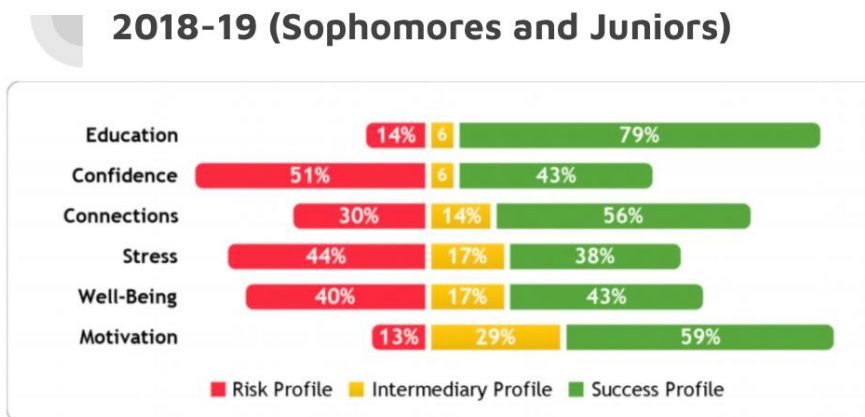
After the negative behavior issues increased and survey data that suggested the students could be experiencing SEL problems were analyzed, an assistant principal concluded that the study site may need to explore addressing the SEL needs of students by implementing programs to support SEL (personal communication, February 20, 2020). In more recent school site discussions, faculty and administrators discussed academic failure data from the first semester at the monthly faculty meeting at the study site. At the meeting, faculty were asked by the principal to share what other issues were present within the student body. Several teachers expressed concern with the lack of motivation, poor attitudes, and lack of responsibility among the student body.

The survey results, which indicated increased behavior issues and teacher expressions of unsatisfactory student actions, suggested that the SEL needs at the study site were present even though there was an SEL program in place, which suggested the program was not being used effectively. The principal of L High School agreed that given the student negative behaviors being experienced by teachers compared to prior data that there may be a SEL competence issue at the school (personal communication, February 11, 2022). Despite the district providing training for the SEL program, the principal stated that he has his own reasons as to why he thinks the current SEL program is ineffective and feels it would be beneficial to discover what staff think and what would be a better fit for the school (personal communication, February 11, 2022). Based on this information, the purpose of this basic qualitative study was to explore secondary teachers' perceptions of why the efforts to address SEL have been ineffective and to

determine what supports teachers believe are needed to effectively address SEL at the study site.

Definition of Terms

The following terms and definitions were relevant to the basic qualitative study performed to determine the teachers' perceptions of needed supports to provide SEL programs and instruction to students.

Collaborative for academic, social, and emotional learning (CASEL): The organization that developed the five competencies of SEL (Ross & Tolan, 2018).

Emotional intelligence: The ability to organize individuals in frustrating situations, control impulses, control emotions, maintain rational thinking in moods or stress situations, and empathize with others (Choi et al., 2021).

Positive Behavior Interventions and Supports: A three-tiered preventive framework associated with improved student behavior and academic outcomes (Kittelman et al., 2019).

Prosocial behavior: Behavior intended to benefit another, which includes helping, donating, sharing, and comforting (Busching & Krahe, 2020).

Social and emotional competence: The ability to interact with others, monitor and control cognitive processes, and regulate one's emotions and behaviors (Ahmed et al., 2020).

Social and emotional competencies: The five SEL competencies are self-management, self-awareness, social awareness, relationship skills, and responsible decision making (Ross & Tolan, 2018).

Social and emotional learning (SEL): The process that young people and adults use to acquire and apply the knowledge, skills, and attitudes necessary to develop healthy identities, manage emotions, and achieve personal and collective goals; feel and show empathy; establish and maintain supportive relationships; and make responsible and caring decisions (CASEL, 2020).

Significance of the Study

The district where L High School is located had implemented a SEL tool that was not being effectively used by teachers at the study site. The tool implemented at the site is called Rhithm. Rhithm is a digital application in which students log in to complete a wellness check-in; then, based on the results of the check-in, students are presented with a short video to build SEL skills. The teachers and students expressed how they did not feel the program worked well for the study site. The principal of L High School was aware of this occurrence and stated it would be beneficial to the study site to determine why the teachers feel the program has been ineffectively implemented and what may work better for the individual study site (personal communication, February 11, 2022).

In the current study, I explored secondary teachers' perceptions of why the efforts to address SEL had been ineffective and to determine what supports teachers perceive are needed to effectively address SEL at the study site. The findings could impact the literature pertaining to what supports need to be provided to teachers for SEL instruction and programs to be effectively implemented at secondary schools. The results could also justify the use of local funds to invest in the resources teachers need to effectively implement the current SEL program or purchase any additional resources teachers

identify as a need to effectively implement other SEL programs or tools. This study may be beneficial to address the local problem at the study site because effective SEL implementation can assist in improving the social and emotional competence of students in the educational environment by improving self-management, which enables students to replace negative behaviors with positive behaviors (Khazanchi et al., 2021), which could address the behavior problems experienced at the school. Students who are SEL competent can regulate emotions, collaborate effectively, manage time and stress, resolve conflict, and experience enhanced learning outcomes (Paolini, 2020).

Research Questions

As the use of SEL in education has increased over the years, researchers have noted that SEL is beneficial to the development and mental health of students and should be implemented not only in programs but in the entire school (Schonert-Reichl, 2019). To contribute to the success of SEL in the school setting, this study addressed the needs of secondary educators by answering three guiding research questions (RQs):

RQ1: What do secondary classroom teachers perceive as the reason(s) that the current SEL program is not being effectively implemented?

RQ2: What do secondary teachers perceive as needed supports in addition to the current program to impact SEL at the study site?

RQ3: How much, if any, training/education/experience have teachers received on SEL prior to the implementation of the current SEL program?

Review of the Literature

The literature was reviewed based on the benefits of the use of SEL in individualized school programs and classroom curricula. The other listed topics in the review are based on the need to show how the different practices have improved schools. Additionally, a discussion of the conceptual framework based on CASEL and constructivism by Vygotsky is included in the review.

The benefits of SEL practices have been investigated across all education levels including higher education around the world. Among elementary students, Brann et al. (2020) found that focusing on the SEL needs of students can positively improve aspects such as youth development and academic achievement while reducing possible negative outcomes. After implementing a small group curriculum with identified at-risk elementary students, teachers reported decreased behavior problems and intensity of behavior infractions (Green et al., 2018). Middle school students experienced improved academic achievement after the completion of a social-emotional and character development lab (MacDonnell et al., 2021). The implementation of the SEA program in a high school was successful at increasing the SEL competencies among students (Rodriguez-Ledo et al., 2018). The literature review of the relevant contributions did not reveal any adverse effects of implementing SEL via programs or curricula.

The search to determine the scope of research regarding SEL was completed via Walden University's library databases: Academic Search Complete, Taylor and Francis, Education Source, ERIC, and SAGE Journals. The terms used in the searches included *social and emotional learning*, *social emotional learning* and *behavior*, *social emotional*

learning and *curriculum*, *social emotional learning programs*, *social emotional learning* and *teacher perception*, *social emotional learning*, and *students*. Although I was able to locate copious amounts of literature on teacher perceptions of SEL in general, I was not able to locate any literature that pertained to teachers' perceptions of needed supports to effectively provide SEL to students. The Boolean searches returned hundreds to thousands of results that were dependent on the search criteria. I narrowed the selections by filtering to allow for only current studies, removing results that were not peer reviewed, and selecting content that was applicable to this study based on the ability to support the problem of this study and show the positive implications of SEL through prior research findings.

Conceptual Framework

The two frameworks used to ground this study were the constructivist framework developed by Vygotsky (1997) and the CASEL (2020) framework surrounding the five core competencies of SEL. Vygotsky stated that the "social environment is the true lever of the educational process and the teachers' overall role reduces to adjusting this lever" (p. 345). Vygotsky also explained how the purpose of education is to deliberately instill in the child new forms of behavior and activity. This is achieved via the teacher who should direct and guide the student's activity with the purpose of achieving further development of the activity. The theory justified the use of teachers as the focus of the current study as the responsible party for the direct influence of students' behaviors through social constructs and instruction.

To accompany Vygotsky's (1997) theory, the CASEL (2020) framework of the five competencies of SEL was included in the conceptual framework of this study. The five SEL competencies are relationship skills, self-management, responsible decision making, social awareness, and self-awareness (Walker & Martin, 2020). By improving the social and emotional competence of students, teachers can improve educational outcomes and students' ability to engage in good behaviors (Alzahrani et al., 2019). The combination of SEL and academics through instruction by staff who are equipped to address SEL skills can prepare students to use required life skills beyond high school (Walker & Martin, 2020). The CASEL five competencies were used to address the lack of some SEL competence among the student body and to mitigate the growth of behavior problems at the study site.

SEL and School Programs

SEL can be presented to adolescents in many forms. The less invasive to the classroom curriculum is through programs. Carpio de los Pinos et al. (2020) improved empathy among children ages 12 to 17 using Positive Behavior Interventions and Supports and SEL methods to prevent inappropriate behaviors during a summer camp. The increase of empathy helped to promote prosocial behaviors, inhibit aggression, and positively impact health and social adjustment. The empathetic increase was measured by a pre-post quantitative study design. Over the course of 13 weeks, the MindOut program focused on SEL skills such as self-esteem, emotional regulation and intelligence, coping skills, self-efficacy, asserting influence, conflict resolution, and decision making. Mental health and academic outcomes were also a part of the program. The MindOut program

based in schools to promote social and emotional well-being of secondary students revealed significant effects on students' emotional and mental health (Dowling et al., 2020). A small school implemented the Social Harmony program and evaluated the benefits using a concept mapping approach (Haymovitz et al., 2018). The Social Harmony program teaches skills necessary for students to engage in SEL and address conflict. The results of the study indicated a positive effect on faculty productivity, student well-being, peer relationships, and school climate (Haymovitz et al., 2018).

SEL programs have also been used with younger students. COPE-Resilience is a program focused on improving the social and emotional competencies of preschool students using an explicit, teacher-led approach. The COPE-Resilience program was implemented for 6 weeks in a preschool for 4- and 5-year-old students and was successful at improving prosocial behaviors and behavior problems (Wu et al., 2020). Five- and 6-year-old gifted students participated in the SEL-focused Think, Feel, Learn program after school for 6 weeks. The after-school program helped to improve the students' self-esteem, self-confidence, and emotional intelligence (Papadopoulos, 2020).

Duncan et al. (2017) studied the effects of the Positive Action program on 1,130 youths in Chicago from third through eighth grade. The Positive Action program is based in the classroom and focuses on the importance of the desire to feel good personally. The Positive Action program also taught students the skills necessary to maintain self-control and have prosocial interactions with peers. The program was created to lessen the decrease in prosocial behavior and increase academic achievement, thereby reducing disciplinary referrals, substance abuse, and violence (Duncan et al., 2017).

SEL in the Classroom

SEL competencies and skills can be taught through programs that incorporate the needed skills. SEL can also be implemented within the classroom curriculum alongside science, arts, English, and history instruction. Morris et al. (2017) conducted a mixed-methods study to determine the effect of integrating SEL into well-planned academic instruction. Morris et al. operationalized Storypath, which is a "process for facilitating learning and a structure for organizing social studies curriculum" (p.255). The study revealed that the students were able to engage in more cognitively challenging activities and use SEL skills effectively. General music teachers can design activities and lessons to help with social and emotional competencies such as self-awareness, social awareness, cognitive regulation, and emotional regulation (Varner, 2020).

SEL has made its way into higher education classrooms showing that the importance of SEL in education is relevant to those entering the education field as well. In a secondary teacher program in Australia, Main (2018) explored whether embedding SEL skills in a teacher education course enhanced the teachers' awareness and willingness to embed teaching SEL skills into their instruction. The study revealed that the preservice teachers developed a growing awareness of SEL skills and recognized the importance of associating SEL skills and academic success. Additionally, the preservice teachers were able to recognize how to include SEL skills within a broad range of curriculum areas. The teacher education course combined modules to support the need to enhance teachers' SEL skills and teacher efficacy. Stipp (2019) also found that a teacher

education course helped preservice teachers become better prepared and more confident in SEL-related abilities.

Teacher Perceptions

Research to determine how teachers perceive SEL in the education setting has been completed in the United States as well as other countries. Huynh et al. (2019) discovered from a group of 250 teachers that the teachers were aware of the necessities regarding SEL in the classroom. This knowledge was evident regardless of the educational background or experience of the teacher. A joint study was conducted for teachers in the United States and Greece to determine teacher perceptions and whether varying cultures affected the teachers' perceptions of SEL (Poulou et al., 2018). The study found no significant differences in the teachers' commitment in improving SEL skills, and teachers from both countries recognized the importance of educating students on SEL skills and incorporating SEL skills in school activities irrespective of curricular requirements. Teachers have been able to identify positive outcomes from the incorporation of SEL even when it was not explicitly taught with instruction. Teachers in six elementary schools were trained in Circle Solutions, a program that guides effective facilitation of SEL as a social process by focus on students collectively rather than individually (Dobia et al., 2019). After implementing Circle Solutions for 6 weeks, the teachers acknowledged improvements in student confidence, empathy, kindness, and peer relationships. In addition to the improvement among students, the teachers were also able to endorse the need for all teachers to receive training in SEL.

Student Perceptions

The practice of SEL has been evaluated from all perspectives, but there was limited research on the perceptions of students who are primarily the subjects of social and emotional programs and curricular implementation. Medin and Jutengren (2020) evaluated the experiences and beliefs of elementary students in Sweden after the completion of the Life Skills Training program. Medin and Jutengren discovered that students were aware that the program was implemented due to their less than satisfactory behavior in the classroom. Medin and Jutengren also discovered positive attitudes toward the environment of the SEL class due to the calmness and enjoyability. However, some students felt the program was predictable and described some interactions as too personal or uncomfortable to engage in within the school setting.

In a related study, 10 students in seventh and eighth grades expressed their personal interpretation of their SEL in relation to interactions between teachers and peers by participating in case studies (Strahan & Poteat, 2020). The students shared an awareness and appreciation of their teachers' support, identified feelings related to peer interactions, and reflected on social relationships. Students were also able to relate SEL core competencies to specific areas of growth. For example, effort and accomplishment were attributed to showing progress toward responsible decision making. The perspective of students is valuable in the implementation of SEL because it provides a view of what works in practice. Research has shown numerous times how SEL is necessary in theory with suggestions for practice, but only the students can tell if it is as valuable to them in

practice as it is to researchers and educators in theory (Alzahrani et al., 2019; Busching & Krahe, 2020; Panayiotou et al., 2019).

Parent Perceptions

Sutton (2021) discovered that parents believe it is important to teach social and emotional competencies in school when middle school parents were surveyed. The parents also reported that the results of the SEL program on their children were positive, so they felt that the program was effectively implemented. Parents who participated in the study conducted by Zolkoski et al. (2021) were in favor of SEL programs because of the reported increase in prosocial behavior among the children. This was determined by collecting survey responses prior to students participating in the school SEL program and after the conclusion of the program.

SEL and Education Policy

There is no current national policy in support of SEL. In 2015, the Every Child Succeeds Act (ESSA) was passed, which replaced the 2001 No Child Left Behind Act. The ESSA transferred some control over educational goals and standards to states and districts instead of the federal government. Richerme (2020) investigated how P–12 educators could use ESSA to fund new or existing SEL efforts. For example, some schools receive federal funding known as Title I. This funding is based on the income of the student population and earmarked to support student achievement. Administrators could use these funds to implement SEL programs targeted to improve the academic achievement of at-risk students (Richerme, 2020). Title II funding is allocated to districts to improve academic performance by supporting effective instruction. School leaders

could use funding to pay for professional development to strengthen their own and their teachers' SEL understanding (Richerme, 2020).

Several schools implemented "no excuses" education after No Child Left Behind Act. "No excuses" education is accompanied by high expectations for student behavior, reliance on adult control of student behavior, and teacher-centered instruction to meet rigid goals in preparation for assessment. Bailey, Meland, et al. (2019) posited that the implementation of "no excuses" education policy is detrimental to the SEL skill of self-regulation. Self-regulation has been linked to positive life outcomes such as well-being, academic success, and social competence. Although the actions behind "no excuses" education were intended to have a positive effect on academic achievement, instead they inhibited the emotional development of the child. Bailey, Meland, et al. recommended that policies and practices should shift toward more positive proactive supports. This could be supported through funding from ESSA, which has an initiative to support the promotion of a positive school climate. Bailey, Meland et al. also recommended educators explicitly teach SEL skills through activities and create warm and positive environments by fostering responsive relationships and adult modeling.

Implications

CASEL (2020) designates classrooms as one location for effective implementation of SEL instruction (see Figure 3). Teachers are the educational stakeholders inside of the classrooms. Despite teachers having a primary role in the implementation of SEL, many have problems incorporating SEL into the regular curriculum (Ferreira et al., 2020). With the recent push to provide SEL education in

schools for the benefit of the educational environment, teachers, and students, a study to determine the perceptions of needs of teachers to provide social and emotional learning to students will be beneficial. The study site located in an urban area in the southeastern United States has begun to experience a surge in behavior issues and some students are displaying a lack of various social and emotional competencies. Therefore, the school administration felt it would be beneficial to explore options of implementing SEL at the site.

Figure 3.

CASEL SEL Diagram

Note. From CASEL website: www.casel.org

Research has begun to repeatedly call for educating the whole child (Balfanz, 2019). This means that schools should seek to educate the student socially, emotionally, academically, linguistically, and cognitively (Balfanz, 2019). Teachers can influence social emotional skills through personal interactions with students and support their

academic activities with exercises and activities that encourage the development social and emotional skills (Ferreira et al., 2020).

The results of the study may reveal specific resources or needed supports to provide social and emotional learning to students, the preference of programs over curricula or vice versa to implement SEL or any other needs that teacher may perceive as valuable to begin implementing SEL at the study site. Ultimately, this study would lead to the development of a professional development opportunity to educate teachers on the benefits of SEL accompanied by best practices to begin teaching with SEL in mind and provide administration at the study site with a starting point to wisely invest into the purchase of SEL programs or curricula. The opportunity would also expound upon specific techniques to incorporate the SEL techniques in some academic areas as well as research that provides evidence for educators who may need further information to support the idea for the implementation of SEL at the study site.

Summary

The literature review composed to support this study discussed the conceptual framework and details various studies that have been conducted in support of SEL in schools via programs and adjustments to daily curriculum within the classroom. Researchers have demonstrated a need for SEL for behavior, academic, and emotional reasons to assist students in becoming valuable and successful members of today's society. One common theme among all conducted research is that teachers are the primary facilitators and implementors of SEL. While the research does document how teachers perceive the idea of SEL in schools, the research does not entail what teachers

perceive as needed supports to undertake such a role. In the following section, I will

discuss the research design and approach for this study.

Section 2: The Methodology

Research Design and Approach

The purpose of this basic qualitative study was to explore secondary teachers'

perceptions of why the efforts to address SEL have been ineffective and to determine

what supports teachers believe are needed to effectively address SEL at the study site.

The study was guided by the following research questions:

RQ1: What do secondary classroom teachers perceive as the reason(s) why the

current SEL program is not being effectively implemented at the high school in an urban

district located in the southeastern United States to support students' SEL competencies?

RQ2: What do secondary teachers perceive as needs in addition to current

programs to impact SEL at the study site?

RQ3: How much, if any, training/education/experience have teachers received on

SEL prior to the implementation of the current SEL program?

I chose to do a basic qualitative study because the primary goal of the research

was to gather perceptions of teachers at the study site via interviews. Kalman (2020)

stated that qualitative research is useful to explore or identify the views of participants.

According to McGrath et al. (2018), "qualitative interviews afford researchers

opportunities to explore, in an in-depth manner, matters that are unique to the experiences

of the interviewees, allowing insights into how different phenomena of interest are

experienced and perceived" (para. 1). The choice to conduct a basic qualitative study

using interviews was appropriate because it allowed me to obtain in-depth and personal

perceptions from the participants. Ethnography would not have been a wise choice

because there was no fieldwork to be conducted to gather information regarding a group

of people. Observation would have yielded the data of behaviors and not individual views

or perceptions of the teachers, and grounded theory was not appropriate because there

was no desire to generate a theory from the data obtained from this study. Interviews

were the data collection tool selected for this study because they involve a conversation

between the interviewer and interviewees to collect data on a particular issue (see

Salkind, 2010). Another benefit of interviews is that they can be conducted in numerous

ways such as face to face, telephone, video calls, and email. This could prove to be

valuable if on-campus attendance is not possible.

Participants

The setting for this study was a small school in an urban district in the

southeastern United States. The district has 51 school sites in which approximately 8,200

students are enrolled. There are 31 elementary schools, 10 middle schools, eight high

schools, and two charter schools. The school is in a low-income district where each

student receives free and reduced lunch. The target sample for this study was teachers at

the study site who are certified teachers of various subjects at the school. Participation in

the study was offered to teachers who met the requirements of the study.

My study sample was composed of eight teachers. At the study site, there are

approximately four to six teachers per content area. To obtain diverse perspectives on the

study topic, I focused my efforts on recruiting two to three teachers from each content

area. I achieved similar numbers as intended by the recruitment goals of this study. The

final sample included three history teachers, one English language arts teacher, two math

teachers, and two science teachers. The number of participants allowed for an adequate collection of perceptions. The criteria to be a part of the study included (a) employment as a certified teacher at the study site and (b) minor self-reported knowledge of SEL. No additional teachers volunteered to participate in the study beyond the eight participants who were included.

At the time of the study, I was employed by the district as a teacher at the study site, which is how I gained access to the teachers. I had no supervisory authority over any participants. I created a recruitment advertisement (see Appendix F) that I distributed to teachers in person at the study site. Upon distribution, I explained to potential participants that participation was voluntary, and if they chose to participate, they should email me at the provided email address for further steps. This gave the teachers time to decide without being pressured to agree to participation on the spot. I also obtained permission from the school administrator to conduct the study with participants recruited from the school. I did not conduct any interviews during instructional time or without the permission of the principal. I requested permission from the teachers who agreed to complete the study to release the data that I collected. The school employee working relationship that I developed with the participants assisted with fostering the researcher–participant working relationship. I had worked in the same school with the participants for 7 years. Due to working with the participants, there was already an established rapport and positive relationship between us.

There was no physical danger related to participants in the study. I took steps to protect the participants' rights. Confidentiality was maintained by not disclosing any

identifying information of the participants, including demographic data and names. No

teachers were identified in the study. If I needed to refer to a participant, I used a

pseudonym. Additionally, all records were kept secure, such as interview responses and

transcripts. Prior to conducting the interviews for this study, I provided each participant

with a consent form. The consent form informed the participants of expectations

regarding confidentiality, expectations of the interview process, the collection of personal

information such as their email, and sample interview questions.

Data Collection

I conducted one-on-one interviews with eight teachers at the study site. I used an

interview protocol (see Appendix D) that I developed to guide interviews. In addition to

documenting the participant responses, I audio recorded the interviews so I could

accurately transcribe the interview in the event I was not able to document the response

in its entirety. The recordings helped with data analysis procedures.

Interviewing was the only method of data collection for this study. I asked

preestablished questions aimed at capturing data that could be categorized, codified, and

analyzed. The face-to-face interviews lasted approximately 30 minutes. As the interviews

proceeded, I used an iPad with pencil capabilities to take notes of the interviewees'

responses. The goal of the interviews was to elicit the secondary teachers' perceptions of

needed supports and resources to implement SEL programs and instruction. Although the

interviews were audio recorded for later transcription, participants were allowed to opt

out of audio recording. No participants opted out of audio recording. The audio recording

was conducted with an application known as Otter on an iPhone. I created an interview

protocol (see Appendix D) included demographic questions such as the person's name (redacted from final data), questions for the interview, and space for additional notes or further questions, as needed. I conducted interviews only with teachers at the study site because they were the primary facilitators of SEL instruction and programs at the study site. Each teacher had their own designated folder for the interview protocol, transcribed interview, and any notes taken during the interview. As an employee at the study site, I had access to participants outside of instructional time.

Role of the Researcher

At the time of the study, I was a tenured teacher employed by the district in which the study site is located. In addition to being a district employee, I was a secondary science teacher at the study site. I did not hold and never held any supervisory capacity over any of the teachers employed at the study site.

A positive and cooperative relationship existed between me and my coworkers; this included the participants. The lack of supervisory role over the participants ensured that each teacher's choice to participate was voluntary. Participants were informed that participation in the study should not bring any professional or personal stress, and all participants were treated equally without prejudice or discrimination (see Husband, 2020). The cooperative work relationships built over the past 7 years created some trust that extended to the researcher–participant relationships. After losing a few students to suicide, my interests piqued regarding the emotional wellness of students; SEL had become a deep passion of mine. I held SEL in high regard because it applies to educating

students; however, this did not affect my position as an interviewer and researcher, and there are no biases to manage.

Data Analysis

The data were collected using an interview protocol (see Appendix D) and audio recording device during the interviews. After each interview concluded, the recording was transcribed within 48 hours and analyzed using thematic analysis. Thematic analysis is the act of identifying, analyzing, and reporting patterns in qualitative data (Scharp & Sander, 2019). The goal during the coding process was to locate common themes that could lead to a deeper understanding of the phenomenon and provide answers to the research questions.

Evidence of Quality

I considered the course of the research to determine whether there should be adjustments made to the sample size or line of questioning in the interviews. This consideration was effective because no changes were made after the beginning of the study. After the conclusion of the interviews, participants were allowed to edit/confirm responses given during the interviews. This process was completed by emailing the interview transcript to the participants. If there were corrections necessary, participants were instructed to document those changes and respond via email. If no changes were necessary, then participants were instructed to respond to the email communicating there were no needed changes. No interview participants reported that changes were necessary. These transcript reviews increased the accuracy and validity of the study. There was no

need to contact any participants after they completed the transcript reviews because all data had been confirmed.

Discrepant Cases

The choice to conduct interviews as a data collection method for the study meant that I was be able to gather in-depth and detailed information regarding the study topic. Although great amounts of data were obtained and many themes emerged, only the themes that answered the research questions were important for analysis (see Scharp & Sanders, 2019). The data analysis in this study did not reveal any discrepant cases. This may have been due to the small sample size. If more interviews had been conducted, then discrepant cases may have been identified during data analysis. For this study, all participants expressed similar views in response to the interview questions.

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Data Analysis Results

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I conducted interviews with eight teachers who were employed at the study site and who were also employed during the implementation of the SEL program. However, employment during the SEL program implementation was not a requirement to participate in the study. There were three male participants and five female participants. The department participation included three history teachers, two science teachers, one math teacher, and one English language arts teacher. Out of the eight participants, five had been employed at the study site for more than 5 years; the remaining three participants had been employed for 3 years or fewer.

Prior to conducting interviews, I spoke with participants individually and gave them a recruitment flyer (see Appendix F) that I created. My goal with speaking to

participants individually was to explain the goal of my research and what I was asking of them as a participant. The recruitment flyer had important details such as participation requirements, time commitment estimates, and my contact information. I emphasized to the participants that my role in this study was separate from my employment with the district at the study site.

For this basic qualitative study, I created my own interview protocol (see Appendix D). In the interview protocol, I reminded participants that their participation was voluntary and communicated my final request for approval to collect an audio recording of the interview. Most of the interviews were complete in 15 minutes or fewer while a couple of the interviews lasted 25–30 minutes. After I transcribed the interviews using Otter, I emailed the participants a copy of their transcripts and gave them the opportunity to correct any information, if needed. I instructed the participants to review the transcripts for accuracy. I wanted to ensure that all ideas were communicated properly and to the participants' satisfaction.

After the participants approved their transcripts, I began coding the data to identify themes. I utilized my iPad to take notes digitally while reading and listening to the recordings of the participant interviews. For each participant, I recorded notes regarding their responses to the interview questions and documented the quotes that addressed the research questions. Because this was a basic qualitative study in which data collection relied on interviews, I was able to determine many common themes among the responses to the interview questions.

Findings

The interview questions were developed to explore the teachers' perspectives on the current SEL program and to determine the perceptions of needed supports for implementation of SEL in the classroom. The main themes that emerged from the research were the following: (a) inadequate implementation of current SEL program, (b) lack of student and teacher buy-in to current SEL program, (c) relationship building programs are better for a student population to address SEL, (d) resources with guidance on implementing and incorporating SEL in lesson plans for courses and daily interactions are needed, and (e) there is a lack of formal training on the topic of SEL provided to teachers at the study site by the district.

Findings for RQ1

I was able to gather responses to determine whether the teachers felt they were using the SEL program effectively and the basis for their perspective. Teachers reported they were either not using the program or had stopped using the program shortly after implementation. RQ1 was the following: What do secondary classroom teachers perceive as the reason(s) why the current SEL program is not being effectively implemented at the high school in an urban district located in the southeastern United States to support students' SEL competencies? Data analysis related to this question revealed two themes (see Table 2).

Table 2.

Codes and Themes for RQ1

Code	Theme	Research question
Did not fit into all other teacher responsibilities Overused Childish/not age appropriate	Lack of teacher/student buy-in	RQ1: What do secondary classroom teachers perceive as the reason(s) why the current SEL program is not being effectively implemented at the high school in an urban district located in the southeastern United States to support students' SEL competencies?
Inability to explain usage to students Lack of program familiarity/ unknowledgeable of how to use	Inadequate program implementation	

To gather data regarding this research question, I asked participants, "Do you feel that you have been using our current SEL program effectively? Why or why not?" The first theme is that there was a lack of buy-in from both teachers and students regarding the implementation of the SEL program at the study site. Participant 1 reported,

Students would tell me that they chose not to participate. Teachers were too busy to learn the application or regularly use it. Participant 3 stated

students found it childish or that it didn't pertain to them and really a waste of time. I found that students didn't take it seriously. So, I just stopped using it. I don't think that whoever chose the program was really thinking about all of the children in the district. SEL is not a one size fits all kind of thing. We need to think about the different populations that we have in the school and school

system. Age group is a very important thing. If something is appropriate for elementary and some middle school grades, you might need to find something different for high school kids.

Participant 5 echoed these statements by stating

I've definitely not been effectively using that program. When we were first given access to start using it, there was no background or training on it. I used it for a little bit in a couple of my classes; I would kind of start off the day with my first period with it. We would do it first as a class, and then I had them try to do it as individuals. I did that for maybe two weeks, or three. It was probably only two weeks; the kids mostly seemed disengaged. I didn't really know what its purpose was. I didn't really know how to implement it well. And since there was no training involved, I and the kids didn't seem to respond super well to it. Outside, maybe one or two students. I discontinued my use.

Participant 4 indicated "I have not been on the platform. I am just not familiar with how it is to be done. I've been told about it and that it was supposed to be done, but I've never attempted to do it." The reference to the program being overused was developed from the statement provided by Participant 6:

The first time I did it, I did think it was very effective because it was new to everybody. I think there might have been one or two naysayers in the class of 20. But then when we were told we need to be doing it every day, it became a real crutch for the kids. The kids wanted to know how the data was being used. And

then some of them just admitted they were clicking random things because they

were tired of seeing the same video.

The participant responses to the interview question utilized to answer RQ1 show

that either one of two things occurred in the classrooms with attempted implementation

of the SEL tool. The teachers were not motivated to use the tool because they saw no

benefits to use the tool or were unsure how to use the tool. Secondly, the students were

not receptive to use the tool, cited as a requirement, without relatability or conceptual

understanding of what the tool was for or its benefits. This led to the theme of lack of

buy-in from students and teachers.

The second theme that was discovered during interviews in relation to RQ1 is

inadequate implementation of the current SEL program. Teachers were just not aware of

how the program was to be used or what the program specifically was supposed to do.

Throughout the responses for this interview question, teachers are giving various codes

that led to the theme of inadequate implementation. Teachers communicated confusion of

use of the application interface and lack of understanding why the program is being used.

This led me to the theme of inadequate implementation. A tool that is implemented

effectively and appropriately would not leave the users confused on how to use the tool

or lack of understanding why the tool is in place. Participant 5 reported

> I also wasn't sure what to make sense of the data with because it seemed when
>
> you look at the student responses, they were, I guess, so variable from day to day
>
> and that was a lot for me to take in without any more instruction about that.

Participant 8 shared

I know it was emailed to us, but to me it wasn't explained to me what it was. Just

told to the teachers as something that is pushed by the district, and they wanted us

to do it every day during homeroom. But for me, I didn't know what rhithm was. I

wasn't trained in rhithm.

Additionally Participant 5 shared, "I didn't really know what its purpose was for I didn't

really know how to implement it well."

Teachers at the study site were provided with a screencast training video upon

implementation of the current SEL program. However, 7 out of 8 teachers involved in

this study expressed that they were unfamiliar and/ or were not able to explain to students

how the data would be used or how the program would be beneficial to them. The

teachers who did not share the same feelings regarding the implementation of the SEL

program did not have a homeroom class which is when teachers had been instructed to

use the SEL program.

The participants expressed an overall lack of confidence in their usage of the

program. With staff members not being confident in their operation of the program, there

is an expectation that they would not be able to pass any confidence on to other teachers

and students, hence the buy-in is low for everyone at the study site. If teachers and

students were not aware of how the program was to be used, how can the program be

effective? The program was used at the study site daily, but teachers were still unfamiliar.

The implementation of the program should have included a more in-depth introduction

for users. The screencast video distributed to teachers was not adequate to train teachers

on the level that they needed to be trained as shown through the statements made by participants.

Findings for RQ2

Themes that included relationship building resources or programs and training with guidance on implementing SEL in lesson plans for courses and daily interactions were discovered for research question 2: What do secondary teachers perceive as needed supports in addition to the current program to impact SEL at the study site? To collect data to answer this research question, the following question was included in the interview protocol: What other needs, supports, resources are you familiar with that may effectively support SEL at this school? The responses that participants gave lead to the first theme, relationship building resources or programs (see Table 3).

Table 3

Codes and Themes for RQ2

Code	Theme	Research question
Model of family Build on shared experiences Small groups Open communication opportunities Conflict resolution Behavior modeling	Relationship building resources/programs	RQ2: What do secondary teachers perceive as needs in addition to current programs to impact SEL at the study site?
Guidance on implementation techniques Lesson plans/pedagogical guidance Generate understanding about what is SEL Able to identify students with greater SEL needs	Resources with guidance on implementing and incorporating SEL in lesson plans for courses and daily interactions	

This theme arose multiple times throughout the course of data collection.

Participant 1 expressed needs such as "something that promotes buy-in to the community

and the idea of (study site) and this model of family and I can get over things because I

have my people or my tribe." Participant 3 reiterated this need by referencing that even

though rigor is important in an academic environment, student-teacher relationships are

also important. The participant shared

> That's (SEL) not being friends; it's respecting them and creating a relationship.
>
> And I have to have relationship. Put relationship before rigor. So, if I don't have a
>
> relationship with the student, regardless of what I'm teaching, they're not going to

receive it as well as they would if I had a better relationship with them. So, we

need to really focus more on creating those relationships with our students.

Participant 4 stated

I believe in a shared experience. And I believe that if you have somebody to talk

to that can guide you and say," Oh, yes, well, yes, you're asked to be and you're

asked to do that. However, I can help you through that." And this is the way to

best, you know, achieve what you need to do.

Other participants were also in favor of a program or resource that would build

relationships but in the form of small groups that would give students the opportunity to

build more personal relationships with each other and their faculty. Participant 6 gave the

following statement:

I feel like those relationships are important and like some of the people that do

different things (to develop SEL skills). Like they have a very close or interesting

relationship with their faculty sponsors. I feel like doing something like that, like

maybe some sort of small group meeting.

Participant 7 also gave statements in support of a small group relationship building

program or resources:

You have to give them a space to open up and just visit sometimes and get their

emotions under control. Just an opportunity to express to someone that can help

them rather than someone that's not in a position to help and help them work

through the problem.

Participant 8 made similar comments: "I would love more support with you know, we have flex time this year. So, I would love more support. Can we take maybe one flex time a week and talk to them about real life situations?"

The second theme that was discovered with RQ2 is the need for resources with guidance on implementing and incorporating SEL in lesson plans and daily interactions. Participant 2 shared "sometimes even materials that are, you know, that are pedagogical and lesson plan ideas." Participant 3 communicated that there is a need to communicate or train faculty on what SEL is and what it looks like for teachers.

We can have speakers come in and talk to us; we can talk about really some of the socio-economic learning emotional needs that really address our age group. I think we do a lot of surface things here. And by we, I mean, just a few of us, because a lot of my coworkers don't value SEL. They kind of think about it as you know, what was the word I heard a coworker use touchy feely, you know, I don't do that. I teach what I teach. And then I don't have to be friends with the students.

Some of the participants even expressed concerns about being able to recognize students that are at a higher need for SEL skill development rather than subjecting the entire student body to SEL programs. Participants 3 shared the following statements:

We have so many kids with anxiety issues and depression, and different other emotional behavioral issues documented on 504, IEPs.... Because for all the ones that have made it known now that they have these issues, we probably have four

or five, that have not said anything, and because they're too afraid to say anything

about whether there's pride or, just being fearful that they'll be judged.

Participant 4 added

additional programs, honestly. I feel like I've gotten through the years, I think

I've been better at just through experience, recognizing maybe when a kid seems

to be behaving or demonstrating some kind of depression. You're more than just

what we might term as regular like, teenage like up and down. And so, I'm sure

I've missed kids. I know that I have. And but I've tried to still be cognizant of

that. Because I do know that it's quite normal for teenagers to be struck down. My

concern is, and what I tell the students all the time is that it's very normal to be

down. It's just you got to try to get back up. It seems like they get down and they

just conclude, oh, I guess this is it. And I don't really have an explanation for that

as to why.

The participants were able to effectively communicate the needs that would better

suit the students and faculty at the site from their perspectives. The consensus is that the

students at the study site are in need of a program that will build their relationship skills.

A couple of participants mentioned the current mentor-mentee program that is in place at

the study site. The mentor-mentee program is a pairing opportunity between freshman

and senior students at the study site. The mentor-mentee program is supposed to provide

guidance and insight to younger students on how to navigate their high school

experience. The suggestion is that the mentor-mentee program could be expanded to

further support more peer relationships in the school, but the participants were not sure

how that could be implemented. The participants were also able to identify that the teachers at the study site need resources of how to get SEL into their daily functions whether this is through pedagogical processes, daily interactions, or even separate programs. There is simply a lack of how-to among the faculty that is willing to do what is necessary to support SEL but currently has no guidance.

Findings for RQ3

The final research question is: How much, if any, training/education/experience have teachers received on SEL prior to the implementation of the current SEL program?? To answer this research question I asked the participants, "How much training, if any, have you received on the topic of SEL prior to the implementation of the current SEL program? The codes revealed the final theme of the study: lack of formal training on the topic of SEL provided to teachers at the study site by the district (see Table 4).

Table 4.

Codes and Themes for RQ3

Code	Theme	Research question
Individual committees working on ways to improve well-being of student body	Lack of formal training on the topic of SEL provided to teachers at the study site by the district	RQ3: How much, if any, training/education/experience have teachers received on SEL prior to the implementation of the current SEL program?
Training provided by other organizations		
Education regarding SEL provided by higher education institution		
No formal training on SEL		

Most of the participants, six out of eight, stated that they had no formal training on SEL provided to them by the district in which the study site is located. Other

participants received training from other entities. Participant 2 who has received training from an outside community partner stated "I have from (program name). It is incorporated into the (program name) lesson plans that they provide us with when you're on their grant program." Another participant has received training due to their choice to attend a higher education institution. Participant 3 shared "because I'm in a doctoral program, I have received more training than my average coworker because of my program, not because I'm a teacher here."

It is evident that the failed implementation of the current SEL program and lack of buy-in from students and teachers could have been caused by the lack of training. The district implemented a program to address SEL at the school level. The district made this decision; therefore, they must be aware that some type of SEL competency issue exists. The teachers were expected to implement a program based on SEL for which there has been no prior training provided and a program that educators were not trained on how to properly implement.

Salient and Discrepant Results

There were no salient or discrepant data results. Participants communicated their perceptions in a clear and concise fashion that produced similar results from each interview.

Evidence of Quality

In this process of research development, I designated the procedures that would be followed to ensure the quality of this research study. For example, each interviewee was selected from the use of the same procedures. The potential participants were invited

via a recruitment flyer that I created (Appendix F). The flyer instructed participants, if

willing to participate, to send an email to my Walden University email address to express

interest in participating. Some participants overlooked this directive and emailed my

district email address. I redirected these participants to my Walden email to ensure that

no correspondence regarding the study took place in my employer owned email account.

When participants emailed to participate in the study, I thanked them for their willingness

to participate and forwarded a consent form for the study. The consent form was created

to give participants a better perspective of what to expect regarding their participation in

the study. On the consent form, participants were asked to reply to the email with "I

consent" if they wished to continue participation. If they consented, they were forward a

link to a scheduling site to choose a date and time for their interview. This was to ensure

that the interviews took place when it was convenient for the researcher and participant.

All interviews were scheduled to take place outside of contractual school hours. I

conducted each interview when scheduled and followed an interview protocol that I

created for each interview (see Appendix D).

While conducting the interviews, I took notes on the interview response form (see

Appendix E) and recorded the interviews using an application, Otter. Another way that I

ensured the quality of my research was to verify the accuracy of participant statements.

After each interview concluded and the data was transcribed, I emailed the participants a

copy of their interview transcript to provide an opportunity to edit or verify any

information collected during the interview. This step allowed me to maintain validity in

the research process. Stenfors et al. (2020) shared that for research to be credible, the

methodology chosen should be justified and explicated. I was careful of the need to choose an appropriate methodology when designing the data collection process. The task was to gather the perceptions of individuals. I desired the full and honest point of view from the participants. The only requirements to participate in the study were minor self-reported knowledge of SEL and certified employment at the study site. These requirements allowed me to recruit candidates that could, at the very least, provide a definition of SEL in their own words. After the member checking process was complete, I began to listen and record notes regarding the interview responses. I recorded codes and linked the codes to overall themes which lead me to the overall answers to the research questions for this study.

Outcomes

This study addressed the problem that efforts to address SEL at the study site have been ineffective. The purpose of this basic qualitative study was to explore secondary teachers' perceptions of why the efforts to address SEL have been ineffective and to determine what supports teachers believe are needed to address SEL at the study site effectively. The knowledge of CASEL's SEL competencies gives the study areas to target to improve the social and emotional competencies among the student body. If faculty receive effective training on SEL implementation and SEL competencies, then the staff can appropriately address the areas where students lack. Without CASEL's SEL competencies, there would be no reference of what skills and characteristics should be the focus of efforts to address SEL in the school population, as well as no way to determine there was a lack of SEL competencies to justify the problem that guides this study.

Vygotsky's constructivist framework identified how teachers are responsible for instilling the desired behaviors into students through leadership and guidance. SEL is a form of learning just as any other discipline that occurs in the academic setting. Vygotsky's framework stated that the purpose of education is to deliberately instill in the child new forms of behavior and activity (Vygotsky, 1997). Teachers should direct and guide the student's activity with the purpose of achieving further development of the activity. In the case of SEL, accompanied with the knowledge of CASEL's SEL competencies, teachers will have the ability to guide activities related to SEL to achieve the final goal of improving and further developing the SEL competencies of students. The outcomes of this study show that the teachers recognize that there has been a change in the quality of student enrolled at that study site such as increased cheating, lack of resiliency and motivation, and lack of ability to manage stress which confirms the problem. The teachers at the study site are aware of SEL and what it means in relation to being an educator, could communicate why they perceived that the attempted implementation of a method to address SEL at the study site was not successful, and expressed suggestions of types of programs would be a better fit for our student body.

The results of the study aligned with the intended outcomes. I collected meaningful and in-depth accounts of secondary educators' perceptions. The findings of RQ1 reveal that the attempt to implement the SEL program at the study site failed due to lack of teacher/ student buy-in and inadequate implementation. The teachers were not knowledgeable of how or why the program was to be used and were not able to effectively explain the purpose of the program to students. Therefore, the teachers were

not able to recognize the value of the program which undoubtedly was the source of the lack of buy in from the teachers and students. The findings of this research study show that teachers have received little to no PD on social and emotional learning but have received inadequate PD on a program designed to address SEL among the student body. The findings of this research study are not uncommon to others. Research has shown that schools typically offer PD in content areas that also address curriculum and assessment but lack PD on teacher expressed needs such as behavior and classroom management (Liu & Du, 2022). The overall idea is that teacher PD needs have not been considered when PD decisions are made in terms of content and type. The project for this study includes a professional development project to teach educators the basic tenets of SEL reflective of expressed needs from the research study.

Teachers recognize the value of SEL and the benefits that SEL education holds for students. The findings of RQ2 show that teachers feel that a SEL program builds relationships within the school. The relationships listed by the study participants include peer and student-teacher relationships. The teachers also desire resources on incorporating SEL in daily interactions and lesson plans. The final research question, RQ3, reveals the most important aspect of the study. The teachers at the study site have not been trained. Teachers have not had professional development regarding SEL or the implementation of SEL in classrooms. The professional development supplied for the current SEL program was inadequate to the degree of which teachers nor students fully understood the operation of program or the benefits of the program. The proper

professional development will not guarantee any positive results, but it will at least set the teachers up for success.

Project Deliverable

The need for professional learning is evident among the participants. The development of a professional learning would address the need for SEL educator training and provide suggestions for methods to incorporate SEL education into daily interactions and lesson plans. The teachers are willing to do what is necessary to improve the SEL competencies in the student body but have not had proper guidance on how to complete this task.

Section 3: The Project

The purpose of this study was to explore secondary teachers' perceptions of why the efforts to address SEL have been ineffective and to determine what supports teachers believe are needed to address SEL at the study site. The results of the study indicated that the teachers lack adequate district- and school-provided training on SEL. The teachers also reported that the current SEL program application at the school is poorly implemented because they have not been trained to use it properly and do not think the students are receptive to using the current SEL program application. The interviews included comments from the teachers stating they have opted not to use the program because they do not have the capability to guide students in using it properly and do not understand how the program is beneficial to students because of their lack of training. Other teachers stated that they have heard coworkers say they do not intend to address SEL because it is "touchy feely." This indicates a gross misunderstanding of what SEL is. Overall, the teachers expressed an understanding of how the development of more appropriate SEL skills could benefit the student body and their daily classroom operations. The following themes were exposed during data analysis of the study: (a) inadequate implementation of the current SEL program, (b) lack of student and teacher buy-in to current SEL program, (c) relationship building programs would be better for student population to address SEL, (d) resources with guidance on implementing and incorporating SEL in lesson plans for course and daily interactions, and (e) lack of formal training on the topic of SEL provided to teachers at the study site by the district. The goal

of this project is to provide teachers with clear definitions of what SEL is and provide

guidance and practices on how to effectively implement SEL in their classrooms.

Rationale

The problem explored in this study was that the efforts to address SEL at the

study site had been ineffective. The findings indicated that teachers had not been properly

trained on the topic of SEL or on the district provided application to address SEL at the

study site. These findings guided me to determine that professional development training

would be the best project to address the problem at the study site. The district uses an

online system in which teachers can sign up for training voluntarily. Throughout the year,

the district has mandatory training days, and a schedule is provided ahead of the training.

These mandatory trainings are usually discipline and grade level specific to address

content or curricular topics. At the time of the study, there were no scheduled trainings to

address SEL. However, schools are allowed to choose their own professional

development opportunities throughout the school year on an as needed basis. For

example, the staff had experienced an exponential increase in academic dishonesty at the

study site; therefore, the most recent training was focused on using a district-provided

application to curb cheating on assessments given online.

This professional development in the current study could serve as an individually

selected training at the study site. I recommend separating the professional development

into 3 days of professional development at the study site. Trainings will take place on the

allotted professional development days for teachers, which are required contractual work

days. I would like to refrain from taking up too much of the teachers' time and allow

them to have the opportunity to contemplate information provided in the first session. This professional development will also include access to resources and materials for teachers to revisit after the trainings have been concluded.

Review of the Literature

Similar to the current study, teachers in the study conducted by Tran et al. (2021) reported that current professional development for transnational teachers had been inadequate. Professional development opportunities should be responsive to teachers and the students they are interacting with on a daily basis (Tran et al., 2021). Professional development should also include a demonstration of how recommendations can support students and how they can be implemented (M. Chu et al., 2020). The professional development project for the current study not only addresses how SEL is beneficial to students but also suggests methods for classroom implementation in various content areas.

Section 3 includes a review of the relevant literature to support the project chosen to address the findings of this study. The findings revealed that teachers need training on the topic of SEL and guidance on classroom practices to implement SEL in their classrooms. The teachers who participated in this study stated that they lack the training to positively affect the social and emotional competencies of students in their classes. Because the teachers reported the need for professional development, the other project options (evaluation report, curriculum plan, or policy recommendation) would not have addressed the concerns revealed in this study.

Based on the study findings, I chose to create a professional development project. The training will be composed of evidence-based practices to support completion of professional development to educate teachers on the topic of SEL, classroom practices to implement SEL skill-developing strategies in the classroom, and how to achieve improved SEL competence so teachers are more equipped to help their students. According to Vygotsky's (1997) constructivist framework, it is the teacher's responsibility to instill new behaviors into students. However, before this can occur, teachers must learn the behaviors and develop their own understanding of the goal: improve SEL competencies among the student body. Therefore, the primary function of this project is to educate teachers on how to instill these new behaviors. I conducted searches for peer-reviewed literature in the following databases: ProQuest, Academic Search Complete, Taylor and Francis, ERIC, and Thoreau. The search terms entered into the databases were *professional development*, *SEL classroom practices*, *SEL* and *ELA*, *SEL* and *STEM*, and *adult SEL skills*.

Professional Development

Huynh et al. (2021) had similar findings that teachers' limited understanding of how to conceptualize or apply SEL or design SEL educational activities is linked to teachers' lack of education on SEL. There are several formats of professional development that exist as an avenue to impact teachers. Ramos-Rodriguez et al. (2021) stated that the class study method is useful to achieve the best results from professional development in terms of effectiveness. The class study method encourages inquiry and reflection in learning communities. Class study methodology, regarding professional

development, also expresses the need for teachers to be involved in data collection and data analysis, considers the links with outside entities, permits reasonable time to change, and communicates the need for expert participation such as trainers or visiting professors (Ramos-Rodriguez et al., 2021).

Professional development is a customary practice within the district where the study site is located. This practice is common because it is known that professional development of teachers is important and directly related to student outcomes (Batool & Thakur, 2022). Batool and Thakur (2022) stated that teachers reported that they had obtained better pedagogical knowledge and better attitudes and understandings because of professional development activities. The state of California invested in improving the SEL of their students in 2015 when they implemented a statewide professional development strategy (Vance & Goldberg, 2020). California's strategy included certifying SEL trainers and district leaders. The basis of the adoption of this SEL plan was that the success of the student depends on properly equipping the workforce. As it relates to SEL professional development, students need autonomy, belonging, and choices to be included in more learning opportunities that are relevant to their current and future lives (Mac Iver et al., 2022). Mac Iver et al. (2022) stated that teachers who participated in the professional development series experienced better course passing outcomes. The study was designed to determine the impacts of high school teacher professional development on deepening students' learning and engagement to increase course passing rates. Alruqi and Alharbi (2022) conducted a study to examine the impacts of professional development on English teachers. The study revealed that professional

development has a positive effect on student learning. However, the professional development should be tailored to the needs of the teachers and provide the opportunity for collaborative practices.

Gul et al. (2021) investigated the connection between teacher professional development and effective application of new instructional strategies. Findings indicated that after teachers were provided with guidelines and experience, they had an increased ability to provide effective content knowledge and skills to the students. The study reported a strong positive relationship between three variables: instructional practices, productive professional growth, and student learning outcomes. This indicates that when teachers are properly trained with instructional practices to implement their learning in the classroom, then the students will be positively affected.

The purpose of a study conducted by Rodgers et al. (2022) was to determine the relationship between beliefs of teachers and student progress during a professional development initiative. The findings revealed that if teachers do not feel the procedures being taught in the professional development are worthwhile for their students, they may be unlikely to implement new practices. This finding was absent of any effects due to the evidence base to support the new practices or prior teacher success. The study also revealed a need to understand what teachers believe about the subject. This was an important finding regarding using professional development to influence teachers' understandings of SEL. There should be a portion of the professional development to measure what teachers believe about the topic so that after the professional development is completed the measurement can be completed again. If teachers' beliefs change to

align with what the professional development is teaching, then teachers will be more likely to implement the new practices.

Classroom Practices

The current professional development project covers classroom practices to positively affect the SEL competencies of students. Teachers who participated in the study expressed that they need guidance on how to implement SEL in their classrooms. The professional development project for this study includes suggested practices for discipline-specific courses and practices that can be implemented in any course. Some things can be done in the classroom to provide an environment for students to develop SEL competencies. To properly train teachers to implement SEL in their classrooms, it is important to predict some challenges so that teachers can be trained with those challenges in mind. The benefits of SEL expand beyond improving SEL competencies. The implementation of SEL practices also have positive effects on self-esteem, emotional and behavioral disorders, and prosocial behaviors (Kim et al., 2022). SEL researchers have completed a great amount of research on school programs and afterschool programs used to improve the SEL of students. SEL education must be approached differently for students of varying ages and grades. For example, elementary students spend most of their time in one classroom while high school students change class throughout the day, so informal SEL practices may be more common (L. Chu & DeArmond, 2022). Kim et al. (2022) conducted a meta-analysis of SEL programs and found valuable information regarding the effectiveness of SEL, including the goal to include SEL in schools, that it

should be integrated with the academic skills that are being taught, and that it should not be implemented on a selective basis but included in the school curriculum.

SEL programs should be developed to be a part of general and inclusive education. For example, to help develop the skill of motivation, students should be able to set and achieve goals. A strategy that helps students set and achieve goals is giving the students an opportunity to identify and discuss goals. Students could use spreadsheets to input educational and personal goals with time allotments for quarters, months, or weeks (Crawford, 2022). SEL can also be implemented using general practices such as welcoming rituals, engaging practices, and optimistic closure (Hanover Research, 2019). Welcoming rituals are openings used to establish safety and predictability, such as class meetings and greeting each student by name. Engaging practices provide opportunities for interactions such as group work and brain breaks. Optimistic closure gives students the ability to reflect and end the day on a positive note.

Research has shown that SEL is most successfully implemented in English language arts classrooms in comparison to social studies, math, and science (Lahey & Monahan, 2022). In English language arts classrooms, comparing characters and describing characters can be associated with the SEL competencies of social awareness and relationship management (Lau & Shea, 2022). Other activities that may be beneficial in the English language arts classroom include dialogic reading, literature circles, and role-playing. These activities help students develop communication skills, express feelings, and problem solve (Lau & Shea, 2022).

In physical education, accompanying the development of psychomotor skills with the skill of practicing rather than observing or giving feedback on skills assists in respectful communication and giving or receiving feedback in a constructive manner (Wright & Richards, 2022), which helps develop relationship skills. Other instructional practices in physical education include forming groups or teams in a way that preserves the student's self-respect compared to allowing students to pick teams or giving the students the opportunity to extend their learning experience by using in-class experiences for the promotion of a physically active lifestyle (Barney et al., 2021).

Social science courses can support student development of self-awareness by engaging students in reflection and analysis of people in history (Hendra, 2020). The goal is to expose students to scenarios of people in history to gain understanding of differing perspectives and the impact of having a differing view, to evaluate how commitments or values led to certain choices, and to analyze how trust or loyalty was built over time. Teachers in the social sciences also can choose interesting stories to align with overarching ideas. Hendra (2020) recommended strategies such as rapid fire writing, listen to learn, text to text, and text to world for use in social science classrooms to develop SEL skills.

Science, technology, engineering, and mathematics courses provide the same opportunity to implement strategies to guide the positive development of SEL skills. Some practices such as writing assignments and hands-on activities develop the SEL competencies of self-awareness and self-management. Students could also create or mimic real-world experiences. This can be achieved via demonstrations, projects, and

student center discussions (Elmi, 2020). These activities could demonstrate to students how the content has personal relevance to their lives. Peer collaboration can provide experiences to reduce student stress. Elmi (2020) recommended a classroom peer tutor strategy that promotes a tutor–tutee design for students who understand the content well and students who are struggling. This strategy could help develop relationship skills and social awareness.

SEL is most effective when used with low-lift strategies and practices instead of simply written into the curriculum and when teachers have the ability to design learning opportunities that align with student needs and experiences (Bailey, Stickle et al., 2019).While project is primarily focused on classroom practices that can help develop the SEL competence of students, it is important to note other avenues are available that can be arranged between schools and communities. Community based service learning gives students the ability to have a hands-on experience with the SEL process. Instead of deducing experiences from books or classroom materials, service learning can provide students with the opportunity to gain greater understanding, tolerance, and respect for groups of people whom they do not normally interact with (Sun et al., 2021).

Teachers and SEL

To help remedy the lack of buy-in related to SEL among the teachers, the project will also address and show how SEL can be beneficial to teachers in the classroom. Teachers experienced a lack of buy-in related to the current district SEL application. This could have been caused by two factors 1) lack of effective implementation of the program or 2) lack of understanding how SEL can benefit teachers. If teachers understood how

SEL could support their classroom endeavors, then they may be more likely to buy in and implement practices to support SEL competency development. A study conducted in 2020 revealed that for adults to teach their students how to establish and maintain healthy relationships, they must first develop their own abilities (Wallace Foundation, 2021). To develop the SEL competence of education professionals, such as teachers, professionals should: 1) model positive behaviors, 2) create and sustain healthy relationships, and 3) be reflective practitioners (Gimbert et al., 2021).

Teachers should model positive behaviors because human behaviors can be learned by observing others. If teachers want students to behave in a specific manner, then they must model those mannerisms. Teachers should also be able to create and sustain healthy relationships. Gimbert et al. (2021) recommends professional development opportunities that expose educators to SEL through self-study structures grounded in the CASEL framework. Reflective practitioner is the third practice revealed by the study conducted by Gimbert et al. (2021). For teachers to comprehend why SEL competence is important, they need the time and ability to evaluate their current level of SEL and create plans to increase their understanding of competencies. Teachers have can obtain personal benefits by improving SEL competence such as minimizing stress levels (Brion, 2022). Teachers with lower stress levels have a higher ability to create classroom environments that are suitable to improve the SEL competence of students. School leaders also maintain a responsibility to improve the social and emotional competence of teachers. Some practices for school leaders may include creating opportunities for staff to learn and strengthen professional SEL skills and personal SEC (social and emotional

competence), creating opportunities to develop trust and collaboration among staff, and identifying ways to explicitly model SEL in daily interactions with faculty, staff, students, and families (Brion, 2022). School leadership also can influence the development of teacher SEC through organizational methods. Leadership in schools need to provide spaces for professional vulnerability, reduced teacher pressure, and efforts to treat teachers as people (Stark et al., 2022). This can be done by recognizing the emotional demand, wide range of daily emotions, and effort it takes to regulate the outward expression of emotions by teachers and creating supports in the school structure.

The explicit intent to improve the SEL competence of students must focus on both pieces of SEL which is social and emotional. However, it cannot be ignored that students have emotions and that to regulate, define, and express those emotions; the students need a safe space to feel those emotions and as educators we must avoid simply reducing SEL to behavior management (Clark et al., 2022). Overall, teaching is an emotional occupation and emotional competence can be developed through school organization by establishing this fact and developing an understanding and an ability to discuss the emotional challenges that are unavoidable in daily interactions with students (Keller & Becker, 2021). Teachers undertake the responsibility to teach SEL to their students while simultaneously and continuously working in their own SEL competence. However, school leadership must support teachers to reach this goal.

Project Description

This project is a professional development plan to educate teachers on SEL and how to implement SEL in their regular class curriculum. The learning opportunity will be

conducted using printed materials and PowerPoint presentations. In addition to the printed materials and PowerPoints, teachers will participate in evaluation activities to evaluate their learning and the effectiveness of the professional development opportunity. The topics of the professional development were decided based on the results of the research study conducted at the study site. The training will be offered at the study site over the course of three sessions. The sessions will be conducted on professional development days provided by the district. The study site administration has the authority to designate and select trainings for the staff to attend on professional development days. Teachers could also be awarded continue education units for trainings that take place on the professional development days.

Barriers and Needed Resources

Resources needed to effectively implement this project will be the use of space at the study site and the use to technology for the completion of project objectives. The teachers participating in the training will need access to laptops or digital devices to complete evaluations. I will need access to a projector as the presenter to disseminate information. The study site has many existing supports. For example, training funds. Each school site has available funds to use for the training of staff. While the use of these funds does not directly apply to this training, if teachers or administration see the need to hire experts on SEL to further the SEL education of the faculty, then the training funds will become a valuable resource.

Some barriers of this project include lack of professional familiarity and buy-in from teachers. The lack of professional familiarity from colleagues is a barrier because I

have been in the role of coworker for the past eight years. Teachers in the training will have to change their perspective to view my role as researcher/ trainer instead of classroom teacher. The second barrier is buy-in in while the teachers that participated in the study are supportive of implementing SEL, some teachers may not be as open to making classroom changes or even undertaking the responsibility of SEL educator. The method I will use to overcome these barriers will be to present facts and show how research states the implementation of SEL practices could benefit teachers and students. I am confident that if teachers view the benefits and receive implementable practices, then there will be more apt to adjust to the addition of SEL in their classrooms.

Implementation Proposal

The training will be given at the study site on professional development days. These are paid workdays provided by the district to provide professional development to teachers. No students are present at the school during professional development days. The project will be completed during professional development days in the 1st, 2nd, and 3rd nine weeks. The expectation is that teachers complete the training and then return to classrooms with an operational definition of SEL and practices that they could implement in the classroom regardless of the discipline. Teachers will also have access to materials to use as resources to support them in SEL practice implementation.

Roles and Responsibilities

As the researcher, my role for the professional development project will be to create and present the professional development project. I will supply all original materials to present to the faculty. Other responsibilities that must be completed include

evaluation reviews. The responsibilities of training participants include attending all 3 sessions and completing and pre/post evaluations (see Appendix B and C) assigned for the professional development.

Project Evaluation Plan

Evaluation of the project will take place twice during the professional development presentation. Prior to presenting the professional development, faculty will complete a pre assessment (see Appendix B) to determine current understandings of the definition of SEL, what SEL looks like in practice, and awareness of SEL strategies and benefits. After the conclusion of the professional development, faculty will complete a post assessment (see Appendix C). This assessment will evaluate the level of better understanding of SEL, level of likely implementation of strategies, and possible implementation strategies for their classrooms. The primary goal is to determine the effectiveness of the project. I will review each document to determine if faculty experienced any learning growth based on their responses. It is a formative evaluation to also give me the opportunity to improve the professional development where it is necessary. The overall goal is to determine if teachers understanding of SEL and implementation of SEL practices in the classroom have improved.

Project Implications

This project is supported by study findings that teachers at the study site and thereby the district are not receiving adequate training on the topic of SEL. The district recognizes the need to address SEL as they have implemented programs to evaluate student SEL daily. This is completed through the current SEL application that is being

used ineffectively. However, teachers were improperly trained on the program as well per study findings. The findings of the study could motivate more focus on the SEL of students by making changes to the student focused activities or influence administration to invest in more support for teachers regarding providing SEL education. The district may also wish to expand the current project to train all teachers in the district so that they are more familiar with SEL and SEL classroom practices.

The project can improve the educational environment for the faculty and increase the academic outcomes of the student body. If students experience growth in SEL competencies, they will be more equipped to cope and integrate into society as emotionally sound individuals with the ability to contribute and adapt.

Section 4: Reflections and Conclusions

Project Strengths and Limitations

At the beginning of the conceptualization of this study, I was prepared to encounter setbacks and experience professional and personal growth. Some of the strengths of this project included the project choice, the method of project dissemination, and the ability of the project to improve the perception of SEL teachers at the study site. The study participants reported teacher training as a need to improve the SEL competencies of the students at the study site. Professional development opportunities give teachers the ability to use new and creative ideas and teaching strategies when working together (Meesuk et al., 2021). Other project options would not have been effective to address the study findings. An evaluation report would not have been suitable because there was no product, service, or program to evaluate. Curriculum plans could be used to plan for SEL inclusiveness in the classroom but would not have addressed the findings of this study. The professional development project best suited the findings of the study.

The project could have been disseminated virtually to maximize professional development opportunities for the teachers at the study site. However, some teachers may not have taken interest and may have skipped through slides and activities. Because teachers must attend this professional development opportunity in person, it increases the possibility that teachers engage with the project with more fidelity. This project has the potential to change teachers' perception of SEL. In this project, teachers are being educated on SEL competencies, methods to improve SEL competencies, and classroom

strategies to improve the SEL competencies of students. Even if teachers do not use the strategies provided, they should at least gain a new understanding of SEL. This will clarify misconceptions reported in the study, including teachers referring to SEL as "touchy feely."

A limitation of this study is that there are some teachers who will not want to participate in providing SEL education to students at the study site. This may be due to continued lack of buy-in to the need for SEL in the classroom or lack of ability to confidently partake in the SEL education of students. This can be combated by consistent presentation of data to support SEL in the classroom. All study participants revealed that they lacked district-provided training regarding the importance of SEL to students. However, the teachers who did not participate in the study could feel differently, but there was no way to gather their perceptions.

Another limitation of this project was that it does not provide guidance on how to effectively use the current SEL application at the study site. Most participants in the study stated that they did not use the current application for various reasons. The most common reasons were lack of understanding of how the application is used and how it is used to benefit the student body. This project does not include any training to address these findings. The current SEL application is district mandated, and it is the responsibility of the district to ensure that teachers are properly trained to use the information to support students.

Recommendations for Alternative Approaches

An alternative approach to this study could have been to teach the students about SEL competencies. This would require free time in the required academic schedule of all students. Even if free time at the study site were attainable, the factors such as location and methods would come into play. The study site would have to decide to host students in one location or another and determine how to teach a large body of students at one time with fidelity. However, the choice to teach SEL competencies to students would not address the lack of training among the teaching staff at the study site. Another approach to this study could have been to ask the district to hire or request a presenter employed by the developers of the current SEL application to come in and provide a thorough training. This would allow teachers to have hands-on knowledge of how and why the application is beneficial to the student body. This could help with teachers' misunderstanding of how to use the application due to lack of knowledge, but it would require funds to support the training for the study site and other schools in the district. This approach could also become time-consuming to visit each school in the district to provide the needed training sessions.

Scholarship, Project Development and Evaluation, and Leadership and Change

The term "resilience" comes up in SEL education on a frequent basis. Resilience is related to the SEL competency of self-management. Resilience is also related to the ability to face setbacks and recover without the urge to avoid the work to overcome a challenge. At the beginning of this study, I lacked resilience. The process of completing the prospectus and proposal introduced me to a new level of iterative adjustments and

corrections, and I almost succumbed to the thought of leaving the program. I was forced to become resilient or cease my journey. I have learned so much about the research process and have gained a new level of expertise related to addressing the SEL needs of students in my classroom and school. I have read peer-reviewed literature from the Walden Library addressing SEL. Each time I reviewed a source, I gained a new understanding of how to help my students and grew as an educator.

The purpose of this study was to explore secondary teachers' perceptions of why the efforts to address SEL have been ineffective and to determine what supports teachers believe are needed to address SEL at the study site. However, a personal goal of mine was to gain experience as a scholar practitioner. I gained that experience as well as newfound respect for those who completed this feat prior to me. As a nearly burned-out teacher with 8 years of classroom experience, I renewed my purpose as a teacher by completing this study. My purpose is to educate the world's next generation of leaders, which includes developing their ability to become academically, socially, and emotionally equipped members of their communities.

Through the completion of this study, I have recognized the importance of being thorough. As students begin to consider what moves them as a scholar practitioner, it takes thoroughness to ensure all their thoughts align in actionable research. To ensure this alignment, students must be thorough in their thinking and consider how each idea connects to other ideas in a horizontal fashion or supports them in a vertical fashion. The literature review for this study and project was extensive. I am now able to recognize the

usefulness of reference management applications, which provide valuable storage and organization techniques for peer-reviewed sources.

As a scholar, I have gone through several changes. I have been forced to address the understanding that school tasks have been easy for me at every level until I arrived at the doctoral process. I have been required to take criticism as constructive instead of personal and maintain my own work ethic to complete tasks in a timely fashion. I have increased my depth of critical thinking, which has improved my effectiveness as a practitioner. The ability to critically think with the purpose of planning instruction and guiding students to intended outcomes has improved throughout this process. I have adapted strategies to support my students' SEL competencies and have developed methods to improve their academic outcomes based on the understanding that I am an educational facilitator. As a project developer, I have learned valuable skills. I feel that I am an expert in SEL based on the knowledge obtained from research completed by other practitioners in the field. However, I know that education is a changing field, so the application of SEL through the lens of education will also need to change. To remain current regarding SEL in education, I will have to continue lifelong learning on this topic.

Reflection on Importance of the Work

I have always known that caring for my students was important for my classroom management, student motivation, and general ability to impact the life of young adults. However, the literature review and project completion have made me aware of how vast the opportunities are to ensure that teachers educate each student academically, socially, and emotionally. The work that took place was important to me to reveal the perceptions

of the people most undervalued in education: teachers. This study is a perfect example of how teachers are mandated to perform duties that they know are not effective or feasible for their classroom schedule. Typically, mandates are implemented without teacher input and often on a one-size-fits-all basis. I hope to have provided information not only on the importance of SEL for all students but also on the importance on doing what is best for teachers and students while allowing for teacher input. I am hopeful that this study will be used to inform stakeholders of the importance of professional development for programs, applications, and strategies that they want teachers to use.

Implications, Applications, and Directions for Future Research

The current study has the potential to impact potential social change on organizational and individual levels. The purpose of this study was to explore secondary teachers' perceptions of why the efforts to address SEL have been ineffective and to determine what supports teachers believe are needed to address SEL at the study site. This included an analysis of why the current SEL application is not being used effectively, what teachers need to support SEL in the classroom, and how much training teachers have received on SEL. The study revealed that the current program is not being used effectively due to a lack of understanding the function and purpose, which can be corrected by providing teachers with adequate training. The teachers also reported that they need training on SEL and SEL strategies to have the ability to support SEL in the classroom.

The major finding is that teachers need training. They need to be taught to perform the duties that are extending beyond their normal professional roles. This study

may impact the organizational level by encouraging the decision-making stakeholders to ensure they are providing adequate training to teachers. If the goal is to implement applications, programs, and materials for use by teachers to impact student learning, there is no way the implementation can be successful if teachers have not received adequate training. On the individual level, students and teachers becoming more cognizant of SEL may be the primary impact of the study. This includes how improving SEL competencies can improve daily life and life outcomes for students. When the teachers gain more knowledge of SEL, it could motivate them to be more intentional of developing their own SEL competencies, which may lead to less stress and lower risk of burnout.

I recommend that the district perform an evaluation of the training methods used to train teachers on the current SEL application required for use by classroom teachers and students to determine whether teachers are using the application adequately and effectively. This evaluation may reveal areas of improvement and necessary action. I also recommend that researchers establish a link between teacher burnout and stress levels after participating in continuous learning opportunities to improve educator SEL. Researchers could measure growth in SEL competencies and changes in stress level among educators. This contribution to the literature could help make the case for SEL even more compelling by providing a quantitative explanation of the current qualitative findings. The project produced for the current study could be used to train faculty on SEL competencies and could expand the findings of the current study by having teachers who have implemented the strategies complete follow-up evaluations. These evaluations may reveal whether the strategies have been effective in developing the SEL of students.

Conclusion

The purpose of this basic qualitative study was to explore secondary teachers'
perceptions of why the efforts to address SEL have been ineffective and to determine
what supports teachers believe are needed to effectively address SEL at the study site.
The research questions that were developed to guide this study were used to explore
participants' perceptions regarding why the SEL efforts have been ineffective and to
determine why the teachers were not using the program. The questions also addressed the
needed supports for SEL in the classroom from the teachers' perspectives. This included
asking teachers about specific needs or additional programs they were familiar with to be
successful.

Interview responses led to several conclusions that the teachers need more
training and supports to effectively address SEL in their classrooms. This research gave
me an understanding of how to address the gap in practice at the study site. The gap was
the lack of effective SEL at the study site. The findings revealed that teachers are not
using the current SEL program (Rhithm), and they lack sufficient training on SEL. The
participants communicated that they need more training on the topic of SEL and ways to
better address SEL in the classroom. All participants expressed the opinion that SEL
education is important but lacked the ability to positively impact their students in this
area. The findings indicated that more training would be beneficial to educate the faculty
on what SEL is and how easily it can be incorporated into their classrooms. The project
chosen for this study was professional development (see Appendix A), which will
address the need for training on the topic of SEL, strategies to implement SEL in the

classroom using instructional practices, and information on how personal SEL skills can help teachers promote SEL skills in the student body. The training will give teachers the foundational knowledge to become familiar with SEL and will provide basic instructional strategies that could be implemented in any discipline to positively effect SEL competencies of their students.

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Appendix A: The Project

SEL and the Classroom: Professional Development for Teachers

Purpose: The purpose of this project is to address the findings of the study that show teachers lack adequate training on the topic of SEL by providing general information on the topic of SEL and strategies to support SEL practices in the classrooms. At the end of the professional development, teachers will have a better understanding of what SEL is and what SEL looks like in the classroom. The teachers will receive resources to revisit key topics addressed and discussed in the training.

Goals: The goal of the project is to address the lack of training on the topic of SEL among the teachers at the study site by providing the teachers with training on the topic of SEL and supplying teachers with strategies to use in their classroom to improve the SEL competencies of the student body. Additionally, goals for the teacher should be to obtain the skills required to begin to implement strategies into their lesson plans to improve the SEL competencies of the student body.

Learning Outcomes: Educators at the study site will obtain a clear understanding about what SEL is and how to implement it in their daily class curriculum.

Target Audience: This professional development opportunity is designed for secondary teachers at the study site. However, it could be used for other secondary teachers. It is not applicable to teachers in primary schools as some of the strategies are not used or appropriate for younger children.

Timeline: The professional development will take place over three days during the school year. The days will not be consecutive as the district has not provided that many

consecutive days for training. The days are randomly place during the 1st, 2nd, and 3rd nine-weeks of the school year. Therefore, each session will take place on the professional development day allotted for that nine-week period.

During the first session, I will welcome the teachers and explain to them how we arrived at the need for the training. I will address the goals of the session. This includes a recap of data provided in the past regarding the lack of SEL competencies and behavior problems among the student body. I will ask the staff to complete a pre-assessment. The pre-assessment is an original document that will be completed via google forms. I will then present information on SEL including the definition and address misconceptions on what teachers may think SEL is. Teachers will be randomly put into 5 groups and given a list of terms on a self-created handout. The handout lists characteristics that represent each SEL competency. I will give each group and SEL competency and they will attempt to choose the term that aligns with their assigned competency. They will document this on post-it chart paper so other groups can view their selections. I will the debrief that activity before teachers leave for lunch. When teachers return from lunch, I will give them time to complete a think-pair-share activity to discuss and document current classroom experiences that may be related to the lack of SEL competencies. After this activity, I will use the provided classroom experiences to link to a lack of a specific SEL competency. To conclude the first session, I will review what was covered during the day and provide information for what is to be covered in the next session and give teachers a challenge to participate in reflection of their own SEL competencies.

The second session will begin with a recap of the first session and discussion of plans for the second session. I will address the goals for the session. I will open the floor for voluntary contributions of the reflective analysis regarding personal SEL competencies given at the end of the first session. The next portion of this session will contain information on how improving SEL competencies could be beneficial to teachers and students and engage teachers in discussion of ways they could improve personal SEL competencies. The final portion of the session will include the re-distribution of the data that contains information that identifies characteristics that led to the conclusion that there is a lack of SEL competencies among students and a think-pair-share activity. I will separate teachers into random groups and allow teachers to determine what SEL competency the characteristic belongs to and discuss if it is something they can address in their classroom. This will allow me to gauge how confident teachers are or could be regarding SEL education and allow teachers to identify exactly where students need support.

The third and final session will open with a review from the previous two sessions and discussions of the goals for the current session. I will ask teachers to give input on things they are already doing in the classrooms that they feel addresses an SEL competency. I will then present to teachers suggested classroom strategies for each core discipline and elective such as physical education. The teachers will then separate into content specific groups. The groups will be organized by core disciplines and one group for all elective teachers. I will then give teachers that task of creating a lesson plan for two days that incorporates one or more presented strategies to address SEL in the classroom. Teachers

will use a lesson plan template that I created to complete this activity. Finally, I will
communicate to teachers the importance of SEL in the classroom for teachers and
students. Teachers will engage in closing discussions and then complete a post-
assessment via google forms.

Agenda: The agenda for the three-day professional development are included in the
tables below.

Session 1

Time	Topics
8:00- 9:30	• Introduction • Overview of Sessions • Goals of Current Session • Pre-Assessment
10:00- 11:30	• Discuss CASEL and SEL • 5 SEL Competencies • Easel Post It Activity
1:00-2:00	• Think-Pair- Share: Discuss current problems experienced in classrooms due to lack of SEL competency • Assign teacher provided experiences to a SEL competency
2:30-3:00	• Closing • Next Session Discussion • Reflect- Teacher SEL competence

Session 1 Notes: Teachers will break from 9:30- 10:00, 11:30-1, and 2:00-2:30. The

materials needed for this session for the presenter include a projector, laptop, Post-It

Chart paper, markers, print outs of SEL competency characteristics. Materials for

participants include laptops.

Session 2

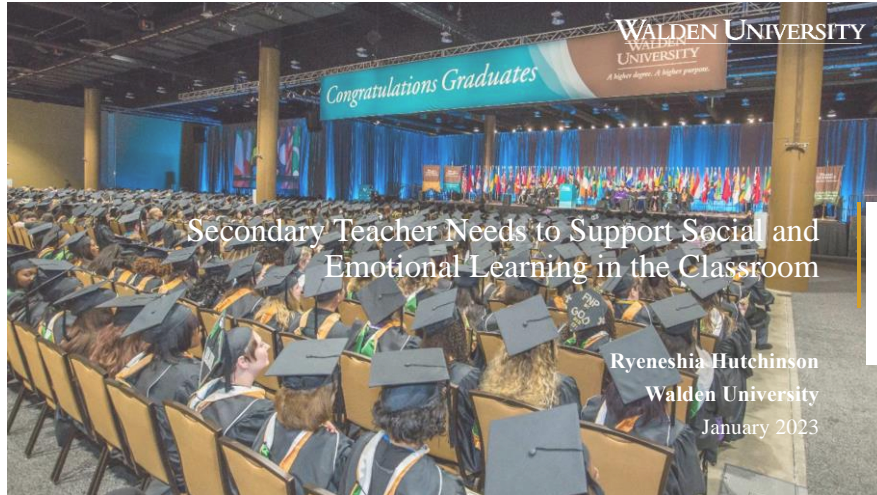| Time	Topics
8:00-9:30	• Review session 1 • Goals of current session • Discuss reflections from session 1
10:00-11:30	• Present how improving SEL competencies can help teachers and students • Discuss how teachers could improve personal SEL competencies
1:00-2:00	• Review data that lead to discovery of lack of SEL competencies • Think-Pair- Share: Use data to determine if any SEL competency needs emergent support
2:30-3:00	• Closing • Next session discussion

Session 2 Notes: Teachers will break from 9:30- 10:00, 11:30-1, and 2:00-2:30. Materials

needed for the presenter for this session include: projector and laptop. Participants do not

need any materials for this session.

Session 3

Time	Topics
8:00-9:30	- Review sessions 1 &2 - Goals of current session - Discussion of any current classroom strategies that teachers feel align with SEL
10:00-11:30	Present SEL strategies for the classroom that are applicable for different disciplines and general behaviors
1:00-2:00	Planning Activity: Separate teachers into disciplines, create lesson plan including two SEL strategies for two days of instruction.
2:00-2:30	- Closing - Goals for implementation - Post- Assessment

Session 3 Notes: Teachers will break from 9:30- 10:00, 11:30-1, and 2:00-2:30. Materials

needed for the presenter for this session include: projector, laptop, and blank sheets of

paper. Participants will need writing utensil and laptop.

Evaluation Plan: Each participant will complete a pre-assessment and post-assessment

as part of the evaluation plan for this project. The information will be used to determine if

the professional development was effective in terms of improving teacher understanding

of SEL and supporting teacher needs for ways to improve the SEL of students in the

classroom. The assessments will also be used to collect feedback and suggestions for the

future use of the professional development.

Secondary Teacher Needs to Support Social and
Emotional Learning in the Classroom

Ryeneshia Hutchinson
Walden University
January 2023

Purpose

The purpose of this project is to address the
findings of a study that show teachers lack
adequate training on the topic of SEL by
providing general information on the topic of
SEL and strategies to support SEL practices in
the classrooms.

WALDEN UNIVERSITY

Overall Goal

At the end of the professional development, teachers will have a better understanding of what SEL is and what SEL looks like in the classroom. The teachers will receive resources to revisit key topics addressed and discussed in the training.
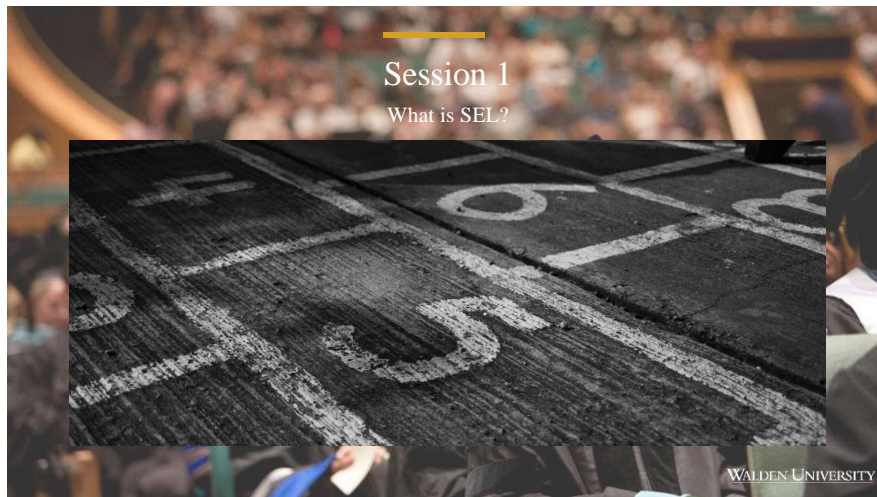
Plans- 3 Sessions

- Session 1- What is SEL?
  - Discuss main tenets of SEL and the research completed by CASEL that shows how SEL education supports teachers and students.
- Session 2- Data Driven Decisions
  - Use site data both academic and experiences to relate the phenomena to lack of SEL competencies
- Session 3- SEL in the Classroom
  - Discuss SEL classroom practices and develop plans to use SEL practices in daily instruction.

Session 1
What is SEL?

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Agenda

Time	Topics
8:00- 9:30	☐ Introduction ☐ Overview of Sessions ☐ Goals of Current Session ☐ Pre-Assessment
10:00- 11:30	☐ Discuss CASEL and SEL ☐ 5 SEL Competencies ☐ Easel Post It Activity
1:00-2:00	☐ Think-Pair- Share: Discuss current problems experienced in classrooms due to lack of SEL competency ☐ Open Discussion
2:30-3:00	☐ Closing ☐ Next Session Discussion ☐ Reflect- Teacher SEL competence

WALDEN UNIVERSITY

Goals

What is SEL?

We will the discuss main tenets of SEL and the research completed by CASEL that shows how SEL education supports teachers and students.

Preassessment

Please type the following link into your browser or scan the QR code on your cellular device to complete the preassessment for this training.

https://forms.gle/PmnEW1Fi8yWhaJUs5   OR

What is SEL?

Social and emotional learning (SEL) is an integral part of education and human development. 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, 2022).

WALDEN UNIVERSITY

CASEL

- CASEL – Collaborative for Academic, Social, and Emotional Learning.
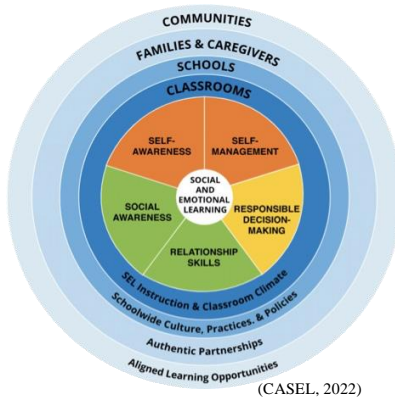
CASEL's mission is to help make evidence-based social and emotional learning (SEL) an integral part of education from preschool through high school.

The CASEL framework was used to support the study that revealed the need for this training. The CASEL framework provides a foundation for communities to use evidence-based SEL strategies in ways that are most meaningful to their local context. The CASEL framework established 5 core competencies that support SEL and designates locations in a hierarchy of where students need to receive this support.

(CASEL, 2022)
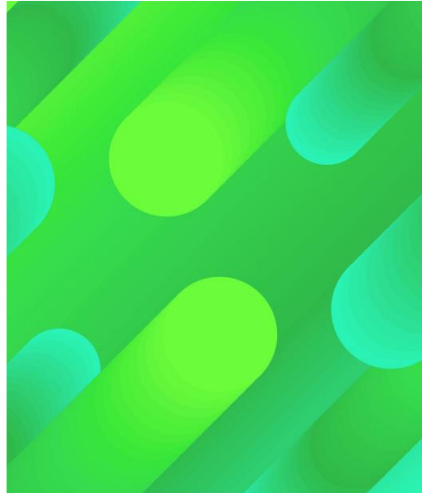
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CASEL Framework

(CASEL, 2022)

Where do you think you fit in on the CASEL framework?

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The Fab 5

5 SEL competencies

self-awareness

Understand one's own emotions, thoughts, and values and how they influence behavior across contexts.

self-management

Manage one's emotions, thoughts, and behaviors in different situations and to achieve goals and aspirations.

social awareness

Understand the perspectives of and empathize with others, including those from diverse backgrounds.

relationship skills

Establish and maintain healthy, supportive relationships and effectively navigate settings with diverse individuals/groups.

responsible decision-making

Make caring and constructive choices about personal behavior and social interactions across diverse situations.

(CASEL, 2022)

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Activity- Identifying Characteristics

- At your table, using the definitions from the previous slide, use the list given to you to designate the characteristics that you think match to your assigned competency.
    - Self-Awareness has 9 characteristics
    - Self-management has 7
    - Social awareness has 8
    - Relationship skills has 9
    - Responsible decision making has 10

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Self Awareness

The abilities to understand one's own emotions, thoughts, and values and how they influence behavior across contexts. This includes capacities to recognize one's strengths and limitations with a well-grounded sense of confidence and purpose.

Such as:
•Integrating personal and social identities
•Identifying personal, cultural, and linguistic assets
•Identifying one's emotions
•Demonstrating honesty and integrity
•Linking feelings, values, and thoughts
•Examining prejudices and biases
•Experiencing self-efficacy
•Having a growth mindset
•Developing interests and a sense of purpose

(CASEL, 2022)

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Self- Management

The abilities to manage one's emotions, thoughts, and behaviors effectively in different situations and to achieve goals and aspirations. This includes the capacities to delay gratification, manage stress, and feel motivation and agency to accomplish personal and collective goals.

Such as:
•Managing one's emotions
•Identifying and using stress-management strategies
•Exhibiting self-discipline and self-motivation
•Setting personal and collective goals
•Using planning and organizational skills
•Showing the courage to take initiative
•Demonstrating personal and collective agency

(CASEL, 2022)

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Social Awareness

The abilities to understand the perspectives of and empathize with others, including those from diverse backgrounds, cultures, and contexts. This includes the capacities to feel compassion for others, understand broader historical and social norms for behavior in different settings, and recognize family, school, and community resources and supports.

Such as:
•Taking others' perspectives
•Recognizing strengths in others
•Demonstrating empathy and compassion
•Showing concern for the feelings of others
•Understanding and expressing gratitude
•Identifying diverse social norms, including unjust ones
•Recognizing situational demands and opportunities
•Understanding the influences of organizations and systems on behavior

(CASEL, 2022)

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Relationship Skills

The abilities to establish and maintain healthy and supportive relationships and to effectively navigate settings with diverse individuals and groups. This includes the capacities to communicate clearly, listen actively, cooperate, work collaboratively to problem solve and negotiate conflict constructively, navigate settings with differing social and cultural demands and opportunities, provide leadership, and seek or offer help when needed.

Such as:
•Communicating effectively
•Developing positive relationships
•Demonstrating cultural competency
•Practicing teamwork and collaborative problem-solving
•Resolving conflicts constructively
•Resisting negative social pressure
•Showing leadership in groups
•Seeking or offering support and help when needed
•Standing up for the rights of others

(CASEL, 2022)

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Responsible Decision Making

The abilities to make caring and constructive choices about personal behavior and social interactions across diverse situations. This includes the capacities to consider ethical standards and safety concerns, and to evaluate the benefits and consequences of various actions for personal, social, and collective well-being.

Such as:
•Demonstrating curiosity and open-mindedness
•Learning how to make a reasoned judgment after analyzing information, data, and facts
•Identifying solutions for personal and social problems
•Anticipating and evaluating the consequences of one's actions
•Recognizing how critical thinking skills are useful both inside and outside of school
•Reflecting on one's role to promote personal, family, and community well-being
•Evaluating personal, interpersonal, community, and institutional impacts

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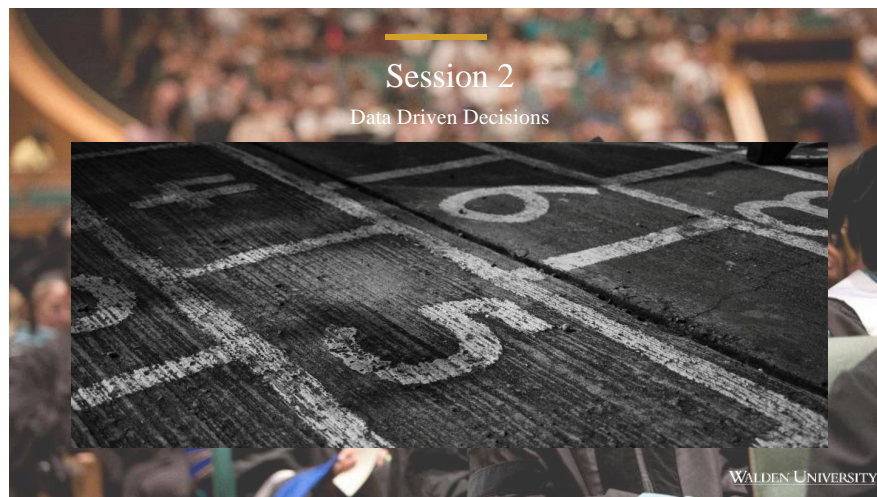
(CASEL, 2022)

Think-Pair-Share

At your tables, discuss the following topic:

- Have you observed any occurrences or reviewed any data regarding our student body that leads you to identify that students may be lacking in the area of your assigned competency?
- Be prepared to share.

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Conclusion

- Are you able to:
- Communicate a clear definition of SEL
- Identify the 5 CASEL competencies
- Determine where students may lack to identify areas of need
- Next Session: Review data to identify where students have shown they need support
- Homework: Reflection
    - Review the definition of SEL and evaluate what word(s) you connect to. Why?

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Session 2

Data Driven Decisions

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Agenda

Time	Topics
8:00-9:30	☐ Review session 1 ☐ Goals of current session ☐ Discuss reflections from session 1
10:00-11:30	☐ Present how improving SEL competencies can help teachers and students ☐ Discuss how teachers could improve personal SEL competencies
1:00-2:00	☐ Review data that lead to discovery of lack of SEL competencies ☐ Think-Pair- Share: Use data to determine if any SEL competency needs emergent support
2:30-3:00	☐ Closing ☐ Next session discussion

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Goals

Discuss reflections from last session, review past data from the student body surveys that show areas of need regarding SEL, discuss experiences noted from Session 1 and review data that shows why improving SEL competencies of teachers and students are beneficial.

Reflections

You were tasked to review the definition of SEL and identify any word(s) that you personally connect to and determine why you connect to that word(s).

- In your groups: Discuss your selections and reasoning

SEL: Benefits to students

- Improved attitudes about self, others, and school
- Positive classroom behavior
- 11 percentile-point gain on standardized achievement tests
- Reduced conduct problems
- Reduced emotional distress

(CASEL, 2022)

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SEL: Benefits to teachers

Teachers with high levels of social competence are better able to protect themselves from burnout by:

• Developing and managing nurturing relationships with their students
• Serving as behavioral role models for children
• Regulating their own emotions

(CASEL, 2022)

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Open Discussion

Evaluate your personal SEL competencies. Identify some characteristics where you may lack. How do you think you could improve your own SEL competencies?

Adult SEL Strategies

1. Reflect on guiding questions to deepen your understanding of how your own SEL can benefit students.
   1. What beliefs do I have about my students that may be impacting my instruction or lesson design? How do these beliefs help or hinder my students and myself?
   2. How will I strengthen my relationship skills with my students, or their relationships with one another, through this lesson? What specific actions can I take?
   3. How will I practice self-management and be transparent about how I'm practicing it during this lesson?

(Woolf, n.d.)

Adult SEL Strategies

2. Observe and name your own emotions in front of students.

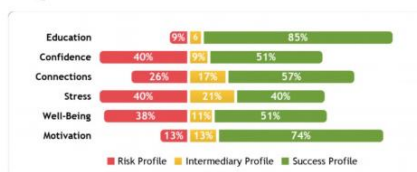3. Engage fellow educators as resources in problem solving.
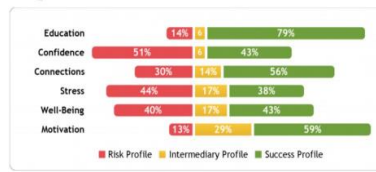
4. Practice self-care.

Data Review

2017-18 (Freshmen and Sophomores)

	Risk	Intermediary	Success
Education	9%	6	85%
Confidence	40%	9%	51%
Connections	26%	17%	57%
Stress	40%	21%	40%
Well-Being	38%	11%	51%
Motivation	13%	13%	74%

2018-19 (Sophomores and Juniors)

	Risk	Intermediary	Success
Education	14%	6	79%
Confidence	51%	6	43%
Connections	30%	14%	56%
Stress	44%	17%	38%
Well-Being	40%	17%	43%
Motivation	13%	29%	59%

Risk Profile ■ Intermediary Profile ■ Success Profile

Think-Pair-Share

Relate the survey categories: education, stress, confidence, connections, well-being, and motivation to a SEL competency.
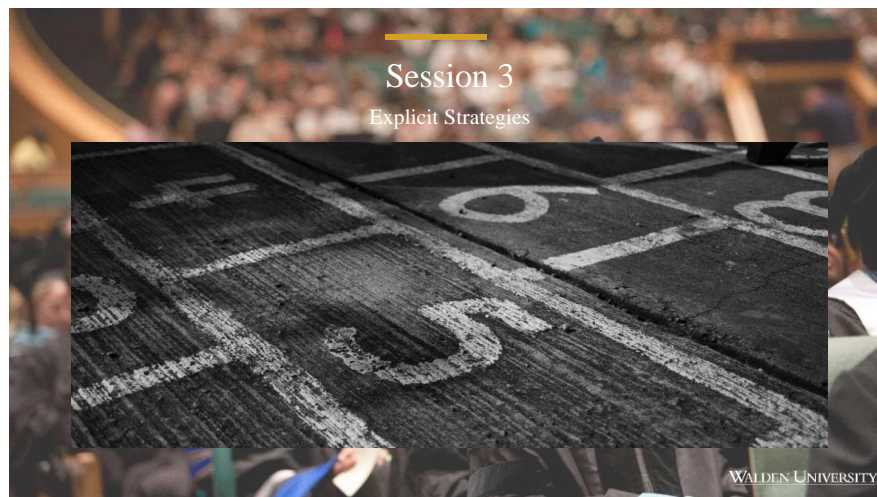
Based on the data, do you feel any of the competencies need emergent attention?

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Conclusion

- Are you able to:
    - Understand how/why SEL is important in schools
    - Evaluate and improve your own SEL competence
- Next Session: Discuss explicit instruction strategies to support SEL

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Session 3
Explicit Strategies

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Agenda

Time	Topics
8:00-9:30	☐ Review sessions 1 &2 ☐ Goals of current session ☐ Discussion of any current classroom strategies that teachers feel align with SEL
10:00-11:30	☐ Present SEL strategies for the classroom that are applicable for different disciplines and general behaviors
1:00-2:00	☐ Planning Activity: Separate teachers into disciplines, create lesson plan including two SEL strategies for two days of instruction.
2:00-2:30	☐ Closing ☐ Goals for implementation ☐ Post- Assessment

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Goals

Discuss any current strategies, potential strategies, and
plan lessons to include strategies to support SEL.

Open Discussion

Think of your most frequently classroom strategies. Do you
use any strategies to support SEL within your strategies?
What about general classroom practices?

General Classroom Practices

- Practice student centered discipline
- Utilize teacher language laced with encouragement and explanation
- Encourage the ability to evoke responsibility and choice
- Display warmth and support
- Provide opportunities for self-reflection and self-assessment
- Provide balanced instruction
- Utilize academic press and expectations with awareness of how students will respond emotionally

(Yoder, 2014)

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Content Specific Practices

ELA

Dialogic reading	Literature circles	Role-playing
Character comparison	Describing characters	

(Lau & Shea, 2022)

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Content Specific Strategies

Social Sciences

| Rapid Fire Writing | Listen to Learn | Text to Text | Text to World | Reflection and Analysis of Important Persons |

(Hendra, 2020)

Content Specific Strategies

STEM (Science, Technology, Engineering, Math)

- Projects
- Peer Collaboration
- Peer Tutoring
- Real World Experiences
- Writing Assignments

(Elmi, 2020)

Content Specific Strategies

Physical Education

Activities that include:
Spatial awareness
Team building
Multiplayer games
Challenge, conflict, or risk taking
Conflict resolution
Trust building and mutual obligation

(Ciotto & Gagnon, 2018)

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Activity-Planning for SEL

Separate into groups that represent each content area. Utilize any of the strategies presented to plan two days of instruction in your content area to support SEL. Your strategy chosen should appropriately align with academic objectives.

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Conclusion

- Recap of Professional Development
- Suggestions for Success
- Post- Assessment

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Post-assessment

Please type the following link into your browser or scan the QR code on your cellular device to complete the post-assessment for this training.

https://forms.gle/nohpRcgv1TWqrHhm9   OR

References

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Yoder, N. (2014). *Teaching the whole child: Instructional practices that support social and emotional learning in three teacher evaluation frameworks.* Washington, DC: American Institutes for Research Center on Great Teachers and Leaders.

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Activity -Identifying Characteristics

- Demonstrating curiosity and open-mindedness
- Learning how to make a reasoned judgment after analyzing information, data, and facts
- Identifying solutions for personal and social problems
- Anticipating and evaluating the consequences of one's actions
- Recognizing how critical thinking skills are useful both inside and outside of school
- Reflecting on one's role to promote personal, family, and community well-being
- Evaluating personal, interpersonal, community, and institutional impacts
- Communicating effectively
- Developing positive relationships
- Demonstrating cultural competency
- Practicing teamwork and collaborative problem-solving
- Resolving conflicts constructively
- Resisting negative social pressure

- Showing leadership in groups
- Seeking or offering support and help when needed
- Standing up for the rights of others
- Taking others' perspectives
- Recognizing strengths in others
- Demonstrating empathy and compassion
- Showing concern for the feelings of others
- Understanding and expressing gratitude
- Identifying diverse social norms, including unjust ones
- Recognizing situational demands and opportunities
- Understanding the influences of organizations and systems on behavior
- Managing one's emotions
- Identifying and using stress-management strategies
- Exhibiting self-discipline and self-motivation
- Setting personal and collective goals
- Using planning and organizational skills

- Showing the courage to take initiative
- Demonstrating personal and collective agency
- Integrating personal and social identities
- Identifying personal, cultural, and linguistic assets
- Identifying one's emotions
- Demonstrating honesty and integrity
- Linking feelings, values, and thoughts
- Examining prejudices and biases
- Experiencing self-efficacy
- Having a growth mindset
- Developing interests and a sense of purpose

Activity- Planning for SEL

LESSON PLAN

GRADE	SUBJECT	DATE

TOPIC	LESSON #

LESSON FOCUS AND GOALS

LEARNING OBJECTIVES

STRUCTURE / ACTIVITY

ASSESSMENT

Appendix B: Preassessment

SEL and the Classroom: Professional Development for Teachers

These questions will be added to a google form for digital completion at the beginning of

the professional development.

1. How well do you understand the concept of SEL? (1= I do not understand SEL at all 5= I am familiar and comfortable with SEL)

2. Are you aware of CASEL and the 5 SEL competencies? (Yes/No)

3. Have you had any district-provided training on the topic of SEL? (Yes/No)

4. How optimistic are you that you can provide SEL education to students? (1= Not optimistic to 5=very optimistic)

5. What do you expect to achieve in this professional development? (Short Answer)

Appendix C: Postassessment

SEL and the Classroom: Professional Development for Teachers

These questions will be added to a google form for digital completion at the end of the professional development.

1. How well do you understand the concept of SEL? (1= I do not understand SEL at all 5= I am familiar and comfortable with SEL)

2. What are the 5 SEL competencies? (Short Answer)

3. How optimistic are you that you can provide SEL education to students because of this professional development? (1 to 5)

4. How optimistic are you that you can provide SEL education to students? (1= Not optimistic to 5=very optimistic)

5. What suggestions or general feedback do you have to improve this professional development? (Short Answer)

Appendix D: Interview Protocol

Interviewee Name: _____
Date: ____/____/____

Interview Protocol

Intro:

Thank you so much for being a willing participant in my study. This study is being conducted for partial fulfillment of graduation requirements in my doctoral program at Walden University. This interview is scheduled to last no more than 30 minutes. All responses in this interview are confidential. Names and personally identifiable information will be redacted from the final study. During the interview, I will ask you questions about SEL (social and emotional learning) and needed supports to effectively implement SEL in your daily instruction. The purpose of this basic qualitative study is to explore secondary teachers' perceptions of why the efforts to address SEL have been ineffective and to determine what supports teachers perceive are needed to effectively address SEL at the study site.

Prior to the interview, I forwarded a document to you which requests your permission to collect an audio recording of our conversation today. I am the only researcher involved in this study; therefore, I am the only person with access to the audio recordings. You may request a copy of your recording should you choose any time after the conclusion of the interview. Are you still in agreement with allowing the collection of an audio recording of our conversation today? If at any point you would like to cease audio recording, please let me know, and I will default to note taking only.

I would like to remind you that your participation in this interview is voluntary. If at any time you would like to stop, please let me know. Do you have any questions before we begin? If you think of any questions during the interview, please do not hesitate to ask.

1. How many years have you been teaching here at the study site?

2. What subject do you teach?

3. Describe your definition of social and emotional learning.

4. Do you feel you have been effectively using our current SEL program? Why? Why not?

5. What other needs, supports, resources are you familiar with that may effectively support SEL at this school?

6. How much training, if any, have you received on the topic of SEL prior to the implementation of the current SEL program?

7. Is there anything else you would like to share?

Appendix E: Interview Response Form

Interviewee Name: _____

Date: ____/____/____

Interview Responses

1. How many years have you been teaching here at the study site? _____

2. What subject do you teach? _____

3. Describe your definition of social and emotional learning.

4. Do you feel you have been effectively using our current SEL program? Why? Why

    not

5. What other needs, supports, resources are you familiar with that may effectively

    support SEL at this school?

6. How much training, if any, have you received on the topic of SEL prior to the

    implementation of the current SEL program

7. Is there anything else you would like to share?

Appendix F: Recruitment Flyer

Are you familiar with SEL?

(SOCIAL AND EMOTIONAL LEARNING)

1

WHO?
Teachers of all disciplines.

2

WHAT?
30 minute Interview

3

WHEN?
Specified dates and times
will be set depending on
availibility of researcher and
participant

4

WHERE?
Virtually or face-to-face

5

WHY?
To fulfill the research
obligations of my dotoral
degree

6

YES?!
Email
ryeneshia.hutchinson@waldenu.edu