Examining the Efficacy of Universally Delivered Social and Emotional Learning

Curriculum, Second Step: A Mixed-Method Study of the Effects on Regular and Special

Education Student Behavior and Teacher Instructional Competence

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Joseph A Jablonski

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Slippery Rock University of Pennsylvania
Department of Special Education

A Dissertation Written By
Joseph A Jablonski

Bachelor of Music in Music Education, Mercyhurst University, 2009
Master of Music, Cleveland State University, 2011
Post-Master's K-12 Principal's Certification, Edinboro University, 2016
Doctorate of Education in Special Education, Slippery Rock University of
Pennsylvania, 2021

Approved by

6/22/21

Dr. Eric J Bieniek, Dissertation Committee Chair	Date
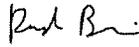
6/22/21

Dr. Richard Busi, Committee Member	Date
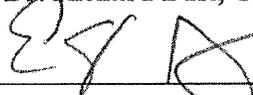
6-22-202)

Dr. Edward G Nientimp, Committee Member	Date

Accepted by

Dr. Keith Dils, Dean, College of Education, Slippery Rock University of
Pennsylvania
6/22/2021

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Abstract

Since the establishment of social emotional learning (SEL) as a conceptual framework to increase students' prosocial and emotional competencies, research has been conducted to provide an evidence base to its programmatic effects. This study examined the efficacy of Second Step, a universally delivered SEL curriculum. Evidence of efficacy is supplied through a mixed-method research design providing three separate data metrics for quantitative and qualitative analysis. The sample set was derived from the behavior data of 505 students who attended a suburban K-5 elementary school in northwest Pennsylvania for two consecutive years. Also included in the sample are 22 teachers who participated in a voluntary survey. Quantitative analysis was conducted through a quasi-experimental design utilizing a McNemar test to determine the statistical significance of negative behavior prevalence in comparing two school years. Additional quantitative data was supplied through a Likert-scale questionnaire. Contextual qualitative information was supplied from an open-ended survey. Through this study, it was determined that the Second Step SEL program had a statistically significant impact on the behaviors of students as well as an impact on the climate of the building. While teachers felt the stress of teaching the newly implemented SEL curriculum during the COVID-19 pandemic, results from the study suggest that the benefits of implementing the program outweighed this negative effect. Results also showed an impact on students in the special education emotional support subgroup. The evidence this study provides will help schools work to strengthen their students' social, emotional, and behavioral capacities.

Dedication

This project is dedicated to the three individuals who without their love and support this would not have been possible.

Karson and Levi-Never let anyone tell you what you can't do. Reach for the stars and once you reach those, reach even higher.

Lisa-Many years ago we began our journey together "one mile at a time". This was a long stretch, but we made it. Here's to continuing to the next mile and beyond!

Acknowledgments

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Chapter I - Introduction

Background

Public schools have an obligation to ensure that their students have an opportunity

to receive a free and appropriate public education regardless of exceptionality

(Individuals with Disabilities Act, 2004). The obligations imposed on public schools in

this regard emanate from federal law and are also firmly rooted in the traditions of the

American educational system. However, what if a student's social or emotional needs

preclude him or her from attaining that education? What if social and emotional needs

exist, but they do not impact the student's ability to learn? Do school districts have an

obligation to meet the social and emotional needs of all their students? Current trends in

school systems, along with legislative efforts, have worked in recent years to provide the

answer to this question.

Within the past 20 years, the concept of addressing the social and emotional needs

of students has been brought to the forefront of educational policy and practice (Weisberg

et al., 2015). In 1994, a group of educators, researchers, and advocates met at the research

foundation, Fetzner Institute, to discuss the needs of enhancing students' competence of

social and emotional constructs, academic performance, health, and citizenship. To

address these needs, they developed the conceptual framework of "social and emotional

learning." This framework of social and emotional learning (SEL) sought to prevent

mental health and behavioral problems by teaching students the competence of five

domains: self-awareness, self-management, responsible decision making, relationship

skills, and social awareness (Weisberg et al., 2015). A result of the meeting at the

Fetzner Institute was the establishment of the Collaborative for Academic, Social, and

Emotional Learning (CASEL). The mission of CASEL was to establish evidence-based

SEL that focuses on the five identified domains, from preschool through high school, in

educational systems throughout the entire country (Weisberg et al., 2015).

Since the establishment of SEL as an instructional framework, there has been an

ever-growing body of evidence demonstrating the efficacy of SEL in establishing

prosocial behaviors and emotional competence in students. Studies from Low, et al.;

Bierman, et al.; Chi-Ming, et al.; and Doughty, all provide evidence on the impact SEL

has on students' prosocial and emotional competence in different settings and programs

(Bierman et al., 2010; Chi-Ming et al., 2004; Doughty, 1997; Low et al., 2015).

As the concept of SEL is being addressed in the research and school-based sector,

it is also paralleling the mental health legislation occurring in the public sector. In 1990,

the state of Pennsylvania began to address the issue of young adults abusing drugs,

alcohol, and/or tobacco. In a concerted effort, Act 211 was enacted and section 1547 of

the Pa School Code was added. This legislation mandated that all school districts must

implement a drug, alcohol, and tobacco prevention program. Through this program, the

Student Assistance Program (SAP) was developed (Act 211, 1990). SAP helped to screen

and find students who may be at risk and provide intervention and/or counseling services

to them. This system was found to be successful and, as a result, in 2006, Chapter 12 of

the Pennsylvania School Code was expanded to increase the scope of SAP to include a

mental health component (Chapter 12, 2006). More legislation regarding student mental

health was to follow. Specifically, in 2019, Pennsylvania enacted Act 18, which required schools to recognize the impact of trauma on students and provide them with the necessary support for students (Act 18, 2019). SEL is an integral part of trauma-informed care, as it fosters resilience capabilities through emotional literacy and problem-solving (Payton et al., 2008).

Aside from SEL increasing prosocial and emotional behaviors and working through the lens of trauma-informed education, there is an academic component of SEL that provides justification for its inclusion as an educational practice in schools. Noted psychologist, Abraham Maslow, made the argument that for higher-level thinking to occur, a human must first receive their basic and psychological needs. He created a hierarchy with psychological necessities following basic needs, before self-fulfillment (Maslow, 1943). For example, if a student is not eating, that student is not worried about long division. Likewise, if a student does not feel safe, comfortable, and secure, they are not worried about long division. From a very rudimentary standpoint, if we are not addressing basic needs, based on Maslow's theory, motivation for academic achievement can never be met. A student's emotional needs will supersede their academic needs, due to their emotional state (Plumb et al., 2016). Therefore, from an academic correlation, if schools want to ensure academic growth and achievement, they must fulfill an obligation to meet those social and emotional needs that preclude students from reaching academic motivation.

To substantiate SEL's effect on academic performance, many studies have been conducted to ascertain the positive effects that SEL programs have on a student's well-being and academic achievement. A recent meta-analysis of hundreds of these studies

was conducted, demonstrating a positive correlation between social/emotional well-being and higher academic achievement in participants of social and emotional learning programs (Durlak et al., 2011; Taylor et al., 2017).

These benefits of SEL are further quantified from a school district fiscal perspective when examining the benefit-cost analysis (BCA). In 2015, Belfield et al. conducted a BCA of various SEL programming. Through their analysis, the researchers found that the benefit of SEL instruction substantially outweighed the cost, where in some cases a $1 expenditure translated to an $11 benefit (Belfield, et al., 2015).

Given the extensive amount of evidence supporting benefits attributed to SEL, and following along with current legislation and research about the positive effects of SEL, this framework has been identified as a possible solution to a localized problem at an elementary school in northwest, Pennsylvania

Statement of Problem

The school being studied is one of five elementary schools located within a school district in the greater Erie area. The district has a current student enrollment of approximately 6500 students. As of 2020, the school featured in this study is the largest of five elementary schools located within the district, with approximately 630 students. It is a suburban elementary school housing grades K-5 with 49% of the student population considered to be economically disadvantaged and approximately 8% who are identified as English Language Learners (ELL). Another 12% of the student population need Special Education services and 26 of those students are identified as needing Emotional

Support (ES) Services, accounting for 45% of the special education demographic (Millcreek Township School District, 2020).

The school's demographic has changed substantially over the past six years. This is due in part to the consolidation efforts following the closure of two elementary schools within the district, as well as the addition of federally subsidized Section 8 housing within the school's boundaries. Prior to the consolidation, in the school year (SY) 2012-2013, the school had an enrollment of 561 students. With this enrollment, 25.6% of students were considered economically disadvantaged. After the consolidation, in SY 2013-2014, the school's enrollment increased 36% to 763 students. The increase in student enrollment correlated with an increased percentage of economically disadvantaged students at a rate of 35.5%. Shortly after the consolidation, there was the establishment of Section 8 federally subsidized housing within the school's boundaries. Due to this, within four years, the economically disadvantaged percentage grew substantially and reached 48.5% in SY 2018-2019. In the span of six years, the school saw its economically disadvantaged percentage almost double in size (Millcreek Township School District, 2020).

With the influx of economically disadvantaged students, there was also an increase in the number of students with socially inappropriate and maladaptive emotional behaviors. Evidence-based research confirms this. The relationship of economically disadvantaged students correlating to an increase in maladaptive behaviors can be found in the evidence-base of the second-order meta-analysis of Korous et al. Their study consisted of 327,617 participants and found that those students who came from lower-income families were found to experience more negative externalizing and internalizing

behaviors (Korous et al., 2018). Dodge, et al., also found that low socioeconomic status was found to negatively correlate to higher conduct problems in students of grades K, 1, 2, and 3 (Dodge et al., 1994).

This increase of inappropriate and maladaptive social and emotional behaviors led to reflective questioning on how these students can be better provided with a skillset to address their social and emotional deficiencies. Prior to the study, the school and its district did not have an SEL curriculum that provided instruction in these areas to students. The school had a positive behavior intervention and supports (PBIS) framework in place. However even with the PBIS framework, the school found itself without the necessary tools to combat the increasing negative social and emotional behaviors with no systematic, explicit, evidence-based instruction to educate the students on their deficiencies. This omission left teachers without the appropriate skills to help deal with these areas of need.

Purpose of Study

The purpose of this study is to examine the school's implementation of an evidence-based SEL curriculum, "Second Step", on a universal level while focusing the efficacy of the program. Second Step was chosen as the SEL program to be utilized due to its extensive evidence base in impacting the SEL competency of students, while providing age-appropriate differentiated K-5 curriculums with defined lesson plans for each grade level that are CASEL, PBIS, MTSS/RTI, and Common Core Aligned (Second Step Alignment Charts, 2017). Effectiveness was measured both quantitatively and qualitatively. A comparison of Office Disciplinary Referrals (ODRs) was used to

quantify the extent and amount of externalizing behavioral infractions as compared to the previous school year. The study will not only quantify the efficacy of SEL as evidenced by behavioral infractions, but also the self-reported instructional attitudes and competencies of the teachers who are providing SEL instruction to both regular and special education students through the use of a Likert-scale questionnaire. A qualitative inquiry was added to the questionnaire to report on the student behavioral observations conducted by teachers. This was used to determine the program's effects on the prosocial and emotional competence of both regular education students and the special education students in need of emotional support. The qualitative inquiry also gauged the effect that the program had on the climate of the building students and their behaviors within the school.

Research Questions

- What is the effectiveness of the Second Step SEL Curriculum on student behavior as evidenced by Office Disciplinary Referrals when it is delivered in the regular education classroom at a universal level?

- After completing one year of the program, what are the attitudes and responses of both regular and special education teachers with regard to the implementation of delivering social-emotional instruction?

- What are the perceptions of regular education teachers and special education teachers after one year of the Second Step program as to the following categories: emotional support students and their behaviors; regular education students and their behaviors; and, the school climate and culture?

Definition of Terms

Collaborative for Academic Social Emotional Learning (CASEL)- Advocacy

organization with a mission to establish evidence-based SEL in education systems, pre-K

through high school, throughout the entire country (Weissberg, 2015).

Common Core- standardized goals set forth by the National Governors Association to

provide academic targets for each grade level (United States Department of Education,

2020).

Economically Disadvantaged- Pennsylvania Department of Education states that a school

district has the discretion to determine what classifies a student as economically

disadvantaged (Pennsylvania Department of Education, 2020). The school district in

which the study is being conducted, defines Economically Disadvantaged as those

students who qualify for the Federal Free and Reduced Lunch Program. To qualify for

this program, families must apply and be located within a specific income threshold as

compared to the number of dependents in their household (United States Department of

Agriculture Food and Nutrition Service, 2020).

Emotional Support (ES)-A special education placement for students with disabilities in

need of specially designed instruction due to the adverse effect of their inappropriate

emotional responses, social interpersonal interactions, and/or functional behaviors on

their ability to learn (Pa Code 22, Chapter 14, 2008).

Free and Appropriate Public Education (FAPE)- a key provision of IDEA that mandates

that all students in the United States, regardless of ability or disability, will be able to

attend a public education institution at no cost and receive educational instruction that

meets their individual needs either through regular education or special education

(Individuals with Disabilities Act, 2004).

Individuals with Disability Act (IDEA)- Act that was originally passed in 1975 and then

reauthorized in 2004. This act states that every child regardless of ability or disability is

entitled to a free and appropriate public education (FAPE) in the least restrictive

environment (LRE) (Individuals with Disabilities Act, 2004).

Infinite Campus (IC)- The school district's student information system. All demographic,

behavioral, grading, and student information is located on this system. Ad hoc data

reports can be completed to provide smaller and more focused data reports from this

system.

Least Restrictive Environment (LRE)- a central component of IDEA requiring that

students who receive special education services will receive those services with their

regular education peers as much as is appropriate to do so (Individuals with Disabilities

Act, 2004).

Mental Health- As defined by the World Health Organization; "a state of well-being in which the individual realizes his or her own abilities, can cope with the normal stresses of life, can work productively and fruitfully, and is able to make a contribution to his or her community" (World Health Organization, 2004).

Minor Incident Report (MIR)- At the school being studied, these are forms that are filled out for students who do not abide by the SOAR behavioral expectations and engage in inappropriate behaviors on a smaller scale. Examples include; talking at inappropriate times, being unkind, not following school rules, etc. A full breakdown is included in Appendix D. These minor incidents are dealt with by the teacher on a personal level and no official office disciplinary consequence is given. When three MIRs accumulate for a student, the teacher will write an ODR and all three MIRs will then be logged into the district's student information system, Infinite Campus.

Multi-Tiered System of Supports/Response to Intervention (MTSS/RTI)- An academic and behavioral intervention system that utilizes regular use of data to monitor progress and provide different levels of evidence-based support typically within a three-tier system. Generally, Tier One being a universal evidence-based practice, Tier Two is a small group evidence-based practice, and Tier Three is an individualized evidence-based intervention. (Stoiber & Gettinger, 2016).

Office Disciplinary Referral (ODR)- At the school being studied, when a student has received three MIRs or commits a more egregious offense, as outlined in the district's

Discipline Matrix located in Appendix E, the teacher will fill out an ODR. The student

will be called down to the office to receive a disciplinary consequence that is

commensurate with the district's board approved matrix. The consequence will be logged

in Infinite Campus.

Positive Behavior Interventions and Supports (PBIS)-Type of a conceptual framework

designed for a school system to build its practice of establishing and sustaining a positive

school culture with behavior supports to ensure academic and behavioral success. All of

the school's processes and procedures tie back to the guiding principles that the school

identifies as being the cornerstone characteristics for their student body (Association for

Positive Behavior Support, 2019).

Regular Education- Education that is given to the general population of all students.

Second Step- Comprehensive K-5 evidence-based SEL program that provides age-

appropriate differentiated K-5 curriculums with defined lesson plans for each grade level

that are CASEL, SWPBS, MTSS/RTI, and Common Core Aligned (Second Step

Alignment Charts, 2017).

SOAR- The study school's PBIS system. Students are taught behavior expectations of

Being Safe, Organized, Accepting, and Respectful. The school's behavioral expectations

are aligned to these four principles and they have operational definitions displayed for

each area within the school. There are various incentives, assemblies, and common

language that align the various academic and behavioral systems within the school under the SOAR framework.

Social-Emotional Learning (SEL)-The conceptual framework which seeks to prevent mental health and behavioral problems by teaching students the competence of five domains: self-awareness, self-management, responsible decision making, relationship skills, and social awareness (Weissberg et al., 2015).

Socioeconomic Status- The American Psychological Association defines socioeconomic status as "the social standing or class of an individual or group. It is often measured as a combination of education, income, and occupation" (2020).

Special Education- Type of individualized education provided to students who have been identified as needing specially designed instruction through the classification of one of the 13 disability categories identified in IDEA (Pennsylvania Department of Education, 2020).

Trauma-Informed Education- Framework of providing instruction that is sensitive to students who have experienced adverse life events such as; abuse, neglect, violence, or witness to such an event. Trauma-Informed Education aims to repair the personal regulatory and attachment deficits that occur as a result of those events and build upon the strengths of the individual student (Bruznell et al., 2016).

Universal Delivery-Method of instruction that encompasses all learners in the environment.

Procedures

This study utilized a mixed-method approach to provide a quantitative and qualitative analysis of the efficacy of Second Step. This was achieved through a pre/post analysis of ODRs and a post-program analysis with both a standardized questionnaire that features strong inter-item reliability and strong content validity, and an open-ended questionnaire. The mixed-method approach provides both empirical and descriptive evidence to either support the efficacy of the program or highlight its deficiencies. The inclusion of the qualitative data serves in an explanatory function, to provide a contextual understanding and discuss the positive and/or negative aspects of the empirical findings and program implementation.

Implementation of Second Step occurred during the 2020-2021 school year. Teachers were given an introductory in-service on the program and received ongoing professional development about the program throughout the year as outlined in the Implementation Timeline (Appendix A). Teachers provided the Second Step SEL instruction to students approximately every week. Second Step has 22 weekly lesson plans for grades 1-5 and 25 weekly lessons for Kindergarten. The start and end guidelines, whole school assembly, and whole school announcement schedule are included in Appendix A.

At the end of the program, the teachers were given a questionnaire to qualitatively assess their views and perceptions of student behavior, both regular and special ed. The

questionnaire is included in Appendix B. The teachers also completed the questionnaire; Teacher Attitudes about Social and Emotional Learning (TASEL) located in Appendix C.

A quantitative analysis was also conducted to provide empirical evidence to substantiate the efficacy of the program. This was achieved through the analysis of ODRs in comparison to the previous year. Year to year comparisons were made for the whole student body.

Significance of Study

This study is significant in that it not only contributes to the evidence base surrounding the efficacy of SEL instruction and the Second Step program, but it also highlights previously unstudied aspects. While there is an evidentiary base to support the positive social, emotional, and academic results of Second Step (Edwards et al., 2005; Frey et al., 2005; Low et al., 2015; Low, Smolkowski et al., 2019) the program has not been studied while focusing on the efficacy of the program on special education students. Specifically, special education students who are identified as emotional support, when the program is delivered at the universal level.

An additional aspect of the study, that does not have a significant amount of research base, is the analysis of teachers and their perceived competence of providing SEL instruction to students. As teachers are the primary disseminators of this instruction, it is important to study their comfort level of providing this type of instruction.

Uniquely, this study was able to examine the implementation and effects of SEL during a school year taking place within the COVID-19 pandemic. The evidence

collected during the course of the school has significant research implications as this type

of event is a once in a hundred-year occurrence.

Aside from the global contribution of the study, this study provides an evidence

base at the local level. By studying the impact on formal disciplinary processes such as

ODRs, the empirical findings will help to justify whether or not to provide this SEL

resource throughout the school and/or district. The ramifications of the study may be used

to drive resource conversations at the district level and help to prioritize district-wide

initiatives regarding academic and mental health resources.

Basic Assumptions

All of the teachers in this study are Pennsylvania certified elementary or special

education public school teachers, counselors, or educational psychologists. The

individuals are familiar with the school's disciplinary process of ODRs and follow this

disciplinary system with fidelity.

This study operates under the basic assumptions that those who are identified as

needing special education services have been so identified through a formal evaluation

process conducted by a certified educational psychologist. Those identified students

qualify for special education under one of the 13 disability categories as identified by

IDEA (Individuals with Disabilities Act, 2004). More specifically, the subgroup of

emotional support students in this study have been identified through this process and

have been found to need emotional support services. The students that qualify for this

need, do so under either the classification of emotionally disturbed or through another

health impairment; needs that preclude them from attaining their education without the

added social and emotional support and individualized accommodations for their social

and emotional needs.

Limitations of Study

The limitations of this study can be found in the scope of its geographic location.

While the school represents a fairly diverse population with almost 8% of its population

as English Language Learners and 20% of its students identified as non-white, this study

is limited to the suburban region of northwest Pennsylvania (Millcreek Township School

District, 2020). A more comprehensive look at various regions in rural and urban

neighborhoods with the same research parameters would provide a more global

perspective.

An additional limitation of this study is that the 2019-2020 behavior data was

only collected through approximately 3 quarters due to the COVID-19 school closures. In

light of this, the 2020-2021 behavior data that was compared in the pre/post quantitative

analysis only included ODR behavior data associated with the same number of days that

school was in session during both the 2019-2020 and 2020-2021 school years. The

instructional delivery model of the 2020-2021 school year was also different as it was

impacted by safety measures for the COVID-19 pandemic. The school year included

hybrid, virtual, and in-person models throughout the year. However, these various models

did not limit the delivery of SEL as it was administered in all three models.

Organization of Study

The articulation of this study is organized into five chapters. This first chapter provides the contextual background of the problem while also providing an overview of the study with guiding research questions. The second chapter will review the relevant research with foci on the justification of social-emotional learning within a school system, the efficacy of social-emotional learning on students, the evidence-base of the selected SEL program, Second Step, and other programs that were excluded from consideration. The third chapter will discuss, in detail, the methodology behind the study. Chapter Four will present the results of quantitative and qualitative inquiries. The study will conclude with the fifth chapter, which will discuss the findings, implications, and an overall summary of the study.

The genesis of this study came from a school's need to find a solution to a problem. Their question of; how to address socially maladaptive behaviors and inappropriate emotional responses, led to a significant amount of research into both social-emotional learning and the various program offerings associated with SEL. Based upon the needs of the study body, the SEL program, Second Step, was selected to be incorporated as a school-wide curriculum to attempt to address the social and emotional needs of the students. The study seeks to examine the efficacy of the program, both qualitatively and quantitatively, by examining student behavior and SEL instructional competence. Through the next chapter, the research around SEL and its educational programming will be explored.

Chapter II - Literature Review

Historical Background

"It is critical to the future of a society that its children become competent

adults and productive citizens. Thus, society and parents share a stake in

the development of competence and in understanding the processes that

facilitate and undermine it. Research on competence builds a fundamental

knowledge base for policies and programs that aim to promote successful

development" (Masten & Coatsworth, 1998, p. 205).

Genesis of Social Emotional Learning- School systems are tasked with

preparing students for success in college, careers, and life. This has traditionally been met

through the encouragement of academic success. However, recent research has suggested

that in order to cultivate this academic success, students require skills for social and

emotional competence (Annie E. Casey Foundation, 2018). Despite this knowledge, the

dissemination of these social and emotional skills is not an established, or widely

recognized, systematic component of education systems (Greenberg et al., 2003).

A widely transforming societal culture in America has set the stage to suggest a

shift in pedagogical framework to encourage the incorporation and implementation of

social and emotional learning is needed. This can be seen through the transformation of

the family landscape within the past century. With the increasing unfettered access to

information and media and a seemingly constant global-interconnectedness, families find

themselves under increased social and economic pressures (Weissberg et al., 2015). In

addition to these pressures, children show an increasing disengagement with school systems (Klem & Connell, 2004). Counterintuitively, this increase in disengagement is coupled with decreasing support for institutions that grow a child's social and emotional competency. Thus, putting extra pressure on the educators and the education system to address these needs (Weissberg et al., 2015).

To address these needs collectively, a group of educators, advocates, and researchers met in 1994 at the Fetzer Institute, a research foundation in Kalamazoo, Michigan. The group met to collaborate on strategies to reduce student behavioral and mental health issues while increasing their social-emotional competence, academic performance, health, and citizenship. This meeting was the genesis of the Collaborative for Academic, Social, and Emotional Learning (CASEL). Through their organization, CASEL created the concept of "Social Emotional Learning" (SEL) (Elias et al., 1997). Since the creation of SEL, a framework has been developed to provide guidance to school systems as they work to increase the social and emotional competency of their students.

Theory of Discipline Relative to Research Questions

Social Emotional Learning (SEL)- SEL is a conceptual framework to help schools prevent mental health and behavioral problems by increasing prosocial and emotional competencies. CASEL categorizes these competencies into five domains: self-awareness, self-management, responsible decision making, relationship skills, and social awareness (Weissberg et al., 2015). These five domains provide the framework and foundation of social and emotional programming. The effectiveness of the five domains

is evidenced through an increase in prosocial behaviors, emotional competence, academic achievement, and a decrease in negative behavioral incidences (Greenberg et al., 2003).

CASEL advocates delivering these five domains by utilizing evidence-based SEL curriculum and programs that are implemented universally, either school or district-wide. The program must incorporate and encourage positive classroom relationships between teachers and students, whereas the lesson instruction must provide opportunities for the students to practice and model the skills that are being taught (CASEL, 2013). It is imperative that teachers not only incorporate direct SEL instruction but also to embed and integrate the skills across the various academic learning settings and within the culture and climate of the building (Jones & Bouffard, 2012). Skill integration should be reinforced in the home setting through continuous communication with the family unit. The programming should include ongoing professional development for staff, as teachers are the recommended disseminators of this instruction to further facilitate relationship building. (CASEL, 2013). Figure 1 provides an illustration from CASEL regarding this SEL framework (CASEL, 2017).

Figure 1

SEL Framework
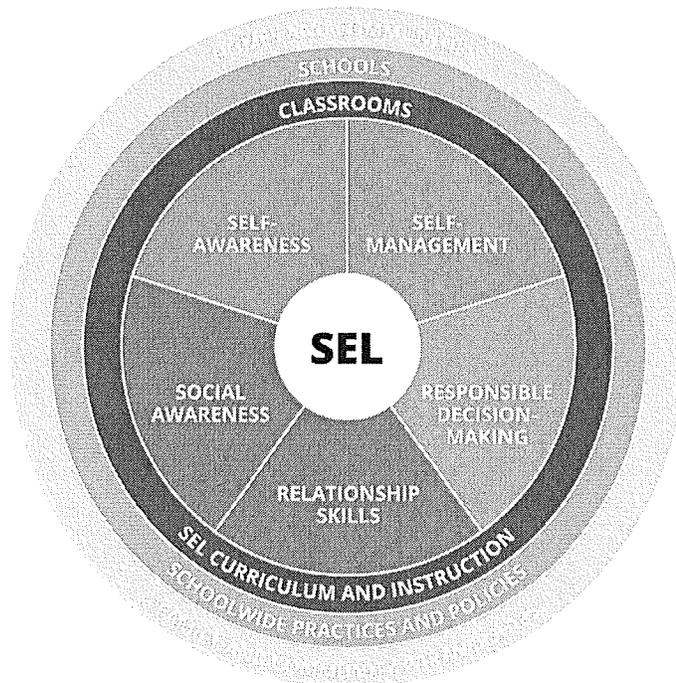
Through CASEL's research and guidance, educators, psychologists, and program

developers have worked to create programming that provides the recommended ongoing,

systematic, coordinated SEL incorporation into school systems (Greenberg et al., 2003).

Further discussion will highlight how several of these SEL programs are evidenced to

have significant benefits for students who partake in them. These benefits are evidenced

in students' social and emotional growth, a decrease in conduct problems and behaviors,

and improvement in academic achievement.

Social and Emotional Growth of Students Participating in SEL- When

measuring social and emotional growth, researchers typically measure both competencies

together. This is due to the enforcement of the social and emotional symbiotic

relationship created by program developers to integrate the skills of emotion, cognition,

communication, and behavior of participants (Lemerise & Arsenio, 2000; Crick &

Dodge, 1994). Two meta-analyses specifically highlight the overarching benefits of

partaking in social emotional programming. The first meta-analysis focused on the social

and emotional programmatic benefits of SEL, while the second had a focus on the mental

health and academic achievement benefits of SEL.

In 2011, Durlak et al., sought to comprehensively measure the social and

emotional competencies of individuals that participated in SEL programming. The

researchers completed a meta-analysis of various SEL efficacy studies. Their meta-

analysis encompassed 213 schools that implemented universal, Tier 1, SEL instruction.

The total sample size of their study consisted of 270,034 students, ranging from

kindergarten through 12th grade.

Through analysis of the differences between groups that received SEL instruction

(treatment) and groups that did not (control), the averages of the SEL competencies were

compared. The difference in those averages, in statistical terms, is called effect size.

Through this statistical measurement, an effect size of 0.2 means that the treatment is

found to have a small effect, 0.5 means that there is a medium effect, and 0.8 means there

is a large effect (Gravetter & Wallnau, 2017). Through their findings, Durlak, et al.

discovered that SEL instruction accounted for a 0.69 effect size, with regard to social

cognition, emotional recognition, stress-management, empathy, problem-solving, and

decision-making skills (2011).

The second meta-analysis of universal, school-based social and emotional

learning was conducted by Sklad et al., in 2012. Sklad et al. examined 75 SEL efficacy

studies that were published from 1995-2008. The researchers examined seven outcome

categories; academic achievement, antisocial behavior, mental disorders, positive self-image, prosocial behavior, social-emotional skills, and substance abuse. Through their meta-analysis, the researchers found that there were positive effects on all seven outcomes. The largest positive effects were found in the social-emotional skills category, whereby program participants had 76% better skills in this category than their controlled counterparts (Sklad et al., 2012).

As the 2011 Durlak et al. and 2012 Sklad et al. meta-analyses highlighted the immediate social and emotional benefits of participating in a school-based SEL program, a follow-up meta-analysis was conducted to review the long-term effects on students after having participated in a school-based SEL program. In 2017, Taylor et al., conducted a longitudinal meta-analysis by sampling studies that consisted of 82 schools with 97,406 students from kindergarten through 12th grade. While conducting the follow-up, the researchers created seven outcome categories to be measured. Four of the categories measured growth in social and emotional skills; attitudes toward self, others, and school; positive social behaviors; and academic performance. Three of the outcome categories measure decreases in; conduct problems; emotional distress; and substance abuse (Taylor et al., 2017). In the study, the researchers examined the follow-up effects of SEL programming at least six months or more removed from the program. The researchers found that all seven outcome categories had statistically significant results as an effect of participation in the SEL programs. The effect sizes ranged between .13-.33 and the improvement percentage was found to have increased by 5.17-12.93% in all categories (Taylor et al., 2017).

These meta-analytical evidentiary findings of the positive causal effects of SEL and its increase in prosocial and emotional competence have shown that observable and measurable gains can be realized from partaking in these programs both immediate and in the long term.

Additional research also exists to suggest that SEL instruction can have a neurological effect on students. Greenberg suggests that certain executive functioning skills can be positively affected by students who partake in SEL programs. This occurs within the prefrontal areas of the cortex, as the programs emphasize inhibitory control and planning (Greenberg, 2006).

Improved Behaviors from SEL- In conjunction with the social and emotional growth of students who partake in school-based SEL, there is also an improvement of socially acceptable behaviors (Durlak et al., 2011). Domitrovich et al., completed a meta-analysis in 2017 of five studies that examined SEL program effects on problem behaviors. The five studies collectively covered 300 published and unpublished studies encompassing over 300,000 students. Through this review they found that SEL programs had statistically significant effect sizes of .14-.26 on the outcomes of students' at-risk and problem behaviors (2017).

Not only is this behavior benefit observed in the short-term, but Domitrovich et al. reviewed several research studies to suggest that this improvement in behaviors can be observed longitudinally (2017). A study by Eddy et al., found after a 120-week follow-up of student participation in SEL that there was a decrease of 18.5% in arrests for students who participated in SEL versus their control group counterparts (2003).

Further, Jones et al., performed a longitudinal examination of the correlational effects between students with high social and emotional competence in kindergarten and their behavioral outcomes in adulthood. Through this study, the researchers found that those students who had a higher level of social and emotional competence were less likely to receive public assistance, be incarcerated, or engage in substance abuse (2015).

Impacting Special Education Students- The implications of these studies suggest that while SEL increases competencies in all students, it has a significant impact on those with lower pretest scores. In the current study, it was determined that it will be important to examine the results of not only the entire student population but also the specific effects of those students in special education for emotional support services.

When establishing an SEL curriculum within a school district, the research and evidence base suggests that universal implementation not only affects the behavior of those students with little to minimal problem behaviors but also those students who have significant behavior issues who would usually be targeted for a small group (tier 2) or individual (tier 3) interventions.

Novak et al., advocate for universal SEL interventions over targeted ones as they provide preventative interventions and more practice for higher risk children (2017). They argue that universal interventions provide a nuanced effect of individualization as the universal nature helps to target a wide variety of SEL skills. The researchers also argue that when all children participate in the interventions, there is less stigmatization of the higher risk children (Novak et al., 2017).

Duncan et al., conducted a growth measure study examining the growth trajectory of social, emotional, and behavioral skills of students who participated in an evidence-

based SEL program. Their randomized study included 1,129 students from 14 different schools. Through their growth trajectory analysis, they found that regardless of the behavioral trajectory, whether it be minimal externalizing negative behaviors or prevalent externalizing negative behaviors, all students were projected to make equivalent gains in their competencies. They further suggest that the implications of these findings can most likely be attributed to other evidence-based SEL programs. The authors' conclusions provide more support for the integration of SEL at the universal level as opposed to a targeted, individualized approach (Duncan et al., 2018).

This research suggests that those who are identified with significant behavioral issues can be positively impacted by a universal SEL curriculum. These students do not necessarily need individually targeted interventions, as the positive effects of the universal interventions can mitigate many of the behavioral issues. The research helps to provide support for the universal delivery of SEL instruction. Social and emotional growth and improved behaviors are the main targets of social-emotional learning. However, by being more competent in these constructs, there is a direct academic benefit associated with SEL programming (Zins et al., 2007).

Academic Growth Associated with SEL- While not a direct academic pedagogical practice, there is a great body of research behind a correlation to SEL competence and academic achievement (Zins et al., 2004; Zins et al., 2004). Aside from this research base, there is also an empirical body of evidence illustrating the efficacy of SEL with regard to academic achievement. The 2011 Durlak et al. meta-analysis found a documented 11 percentile gain in academic performance in a subset of their analysis (2011). The 2017 longitudinal meta-analysis conducted by Taylor et al., found that those

who participated in SEL programs had a 6% increase in high school graduation rates, an

11% increase in college completion rates, and 6% fewer placements in special education

(2017). In the Sklad et al., meta-analysis there was an immediate statistically significant

effect size of .46 that SEL had on academic achievement. Furthermore, at follow-up, the

effect of SEL on academic achievement was measured in an effect size of .26 (2012).

In their report, *The Positive Impact of Social and Emotional Learning for*

Kindergarten to Eight-Grade Students, Payton et al. state:

> "The positive impact of these programs on academic outcomes, including
>
> school grades and standardized achievement test scores, was particularly
>
> noteworthy in light of the current educational policy environment in which
>
> schools are held accountable for raising student test scores. Although
>
> some educators argue against implementing this type of holistic
>
> programming because it takes valuable time away from core academic
>
> material, our findings suggest that SEL programming not only does not
>
> detract from academic performance but actually increases students'
>
> performance on standardized tests and grades" (Payton et al., 2008, p. 16).

This research helped to guide the current study as an initiative to produce, replicate and

ultimately expand upon these findings.

SEL as an Aspect of Trauma-Informed Education- The evidence and research

surrounding the academic achievement effects of SEL is not surprising when examining

the psychological research that links the correlation between academics and SEL. In their

article, *Trauma-Sensitive Schools: An Evidence-Based Approach*, Plumb, et al. discussed

adverse childhood experiences (ACEs) and how they can preclude a student from

achieving in an academic setting. They state that most ACEs are caused by complex

trauma and that two-thirds of the American population are believed to have at least one

ACE. The researchers go on to discuss the impact that ACEs have on focusing, learning,

self-regulation, decision-making, empathy, regulating emotions, managing stress,

emotional regulation, and social deficits (2016). They state:

> "Students' significant emotional and behavioral needs take precedence
>
> over their academic needs because, as previously discussed, they will most
>
> likely have difficulty learning if their brains are in a hypo-aroused or
>
> hyper-aroused state" (Plumb et al., 2016, pp, 44-45.).

The research of Plumb et al. suggests that SEL is a component in helping schools

become more trauma-informed in their approach to students. Emotional literacy and

problem-solving are two of the individual capacities that help treat students dealing with

trauma by increasing their resiliency (Plumb et al., 2016) SEL helps to bolster the

enforcement of these two areas (Payton et al., 2008). By increasing students' resiliency,

they are being provided with protective strategies and processes that reduce maladaptive

behaviors (Greenberg, 2006).

SEL is presented as a trauma-informed pedagogy that increases both social and

emotional growth and academic achievement while decreasing the negative behaviors of

students. It also presents comprehensive prevention and intervention strategies to 21st-

century students of all abilities. Not only are the positive effects realized in the

aforementioned skills, but further discussion will highlight the research that suggests SEL

fills a cultural gap in education systems by working in conjunction with school-wide

positive behavioral interventions and supports to provide a balanced holistic approach.

Positive Behavior Interventions and Supports (PBIS) and SEL-Positive

behavior interventions and supports (PBIS) is a conceptual framework designed for

school systems to build their practice of establishing and sustaining a positive school

culture with behavior supports to ensure student academic and behavioral success

(Association for Positive Behavior Support, 2020). Both SEL and PBIS have overlapping

behavioral goals, however, they are often implemented in isolation (Durlak et al., 2011).

There is growing research and preliminary evidentiary support to suggest their integration

with one another (Cook et al., 2015). Before discussing the intersection of SEL and PBIS

in a school setting, it is first important to understand the research and concept behind

PBIS.

The PBIS system was developed out of Applied Behavior Analytic (ABA)

approach to intervention (Horner & Sugai, 2015). In accordance with the assumptions of

ABA, the system adheres to a data collection process that focuses on changing student

and educator behavior based on school-wide policies and procedures. After data on

behavioral incidents are collected and analyzed, school systems utilize the

implementation of a multi-tiered intervention model to prevent school problems and

teach appropriate behavior and thus, improve school culture (Bear et al., 2015). PBIS's

framework follows the multitiered systems of support (MTSS) model. MTSS is a

continuum of supports that is grounded in evidence-based practices and data decision

making. It typically occurs within a three-tier system (Stoiber & Gettinger, 2016). An

illustration of this three-tier system is found in Figure 2 (Oklahoma State Department of

Education, 2020).

Figure 2

PBIS/MTSS Tier Illustration
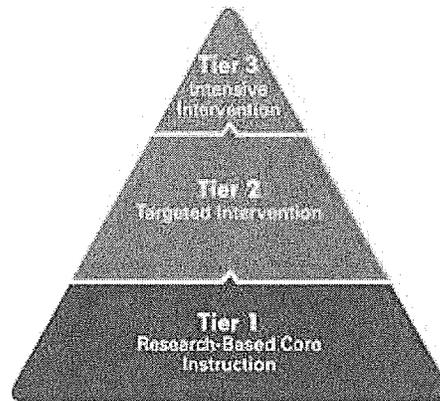
Tier one intervention in a PBIS framework constitutes a universal preventive

behavioral intervention. The main component of tier one is the use of positive reinforcers

to promote expected school-wide behaviors to the entire school population (Bear et al.,

2015). Burke et al. assert that students who are found to meet the expectations of the tier

one PBIS programming, generally coincide with aspects of overall positive behavior. The

researchers also correlate that those who did not meet the tier one expectations score

higher on behavioral rating scales. Whether or not a student adheres to the expectations in

tier one will affect if he or she will be recommended for further intervention in tier two

(Burke et al., 2014).

The second tier of a PBIS system can be used to target the roughly 10-15% of

students who are not successful in tier one. This second tier provides small group,

educational experiences for students to learn expected behaviors in a positive and

supportive fashion when participation in tier one is not sufficient enough for their

success. Tier two has students focus on building social skills, mentoring, check-ins, and

self-regulation and management (Horner & Sugai, 2015). Bruhn et al. examined three

different, tier two interventions to facilitate tier two skill-building; Check In Check Out

(CICO), Check, Connect, and Expect (CCE), or the Behavior Education Program (BEP).

Bruhn et al. found these interventions to lead to an increase in academic engagement and

decreases in problem behaviors and office disciplinary referral (ODR) rates (2014).

The third tier of the PBIS system is reserved for roughly 5% of the student

population that does not respond to the first two tiers of support. These are generally

students with an individualized education plan (IEP) to help support them behaviorally

(Horner & Sugai, 2015). The behavioral goals in the IEP are derived from a functional

behavior assessment (FBA). The FBA includes a summary statement that describes the

relationship between an environmental event and the problem behavior(s) of the student.

After the summary or hypothesis statement is made, observational data is collected. This

data can consist of frequency recording, intermittent re-coding, duration recording, or

latency recording of problem behaviors. It can also come from teacher interviews, direct

observation of the student, a review of records, behavioral rating scales, students, and

personal interviews. After the function of the behavior is determined, then appropriate

antecedent strategies are defined as well as replacement behaviors to serve the same

function as the negative behaviors. Also defined in the FBA are the consequences, both

positive and negative, for engaging in either the replacement or negative behaviors. Once

the FBA is developed, progress monitoring should occur regularly to ensure that the

student is making progress towards their established behavior goals (Cooper et al., 2008).

These three tiers of a PBIS system function to positively affect student behavior, just as SEL does. While both share common goals and bear similarities, each system utilizes different strategies to ultimately achieve their goals (Bear et al., 2015).

Intersection of SEL and PBIS-Both SEL and PBIS advocate for evidence-based techniques to establish life skills that give students the ability to increase their capacities proactively in social competence and behavioral regulation (Bear et al., 2015). However, PBIS is viewed as more of a teacher-driven classroom management mechanism as the teachers are who reinforce the student behaviors. The focus on immediate reinforcement for behavior leads PBIS to be viewed as an immediate short-term fix as it does not address the underlying root cause of the behavior (Plumb et al., 2016). Juxtaposed to the short-term fix is SEL which is student-driven. SEL is viewed as a more long-term fix, in that it works to address the long-term root issues and challenges that plague the student (Plumb et al., 2016). In simplest terms, SEL focuses on teaching the behaviors through a curriculum, whereas PBIS reinforces positive behavior expectations (Cook et al., 2015).

SEL and PBIS have a somewhat synergistic effect in that where one system lacks aspects, the other system will compensate. (Cook et al., 2015). Both skills are needed and can work in concert with one another. As SEL works with more internalizing and student acquired self-management skills, PBIS focuses on the extrinsic rules that teachers positively reinforce to manage student behavior. (Osher et al., 2010).

Osher et al. argue for the integration of SEL and PBIS programs by providing students with exposure to various universal preventative supports. Both methodologies stress positive approaches to behavior change rather than punitive. Osher et al., states that the programs are complementary and work to establish a positive, supportive, learning

environment that empowers students in their development of behavioral competencies (2010).

Cook et al., cited a paucity of evidence with regard to the integration of PBIS and SEL. Therefore, they conducted a study where they utilized a quasi-experimental design to examine the efficacy of an integrated SEL and PBIS approach. The researchers found that while SEL and PBIS acting as stand-alone systems have significant effects on student behavior, as opposed to those control classrooms, the combined effect of both SEL and PBIS realized significantly greater behavioral improvements (Cook et al., 2015).

Cook et al. argue that in an MTSS model, the universal tier-one delivery of content looks to target all students. However, they state: "A singular or standalone approach to universal prevention, however, may be shortsighted if the goal is to address the diverse mental health needs of students" (Cook et al., 2015, p.168). They state that an integrated approach with PBIS and SEL can be advantageous by providing a more comprehensive and complementary approach to address students' needs (Cook et al., 2015).

There is an established PBIS system at the school where this paper's study was conducted. The aforementioned studies offer a promising view of the integration of a new SEL program within the study school's current PBIS system as both offer systemic frameworks to positively affect student social interactions and behaviors at school. Up until recently, these systems existed in isolation. However, recent research and experimental studies have suggested that when the two frameworks work in concert with one another, they can have a greater complementary effect on students and increase the efficiency of their results.

SEL and Building Climate- As the universal delivery of SEL impacts all student's competencies, research suggests the building climate will also begin to be positively affected. There is a current belief that the relationship between SEL and a building's climate is bidirectional. In their issue brief, Osher and Berg define a school's climate as the "culture, norms, goals, values, practices, characteristics of relationships, and organizational structures" (p. 3., 2017). They go on to argue that SEL and school climate have significant overlap in their core elements of; supportive relationships, engagement, safety, cultural competence, cultural responsiveness, and challenge with high expectations (Osher & Berg, 2017).

Making a basic correlation, Osher and Berg state that evidentiary data suggests that SEL lowers disciplinary incidents and behavioral disruptions, leading to a more positive, safer learning environment and increased positive school climate. Conversely, if the climate is a safe, and supportive environment, then students will be more apt to engage in SEL and further develop their competencies. They argue that the relationship is defined by a cyclical influence (Osher & Berg, 2017). The influence on school climate can be seen through the universal implementation of SEL affecting all subgroups of students exhibiting negative behavior. This includes those who are identified as behaviorally challenged and those who are not.

Teacher Attitudes and Perceptions of Teaching SEL- Affecting the climate of a school building, creating positive outcomes in students, and establishing an SEL program effectively, is contingent upon the quality of implementation (Schultz et al., 2010). Schultz et al. described the need to assess the implementation from the lens of teacher disseminators to remove barriers and drive quality implementation. The

researchers developed a questionnaire to examine; teachers' perceptions of administrative

support, teacher competence with program delivery, teacher attitudes about program

necessity, teacher attitudes about program effectiveness, the time constraints for program

delivery, and teacher attitudes regarding responsibility for the social-emotional

development of their students (Schultz et al., 2010).

The researchers state that while their initial study only measured the teachers'

attitudes and perceptions mid-way through the implementation year, they state that

administering the questionnaire at multiple points in implementation can provide valuable

information before, during, and/or after, program implementation (Schultz et al., 2010).

The questionnaire that Schultz et al. developed, "Teacher Attitudes about Social and

Emotional Learning (TASEL), was utilized in this study to examine teacher attitudes and

instructional competence, and implementation. The questionnaire is located in Appendix

E (Schultz et al., 2010).

Cost-Benefit Analysis of SEL- When it comes to the efficiency of SEL,

Benjamin Franklin's quote that "time is money" (Franklin, p.188., 1978) is very much

applicable to the integration of the SEL framework. In a unique, seminal study, Belfield,

et al. completed a benefit-cost analysis (BCA) of SEL interventions in school systems.

This analysis was conducted to examine the economic value of SEL to determine whether

an investment was worth participating in the program (2015).

To start, Belfield et al., created a framework utilizing both economic and

methodological principles to establish a monetary value for specific SEL skills. The

researchers then applied that framework to SEL efficacy studies to measure the costs and

benefits. If the benefits outweigh the costs, then the researchers believe that SEL is worth

the investment for school systems. For this study, costs were not limited to the monetary

value of resources and materials, but also what time and resources are now reallocated or

displaced due to the integration of a program that takes up a previous allotment of time

(Belfield et al., 2015).

Belfield et al. examined four separate SEL curricular programs that have

evidence-based quantitative studies supporting their efficacy. The programs selected were

4Rs, Life Skills Training (LST), Second Step, and Responsive Classroom. After

completing the analysis through their framework, the researchers found that, overall,

interventions were found to have inexpensive costs. They concluded that the benefit of

SEL instruction substantially outweighed the cost, where in some cases a $1 expenditure

translated to an $11 benefit (2015). They further state; "...only a fraction of the overall

benefits are being calculated. If immediate benefits were properly modeled and all

benefits were included, the present value benefits of SEL interventions would likely

exceed costs by even larger magnitudes" (Belfield et al., p. 540, 2015).

Current Literature Relative to Research Questions

Various Evidence-Based SEL Programs-Both the BCA and the previously

mentioned meta-analyses include a variety of evidence-based SEL programs. While all of

these programs have evidenced positive results, it is important to examine the various

programs and discuss considerations when determining which program to implement

within a school.

In 2013, CASEL published a guide entitled *Effective Social and Emotional*

Learning Programs: Preschool and Elementary School Edition. In this guide they

reviewed 23 different K-5 evidence-based SEL programs. Their review was broken into

two parts. The first part was a breakdown of implementation and program design. This

aspect of the review provided a snapshot of each program by providing information on;

which grade range was covered, the grade by grade sequence, the average number of

sessions per year, if they included explicit skills instruction, integration with academic

curriculum areas, whether there were opportunities to practice SEL skills, which

environmental contexts were used to promote and reinforce concepts, and the assessment

tools for monitoring both student behavior and program implementation (CASEL, 2013).

The second part of the review focused on the evidence-base that was attributed to

each program. This aspect provided information about the demographics of the study, the

type of quantitative methodology that was utilized, and the evaluation outcomes

(CASEL, 2013).

In addition to the program reference guide provided by CASEL, the Harvard

Graduate School of Education provided a report in 2017 entitled; *Navigating SEL From*

the Inside Out: Looking Inside & Across 25 Leading SEL Programs: A Practical

Resource for Schools and OST Providers (Elementary School Focus). In this report, the

researchers examined 25 different SEL curriculums. In their report, they examined the

specific skills targeted by each program, the instructional methods used in each program,

and the specific components of each program (Jones et al., 2017). Both the Harvard and

CASEL program lists can be found in Figure 3.

Figure 3

SEL Program Lists

CASEL SEL Program Evaluation	Harvard Program Evaluation
•4Rs	•4Rs
•Al's Pals	•Before the Bullying A.F.T.E.R. School
•Caring Schools Community	Program
•Competent Kids, Caring Communities	•Caring School Community
•HighScope Education Approach for	•Character First
Preschool	•Competent Kids, Caring Communities
•I Can Problem Solve	•Conscious Discipline
•The Incredible Years Series	•Girls on the Run
•Michigan Model for Health	•Good Behavior Game
•MindUP	•I Can Problem Solve
•Open Circle	•Lions Quest
•PATHS	•MindUP
•Peace Works: Peacemaking Skills for Little	•Open Circle
Kids	•PATHS
•Positive Action	•Playworks-in school
•Raising Healthy Children	•Positive Action
•Resolving Conflict Creatively Program	•Responsive Classroom
•Responsive Classroom	•RULER
•RULER Approach	•Second Step
•Second Step	•SECURe
•Social Decision Making/Problem Solving	•Social Decision Making/Problem Solving
Program	Program
•Steps to Respect	•The Mutt-I-Grees Curriculum
•Too Good for Violence	•Too Good for Violence
•Tools of the Mind	•We Have Skills
•Tribes Learning Communities	•WINGs for Kids
	•Wise Skills

Combining the two reports, there were a total of 48 program reviews completed. Of the programs reviewed, 13 were reviewed in both reports for a total of 35 different programs being examined. These references and reviews helped to guide the study school through examination of SEL programs suited to address their school-wide needs.

Prior to selection, certain parameters of the program needed to be established. The program needed to have a significant evidence base supporting its efficacy in the needed competency areas of social-emotional learning. The system also had to be able to fit within the master schedule, be a K-5 school-wide system, include direct instruction on SEL skills during the school day, including teacher training, and have an implementation design that included flexibility for weekly lessons with daily embedded activities across

various academic curriculums. Figure 4 illustrates the selection process with these search parameters.

From the list of 35 different programs, the first step was to only include those that were evidence-based. The programs also needed to be designed for K-5 instruction. This narrowed the list to 23 programs. From there, programs that did not include a direct instruction component that was differentiated by grade level and administered during the school day were also eliminated. This left 13 programs. From there, one program was excluded due to its lack of ability to embed and integrate the program in other academic areas, bringing the total to 12. The final 12 programs all included a teacher training component which was included in the search criterion. All 12 also have at least one experimental or quasi-experimental study to provide evidence for the program's efficacy (CASEL, 2013 & Jones et al., 2017).

In examining the individual studies, Competent Kids, Caring Communities only had evidence to suggest an academic improvement; there was no evidence to suggest improvement in SEL competency or behavior. This led to its elimination. The remaining 11 studies all had realized gains in SEL competence and prosocial behavior. To further narrow down the program selection, many of the programs only had one or two studies in their evidence base. Only three studies had an evidence base of multiple randomized studies (CASEL, 2013 & Jones et al., 2017). The decision was made to focus on these three programs due to the significant amount of evidentiary impact on SEL competencies. The three programs are Positive Action, PATHS, and Second Step.

After the reports from Harvard Graduate School and CASEL were referenced to narrow down the program selection, an individual look at the evidence base of the three

remaining programs was examined in greater detail. The individual study results are explored, with Positive Action serving as the first review.

Positive Action is a comprehensive school-based social and emotional learning curriculum incorporating different tiers by grade level. There is an incorporated school-wide model as well as curricular lessons for each grade level. Grades K-6 utilize 140 lessons that are 15 minutes long. Grades 7-8, on the other hand, use 82 lessons. The integration of the universal school-wide model, as well as the age/grade-specific lessons, help to create a more positive behavioral, social, and emotional climate within the school (CASEL, 2017; Duncan et al., 2017; Guo et al., 2015; Jones et al., 2017; Lewis et al., 2016).

Duncan et al. conducted a multi-year longitudinal study on Positive Action that was published in 2017. This study primarily focused on groups that were in a low socio-economic and minority demographics. The study followed students as they progressed from 3rd to 8th grade in 14 different schools that utilized the Positive Action program. Through the study it was found that the Positive Action program benefited the student body as a whole. The holistic program helped to meet student needs and address issues before they became problems. Evidence was provided to showcase how the positive climate that was created helped to change the building culture and address the negative behavior trajectories of at-risk youth (Duncan et al., 2017).

Guo et al., aimed to research the effects of the program on more rural areas. Their longitudinal study was conducted over a three-year period comparing two like-demographic rural counties. Both counties had significantly racially diverse populations in low-income, violent rural counties. The study focused on the three years of data on

middle school youth. Through the study, they found statistically significant results to support the use of the Positive Action program. More specifically, statistical significance was found in the areas of school hassles, such as bullying, and self-esteem. There was also evidence for a decrease in aggression scores, but the researchers did not find the decrease large enough to define it as statistically significant (Guo et al., 2015).

An additional study examined the effects of the Positive Action program on what the researchers called "Positive Youth Development". This was studied in an urban, high ethnic, low-income setting throughout 3-8. The researchers defined Positive Youth Development as a focus on the psychological and social development in youth. More specifically, the researchers examined self-concept, morality, and social skills. Through the study, the researchers found that the comprehensive program provided evidence of favorable effects of the program on Positive Youth Development. The researchers were encouraged because the findings illustrated how effective the results were when dealing with the low socio-economic ethnic youth demographic (Lewis et al., 2016).

The next program, PATHS, is a comprehensive program differentiated for grades PreK-6. In the program, there are a total of 36-52 lessons in each grade level that are expected to be delivered twice per week. There are also take-home opportunities to bridge communication between home and school (CASEL, 2013; Jones et al., 2017).

Bierman et al. took an extensive examination of the use of PATHS across varying school districts and populations. Their study involved 2,937 children who went through the SEL program for three years in grades 1, 2, and 3. The researchers found that the universal intervention illustrated effectiveness for both social competence and lowering aggressive behaviors in students (Bierman et al., 2010).

Chi Ming Kam et al., illustrated the effects of this program on the special education student subgroup, specifically. They sought to isolate the effect of both regular education students and special education students. Although the study found significant positive effects on the whole population, there was not enough data to separate the specific program effect on the special education population. An important finding in the article found was that at baseline, students who were identified as needing special education had higher levels of externalizing and internalizing behaviors, depression, and lower levels of social and emotional problem-solving skills (Chi Ming Kam et al., 2004).

Novak, et al., examined the efficacy of PATHS in Croatian elementary schools. The study sought to examine the difference in efficacy for two separate subgroups. Those who were high-risk at the point of pre-test and those who were low-risk at the point of the pre-test. The sample included a total of 568 first grade students from 30 different Croatian Elementary Schools. There were two significant major findings. The first was that there was a marginal statistical significance effect between the control and the treatment groups in the area of emotional regulation. The second finding was that the students in the high-risk subgroup illustrated no statistically significant effect from receiving the treatment. However, the low-risk subgroup found statistical significance in all categories (Novak et al., 2017).

The last program examined was Second Step. Second Step provides age-appropriate differentiated K-5 curriculums with defined lesson plans for each grade level that are CASEL, PBIS, MTSS/RTI, and Common Core Aligned. There are 22-25 lessons that are designed to be delivered weekly. The program also provides embedded

integration for existing PBIS systems and academic courses as well as communication

materials for home (CASEL, 2013; Jones et al., 2017, Low et al., 2019; Low et al., 2015).

Low et al., conducted a large-scale randomized control study across 61 different

schools with 321 teachers and approximately 7300 students. The study aimed to

determine the efficacy of Second Step after one year of implementation. The study

demonstrated that eight out of the eleven outcome SEL and behavioral variables had

statistically significant improvement for students who lacked competency at the

beginning of the program. This study highlights the benefits of the program for those

students who have lower baselines for SEL competencies (Low et al., 2015)

Following up on results from the 1-year study, Low et al., examined the efficacy

of Second Step over a 2-year implementation period. Their study encompassed 61

schools, 321 teachers, and 8,941 students in two different states. This quantitative study

took a longitudinal approach to analyze the effect on early elementary students. The

sample included students in kindergarten through third grade from a total of six school

districts in both rural and urban settings. The students selected were also from two

different geographic areas, Washington and Arizona. In total 4,649 took part in the

program from start to finish. The major finding was that students who took part in the

Second Step curriculum achieved better results on the Strengths and Difficulties

Questionnaire (SDQ) than those students who did not. The SDQ is a measure of

emotional symptoms, conduct problems, hyperactivity, peer problems and prosocial

competence. This was true regardless of the pre-test rating. The results were statistically

significant and larger for those students who had lower pretest scores on both the SDQ

and the Devereux Student Strengths Assessment-Second Step Edition (DESSA). DESSA

measured students' skills for learning, empathy, emotional management, and problem-

solving. Another major finding was, contrary to the authors' hypothesis, there was no

statistically significant improvement in academic achievement for those who took part in

the program (Low et al., 2019).

Through the in-depth review of program effects, a selection needed to be made.

The program selected needed to meet the needs of school where the current study is

taking place.

Feasibility of Implementation-After examining the extensive evidence of the

three remaining programs, all three had much evidence to warrant program

implementation. The last aspect for consideration was feasibility. In a qualitative study

examining teachers' viewpoints on SEL learning and implementation, Martinez found

that although all teachers reported positive behavioral outcomes from SEL

implementation, they reported that time constraints were the largest obstacle that they had

to overcome. The teachers stated in their focus groups and individual meetings that they

needed scheduled time allotted for SEL instruction (Martinez, 2016). These same

perceptions about lack of time affecting implementation were realized in the qualitative

study of Ee and Cheng (2013).

Consideration of teachers' concerns about implementation is essential, as the

fidelity of implementation is an integral part of having an effective SEL program. Low et

al., examined the results of SEL when compared to the fidelity of implementation. The

researchers broke up the teachers into three groups; high-quality implementation, low-

engagement, and low program adherence. High-quality implementation had a great deal

of success but surprisingly, they had the most negative results in the low-engagement

class rather than the low program adherence class. This suggests that it is better not to

implement a program than to do so poorly (Low et al., 2016). As the fidelity of

implementation is evidenced to have a greater effect on SEL program efficacy, attention

must be paid to the current schedule and how a specific program can be integrated into

the master schedule without taking away from instructional time dedicated to academic

subjects.

While all three programs had the support to provide effective intervention to the

current problem at the study school, Positive Action and PATHS required more time for

direct instruction of skills. Positive Action had 140 lessons per grade level, and PATHS

had 36-52 lessons. This time commitment, compared to Second Step with 22-25 lessons

per grade level, was too significant considering all three programs had similar outcomes.

The program design of Second Step allows for implementation on a flexible weekly basis

to help ensure fidelity to the completion of the program. After an extensive review of

various programming, Second Step was chosen to be utilized as the evidence-based SEL

program.

Figure 4

SEL Program Selection
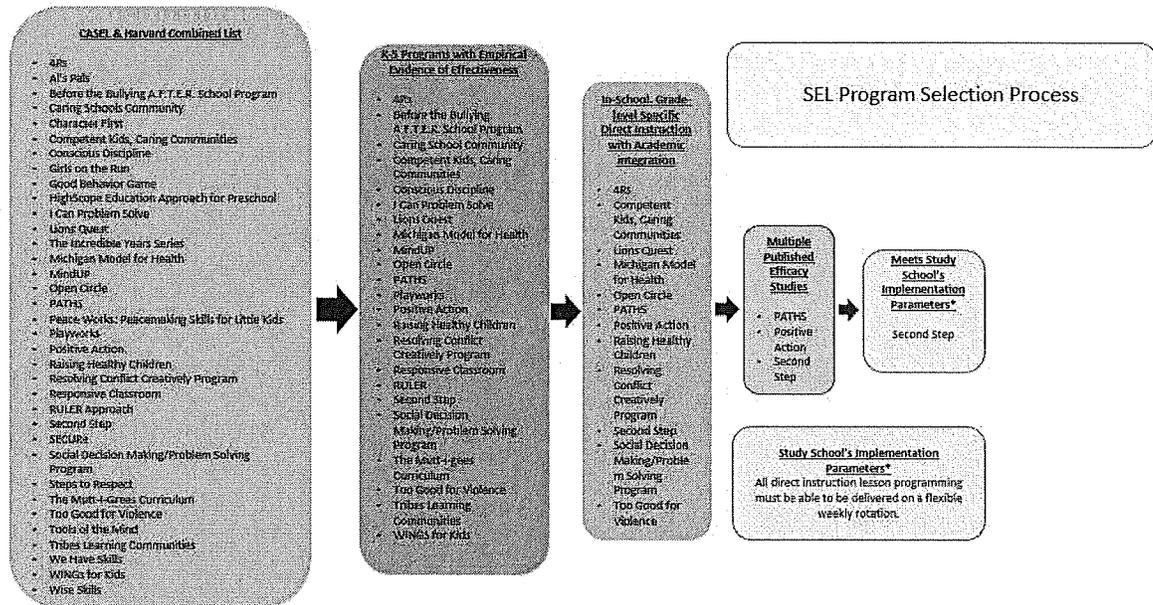
Establishment of Second Step-Given that Second Step had been chosen for use

in the study school, specific and additional background information will now be

presented to establish background knowledge and explain the credibility of this curricula.

In 1979, Committee for Children was founded to advance the study of child abuse

and child sexual abuse. From their studies and research, the Committee for Children

developed the Talking About Touching program in 1981. Talking About Touching was a

personal safety curriculum that focused on teaching children how to recognize, resist, and

report sexual victimization. As the program developed, so did the research regarding

victimization. Committee for Children cited a growing research and evidence base to

suggest that those individuals who are violent lack appropriate social and emotional

competencies. From this realization and research, the Committee for Children began to

move on to the 'second step' of their company's vision and instead of focusing on reaction, began focusing on prevention (Committee for Children, 2018).

Through the new focus on prevention strategies, Committee for Children developed their first version of Second Step. This first edition focused on primary abuse and prevention strategies and in 1998 was recognized by the White House as a "Model Program" in their annual Report of School Safety. In 2001 they were named to the United States Department of Education's "Safe and Drug-Free Schools Exemplary Program" and in 2002, CASEL awarded them "high marks" for their curriculum (Committee for Children, n.d.).

Efficacy of Second Step-The initial Second Step program was evaluated in a study by Frey et al., in 2005. The study examined the effects of Second Step in control and treatment groups encompassing 1,253 children. The study found that students who partook in the program had higher levels of social competence, were less aggressive, and had more positive goals (Frey et al., 2005). In an additional study of the initial Second Step program, researchers found that students who partook in the program illustrated significant gains in prosocial behaviors and social-emotional skills (Edwards et al., 2005).

In 2011, Committee for Children released its current version of Second Step. This program was evidenced to achieve better results in emotional management, prosocial competence, conduct, peer problems, hyperactivity, and problem-solving (Low et al., 2015; Low et al., 2019). Notably, the studies found statistically significant improvements in all students who had lower social-emotional pretest scores prior to treatment. These individuals had significant improvement in peer relations, emotional management, problem-solving, and skills for learning (Low et al., 2015; Low et al., 2019).

Based on the rigor and effectiveness identified by these authors, Second Step was chosen to serve as the curricula used to intervene in the current study. The means for the evaluation of its efficacy will be discussed in the following chapter

Summary

Even though SEL is a relatively new educational concept and framework, the literature surrounding SEL illustrates that it can have a tremendous impact on the students and climate within a school system. Evidence supports SEL programming for increasing prosocial behaviors, emotional competencies, and academic achievement while decreasing conduct behaviors. These causal effects of SEL programming meet the criterion for trauma-informed care and have a substantial benefit when considered in respect to cost-benefit analysis. Further research suggests that universal implementation can have significant preventative and mitigating effects on more behaviorally challenged high-risk students, such as those with emotional support services. The SEL framework has shown that it can work together with current PBIS systems to create a synergistic relationship whereby students are being supported both in the short and long-term. This incorporation can have a positive effect on the overall climate and culture of the building when implemented.

The significant impacts of SEL are realized through effective implementation and care must be given to formatively and summatively assess those who are providing the instruction. While there are many effective SEL programs available, Second Step is a program that meets specific criteria for implementation at the study school. Second Step works well by fitting logistically within the master schedule with little disruption to other

academic areas. The evidentiary base surrounding Second Step warrants its inclusion

within the school system and its efficacy will be studied through a mixed-method inquiry.

The methodology of this mixed-method study will be examined in the following chapter.

Chapter III - Methodology

Restatement of Purpose

The purpose of this study is to evaluate the Second Step program as well as add to the body of research surrounding SEL. The efficacy of the program is examined by answering the following three questions: First, what is the effectiveness of the Second Step SEL Curriculum on student behavior as evidenced by Office Disciplinary Referrals (ODRs) when it is delivered in the regular education classroom at a universal level? Second, after completing one year of the program, what are the attitudes and responses of both regular and special education teachers with regard to the implementation of delivering social-emotional instruction? Third, what are the perceptions of regular education teachers and special education teachers after one year of the Second Step program in each of the following categories: emotional support students and their behaviors; regular education students and their behaviors; and, the school climate and culture?

This study is significant in that it not only contributes to the evidence base surrounding the value of SEL instruction and the Second Step program, but it also highlights previously unstudied aspects. Second Step has not been studied as to the efficacy of the program on emotional support special education students. An additional aspect of this study, that also does not have a significant amount of research base, is the analysis of teachers' attitudes towards implementation and instructional competence of providing SEL instruction to students. This study will also provide an evidence base at the local level. The ramifications of the study can be used to drive resource conversations

at the district level to help prioritize district-wide initiatives regarding academic and

mental health resources. Unique to the school year of implementation, the evidence that

was collected happened during the COVID-19 pandemic. This provides an added benefit

this aspect of implementation has never been studied before.

Description of Participants

The individuals being examined in this study are derived from a convenience

sample of two groups; students and teachers from an elementary school in Erie,

Pennsylvania.

Students-Existing anonymous behavior data was generated from the regularly

reported behavior data of all students enrolled in grades Kindergarten through fifth grade

at the study school. Their ages ranged from 5 to 12 years. The overall enrollment was 628

students (Millcreek Township School District, 2020).

The school where the study took place is a suburban elementary school housing

grades K-5 with 44% of the student population considered to be economically

disadvantaged and approximately 7% who are identified as English Language Learners

(ELL). Another 13% of the student population requires Special Education services and 23

of those students are identified as needing Emotional Support (ES) Services, accounting

for 43% of the special education demographic. In terms of racial ethnicity, the school

comprises 76% White, 9.7% Asian, 5.4% Hispanic, 2.4% Black, and 6.5% of 2 or more

ethnicities. 53.5% of the student population is male and 46.5% is female (Millcreek

Township School District, 2020).

Teachers- Voluntary teacher participation was solicited after an introductory

presentation by the researcher. After completion of the Second Step Program, the

teachers were provided with the "Research Participant Information Letter" found in

Appendix F and emailed a link to complete an anonymous survey. After reading through

the letter and then clicking the link, teachers consented to participate in the study.

The teacher population that was solicited for voluntary participation at the study

school was 42 teachers, one school counselor, one school psychologist, and two Physical

Therapy/Occupational Therapy counselors. From that group, 28 teachers were homeroom

teachers who are responsible for teaching all subjects excluding the "specials" classes.

These homeroom teachers were the primary disseminators of the Second Step curriculum.

There were additional teachers who reinforced the Second Step curriculum. They include:

one Music teacher, one Art teacher, one Physical Education teacher, two Reading

Specialists, one Instructional Support Advisor, one English Language Learners instructor,

three Learning Support Special Education teachers, two Emotional Support special

education teachers, one Speech teacher, and one Gifted Support teacher. The experience

level of the teachers ranged from 1 year of experience to 35 years of experience. The

average amount of experience in the district is 17 years.

Human Subject Consideration and Clearance from IRB

To ensure that the study was conducted in an ethical and unbiased manner, all

study procedures were conducted in an educational institution with minimal to no risk to

participants. The permission to conduct this research from the educational institution is

included in Appendix G. The school's implementation of the program and the collection

of evidence was done in accordance with normal educational practices. This includes the collection of anonymous behavioral referral data.

The anonymous ad hoc data report was performed on the school's student information service, Infinite Campus, to nominally attribute whether a student had received an ODR during the two separate school years being examined. To ensure anonymity, the students' names were not reported, rather a unique 32-digit alphanumeric character was assigned to each student in the computer software. The specific behavioral referrals, or the amount of such, were not reported rather all that was included in the ad hoc was that a referral had occurred and the grade level the student was in. To further ensure anonymity, the report was run by a third-party, the school district's Data Manager. No other personal information was attributed or analyzed.

All other quantitative and qualitative information was collected through an anonymous voluntary questionnaire completed by teachers through a Google Form located in Appendix H. At the end of the program, the teachers were sent a link to the Google Form questionnaire, along with the Informational Letter found in Appendix F. The Informational Letter explained the researcher's role and provided contact information for the Slippery Rock Institutional Review Board, should questions have been raised as the researcher also served the school in a supervisory capacity.

No names or other pieces of identifying information was associated with the questionnaire. The survey was completely voluntary and the teachers could opt-out of any question at any time. The data was stored on a password protected secure Google Drive that only the researcher had access to. Five years after the completion of the study, the data will be deleted from the drive and any hard copies will be shredded.

Attached in Appendix I is the clearance from Slippery Rock University's Institutional Review Board.

Description of Instrumentation/Measurement Procedures

Each of the following three instruments and measurement procedures were utilized to answer the aforementioned research questions.

Office Disciplinary Referrals (ODRs)-To measure the effect of Second Step on problem behaviors, a pre/post quantitative analysis of Office Disciplinary Referrals (ODRs) was measured. At the study school, there were two levels of formal discipline: the ODR and the Minor Incident Report (MIR). A MIR is a form that is filled out for a student who does not abide by the school's PBIS behavioral expectations and engages in inappropriate behaviors on a small scale. Examples include; talking at inappropriate times, being unkind, not following school rules, etc. A full breakdown is included in Appendix D. These minor incidents are handled by the teacher on an individual basis with no official office disciplinary consequence. When three MIRs accumulate for a student, this will result in an ODR.

When a student has received three Minor Incident Reports or commits a more egregious offense as outlined in the Discipline Matrix located in Appendix E, the teacher will fill out an ODR. The student will be called down to the office to speak with the Assistant Principal or Principal and receive a formal disciplinary consequence that is commensurate with the district's board approved disciplinary matrix. The ODR and consequence are then recorded in Infinite Campus.

Teaching Attitudes about Social and Emotional Learning (TASEL)- Aside from the quantitative analysis of ODRs, additional quantitative analysis was conducted using a questionnaire called the Teacher Attitudes about Social and Emotional Learning (TASEL) (Schultz et al., 2010). The TASEL was used to assess teachers' attitudes about providing instruction for social and emotional learning, as well as information regarding the implementation of the program. This was a self-administered questionnaire with 31 items. The questionnaire utilized a Likert-scale, meaning that each item has 6 ratings ranging from 1-Strongly Disagree to 6-Strongly Agree. The questionnaire has strong content validity and strong inter-item reliability ranging from .87-.91 on five out of the six scales measures. Only one scale, time constraints, was found to have questionable reliability. The questionnaire was designed to take 10-15 minutes and is located in Appendix E (Schultz et al., 2010) This questionnaire was transferred to electronic Google form and a copy of the new format can be found in Appendix H. Permission for the approval of use of this questionnaire is located in Appendix J.

Qualitative Inquiry-When administering the electronic Google form TASEL questionnaire, there was the additional inclusion of three open-ended questions and one demographic question (Appendix H). Incorporating the open-ended questions helped to provide both a qualitative evaluation of the program and contextual background to the empirical evidence from the first two quantitative measures (Patton, 2015; Singer & Couper, 2017). The following questions were asked:

- Are you classified as a Special Education teacher or a Regular Education teacher?

- How do you feel Second Step affected the overall behavior of the student

  body?

- How do you feel Second Step affected the behavior of Special Education

  students in need of Emotional Support services?

- How do you feel Second Step affected the overall climate and culture of

  Grandview Elementary?

Research Design

 Mixed-Method Design-Noted psychologist and statistician, William Shadish

argues that utilizing only one research methodology, whether quantitative or qualitative,

is inherently biased. Therefore, he advocates for a mixed-method approach as it will

holistically balance a study by providing multiple avenues of exploration (Shadish,

1993). This study employs a mixed-method design. A quasi-experimental model provides

empirical evidence for a quantitative analysis while the inclusion of the qualitative

questionnaire provides both a summative evaluation and contextualization of the

empirical evidence.

 Question 1 Quantitative Analysis-The first research question asks; "What is the

effectiveness of the Second Step SEL Curriculum on student behavior as evidenced by

Office Disciplinary Referrals (ODRs) when it is delivered in the regular education

classroom at a universal level?" This is examined through a pre/post analysis of ODR

data. Due to the COVID-19 school closure, behavior data for the 2019-2020 school year

was only collected through 128 days of student attendance, roughly the first three

quarters of the school year. Therefore, the comparison of behavior data from the 2020-2021 school year provided behavior data over the same time frame.

At the start of the study, an anonymous ad hoc report was performed on the school district's student information services platform, Infinite Campus. This ad hoc report consisted of students in enrolled in grades K-4 during the 2019-2020 school year and nominally attributed a "Y" or "N" dependent upon whether a student had received an ODR through the first 128 days. Student names were not be reported. Rather, a unique 32-digit alphanumeric character was assigned to each student. The specific behavioral referrals, or the amount of such, were not reported. Instead, all that was reported was that a referral had occurred and what grade level the student is in. The reason multiple incidents by a student were not identified was to mitigate the skewing of data attributed to an anomalous student.

The anonymous ad hoc report was be run by the school district's Data Manager. After presentation of the independent variable (Second Step curriculum as mentioned prior) in the 2020-2021 school year, the same anonymous ad hoc report was run for that same population of students who were now in grades 1-5. This information was reported with the same 32 alphanumeric identifiers. Both the 2019-2020 and the 2020-2021 lists were cross-referenced and any unique identifier that was not on both lists was eliminated. This ensured that the student data reflected only those individuals who enrolled in the school both prior to implementation, as well as through the first year of implementation. This established the student behavioral data sample that was studied.

After the sample was established, a repeated measures McNemar statistical analysis test was completed to determine if there was a statistically significant difference

in ODRs and rule out random chance. The McNemar test is completed for analyses that include repeated measures on matched pairs. Specifically, the McNemar test is used when there are dichotomous pairs, meaning that the measure is looking for statistical significance when the answers are either a nominal yes or a nominal no (Adedokun & Burgess, 2012). Since this study contained the same population both pre and post-treatment and the data provided was nominal, the McNemar test was viewed to be the most appropriate measure to determine statistical significance. This statistical analysis is non-parametric, meaning that it is not included in a normal distribution (Adedokun & Burgess, 2012). An additional McNemar statistical analysis was completed to determine the level of statistical significance of effect at the different grade levels. A comparison was then made between the grade levels.

Question 2 Quantitative Analysis-The second research question asks; "After completing one year of the program, what are the attitudes and responses of both regular and special education teachers with regard to the implementation of delivering social-emotional instruction?" The question was examined through the dissemination of the TASEL. This questionnaire is included in Appendix C and its presentation in electronic form is located in Appendix H. The questionnaire was given to teachers who consented to participate in the study upon completion of the Second Step program. The questionnaire was filled out anonymously through a Google Form. The TASEL has already been established as a questionnaire with strong content validity and strong inter-item reliability (Schultz et al., 2010). From the Likert scale on the questionnaire, the ordinal data was organized through a descriptive statistical analysis to establish the frequency and mean score for each item on the questionnaire.

Question 3 Qualitative Analysis-The third question asks: "What are the perceptions of regular education teachers and special education teachers after one year of the Second Step program as to the following categories: emotional support students and their behaviors; regular education students and their behaviors; and, the school climate and culture?" To answer this inquiry, open-ended questions were added to the end of the TASEL on the Google Form in Appendix H. These answers were coded based on their responses and descriptively analyzed to provide patterns in the provided information. With the inclusion of open-ended questions, summative and contextual information were provided for evaluation of the program (Patton, 2015; Singer & Couper, 2017).

Description of Procedures

The Second Step Program was implemented in the 2020-2021 school year at the study school. Prior to the start of the study, the school district's Data Manager supplied the data regarding the previous school year's ODRs. Program implementation started at the opening teacher in-service, where initial professional development was provided to teachers. Following this initial professional development, the program was implemented at the study school. The implementation timeline was created around the school district's calendar. This timeline is provided in Appendix A.

In the school where the study occurred, the homeroom teachers provided weekly lessons to both regular and special education students in their classrooms ("Specials Schedule", 2020). Second Step has 22 weekly lesson plans for grades 1-5 and 25 weekly lessons for Kindergarten. The start and end guidelines, whole school assembly, and whole school announcement schedule are included in Appendix A

Since implementation will occur with flexibility, this variance was discussed with the program developers. An interview was conducted with the Vice President of Education and Research at Second Step on January 23, 2020. In the interview, it was confirmed that fidelity to implementation would not be adversely affected by integrating Second Step flexibly. The program was developed in this manner to allow the program to fit various school needs (Kim, 2020).

At the conclusion of implementation, the TASEL and open-ended questions were disseminated to teachers via an anonymous Google Form (Appendix H) along with an Informational Letter (Appendix F). Also, at this time the school district Data Manager provided the ad hoc report on ODR data for the 2020-2021 school year. After all of this data was collected, the statistical analysis was completed.

Data Analysis and Display Procedure

At the completion of the Second Step program, the quantitative and qualitative data was collected. The quantitative data for the pre/post analysis of ODR data was input in the statistical analysis software, SPSS. From there, the McNemar test was completed with an $\propto=.05$ to determine if there was a statistical significance after participation in the program. The null hypothesis for the McNemar test was as follows: After treatment with the Second Step program, there will be no change in behavior as evidenced by ODRs. The independent variable in this analysis is the Second Step program and the dependent variable is the dichotomous pair of yes or no when receiving an ODR.

Additional statistical analysis from the ODR data was performed on SPSS to compare the difference in ODRs between grade levels. A McNemar test was completed

with an $\alpha=.05$ to determine if there was a statistical significance in the difference in ODRs grade levels. The null hypothesis for this analysis was: All grade levels will have the same amount of ODRs after treatment with the Second Step program. The independent variable in this analysis is the Second Step program and the dependent variable is ODRs within each grade level. To account for consistency in participation, the data analyzed in these pre/post measures only included those who were present in both the 2019-2020 and 2020-2021 school years.

The collection of the Likert data from the TASEL was calculated to provide the frequency and mean scores of responses for each of the 31 items. As a Likert scale is not a continuous interval or ratio scale, all findings were summarized in the forthcoming chapters using mean, median, and mode based on the ordinal data.

The qualitative data retrieved from the open-ended questions was inductively analyzed to discover patterns, themes, and categories within the individual responses (Patton, 2015). This concept is called open coding and was utilized to establish the overall constructs of original participant responses and to allow answers to be classified for further analysis (Patton, 2015; Strauss & Corbin, 1998). Once the major themes and categories are established in the open coding phase, axial coding was utilized to provide further analysis to create subcategories within the overall open coding categories. This process helped to provide a high level of specificity in analysis, while still relating back to the generalizable themes (Patton, 2015; Strauss & Corbin, 1998). From these themes, deductive analysis occurred and a summary presented. These open and axial coded summative findings will be presented in created charts in Chapter Four to help visualize the results.

Summary

This study answers the three research questions through the utilization of a mixed-method methodology. The quantitative analysis of questions one and two ensures that empirical evidence is provided to either reject or accept the null hypothesis statements in regard to the effect of Second Step. The inclusion of an open-ended qualitative measure to answer question three not only provides a summative evaluation of the program but also a contextual background to the evidence. This context will be important in understanding the ramifications of the empirical data. The results of this research design are presented in the fourth chapter.

Chapter IV – Findings

To determine the efficacy of the Second Step SEL program, two quantitative and

one qualitative measure were conducted and analyzed in order to answer this study's

research questions. Figure 5 illustrates the hierarchal relationship between these research

questions and their subsequent forms of measurement and analysis.

Figure 5

Hierarchal Relationship of Research Questions and Analysis
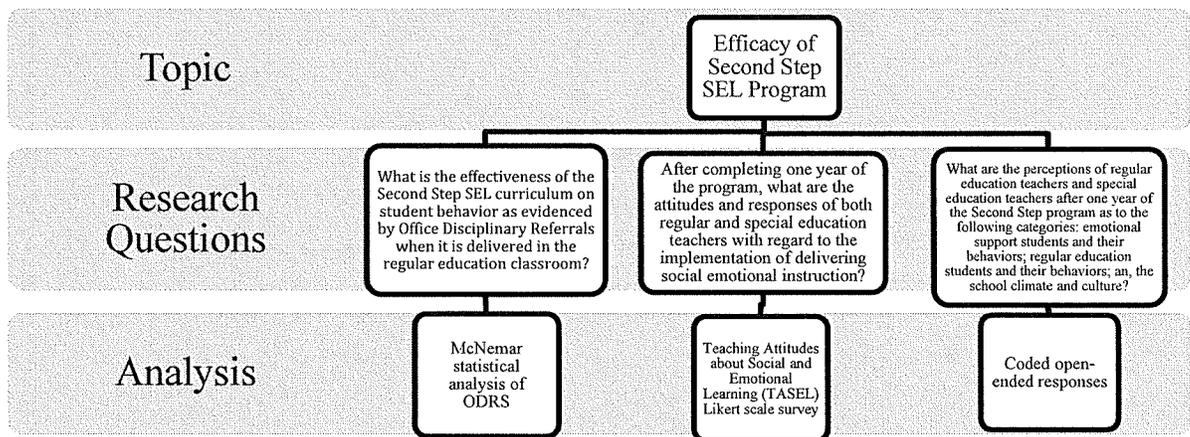
Following this chapter's presentation of data and analysis, the implications,

ramifications, and considerations of the metrics, and how they relate and/or contribute to

the body of research surrounding Second Step and SEL, will be discussed in the chapter

5. The first data metric examined is Office Disciplinary Referrals.

Quantitative ODR Results-Effect on Overall Student Behavior

To analyze the effect of Second Step on student behavior, a pre/post analysis of Office Disciplinary Referrals (ODRs) data was conducted. This analysis was conducted to answer the first research question: *What is the effectiveness of the Second Step SEL curriculum on student behavior as evidenced by Office Disciplinary Referrals when it is delivered in the regular classroom at a universal level.*

To retrieve this information, two ad hoc reports were created. The first ad hoc report generated a list of students enrolled in grades Kindergarten through 4th grade during the 2019-2020 school year at the study school. The report gave each student a unique 32-digit alphanumeric character and nominally attributed a "Y" or "N" to each student dependent on whether the student received an ODR during the first 128 days of the 2019-2020 school year. Multiple incidents conducted by a single student were not included to prevent the skewing of data attributed to anomalous individuals. The time period of 128 days was used as the defined range because that was the length of time the study school was in session prior to the COVID-19 shutdown in 2019-2020.

The second ad hoc report was generated after the presentation of the independent variable, Second Step, in the 2020-2021 school year. The second report provided the same information as the first, over the same range of 128 days. The report included students in grades 1-5, as these students were in the cohort from the prior year and matriculated to the next grade. After both the 2019-2020 and the 2020-2021 reports were created, they were cross-referenced and any student that was not on both lists was excluded from the sample set because they were not present both pre/post-treatment.

Student Sample-The total number of students in the sample data who met the above criterion from the study school was 505. The students in the sample data came from the following cohorts:

- 107 students from Kindergarten (19-20) to 1st Grade (20-21)

- 102 students from 1st Grade (19-20) to 2nd Grade (20-21)

- 105 students from 2nd Grade (19-20) to 3rd Grade (20-21)

- 95 students from 3rd Grade (19-20) to 4th Grade (20-21)

- 96 students from 4th Grade (19-20) to 5th Grade (20-21)

ODR Data and Analysis-Table 1 illustrates the total amount of individuals who received ODRs in each cohort during the two school years. Overall, there was a 35.37% decrease in the total amount of ODRs for the student sample data. Kindergarten/1st had the largest decrease with 88% less than the previous year, followed by 4th/5th with 26.67%, 3rd/4th with 18.19%, and 1st/2nd with 11.12%. The cohort with the largest total amount of ODRs in 19-20 was 4th/5th with 30. This was followed by Kindergarten/1st with 25. In 20-21, the largest total number of ODRs was 4th/5th with a total of 22, with the next highest being 2nd/3rd with 11.

Four out of five cohorts experienced a decrease in the amount of ODRs. The exception was the 2nd/3rd cohort. That cohort experienced an increase of ODRs by 36.36%.

Table 1

ODR Totals by Cohort

Cohort	Students	19-20	20-21	% +/-*
Kindergarten/1st	107	25	3	-88%
1st/2nd	102	9	8	-11.12%
2nd/3rd	105	7	11	+36.36%
3rd/4th	95	11	9	-18.19%
4th/5th	96	30	22	-26.67%
Total	505	82	53	-35.37%

Note. *Percent increase or decrease, year over year.

Statistical Significance- To determine the statistical significance of these increases/decreases in ODRs, a repeated measures McNemar statistical analysis test was completed. The McNemar test was completed with an $\alpha = .05$ to determine statistical significance. The null hypothesis posited that after treatment with the Second Step program, there will be no change in behavior as evidenced by ODRs. The independent variable was the Second Step program and the dependent variable was the number of ODRs. The occurrence of behavioral incidents is delineated by a "Y" in Table 2, where an "N" indicated that there was no behavioral incident. Results of the crosstabulation statistical comparison are included in Table 2 and the p-value, representing statistical significance is located in Table 3.

Table 2

McNemar Crosstabulation of Overall ODRs

			After Second Step		
			N	Y	Total
Before Second Step	N	Count	396	27	423
	Y	Count	56	26	82
Total		Count	452	53	505

Table 3

McNemar Statistical Significance of Overall ODRs

	Value	Exact Sig. (2-sided)
McNemar Test		.002[a]
N of Valid Cases	505	

Note. [a] Binomial distribution used.

As Table 3 illustrates, the p-value of .002 represents a significant statistical significance and subsequently a rejection of the null hypothesis. The alternative hypothesis that behavioral incidents were not equal to those prior to the Second Step program would be accepted.

An additional McNemar statistical analysis was completed to determine if there was a level of statistical significance that was different at other grade levels. This analysis was completed with an $\alpha = .05$ to determine statistical significance and the results of the crosstabulation are included in Table 4. The p-values used to quantify the amount of statistical significance are included in Table 5.

Table 4

McNemar Crosstabulation of Individual Grade Level ODRs

Grade Level	Before Second Step		After Second Step		
			N	Y	Total
Kindergarten/1st		N	81	1	82
		Y	23	2	25
	Total		104	3	107
1st/2nd		N	88	5	93
		Y	6	3	9
	Total		94	8	102
2nd/3rd		N	87	11	98
		Y	7	0	7
	Total		94	11	105
3rd/4th		N	78	6	84
		Y	8	3	11
	Total		86	9	95
4th/5th		N	62	4	66
		Y	12	18	30
	Total		74	22	96
Total		N	396	27	423
		Y	56	26	82
	Total		452	53	505

As shown in Table 5, there is a discrepancy in the p-values for the individual grade levels. Whereas the original null hypothesis can be rejected in the Kindergarten/1st and 4th/5th cohort, the null hypothesis in the 1st/2nd, 2nd/3rd, and 3rd-4th cohorts remains, as the p-values were not statistically significant for these grade-level cohorts. Of particular note is that the p-value is so significant in the Kindergarten/1st and 4th/5th cohorts that it

offsets the p-values of the three other cohorts in the statistical comparison of the whole

school.

Table 5

McNemar Statistical Significance of Individual Grade Levels

Grade Level		Value	Exact Sig. (2-sided)
Kindergarten/1st	McNemar Test		<.001 [a]
	N of Valid Cases	107	
1st/2nd	McNemar Test		1.000 [a]
	N of Valid Cases	102	
2nd/3rd	McNemar Test		.481 [a]
	N of Valid Cases	105	
3rd/4th	McNemar Test		.791 [a]
	N of Valid Cases	95	
4th/5th	McNemar Test		.077 [a]
	N of Valid Cases	96	
Total	McNemar Test		.002 [a]
	N of Valid Cases	505	

Note. [a] Binomial distribution used.

Summary-The data from this objective quantitative analysis suggests that the

Second Step program had a statistically significant positive impact on lowering the

occurrences of negative student behavior as evidenced by a decrease in the number of

students having ODRs. To provide additional data points regarding the program's

efficacy and answer the remaining research questions, two more measures were collected

to present additional objective and contextual evidence. The data is examined in the

following sections.

Quantitative Likert-scale Results-Program Effects and Teacher Instructional

Competence

  Likert-Scale Responses- After completion of the Second Step program in the 20-

21 school year, teachers completed the Teaching Attitudes about Social Emotional

Learning (TASEL) questionnaire with 22 Likert-scale items. The purpose of this

questionnaire was to answer the second question of the study: *After completing one year*

of the program, what are the attitudes and responses of both regular and special

education teachers with regard to the implementation of delivering social emotional

instruction?

Each item in the questionnaire had six rating selections:

- 1-Strongly Disagree

- 2-Disagree

- 3-Somewhat Disagree

- 4-Somewhat Agree

- 5-Agree

- 6-Strongly Agree

  The 22 question items fit into five different domains to assess the program and

the staff experiences. The domains examined were: 1) the effect on social emotional

competencies and behaviors; 2) teacher instructional competence; 3) amount of time

spent on instruction; 4) training; and 5) administrative support. The questionnaire was

sent out to all of the teaching staff within the building and had a response rate of 48%.

The means of the domain responses are illustrated in Figure 6.

Figure 6

TASEL Domain Response Means

TASEL Domain Mean Scores

■ Social, Emotional, Behavioral Effect ⊟ Instructional Feedback
☐ Time and Implementation ☐ Training
☐ Administrative Support
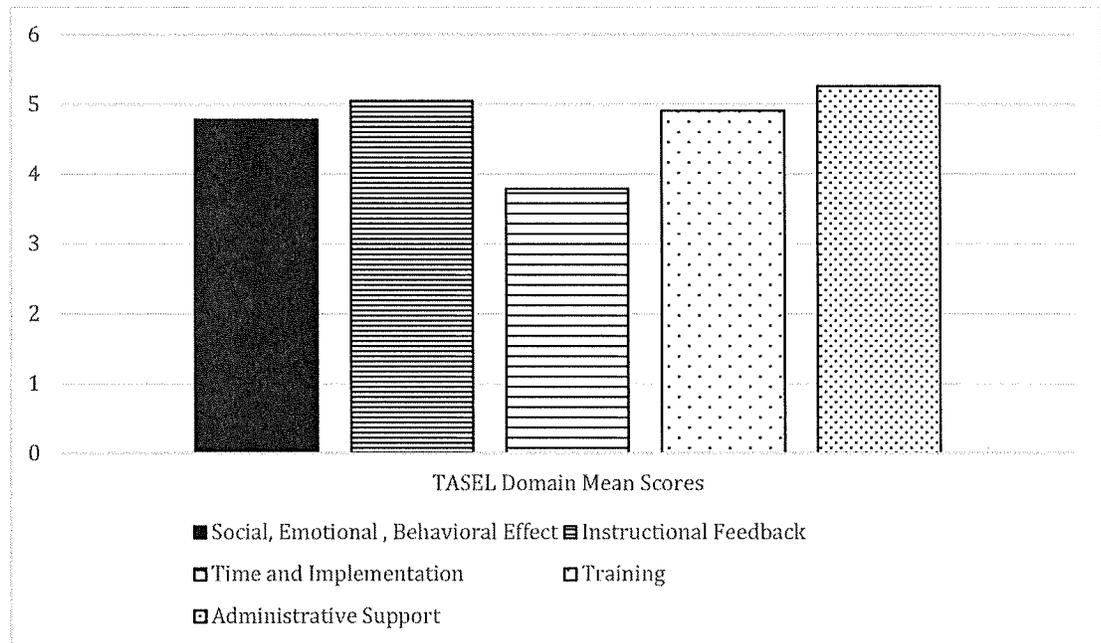
Teacher Sample-Overall 22 teachers participated in the survey. The average amount of self-identified overall teaching experience was 24 years with 16 years within the study school. 91% of the participants were regular education teachers and the remaining 9% of the participants were special education teachers. This represented 48% of the total teacher population at the study school. All of the survey responses indicated that the past year was their first experience in delivering Second Step lessons.

Social, Emotional, and Behavioral Effect-In analyzing the responses regarding the social, emotional, and behavioral effect on students, 90.9% of respondents agreed that SEL programs such as Second Step help children learn social and emotional skills with 40.9% strongly agreeing with the sentiment and a mean score of 5.05. 81.3% of the respondents felt that the program helped the students improve their social and emotional

skills and 77.6% of the respondents felt that the program could benefit all students

regardless of their temperament.

Instructional Feedback-In terms of SEL instruction, 95.5% of the respondents

agreed that they delivered the Second Step lessons effectively. Only 1 response

somewhat disagreed with the statement. 90.9% felt competent at teaching Second Step

lessons. 100% of the respondents understood the goals of Second Step and 90.9% felt that

they had a thorough knowledge of the Second Step lessons.

Time and Implementation-There was an almost equal distribution in the number

of responses that both agreed and disagreed with the statement that they do not have

enough time in the day/week to deliver Second Step lessons. 59.1% felt as though they

had enough time whereas 40.9% did not feel they had enough time. The majority of the

responses were spread equally over the 6 scale options as illustrated in Figure 5.

Conversely, where there was a discrepancy with time to deliver the lessons, 72.7% still

felt they had enough time to prepare for Second Step lessons. Regarding taking time

away from academics, 57.1% agreed that Second Step did not take away from academics

with a mean score response in the middle at 3.23. The majority of responses indicated a

consistent implementation across the school with only 13.6% of teachers indicating they

felt other teachers in the building did not implement the curriculum consistently.

Training-In regard to training, the responses indicated 95.5% of teachers felt that

the administrative staff arranged training for Second Step with a mean score of 5.27.

From this training, 90.9% of staff felt that it was a sufficient level with a mean score of

4.95. Only 2 teachers felt that the training did not provide sufficient knowledge on the

specific program content, accounting for 9.1% of respondents. Most felt that the training

itself was hands-on with a mean score of 4.45.

Administrative Support-When asked about administrative support, 100% of

respondents indicated that the Principal was an active supporter of Second Step with

90.9% of them marking Strongly Agree for a mean score of 5.91. 100% of respondents

said that the Principal discussed Second Step at staff meetings with 95.5% marking 6-

strongly agree and a mean score of 5.95. 95.4% felt that the Principal scheduled specific

times for delivery of Second Step lessons with a mean score of 5.73. A mean score of

3.86 indicated a higher level of variance across the responses from teachers when asked if

the Principal watched them deliver Second Step lessons. 91% felt that the Principal

acknowledged teachers who do a good job delivering Second Step with a mean score of

4.86. In response to the statement regarding academic importance over that of SEL,

63.6% said that was not the case for the Principal with a mean score of 2.82 delineating a

disagreement with the statement.

Appendix K provides a breakdown of the frequency of all Likert-scale responses

for each of the 22 items in a table format. Appendix L provides the responses in a stacked

bar chart to illustrate the response distribution for each survey question and their

corresponding responses. In addition, the means of all the Likert-scale responses are

included in Appendix M in table format with a bar graph presentation illustrated in

Appendix N.

Indications from the quantitative Likert-scale survey support the findings from the

quantitative analysis of ODRs. The questionnaire provides teacher feedback stating that

student behavior is positively affected by participating in the SEL program, with the

majority stating that it was effective regardless of individual temperament. The

questionnaire also provides feedback related to the training of the program, as the

majority of teachers felt well-trained and prepared to deliver the instruction of the SEL

content. Respondents indicated administrative support throughout the program. There

was a discrepancy related to the amount of time it takes to prepare and deliver the lesson

across the sample groups. A further discussion of the implications and significance of

these findings will be discussed in the following chapter.

As two quantitative data pieces have been utilized to provide objective measures

of efficacy, a third qualitative measure was administered and was analyzed in the

following section to provide contextual evidence as to the effectiveness of the program.

Qualitative Results-Effects on Emotional Support, Regular Education Students, and School Climate

Following the completion of the TASEL scale, teachers were asked to respond to

three open-ended questions in the questionnaire. These open-ended questions were

developed to address the three components of the last research question: *What are the*

perceptions of regular education teachers and special education teachers after one year

of the Second Step program as to the following categories: emotional support students

and their behaviors; regular education students and their behaviors; and, the school

climate and culture?

Coding-The results of these prompts were first read and then summarized by the

researcher. Codes were then developed from these summaries to categorize the main

ideas that were in each response. Then, from each of these codes, themes were

established based upon the broad idea of the identified codes from the responses. This

provided an axial connection or overarching theme. Since the questions were open-ended, many responses were coded into multiple different categories, as the length and content of the responses sometimes garnered multiple or overlapping codes. The codes for the responses can be found in Tables 6, 7, and 8.

Question 1-The first question prompted was; *How do you feel Second Step affected the overall behavior of the student body?* There were 20 total responses to this prompt. Those responses were coded into the following six categories: 1) positive due to common strategies/language, 2) positive impact on behaviors, 3) positive impact for some students, 4) taught expected behaviors, 5) hard to make a judgment on one year of implementation, and 6) unsure of one's instructional aptitude. Being that the prompt was open-ended, some of the responses were assigned multiple codes, providing a total number of 25 coded responses. 80% of the coded responses expressed an impact connected axially to the theme of "Positive". The other theme was "Unsure" with the remaining 20% of response codes attributed to it. These response codes and amounts can be found in Table 6.

Table 6

Question 1 Qualitative Coded Responses

How do You Feel Second Step Affected the Overall Behavior of the Student Body?*	
Codes	Themes
Positive due to common strategies/language (7)	
Positive impact on behaviors (7)	
Positive impact for some students (3)	Positive (20)
Taught expected behaviors (3)	
Hard to make a judgment on one year of implementation (4)	
Unsure of one's instructional aptitude (1)	Unsure (5)

Note. Amount of attributed codes located within ( ). *Adapted from the Research Question: *What are the perceptions of regular education teachers and special education teachers after one year of the Second Step program as to the following category: regular education students and their behaviors*

Of the main thematic "Positive" category, seven responses were coded as "positive due to common strategies/language," another seven as "positive impact on behaviors," three as "taught expected behaviors," and an additional three as "positive result for some students." One particular quote encompassed many of the responses:

"I believe Second Step is a much-needed addition to our curriculum. In

our current society, children are exposed to far greater social stressors than

they are capable of understanding and/or dealing with. Family dynamics

have changed and exposure to social media has negatively impacted our

children. Children need to understand their feelings as well as how to deal

effectively with those feelings (good or bad). Schools need to educate

since many families do not".

The responses were mostly in support of the positive effects that Second Step had

on the student body and those responses that fell under the theme of "Unsure" were not

dismissive of the program and its potential effects. Rather, their hesitance was largely

attributed to their desire to see evidence over a longer period. There were no comments to

suggest a negative impact on student behavior.

Some comments suggested that Second Step was useful but did not go far

enough.

"I believe there is a majority of students which benefit from Second Step

lessons. However, I do feel there is a percentage of students who

demonstrate delinquent behaviors which would require much more than

Second Step to reprogram their thinking and behaviors".

This quote leads to the next question of the qualitative survey.

Question 2-The second question *How do you feel Second Step affected the*

behavior of Special Education students in need of Emotional Support services? was only

answered by 64% of the survey participants. The responses were coded into four different

codes; 1) responding well/using strategies taught, 2) to an extent/partially, 3) did not

effect, and 4) were unsure at this time. The responses contained some overlap in codes

for a total of 16 coded responses and axial coding was used to further distribute these

codes into three themes; "Positive Effect," "Unsure," and "No Effect." Eight coded

responses fell into the "Positive Effect" category, with four codes in the "responding

well/using strategies taught" and four coded as "to an extent/partially." These codes and

their corresponding amounts are illustrated in Table 7.

Table 7

Question 2 Qualitative Coded Responses

How do you feel Second Step affected the behavior of Special Education students in need of Emotional Support services?*	
Codes	Themes
Responding well/using strategies taught (4)	
To an extent/partially (4)	Effective (8)
Did not affect (5)	No Effect (5)
Unsure at this time (3)	Unsure (3)

Note. Amount of attributed codes located within ( ). *Adapted from the Research
Question *What are the perceptions of regular education teachers and special education
teachers after one year of the Second Step program as to the following category:
emotional support students and their behaviors*

Many of the positive coded responses referenced the specific Second Step

strategies that were utilized to positively affect the behavior of the emotional support

students. For example, "The calming techniques and problem-solving skills are valuable

tools to diffuse an emotionally driven situation and provide a sense of calmness and focus

to move forward in a positive manner"

Some respondents felt this question was difficult to answer either because they

did not have direct involvement with those students or because this was the first year of

implementation and therefore, it was hard to judge its effects. One teacher wrote,

"I believe Second Step is a great addition to the Emotional Support

program and gives a long needed curriculum to the program. However, I

do feel there is a percentage of students which are not reached and their

behavior is not being shaped by Second Step."

Three comments fell under the theme of "Unsure" with all three receiving the

same code. The responses under this theme did not attribute a specific positive or

negative connotation, but an overlap of both. For example, "I do not think Second Step is

an end all be all for the Special Education students, but I do think it is good instruction

for them to be included within the whole group lessons. These students need more one-

on-one instruction in specific areas".

Five responses fell under the theme of "No Effect" with all five having the same

code of "Did Not Affect." It must be disclosed that one response came from someone

who did not have experience with the Emotional Support students, rather they stated they

were giving their "outsider's" opinion. The responses in this category were varied in

length and substance. Some teachers merely stated "not very" while others went into

greater detail explaining, for example, "Special Education students have very little

ambition to correct their behavior when they have very few consequences. When the

other students are fearful of a specific student and are not seeing corrective actions to the

issues it makes it hard to see this in a positive manner."

The responses to this qualitative inquiry solicited an even split between the

responses coded for positive effect and the responses coded and the responses identified

as "No Effect" or "Unsure." More discussion about the implications and

contextualization of these responses will be included in the following chapter.

With the first question receiving substantial positive feedback regarding the effect

on student behavior and the second question receiving 50% of responses with positive

feedback on the effect of emotional support students' behavior, further contextual

evidence was gathered by the third question regarding climate and culture.

Question 3-The third open-ended question was *How do you feel Second Step*

affected the overall climate and culture of the study school? Much like the first open-

ended response, this question was met with overwhelmingly positive responses from the

20 individuals who answered the question. Upon review of the responses, six codes

emerged: 1) positive effect, 2) positive and excited about the future with the program, 3)

positive effect but questioning other staff buy-in, 4) positive with added stress, 5) unsure,

and 6) should have been taught by the guidance counselor. Due to the open-ended nature

of the question, some answers received multiple codes for a total of 26 coded responses.

14 responses were coded as positive, three as positive and excited about the future, one as

positive but questioning other staff buy-in, five as positive but with added stress, one as

unsure, and two as should have been taught by the guidance counselor. The breakdown of

these response codes and their amounts can be found in Table 8.

Table 8

Question 3 Qualitative Coded Responses

How do you feel Second Step affected the overall climate and culture of the school?*	
Codes	Themes
Positive effect (14)	
Positive and excited about the future with the program (3)	Positive Effect (18)
Positive effect but questioning other staff buy-in (1)	
Positive with added stress (5)	
Unsure (1)	Questioning Timing (8)
Should have been taught by the guidance counselor (2)	

Note. Amount of attributed codes located within ( ). *Adapted from the Research Question *What are the perceptions of regular education teachers and special education teachers after one year of the Second Step program as to the following category: school climate and culture*

The two main themes that the coded responses fell into were "Positive Effect" and "Questioning the Timing." There was significant overlap between the two categories as multiple codes were assigned to the different responses. Many of the responses that questioned the timing, did so while also recognizing the positive impact of the program. Their statements were geared towards the already stressful situation of the COVID-19 pandemic and the implementation of something new. The singular response that indicated being unsure was because the individual was strictly teaching in a virtual format and therefore could not give a good assessment.

The many teachers who expressed positive feelings did so because of the holistic nature of the program. To quote one response:

"Second Step has been implemented as an all inclusive program to support the students as well as the staff in all grade levels in person and virtually. The program has cemented a common goal for all staff and students to monitor their behaviors, feelings, emotions, and reactions as well as how to conscientiously regulate responses to trigger events being both positive and negative. With that said, the common theme has created an atmosphere of sensitivity, support, and acknowledgment of the importance of empathy in the workplace as well as the classroom. The program has created a culture where all staff can feel supported and valued!"

Another teacher commented:

"I believe it has helped the climate of our school which was in desperate need of repair. This is the first year of the program so I remain hopeful that with continued use of the program, it will help our student body to behave in a more respectful and mannerly way."

The context of these responses provided a positive outlook on the entire school climate where the only negative feedback was regarding the timing of implementation. Five responses discussed the stress of learning a new curriculum at the beginning of the year while also learning to navigate the new learning environment that the COVID-19 pandemic created. Due to this, two of the responses indicated that it may have been better received if the guidance counselor was the primary disseminator of the curriculum.

Summary

Three different data measures were used to determine the efficacy of Second Step regarding student behavior, teacher instructional competence, and school climate. The descriptive statistics and further statistical analysis of the ODRs through a McNemar test, suggest that the dependent variable of behavioral infractions is positively affected by the SEL program. Further supportive evidence was provided by the additional quantitative measure, through the Likert-scale TASEL, and the contextual qualitative questionnaire. The TASEL and qualitative inquiry also provided support that teachers felt competent delivering the program with the training provided. The results illustrate that the program contributed positively to the school climate during a stressful year due to COVID-19. The implications, ramifications, and considerations of these data points as well as how this study relates and contributes to the body of research surrounding SEL will be discussed in the next chapter.

Chapter V - Conclusions and Recommendations

This study was conducted to examine the efficacy of a universally delivered social emotional learning (SEL) curriculum, Second Step. Evidence of efficacy was supplied through three separate data metrics. Each data metric was designed to answer one of the guiding research questions. The quantitative and qualitative data from these three metrics provided proof points to carry out a holistic evaluation of the Second Step program. This culminating chapter presents a discussion of these findings based upon the evidence collected and presented earlier in this report. The results affect current and future SEL practices and more specifically the endorsement of the Second Step curricula as an evidenced-based practice within the domain of SEL.

Discussion of Study and Results

Effect on School-Wide Behavior- Several studies have been conducted to provide an evidence base that supports the positive behavioral effect of students participating in various SEL programs (Durlak et al., 2011; Domitrovich et al., 2017; Eddy et al., 2003; Taylor et al., 2017). In order to quantitatively examine the behavioral effect of the Second Step program, the following research question was asked: *What is the effectiveness of the Second Step SEL curriculum on student behavior as evidenced by Office Disciplinary Referrals when it is delivered in the regular education classroom at a universal level?*

This question was answered through the McNemar analysis which illustrated a statistically significant effect in the overall reduction of ODRs. This significant reduction,

coupled with additional qualitative feedback from an open-ended questionnaire, provided

evidence to support the Second Step program in realizing positive effects and impact on

overall student behavior.

Effect on Grade Level Cohort Behavior- While there was a statistically

significant reduction in school-wide ODRs, further cohort analysis provided a

discrepancy in the reduction of ODRs within separate grade-level cohorts. The analysis

found a significant statistical reduction in ODRs in the Kindergarten/1st and 4th/5th cohorts,

however, the 1st/2nd, 2nd/3rd, and 3rd/4th cohorts did not have a statistically significant

reduction. The explanation of this can be realized when examining the raw ODR data.

Upon further examination, a postulation can be made that since the

Kindergarten/1st and 4th/5th cohorts had substantially higher amounts of ODRs prior to the

Second Step program, they were most likely to realize the greatest effect after

participation in the program. Conversely, the other three cohorts had substantially lower

amounts of ODRs pretreatment with Second Step, thereby leading to a negligible effect.

These results lead to the hypothesis that because the Kindergarten/1st and 4th/5th cohorts

had larger ODR numbers before the program, those cohorts realized the greatest effect.

Indeed, this hypothesis is on par with the results of a previous study by Jones et

al., which concluded that SEL programs have a greater impact on students with lower

social-emotional, and behavioral pretest scores (Jones, et al., 2015). Also, research from

Duncan et al., found that SEL programs can foster improved behavioral trajectories when

administered at the universal level (Duncan et al., 2016). Further analysis of these cohorts

would be recommended to see if the relative pattern of effectiveness continues

longitudinally or if the results are attributed to a specific student population in those
cohorts.

TASEL Likert-Scale Response to Behavior-In addition to the statistical
evidence from the ODR comparison, the quantitative results from the TASEL Likert-
scale questionnaire also supported the positive behavioral effects of the program. A
substantial number of responses indicated that there was a positive prosocial and
emotional impact on students, as evidenced by 90.9% of respondents who agreed that
Second Step helped children learn social-emotional skills. Also, 81.3% of respondents
agreed that Second Step helped students improve their social and emotional skills. These
results coincide with the prosocial and emotional gains realized by other studies focused
on the Second Step program (Edwards et al., 2005; Frey et al., 2005; Low et al., 2015;
Low et al., 2019).

Qualitative Response to Behavior Impact-In addition to the two quantitative
measures, the qualitative analysis provided further justification of the overall impact of
Second Step on behaviors by answering the following research question: *What are the
perceptions of regular education teachers and special education teachers after one year
of the Second Step program as to the following category: Regular education students and
their behaviors?*

To answer this, the qualitative survey question asked teachers: *How do you feel
Second Step affected the overall behavior of the student body?* From the coded responses,
80% of answers were identified under the theme of "positive" with 50% of those
responses coded to "positive impact on behaviors" and "positive impact for some
students". These qualitative findings further support the statistical evidence from the

ODR analysis and TASEL Likert-scale questionnaire. All three findings substantiate a

positive behavior effect and impact on students participating in the Second Step program.

Impact on Behavior of Emotional Support Subgroup-The only differing

comments gathered from the qualitative prompt on student behavior were those that

questioned the effectiveness of the program on students who had higher incidences of

behavioral problems, such as those being supported in the emotional support classrooms.

While there is an evidentiary base in current literature to support the positive social and

emotional results of Second Step, the program has not been examined in existing

literature while focusing on the behavioral effect of identified special education students

(Edwards et al., 2005; Frey et al., 2005; Low et al., 2015; Low, Smolkowski, et al.,

2019). Specifically, those special education students who are identified as emotional

support. As defined previously in this study, emotional support is a special education

placement for students with disabilities in need of specially designed instruction due to

the adverse effect of their emotional responses, social interpersonal interactions, and/or

functional behaviors on their ability to learn (Pa Code 22, Chapter 14, 2008).

The specific qualitative inquiry about the program's impact on those students who

need emotional support helped to answer a component of one of the research questions in

this regard: *What are the perceptions of regular education teachers and special education*

teachers after one year of the Second Step program as to the following category:

emotional support students and their behaviors?

To answer this, the qualitative survey question asked teachers: *How do you feel*

Second Step affected the behavior of Special Education students in need of emotional

support services? From this question, 50% of the survey's coded responses indicated that

teachers felt the program was "effective" with emotional support students. Conversely, 31% believed there was "no effect" and 19% were "unsure". Importantly, some teachers who fell into the "unsure" category indicated that they did not have any experience with this subgroup. Thus, as one respondent stated, they merely provided an "outsider" perspective. This is an important caveat in evaluating the data as current research has found significant variance in the inter-teacher ratings of students who are at risk for emotional and behavioral problems (Splett, et al., 2018).

As half of the qualitative responses indicated the positive impact that Second Step had on the behaviors of emotional support students, these findings contribute to the body of research by highlighting the impact on this specific subgroup. Further longitudinal analysis of this subgroup could provide a more extensive picture of the program's level of efficacy after participating in the program over a longer period of time.

Impact on School Climate-As Osher and Berg state, SEL and school climate have significant overlap, as an effective SEL program will positively impact the overall school climate (Osher and Berg, 2017). They define climate as "the cultural norms, goals, values, practices, characteristics of relationships, and organizational structures" (Osher and Berg, p. 3., 2017). With SEL and school climate focused on common elements, it is important to examine Second Step's impact on climate in this regard.

The qualitative question *How do you feel Second Step affected the overall climate and culture of the school?* was asked as a way to examine the relationship between the Second Step program and the school climate. The prompt also answered the research question: *What are the perceptions of regular education teachers and special education*

teachers after one year of the Second Step program as to the following category: school

climate and culture.

When addressing this question, 69% of coded qualitative responses indicated that

Second Step had a positive impact on school climate. Many individuals were excited

about the program and indicated looking to the future to see the long-term effects. As one

respondent indicated:

> "I believe it has helped the climate of our school which was in
>
> desperate need of repair. This is the first year of the program so I remain
>
> hopeful that with continued use of the program, it will help our student
>
> body to behave in a more respectful and mannerly way."

Research from Collie et.al., suggests that as SEL programs increase school

climate, teacher commitment also increases (Collie et al., 2011). Therefore the

findings of this study and the positive perceptions that teachers have on the school

climate will only be further strengthened by continued participation in the

program.

There was also specific qualitative feedback from participants regarding the

timing of program implementation. Some teachers expressed stress with the start of a new

curriculum during the COVID-19 pandemic. However, with 69% of coded responses

falling under the theme of "positive effect", an assumption can be made that although it

was stressful for some teachers to implement, it had a positive effect on the overall

climate. This is further evidenced by the remaining 31% of responses. While those

responses fell under the theme of "questioning timing", 63% of those responses denoted

positive impacts while also identifying the stress of implementation.

These results, coupled with the reduction in behavioral incidences, substantiate that the overall positive implications on climate may outweigh some of the negative individual stress responses. A further examination beyond this study could explore if teachers still have the same stress level in delivering Second Step lessons in subsequent years as they become removed from the COVID-19 pandemic.

Teacher Perceptions and Attitudes About SEL Instruction-Schultz et al. states that to establish an SEL program effectively, there must be a high-quality level of implementation (Schultz et al., 2010). The TASEL questionnaire was developed by Schultz et al. to eliminate any potential barriers to SEL program integration by assessing the readiness and attitudes of teachers, while also identifying areas that could be strengthened (Schultz et al., 2010). Thus, this questionnaire was used to provide an answer to the following research question: After *completing one year of the program, what are the attitudes and responses of both regular and special education teachers with regard to the implementation of delivering social emotional instruction?*

The TASEL Likert-scale questionnaire solicited positive feedback regarding teacher attitudes and implementation, as 95.5% of survey respondents felt they were effective at delivering the Second Step lessons and 90.9% felt they were provided with a sufficient level of training. These results provide specific information regarding the training that is supplied with the Second Step program. As outlined in the Implementation Timeline in Appendix A, the study school implemented the training based on the materials and structure that Second Step provided. The results of the TASEL questionnaire highlight the level of training, materials, and resources supplied by the Second Step program. These results provide evidence that Second Step has an effective

program to properly prepare teachers for the implementation of a brand-new curriculum.

This is relevant as Oberle et al., state that effective professional development is one of the

components for a successful and sustainable SEL program (Oberle, et al., 2016).

Regarding the facilitation of the program, the TASEL results provided

overwhelming evidence for the Principal as an active supporter of Second Step and SEL

instruction. 100% of respondents agreed with this statement and 100% marked that

Second Step was discussed at staff meetings. There were 95.4% of responses that

indicated the Principal scheduled specific times for SEL instruction. This is important as

previous studies recognized that lack of time affected implementation (Martinez, 2016;

Ee & Chang, 2013).

While 72.7% of teachers felt they had enough time to prepare for SEL lessons,

there was a discrepancy in the amount of time teachers felt they had for specific program

instruction. From the questionnaire responses, 59.1% of teachers felt that they had

enough time for actual instruction and 40.9% did not. This finding is commensurate with

the findings of Martinez who found that teachers report time constraints as the largest

implementation obstacle to overcome (Martinez, 2016).

A possible explanation for the discrepancy realized in the reported amount of time

for instruction, may be found in the responses from the qualitative survey question: *How

do you feel Second Step affected the overall climate and culture of the school?*, In their

responses, teachers commented that the stress of teaching a new curriculum during the

COVID-19 pandemic led to them feeling rushed. Thus, it is more likely that the new

mitigation efforts and stress from the COVID-19 pandemic affected the teachers' ability

to adequately budget time for classroom instruction rather than the Second Step

program. A second-year analysis of the program could help to prove or disprove this postulation.

The ratings regarding teacher instructional competence received the second-highest marks in the TASEL questionnaire, following those regarding administrative support. This follows the research of Low et al., stating that the fidelity of teacher implementation of SEL is integral to having a successful program (Low et al., 2016). These ratings, in conjunction with the quantitative and qualitative behavioral results, provide evidence of the study school's successful implementation of the Second Step SEL program.

COVID-19 Implementation Considerations-As some qualitative comments provided feedback while referencing the COVID-19 pandemic, it is important to note that the study school utilized several instructional models throughout the school year. A combination of hybrid, in-person, and virtual instructional models were utilized and thus, the Second Step curriculum was disseminated through these various modalities. Despite the potential barriers that this could have presented, the positive feedback from multiple data points supports Second Step as an effective SEL program regardless of the instructional model.

In speaking with the Vice President of Education and Research at Second Step, prior to implementation, she stated that the program was designed to be flexible when being delivered. This way the program could be tailored to meet the specific needs of the school (Kim, 2020). The evidence from this study provides both quantitative and qualitative evidence to support the company's statements.

The ramifications of these findings could have a significant impact on schools as they look to utilize effective curriculums that can be delivered with flexibility. The ability to be able to provide instruction across modalities is important as schools find themselves adapting to changes in light of the COVID-19 pandemic. The practical results of this study and the effects of Second Step while being delivered both virtually and in-person, highlight the strength of the program.

Considerations/Limitations

This study was conducted during an atypical school year. In the 2020-2021 school year, the study school was operating under health and safety mitigation protocols due to the global COVID-19 pandemic. As a result, the school utilized various instructional modalities. The same behavioral expectations and reporting methods that were utilized in previous school years continued, even when students were participating across the three modalities. While this could have affected some of the overall ODR numbers, the additional information provided from the TASEL Likert-scale questionnaire and open-ended qualitative responses, provided evidence to support the reduction of ODR numbers as a result of the Second Step program.

An additional consideration is that the researcher of the study was also an administrator at the study school. Every attempt was made to solicit unbiased, anonymous, and voluntary feedback from the teachers involved in the study. The school's PBIS team, school counselor, and emotional support teachers took key roles in implementation as they filmed virtual assemblies, created posters, disseminated materials, developed skits, etc. When the survey was distributed, emphasis was placed on the anonymity of the survey. It was reiterated multiple times that the survey was both

anonymous and voluntary and there would be no repercussions with lack of participation.

If at any point during the study teachers were concerned about the survey or its inquiries,

they were able to opt out. Teachers were also provided with information to contact the

Slippery Rock University Institutional Review Board. This contact information was

included in the informational letter that was sent out to all staff located in Appendix F.

Significance and Research Contributions

The execution of the current study has resulted in a contribution to the evidence

base surrounding SEL and the efficacy of the Second Step program. The statistically

significant effect on student behavior as well as the qualitative impact on school climate

provides evidence for the holistic quality of the program. Added evidence through

qualitative responses recognized the impact on the behavior of emotional support

students. The study also highlighted the effectiveness of the Second Step teacher training

and implementation program.

An especially noteworthy outcome of this study is the evidence that was realized

due to the study being conducted during a global pandemic. The effect and impact that is

evidenced by this study bolster the recommendations of the reports that came out in

advocacy for SEL as a critical component to reopening schools in the 2020-2021 school

year following the COVID-19 school closures during the 2019-2020 school year

(CASEL, 2020; Pennsylvania Back to School Task Force, 2020).

The Collaborative for Academic, Social, and Emotional Learning (CASEL)

released a return to school report in conjunction with 46 different education, counseling,

and philanthropic organizations including; the Wallace Foundation, American School

Counselor Association, National Education Association, and the National Association of School Psychologists, among many others. In their detailed report, CASEL advocated and outlined SEL critical practices that were needed to ensure schools were attending equitably to students' academic needs, social and emotional development, physical and mental health, and the overall well-being of students (CASEL, 2020).

In Pennsylvania, where the study school is located, a joint coalition of organizations formed the Pennsylvania School Reopening Task Force. Included in this task force was: Pennsylvania School Board Association, Pennsylvania State Education Association, Pennsylvania Association of School Administrators, Pennsylvania Association of School Business Officials, Pennsylvania Association of Intermediate Units, Pennsylvania Principals Association, Pennsylvania Association of Career and Technical Administrators, and the Pennsylvania Association of Rural and Small Schools. These organizations worked in conjunction with guidance from local and state health officials, the Governor's office, and the Pennsylvania Department of Education. This task force identified SEL as an integral component to reopening schools both in terms of instruction as well as student health and safety (Pennsylvania Back to School Task Force, 2020). The evidence generated in this study not only supports the recommendations of these organizations but also provides a base of evidence for their recommendations for SEL instruction as a critical component to reopening schools during a pandemic.

Recommendations for Further Research

The findings of this study, coupled with previous research, provide a catalyst for further exploration and examination. A great amount of information would be provided if the study was examined longitudinally. Through a multi-year analysis, evidence could be

collected to determine if the different instructional modalities that were utilized due to COVID-19 had an impact on the overall ODR numbers. The longitudinal data could also be used to examine individual cohorts to determine if the relative level of difference in ODRs/effectiveness trended similarly. This data could then be analyzed through the same McNemar test to determine overall statistical significance, as well as significance on cohort subgroups. Research protocols could also be revised to determine if there are any potential cumulative effects of the rate of ODRs on the emotional support subgroup.

A further longitudinal study could focus more qualitatively on identifying further contextual information from teachers regarding their attitudes and perceptions about SEL, its implementation, and the Second Step program. Teachers would be able to provide qualitative feedback on several inquiries including; the quality of implementation in the second year, the level of comfort in instructing during the second year, the level of the behavioral effect, and if the added stress due to teaching a new curriculum during the pandemic was alleviated.

An additional aspect of this study that could provide insight regarding the program would be to conduct a comparative analysis with the study school and the other elementary schools in its school district. The 2020-2021 school year was also the first year of implementation for the five other elementary schools within the district and a comparison of these schools could provide more evidence regarding the program and its effects.

Conclusion

The purpose of this study was to expand on the existing research surrounding SEL instruction in schools, specifically examining the Second Step program as one iteration of

this curricular approach. By answering the research questions, the study determined that the Second Step SEL program not only had a statistically significant impact on the reduction of behaviors as evidenced by the McNemar analysis, but also an impact on the climate of the entire building as evidenced through the qualitative teacher responses. Results from the study suggest that teachers identified that overall, the positive benefits of implementing the program outweighed the negative, even when considering the delivery of this new curriculum during the COVID-19 pandemic. Finally, results also showed a positive impact on more challenging behavioral students in the special education emotional support subgroup.

The evidence that this study provided will help schools work to not only strengthen their students' social, emotional, and behavioral capacities but also help as they navigate their return to normalcy following the pandemic. As schools often function as a microcosm of their communities, programs like Second Step can be used to help encourage not only individual growth but growth as a school community as well. By using Second Step to help invest in the five core competencies of SEL; self-awareness, self-management, social awareness, relationship skills, and responsible decision making, schools will help students grow in their capacities and, in turn, have a greater impact on their communities as a whole.

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Appendix A

Second Step Implementation Timeline
SY 2020-2021

- Summer Implementation completed on an on-demand basis prior to the start of school on 8-31-20
  - District introductory video to staff
  - Administrator 2 hr. online Second Step training
  - Administrator onboarding video conference
  - Teachers 2 hr. online Second Step training
  - Parent introduction posted with Welcome Back Letter
  - Parent introduction included in Welcome Back Video

- August
  - Teacher Inservice
    - Second Step Orientation Meeting 1

- September
  - Began 5-week Second Step COVID-19 Community Rebuilding Unit
  - Weekly Staff-led PD at Team Meetings.
  - Faculty Meeting
    - Orientation Meeting 2

- October
  - Month 1 K-5 Weekly Lessons w/ Home Link correspondence and daily reinforcement strategies. Weekly Staff-led PD at Team Meetings.
  - Month 1 Kick-Off Staff Meeting
  - Month 1 Virtual Kick-Off Assembly
  - Weekly announcements highlighting the week's SEL focus
  - Monthly parent SEL update posted to school website

- November
  - Month 2 K-5 Weekly Lessons w/ Home Link correspondence and daily reinforcement strategies. Weekly Staff-led PD at Team Meetings.
  - Month 2 Kick-Off Staff Meeting
  - Month 2 Virtual Kick-Off Assembly
  - Weekly announcements highlighting the week's SEL focus
  - Monthly parent SEL update posted to school website

- December

- Month 3 K-5 Weekly Lessons w/ Home Link correspondence and daily reinforcement strategies. Weekly Staff-led PD at Team Meetings.
- Month 3 Kick-Off Staff Meeting
- Month 3 Virtual Kick-Off Assembly
- Weekly announcements highlighting the week's SEL focus
- Monthly parent SEL update posted to school website

- January

  - Month 4 K-5 Weekly Lessons w/ Home Link correspondence and daily reinforcement strategies. Weekly Staff-led PD at Team Meetings.
  - Month 4 Kick-Off Staff Meeting
  - Month 4 Virtual Kick-Off Assembly
  - Weekly announcements highlighting the week's SEL focus
  - Monthly parent SEL update posted to school website

- February

  - Month 5 Kick-Off Staff Meeting
  - Month 5 Virtual Kick-Off Assembly
  - Month 5 K-5 Weekly Lessons w/ Home Link correspondence and daily reinforcement strategies. Weekly Staff-led PD at Team Meetings.
  - Weekly announcements highlighting the week's SEL focus
  - Monthly parent SEL update posted to school website

- March

  - Month 6 Kick-Off Staff Meeting
  - Month 6 K-5 Weekly Lessons w/ Home Link correspondence and daily reinforcement strategies. Weekly Staff-led PD at Team Meetings.
  - Month 6 Virtual Kick-Off Assembly
  - Weekly announcements highlighting the week's SEL focus
  - Monthly parent SEL update posted to school website

- April

  - Completion of Second Step Program
  - Continue to reinforce strategies that were taught/learned

Appendix B

List of Open-Ended Qualitative Questions

- Are you classified as a Special Education teacher or a Regular Education teacher?

- How do you feel Second Step affected the overall behavior of the student body?

- How do you feel Second Step affected the behavior of Special Education students in need of Emotional Support services?

- How do you feel Second Step affected the overall climate and culture of Grandview Elementary?

Appendix C
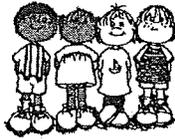
**Social
Development
Lab**

Director: David Schultz, Ph.D., M.Div.
E-mail: dschultz@umbc.edu
Lab Phone: 410-455-8183

Teacher Attitudes about Social and Emotional Learning (TASEL)

Purpose. The TASEL questionnaire examines teacher attitudes towards social and emotional learning programs. It serves two purposes: 1) a needs assessment tool to identify issues to address prior to program implementation, and 2) a tool to assess factors related to implementation quality.

Concepts assessed. The TASEL contains six scales. Administrative support items assess teacher impressions of the support for program implementation they receive from administrative leaders in the school/center. Training items assess teacher beliefs about the quality of training they received. Teacher competence at program delivery assesses how confident teachers feel delivering program lessons. Program effectiveness items assess teacher perceptions of the effectiveness of the program implemented in their school/center. Time-related constraints items assess attitudes regarding time that teachers have for preparation and delivery of program lessons. Curriculum priority items assess how strongly teachers and administrative leaders value social and emotional learning compared to more traditional academic learning.

Administration. The TASEL is a self-administered questionnaire that takes teachers about 10-12 minutes to complete.

ID _____   Center _____

Teacher Attitudes about Social and Emotional Learning (TASEL)

Instructions. Please rate how strongly you agree or disagree with each of the following statements by circling the appropriate response.

*** The acronym SDP (i.e., Social Development Program) refers to the program implemented in your school/center. ***

	Strongly Disagree	Somewhat Disagree	Disagree a little	Agree a little	Somewhat Agree	Strongly Agree
1. Programs such as SDP are effective in helping children learn social and emotional skills.	1	2	3	4	5	6
2. SDP can help all kids regardless of their temperament.	1	2	3	4	5	6
3. It is worth my effort to implement SDP lessons.	1	2	3	4	5	6
4. SDP has helped my children to improve their social and emotional skills.	1	2	3	4	5	6
5. I deliver SDP lessons effectively.	1	2	3	4	5	6
6. I understand the goals of SDP.	1	2	3	4	5	6
7. I feel competent teaching SDP lessons.	1	2	3	4	5	6
8. I have thorough knowledge of SDP lessons.	1	2	3	4	5	6
9. I don't have time in the day or week to deliver SDP lessons.	1	2	3	4	5	6
10. I have enough time to prepare for SDP lessons.	1	2	3	4	5	6
11. Spending time on SDP lessons takes time away from academics.	1	2	3	4	5	6
12. The administrative staff has arranged for training in SDP.	1	2	3	4	5	6
13. I received sufficient training in SDP.	1	2	3	4	5	6
14. The training I received provided me with sufficient knowledge about the content of the program.	1	2	3	4	5	6
15. The training I received was a hands-on training where I could practice what I had learned.	1	2	3	4	5	6
16. The Principal/Director is an active supporter of SDP.	1	2	3	4	5	6
17. The Principal/Director has watched me deliver SDP lessons.	1	2	3	4	5	6
18. The Principal/Director acknowledges teachers who do a good job delivering SDP.	1	2	3	4	5	6
19. Other than at orientation, the Principal/Director has discussed SDP at staff meetings.	1	2	3	4	5	6
20. The Principal/Director has scheduled specific times for delivery of SDP lessons.	1	2	3	4	5	6

ID _____   Center _____

Teacher Attitudes about Social and Emotional Learning (TASEL)

➡ **Instructions.** Please rate how strongly you agree or disagree with each of the following statements by circling the appropriate response.

*** The acronym SDP (i.e.,Social Development Program) refers to the program implemented in your school/center. ***

	Strongly Disagree	Somewhat Disagree	Disagree a little	Agree a little	Somewhat Agree	Strongly Agree
21. The Principal/Director gives more importance to learning academics than learning social and emotional skills.	1	2	3	4	5	6
22. Other teachers in my school/center implement SDP consistently.	1	2	3	4	5	6

If there is another administrative leader at your school/center who oversees implementation and training of the social development program chosen by your school/center, please also make use of the following items.

	Strongly Disagree	Somewhat Disagree	Disagree a little	Agree a little	Somewhat Agree	Strongly Agree
a. The education coordinators are active supporters of SDP.	1	2	3	4	5	6
b. The education coordinators acknowledge teachers who do a good job delivering SDP.	1	2	3	4	5	6
c. The education coordinators have scheduled specific times for delivery of SDP lessons.	1	2	3	4	5	6
d. The education coordinators have watched me deliver SDP lessons.	1	2	3	4	5	6
e. Other than at orientation, the education coordinators have discussed SDP at staff meetings.	1	2	3	4	5	6
f. The education coordinators give more importance to learning academics than learning social and emotional skills.	1	2	3	4	5	6

Please answer the following questions as best as you can.

23. Number of years of experience as a teacher:_____years

24. Number of years of experience as a teacher at this particular school/center:_____years

25. Number of years of experience in delivering SDP lessons:_____years

Appendix D
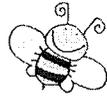
S — Be Safe   O — Be Organized   A — Be Accepting   R — Be Respectful

Minor and Major Offense Flowchart

M I N O R		M A J O R
1st Incident • Verbal re-teach and role-play of expectation • Minor Incident Report Form (MIR) completed • MIR to homeroom teacher the same day	**Incident Procedures** • Follow District protocol • Complete ODR Form • Send copy of ODR to Office • ODR entered into IC • Administrator to contact parent • Possible meeting with parents and staff • Possible referral to IST • Possible Behavior Support Plan	
2nd Incident • Verbal re-teach and role-play of expectation • Alternate seating • MIR completed • MIR to homeroom teacher the same day • Parent contact via phone or email		
3rd Incident • Verbal re-teach and role-play of expectation • Alternate seating • MIR completed • MIR to homeroom teacher the same day • Parent contact informing that the next incident will be an Office Discipline Referral (ODR)	***Be sure to document each incident.***	
4th Incident • MIR Forms complied • Complete Office Discipline Referral (ODR) • Send ODR and copies of all MIRs to Office for resolution • ODR entered into IC • Possible referral to IST		

Last updated: 8/9/19

Behavior Chart

Minor Teacher Managed Behaviors	Major Office Managed Behaviors
Stealing Student is in possession of someone else's property.	**Stealing** Student is repletely in possession of someone else's property.
Inappropriate Language Student engages in low-intensity instance of inappropriate language.	**Abusive Language** Student delivers verbal message that includes swearing, name calling, or use of words in an inappropriate way.
Disruption Student engages in low intensity, but inappropriate disruption.	**Fighting/Physical Aggression Towards Others** Student engages in actions involving serious physical contact where injury may occur. Examples may include: hitting (with or without an object), punching, kicking, or scratching.
Defiance Student engages in brief or low intensity failure to respond to adult requests.	**Repeated Defiance** Student engages in refusal to follow directions, talks back and/or delivers socially rude interactions.
Property Misuse Student engages in low intensity misuse of property.	**Property Damage** Student participants in an activity that results in the destruction or disfigurement of property.
Cheating/Lying Student delivers message that is untrue and/or deliberately violates a rule.	**Harassment/Bullying** Student delivers disrespectful messages (verbal or gestures) to another person that includes threats, intimidation, obscene gestures, pictures or written notes. Disrespectful messages may include negative comments on race, religion, gender, age, national or ethnic origin, disabilities, or other personal matters. Also includes sustained or intense verbal attacks.
Other Student engages in any other minor problem behaviors that do not fall within the above categories.	**Other** Student engages in any other minor problem behaviors that do not fall within the above categories.

Last updated: 8/9/19

Appendix E

Millcreek Township School District Discipline Matrix

September 2020

Millcreek Township School District   Student Infraction and Disposition Matrix

Code	Infraction	Policy	Immediate Disposition	Parental Contact	Referrals
Attendance and Punctuality					
Elementary - Tardiness to School - Although the consequences for tardiness may be different than those of secondary students, elementary students are still held accountable for their punctuality to school. When a student is late by more than 5 minutes after the designated start of the school day (with or without a written excuse by a parent or guardian), those additional minutes shall be logged as "late."					
ATT01	Accumulation of Ten (10) or More Tardies	204	Parent/Guardian Phone Call or Letter	Required	SST Recommended
ATT02	Accumulation of 360 Minutes as defined above	204	Parent/Guardian Phone Call or Letter	Required	SST Required Parent Conference Required District Magistrate Referral Recommended
Secondary - Tardiness to School - A tardy will be considered unlawful if a written excuse by parent/guardian is not provided to the attendance office within three (3) school days. Every tardy (except medical) counts as one (1) toward the accumulation of a maximum of three (3) tardies per quarter. After an accumulation of three (3) tardies (excused or unlawful) in a quarter, each additional tardy will be unlawful unless accompanied by a medical excuse provided by the parent within three (3) school days.					
ATT04	4th Tardy (0 - 90 Minutes Late)	204	One (1) Hour of Office Detention	Optional	Optional
ATT05	5th Tardy (0 - 90 Minutes Late)	204	HS - Administrative Discretion MS - Letter to Parent/Guardian detailing consequences of further tardies.	HS - Optional MS - Required	HS/ MS – SST Recommended
ATT06	6th Tardy (0 - 90 Minutes Late)	204	One (1) Saturday Detention	Required	HS/ MS – SST Recommended
ATT07	7th Tardy (0 - 90 Minutes Late)	204	HS - Administrative Discretion MS - Letter or Phone Call to Parent/Guardian detailing consequences of further tardies.	HS - Optional MS - Required	HS/ MS – SST Recommended
ATT08	8 or more Tardies (0 - 90 Minutes Late)	204	HS - One (1) day of ISS for each additional tardy, or use of Focus Room/consequences at Administrative Discretion. MS – One (1) day of ISS	Required	HS/ MS – SST Recommended HS / MS – Parent Conf. Recommended
ATT03	Any Unlawful Tardy (after first block)	204	One (1) Saturday Detention and no participation in any Extra Curricular activities that day	Required	Optional
ATT09	Tardiness to Class	204	Teacher/Administrative Discretion One (1) Hr of Office Detention after Three (3) Tardies HS/MS: 1. 10 or more tardies per quarter may include exclusion from Homecoming, Prom, Dances, Extra-Curricular Activities, Sports, Parking Privileges, etc.	Optional	Optional

Millcreek Township School District **Student Infraction and Disposition Matrix**

Code	Infraction	Policy	Immediate Disposition	Parental Contact	Referrals
			2. 20 tardies in one (1) year may include exclusion from Homecoming, Prom, Dances, Extra-Curricular Activities, Sports, Parking Privileges, etc.		
Truancy – Unlawful Absence					
A student under the age of 17 is unlawful when he/she is absent from school without meeting the requirements of School District Policy regarding excused absence.					
TRU01	Unlawful Absences (All absences from school shall be treated as "unlawful" until the School District receives a written excuse explaining the absence.)	204	• All Levels - First unlawful absence = Warning • All Levels - Second unlawful absence = Office detention • All Levels - Third unlawful absence = First Notice mailed to parent/guardian, School Attendance Improvement Plan • All Levels – Fourth unlawful absence = Notice mailed to parent/guardian, Saturday detention • All Levels – Fifth unlawful absence = Notice mailed to parent/guardian, Saturday Detention • All Levels – Sixth or more unlawful absences = Citation filed with District Justice Subject to Administrative Discretion for students under the age of eight (8) years old. Students will receive no credit for work or tests missed on unlawful or unexcused days.	Required	HS – Optional MS – Optional ES – Parent Conference Required
TRU02	Truancy – Unexcused Absence (An unexcused absence occurs when a student age 17 or older fails to provide a written parental excuse to the attendance office within three (3) school days) or is absent from school due to an unapproved reason as suggested in Policy 204.)	204	HS and MS – Minimum of one (1) Saturday Detention with Administrative Discretion ES – Minimum of three (3) Office Detentions with Administrative Discretion	Required	SST Recommended

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Millcreek Township School District **Student Infraction and Disposition Matrix**

Code	Infraction	Policy	Immediate Disposition	Parental Contact	Referrals
TRU05	Leaving School Without Permission	204	Minimum of one (1) Day of In-School Suspension	Required	Optional
TRU06	Cutting/Skipping Class	204	HS – Up to Three (3) hours of Office Detention MS - One (1) Saturday Detention ES - One (1) hour Office Detention	Required	Optional
TRU07	Cutting/Skipping School	204	HS and MS – One (1) day of In School Suspension ES – Administrative Discretion	Required	Optional
TRU08	Accumulation of 18 unlawful or unexcused absences or 18 unexcused tardies	204	HS and MS – Administrative Discretion which may include exclusion from Homecoming, Prom, Dances, Extra-Curricular Activities, Sports, Parking Privileges, etc.	Required	Optional
Failure to Comply with Dispositions					
COM01	Excessive Office Detention Accumulation of Twelve (12) Hours of Office Detention during One (1) School Year	218	Determined on a case by case basis including the assignment of Saturday Detention for subsequent actions that would require Office Detention as a consequence	Required	SST Recommended Parent Conference Recommended
COM02	Excessive Saturday Detention Accumulation of Seven (7) Saturday Detentions during One (1) School Year	218	Determined on a case by case basis including the assignment of In School Suspension for subsequent actions that would require Office Detention as a consequence	Required	SST Recommended Parent Conference Recommended
COM03	Failure to Attend Teacher Detention	218	Minimum of Office Detention equal to double the time assigned for the original Teacher Detention	Required	Optional
COM04	Failure to Attend Office Detention	218	HS / MS - Determined on a case by case basis including reassignment of the Office Detention plus the assignment of one (1) Saturday Detention ES - Determined on a case by case basis including reassignment of the Office Detention plus the assignment of an additional Office Detention	Required	Optional
COM05	Failure to Attend Saturday Detention	218	Determined on a case by case basis including reassignment of the Saturday Detention plus the assignment of up to two (2) days of In School Suspension	Required	Optional

Millcreek Township School District   Student Infraction and Disposition Matrix

Code	Infraction	Policy	Immediate Disposition	Parental Contact	Referrals
NA	Multiple Suspensions; or a Single Suspension for Drugs, Alcohol, Assault, Weapons, Terroristic Threats, Fighting, or Tobacco Policy Violations	218	Eligibility for attending major school functions (i.e. dance, prom, game, etc.) is determined by the following parameters: HS: 1-2 days of suspension- may attend; HS: 3-10 days of suspension- Administration's discretion; HS: Over 10 days of suspension- not permitted; MS: 1-2 days of suspension; may attend; MS: 3 or more -- not permitted to attend.	Required	
Inappropriate Behaviors -- General					
GEN01	Inappropriate Behavior on Bus	218	Administrative Discretion including but not limited to suspension of bus privileges. Multiple offenses will lead to a progressive series of consequences.	Recommended in the case of multiple offenses	
GEN02	Computer/Network Resource Impropriety	815	Administrative Discretion including but not limited to suspension of computer and/or network access privileges	Optional	
GEN03	Criminal Trespass	218	Immediate Suspension from school and may include a formal hearing with the Superintendent and possibly the School Board.	Required	Local Law Enforcement contacted with the possibility of criminal charges filed.
GEN04	Disorderly Conduct	218	Immediate Suspension from school and may include a formal hearing with the Superintendent and possibly the School Board.	Required	Local Law Enforcement contacted with the possibility of criminal charges filed.
GEN05	Disruptive and Inappropriate Behavior (Including, but not limited to: classroom, hall, and cafeteria misbehavior, inappropriate language and gestures, horseplay/rough housing/pranks, loitering, snow throwing, etc.)	218	Determined on a case by case basis, and may include, but is not limited to: verbal reprimand, written apology, detention, in-school suspension, or other alternative and logical consequences	Optional	Optional
GEN06	Disrespectful Behavior and/or insubordination	218	Minimum of one (1) hour of Office Detention	Required	SST Recommended
GEN07	Dress Code Infraction -- No book bags or totes are permitted and must be in lockers at all times. Purses should be no larger than 6" x 9"	221	First -- Warning Second --Office Detention Third - Administrative Discretion	Optional	Option of the student choosing to change into appropriate clothing

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Millcreek Township School District   Student Infraction and Disposition Matrix

Code	Infraction	Policy	Immediate Disposition	Parental Contact	Referrals
GEN08	Electronic Device Infraction	237	**First Offense** 1. Confiscation of the electronic device 2. One (1) Saturday detention (elementary equivalent) 3. Electronic device returned directly to the student at the end of the school day **Second Offense** 1. Confiscation of the electronic device 2. One (1) Saturday detention 3. Electronic device returned to parent / guardian **Third Offense** 1. Confiscation of the electronic device 2. One (1) day of In-School Suspension 3. Electronic device returned to parent / guardian **Fourth and Subsequent Offenses** 1. Confiscation of the electronic device 2. Three (3) days of ISS or OSS 3. Electronic device returned to parent / guardian	Required with each Offense Required with each Offense	Optional Optional
GEN09	Failure of Disorderly Persons to Disperse Upon Official Order	218	Immediate Suspension from school and may include a formal hearing with the Superintendent and possibly the School Board.	Required	Local Law Enforcement contacted with the possibility of criminal charges filed.
GEN10	Falsifying Information (Including, but not limited to altering or forging teacher passes, library slips, parental excuses or making false phone calls, cheating, etc.)	218	Minimum of one (1) hour of Office Detention	Required	Recommended SST Possible Legal
GEN11	Falsifying Academic Information (including, but not limited to altering or forging other students work and representing as one's own, Plagiarism, cheating on a test, etc.)	218	Minimum of one (1) hour of Office Detention (including failure for the assignment) with a score of 55% for a summative assignment	Required	Optional
GEN12	Gambling	218	Minimum of one (1) hour of Office Detention	Optional	Optional
GEN13	Locker/Storage Area/Lock Misuse	218	Minimum of one (1) hour of Office Detention plus restitution if damages are involved	Optional	Optional

Millcreek Township School District   Student Infraction and Disposition Matrix

Code	Infraction	Policy	Immediate Disposition	Parental Contact	Referrals
GEN14	Parking Violation	218	First Offense: Parking Citation; Parking Fine Assessed; Possible Towing of Vehicle: Second Offense: Parking Citation; Parking Fine Assessed; Minimum of one (1) Saturday Detention with Administrative Discretion; Possible Towing of Vehicle; Third Offense: Parking Citation, Parking Fine Assessed; Minimum of one (1) Saturday detention with Administrative Discretion; Loss of Parking Pass and Privileges; Possible Towing of Vehicle.	Optional	Optional
GEN15	Rioting	218	Immediate Suspension from school pending a formal hearing with the Superintendent and possibly the School Board.	Required	Local Law Enforcement contacted with the possibility of criminal charges filed.
GEN16	Unlawful Restraint	218	Immediate Suspension from school pending a formal hearing with the Superintendent and possibly the School Board.	Required	Local Law Enforcement contacted with the possibility of criminal charges filed.
GEN17	Vandalism	218	Minimum of One (1) Saturday Detention plus restitution for damages	Required	Optional
Inappropriate Behavior – Theft					
THF01	Burglary	218	Immediate Suspension from school pending a formal hearing with the Superintendent and possibly the School Board.	Required	Local Law Enforcement contacted with the possibility of criminal charges filed.
THF02	Robbery	218	Immediate Suspension from school pending a formal hearing with the Superintendent and possibly the School Board.	Required	Local Law Enforcement contacted with the possibility of criminal charges filed.
THF03	Theft (Petty – less than $50.00)	218	Minimum of one (1) hour of office detention and restitution	Required	
THF04	Theft (more than $50.00)	218	Immediate Suspension from school and may include a formal hearing with the Superintendent and possibly the School Board.	Required	Local Law Enforcement contacted with the possibility of criminal charges filed.
THF05	Acting as a "look out" for Theft	218	Minimum of one (1) hour of office detention	Required	
Inappropriate Behaviors – Fire Code					
FIR01	Arson	218.2	Alt Ed and possible referral to the School Board for further disciplinary action	Required	SST Recommended Notification of Fire Marshall
FIR02	False Fire Alarm	218.2	Immediate Suspension from school pending a formal hearing with the Superintendent and possibly the School Board	Required	Local Law Enforcement contacted with the possibility of criminal charges filed
FIR03	Tampering with Fire Extinguishers	218.2	Immediate Suspension from school pending a formal hearing with the Superintendent and possibly the School Board	Required	Local Law Enforcement contacted with the possibility of criminal charges filed Notification of Fire Marshall

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Millcreek Township School District   Student Infraction and Disposition Matrix

Code	Infraction	Policy	Immediate Disposition	Parental Contact	Referrals
Assault/Fighting					
AF01	Minor Altercation	218	Minimum of one (1) hour of Office Detention	Optional	Optional
AF02	Fighting	218	HS/MS - Minimum three (3) days of Suspension (ISS / OSS at the discretion of the administrator) ES - Minimum one (1) day of In School Suspension HS/MS/ES: 1. Two (2) fights in one (1) year may result in an Alternative Education placement 2. Three (3) fights in a High School (HS) career may result in an Alternative Education placement	Required	HS – Local Law Enforcement contacted with the possibility of criminal charges filed – SST recommended MS – Possible Local Law Enforcement contacted with the possibility of criminal charges filed – SST Recommended ES – SST Recommended
AF03	Reckless Endangering	218			
AF04	Simple Assault on a Student	218	Immediate Suspension from school and may include a formal hearing with the Superintendent and possibly the School Board.	Required	Local Law Enforcement contacted with the possibility of criminal charges filed
AF05	Aggravated Assault on Student	218			
AF06	Simple Assault on Staff	218			
AF07	Aggravated Assault on Staff	218			
AF08	Attempt/Commit Murder/Manslaughter	218			
Harassment/Bullying/Threats/Hazing					
HBT01	Bullying (including Cyber Bullying)	249	Administrative Discretion with a minimum of one (1) hour of Office Detention	Required	SST Recommended
HBT02	Threatening School Official / Student	248	Immediate Suspension from school; pending a formal hearing with the Superintendent and possibly the School Board.	Required	Local Law Enforcement contacted with the possibility of criminal charges filed
HBT03	Terrorist Threats (Excluding Bomb Threats)	218.2	Immediate Suspension from school and a threat assessment completed pending a formal hearing with the Superintendent and possibly the School Board.	Required	Local Law Enforcement contacted with the possibility of criminal charges filed
HBT04	Bomb Threats	218.2	Immediate suspension and a threat assessment completed pending School Board hearing; Possible Threat Assessment and / or Expulsion; Further actions in accordance with Act 26	Required	Local Law Enforcement contacted with the possibility of criminal charges filed
HBT05	Sexual Harassment	248	Minimum of Saturday Detention	Required	SST Recommended
HBT06	Racial/Ethnic Intimidation	248	Minimum of Saturday Detention	Required	SST Recommended

Millcreek Township School District | Student Infraction and Disposition Matrix

Code	Infraction	Policy	Immediate Disposition	Parental Contact	Referrals
HBT07	All Other Forms of Harassment/Intimidation	248	Minimum of Saturday Detention	Required	SST Recommended
HBT08	Stalking	248/249	Minimum of Saturday Detention	Required	SST Recommended
HBT09	Kidnapping/Interference with Custody of Child	248/249	Immediate Suspension from school pending a formal hearing with the Superintendent and possibly the School Board.	Required	Local Law Enforcement contacted with the possibility of criminal charges filed
HBTH01	Hazing	247	Informal hearing / building administrator's discretion; may impose a $100 fine.\n\nWhen recommended, Immediate Suspension from school pending a formal hearing with the Superintendent and possibly the School Board; May impose $200 fine.	Required	Local Law Enforcement contacted with the possibility of criminal charges filed

Weapons

A weapon shall include but is not limited to the following: guns; firearms; knives; metal knuckles; straight razors and razor blades/ noxious, irritating, or poisonous gases; poisons; bombs; missiles; chains; metal objects; or any other object designed for protection or designed to harm others.

Code	Infraction	Policy	Immediate Disposition	Parental Contact	Referrals
WEA01	Possession of Handgun	218.1			
WEA02	Possession of Rifle/Shotgun	218.1	Immediate removal from school property and a threat assessment completed; suspension pending an informal hearing at the building level within three (3) days of the incident. The outcome of the informal hearing may result in a Superintendent hearing and/or School Board hearing and possible expulsion from school for at least (1) school year. Further actions in accordance with Act 26.	Required	Possible referral to local law enforcement SST Required (if student is not expelled as a result of a formal Board hearing)
WEA03	Possession of Other Firearm	218.1			
WEA04	Possession of Knife (2 1/2 " requirement)	218.1			
WEA05	Possession of Cutting Instrument (Razor, Box Cutter, etc)	218.1			
WEA06	Possession of Explosive (Bomb, Missile, etc)	218.1			
WEA07	Possession of BB/Pellet Gun	218.1			
WEA08	Possession of Other Weapon	218.1			
Code	**Infraction**	**Policy**	**Immediate Disposition**	**Parental Contact**	**Referrals**

Drugs and Alcohol

Code	Infraction	Policy	Immediate Disposition	Parental Contact	Referrals
DA01	Sale, Possession, Use, or Under the Influence of Alcohol while on school property, on property being used by the school, at any school function or activity, at any school event held away	227	First Offense - Suspension for ten (10) school days;\nSecond and Subsequent Offenses - Out of school suspension pending a formal hearing with the School Board	Required	Possible referral to local law enforcement\n\nDNA Counselor Referral

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Millcreek Township School District | Student Infraction and Disposition Matrix

Code	Infraction	Policy	Immediate Disposition	Parental Contact	Referrals
	from the school, or while the student is coming to or from school.				
DA02	Possession and/or Under the Influence of an Unauthorized or Controlled Substance (including prescription medications not following District procedures) while on school property, on property being used by the school, at any school function or activity, at any school event held away from the school, or while the student is coming to or from school.	227	First Offense - Suspension for up to ten (10) school days;\nSecond and Subsequent Offenses - Out of school suspension pending a formal hearing with the School Board	Required	Unauthorized substance -Possible referral to local law enforcement\n\nControlled substance – Mandated referral to Local Law Enforcement\n\nDNA Counselor Referral
DA03	Sale or Distribution or the Intent to Sell or Distribute an Unauthorized or Controlled Substance while on school property, on property being used by the school, at any school function or activity, at any school event held away from the school, or while the student is coming to or from school.	227	Any Offense - Out of school suspension pending a formal hearing with the School Board	Required	Possible referral to local law enforcement\n\nDNA Counselor Referral
DA04	Misrepresentation of an Unauthorized or Controlled Substance while on school property, on property being used by the school, at any school function or activity, at any school event held away from the school, or while the student is coming to or from school.	227	First Offense - Suspension for up to ten (10) days;\nSecond and Subsequent Offenses - Out of school suspension pending a formal hearing with the School Board	Required	Possible referral to local law enforcement\n\nDNA Counselor Referral
DA05	Possession of Paraphernalia (any tool or equipment whose function is to aid a user in consuming or selling any type of	227	First Offense - Suspension for up to ten (10) days;	Required	Possible referral to local law enforcement

Millcreek Township School District   **Student Infraction and Disposition Matrix**

Code	Infraction	Policy	Immediate Disposition	Parental Contact	Referrals
	drug, controlled substance or alcohol) while on school property, on property being used by the school, at any school function or activity, at any school event held away from the school, or while the student is coming to or from school.		Second and Subsequent Offenses - Out of school suspension pending a formal hearing with the School Board		DNA Counselor Referral
Tobacco/Nicotine Violations					
TOB01	Acting as a" look out" for smokers	222	One (1) day of In School or Out of School Suspension	Required	SST Recommended
TOB02	Possession/Use of Tobacco or Nicotine Products (including e-cigarettes, vapes, liquids containing nicotine, food items containing nicotine, matches or lighters) on school property including buses or at any event under the jurisdiction of MTSD	222	Any Offense: • Mandated education program or $150 fine will be assessed; • Mandated $50 fire code fee; • Confiscation of paraphernalia until the end of the school year; • 1 – 3 days of Suspension	Required	SST Recommended Tobacco Education Program may be assessed.
TOB03	Possession/use of smokeless devices with liquid containing unauthorized or controlled substances.	222	Any Offense: 10 days of suspension; $150 fine; $50 fire code fee; possible removal from all District sports and activities; School Board hearing for referral for expulsion from school.	Required	Local Law Enforcement contacted with the possibility of criminal charges filed
Sexually Based Offenses					
SBO01	Indecent Assault	248			
SBO02	Indecent Exposure	248			
SBO03	Open Lewdness	248			
SBO04	Obscene and other sexual materials	248	Immediate Suspension from school pending a formal hearing with the Superintendent and possibly the School Board.	Required	Local Law Enforcement contacted with the possibility of criminal charges filed
SBO05	Rape	248			
SBO06	Involuntary Deviate Sexual Intercourse	248			
SBO07	Statutory Sexual Assault	248			
SBO08	Sexual Assault	248			
SBO09	Aggravated Indecent Assault	248			

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Millcreek Township School District   **Student Infraction and Disposition Matrix**

Code	Infraction	Policy	Immediate Disposition	Parental Contact	Referrals
Suicide					
SUI01	Suicide – Attempted	N/A		Required	
SUI02	Suicide – Committed	N/A		Required	

DISCIPLINE FOR SPECIAL EDUCATION STUDENTS (IEP or 504)

IDEA Procedural Due Process ~ Written Prior Notice to the parents of the child is required whenever the local education agency:

1. Proposes to Initiate or Change a Student's Placement
2. Refuses to Initiate or Change a Student's Placement

Disciplinary Action **may** constitute a Change in Placement. Parents may invoke due process when they disagree with a recommendation.

A.   General Rules

The following infractions of the Student Discipline Matrix will be dealt with as following for special education students:

1) For attendance, punctuality, and unlawful absences- treated as non-disabled peers.

2) For minor offenses, with short suspension- treat as non-disabled peers (except for students with ID – see more details below). Discuss with special education teacher (and Supervisor if necessary) to determine appropriate consequence individualized for the student. This may also require the review of the IEP, revision of current PBSP, or an FBA.

3) Suspensions- You can suspend an exceptional student for up to **10 consecutive days or 15 cumulative days** during the school year (without a series of removals that constitute a pattern). This is not considered a change in placement.

4) If an exclusion is greater than ten days or 15 cumulative, a Manifestation Determination must be made before a disciplinary exclusion can be assigned.

   • If the student's conduct is determined to be Manifestation, review IEP and revise as appropriate.
   • If not a Manifestation, may proceed with disciplinary removal or assignment.

5) In situations where disciplinary consequences may result in removals that are greater than ten days:

   • Conduct Disciplinary Hearing first;

Millcreek Township School District   **Student Infraction and Disposition Matrix**

          *   Conduct Manifestation Determination second

B.   **Students with Intellectual Disability (ID) – Any removal is a change in placement:**

    1)   To suspend a student even one day you must complete a Manifestation Determination and Notify/Consult with PDE (call them). Consider revising the FBA and PBSP, complete a Record Review, consider revising the IEP and offer the parents the NOREP.

    2)   If parent refuses suspension, student cannot be suspended (except of the big three – see below).

    3)   School Personnel may remove a student (students with an ID too) to an interim alternative educational setting for u 45 days WITHOUT regard to whether the behavior is a manifestation of the disability if they commit an infraction under the big three:

            a.   Carrying or possession of a WEAPON (as outlined in the Federal Criminal Code Description),

            b.   Possess or uses ILLEGAL DRUGS,

            c.   Inflicting SERIOUS BODILY INJURY.

DESCRIPTION OF STUDENT DISCIPLINE MATRIX INFRACTIONS

The following definitions are included to provide a uniform and fundamental understanding of a particular offense as it relates to the Student Discipline Matrix.

    1)   **Assault on a Student or School Employee-** Intentionally, knowingly or recklessly causing bodily injury or serious bodily harm to a School District employee or another person. By definition, the School District does not recognize attempted assaults, only completed assaults.

    2)   **Aggravated Assault-** an attempt to cause serious bodily injury to another or an attack that causes such injury to a School District employee or another person. Included in this definition are attacks in which the offending attacker uses a weapon.

    3)   **Arson-** intentional damage or attempt to damage any real or personal property by fire or incendiary device. This category includes any attempt to set a fire using fireworks, firecrackers, Molotov cocktails or other similar device. It does not include the simple use of a light or lighting of a match.

    4)   **Bullying-** means an intentional electronic, written, verbal or physical act, or a series of severe, persistent or pervasive acts:

        a)   directed at another student or students, and

        b)   which occurs in a school setting, which shall mean in the school, on school grounds, in school vehicles, at a designated bus stop or at any activity, sponsored, supervised, or sanctioned by the school, and

        c)   inflicts or attempts to inflict discomfort upon another through a real or perceived imbalance of power and

        d)   that has the effect of doing any of the following:

            i.   substantially interfering with a student's education;

            ii.   creating a threatening environment or

            iii.   substantially disrupting the disorderly operation of the school

<div align="center">12</div>

Millcreek Township School District   **Student Infraction and Disposition Matrix**

    "Bullying" includes both genders, can be direct or indirect, and can be physical and/or psychological in nature. This definition includes individual and group bullying as well as cyber bullying. This definition _does not_ include mutual confrontation between two individuals or two groups of students.

    5)   **Burglary-** unlawful entry into a building or other structure with the intent to commit crime, with or without the use of force. This definition includes unlawful entries where no property loss occurs.

    6)   **Bus Infractions-** all School District infractions taking place on bus transportation. Disciplinary action for these offenses will correspond with the type of infraction committed by the student.

    7)   **Computer/Network Resource Impropriety-** use of the School District's computers and internet resources that in is violation of the School District's computer use Policy.

    8)   **Disorderly Conduct-** shall mean any of the following:

        a)   engaging in fighting, threatening, violent or tumultuous behavior,

        b)   making an unreasonable amount of noise,

        c)   using obscene language or gestures, or

        d)   creating a hazardous or physically offensive condition through any deliberate action.

    9)   **Disrespectful Behavior-** a lack of respect or deference shown by a student to the authority or position of a School District official, employee or administrator.

    10)   **Disruptive Behavior-** student behavior, including verbal, physical, and/or written actions, which is distracting, detrimental, or not conducive to the learning environment of other students.

    11)   **Dress Code Infraction-** the wearing of clothing or other clothing accessory items that violates the student dress code promulgated by the School District. This includes situations where a student violates additional limitations on dress or appearance established by School District officials for individual students.

    12)   **Electronic Device Infraction-** the use of electronic devices, including cellular phones, tablets, portable music devices, portable gaming devices, computers, cameras, electronic wrist devices, and any other electronic device, in violation of School District Policy.

    13)   **Fighting (Mutual altercation) -** a student confrontation with another student in which the altercation is mutual between the two, the altercation requires physical restraint and/or results in personal injury or property damages. This definition does not include minor disorderly conduct or verbal confrontations. It is within a School District employee or administrator's discretion to determine whether confrontations amount to "fighting."

    14)   **Gambling-** the making of any bet or wager and/or the organization of or participation in any lottery, numbers game, cards, dice, pool, or bookmaking for money and/or property.

    15)   **Harassment-** shall mean any of the following:

        a)   the striking, kicking, or otherwise subjecting a person to light physical contact, including attempts or threats to do the same

        b)   unwanted following of another person

Millcreek Township School District   **Student Infraction and Disposition Matrix**

c) engaging in unnecessary, repeated acts that make another person feel uncomfortable

d) communicating to or about another person in any lewd, lascivious, threatening, or obscene way, including the use of threatening or obscene words, language, drawings, or caricatures, or

e) doing any of the above in an anonymous manner.

16) Hazing – occurs when a person intentionally, knowingly or recklessly, for the purpose of initiating, admitting or affiliating a student with an organization, or for the purpose of continuing or enhancing membership or status in an organization, causes, coerces or forces a student to do any of the following regardless if consent of the student was sought:

a) Violate federal or state criminal
b) Consuming anything causing physical or emotional harm
c) Brutality of a physical, mental, sexual nature or other activity that creates likelihood of injury

"Aggravated hazing" occurs when a person commits an act of hazing that results in serious bodily injury or death to the student and the person acts with reckless indifference to the health and safety of the student.
"Organizational hazing" occurs when a School District organization, and its member, intentionally, knowingly, or recklessly promotes or facilitates hazing or aggravated hazing.

17) Illegal Possession, Sale, and/or Use of Unauthorized Substances- the possession, sale, and/or use of an unauthorized substance, the possession of an unauthorized substance with the intent to deliver, the misrepresentation of an unauthorized substance, and the possession of paraphernalia by students on School District property, at School District sponsored events and on School District transportation.

18) Indecent Assault- committing a sexual act with or in the presence of a child under the age of sixteen (16) years, by a person of at least age sixteen (16) and at least five (5) years older than the child, for sexual gratification, regardless of the use of force or consent. This definition includes exposure of the genitals, showing a minor pornographic images or videos, or covertly photographing another's genitals.

19) Minor Altercation- an incident involving a single offender who commits a minor physical act against another individual and the victim does not respond. This does not include incidents that amount to assault, aggravated assault, and/or fighting.

20) Possession of Weapons- the control, ownership, or custody of any of the following items:

a) Firearms, including handguns and assault rifles
b) Knives, razors, or blades of any kind
c) Metal knuckles
d) Irritating or poisonous gases
e) Poisons
f) Bombs, fireworks, or other incendiary devices
g) Bats, clubs, or other bludgeoning object
h) Metal devices used to inflict harm or pain
i) Any other object designed for protection or designed to harm others.

21) Racial/Ethnic/Gender/Religious Intimidation- any other offense committed under this section that includes an action with malicious intention toward the actual or perceived race, color, religion, national origin, ancestry, mental or physical disability, sexual orientation, gender or gender identity of another individual or group of individuals.

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Millcreek Township School District   **Student Infraction and Disposition Matrix**

22) Rape- engaging in sexual intercourse with a victim through any of the following:

a) forcible compulsion
b) threat of forcible compulsion that would prevent resistance by a reasonable person
c) engaging in sexual intercourse with an unconscious person, who is unaware that sexual intercourse is occurring
d) engaging in sexual intercourse with an individual who is substantially impaired to the point where the victim has no ability to consent to the sexual intercourse
e) engaging in sexual intercourse with an individual with a mental disability that precludes their ability to give informed consent.

23) Reckless Endangering- engaging in conduct that places or cause an individual to fear being placed in danger of death or serious bodily injury.

24) Riot- the participation in disorderly conduct with two or more others in any of the following circumstances:

a) with the intent to commit or facilitate the commission of a felony or misdemeanor;

b) with intent to prevent or coerce official action; or

c) when the actor or any other participant to the knowledge of the actor uses or plans to use a firearm or other deadly weapon.

25) Robbery- the taking or attempting to take, of anything of value under confrontational circumstances, from the custody, control, or care of another person by force or threat or force or violence and/or putting the victim in fear of immediate harm.

26) Sexual Assault- an unauthorized and unwanted, intentional or forcible touching of a sex organ of another person. This includes attempted rape and any other sexual offense. This category does not include rape.

27) Sexual Harassment- discrimination against another person based on the person's submission or rejection of sexual advances and/or requests or creating an uncomfortable atmosphere based on sexual advances. This includes any unwelcome sexual advances, requests for sexual favors, and other physical or verbal communication of a sexual nature.

28) Stalking- the participation in either of the following:

a) engaging in a course of conduct or repeatedly committing acts toward another person, including following the person without proper authority, under circumstances which demonstrate either an intent to place such person in reasonable fear of bodily injury or to cause substantial emotional distress to such other person; or

b) engaging in a course of conduct or repeatedly communicating to another person under circumstances which demonstrate or communicate either an intent to place such person in reasonable fear or bodily injury or to cause substantial emotional distress to such other person.

29) Tardiness- arriving to the School District building subsequent to the beginning of the school day.

30) Terroristic Threats- the communication, either directly or indirectly of a threat to do any of the following:

a) Commit any crime of violence with intent to terrorize another;

b) Cause evacuation of a building, place of assembly, facility, or on public transportation; or

c) Other cause serious public inconvenience or public terror with reckless disregard of the risk of causing such terror or inconvenience.

31) Theft- the act of taking, or exercising unlawful control over movable or immovable property of another with the intent to deprive them thereof.

Millcreek Township School District   Student Infraction and Disposition Matrix

32) **Threatening or Intimidating Another**- placing a person in fear of bodily harm through verbal, written, or electronic threats without displaying a weapon or subjecting the victim to actual physical attack.

33) **Trespass**- entering or remaining in or on school property or vehicles, knowing or having reason to know that one is not permitted to enter or remain. This includes suspended students who attempt to access school property during extra-curricular events.

34) **Unlawful Absence**- missing a scheduled day of school without proper reason and or notification by a parent/guardian, where applicable.

35) **Vandalism**- the desecration of a building or other structure with the intent to commit damage.

DESCRIPTION OF DISCIPLINARY ACTIONS

The following definitions are included to provide a uniform fundamental understanding of the infractions, dispositions, and other key items identified in the Student Discipline Matrix, as they relate to School District Policy and applicable law:

A. **Administrative Discretion**- allows School District officials and administrators to examine infractions on a case-by-case basis in order to develop the most appropriate and effective course of action with regards to particular infractions of the Student Discipline Matrix.

B. **Dog Search** – The School District has the right to search all property.

C. **Elementary**- refers to students at Asbury, Belle Valley, Chestnut Hill, Grandview, and Tracy, grades K-5.

D. **Elementary School (ES)**- refers to students at Asbury, Belle Valley, Chestnut Hill, Grandview, and Tracy, grades K-5.

E. **Extended Time Out**- a period of time (not to exceed one consecutive hour) whereby a student is excluded from the regular classroom setting. At the elementary level, may be assigned in lieu of office detention where transportation issues and other extenuating circumstances preclude the assignment of office detention or in the event of student infractions that would warrant a Saturday detention at the secondary school level.

F. **Group Searches**- general, random searches conducted on a subset of School District students, including dog searches. Can be conducted for any reason by the School District Administration, subject to neutral guidelines adopted by the School District.

G. **High School (HS)** - refers to students at MIHS and McDowell, grades 9-12.

H. **Immediate Disposition**- description of disciplinary actions that are taken by the administration as a designee of the Superintendent and are imposed as quickly as possible relative to the occurrence of the infraction.

I. **Individual Searches**- searches on one particular School District student. Can be conducted if the School District has (1) reasonable grounds to suspect that the student has violated or is violating a law or a School District policy and (2) the scope of the search is reasonably related to the objective of the search and not excessively intrusive on the student. Dog searches shall only be conducted on the individual students if the School District has reasonable suspicion of wrongdoing and the dog search is necessary in scope. Students shall be given notice and the opportunity to be present prior to any locker search, including dog searches of individual lockers, unless the immediate health, safety, and well-being of School District students, personnel, and/or buildings are at risk.

J. **Infraction**- student behavior that is in violation of School District policy.

K. **In-School Suspension**- the placement of a student within the school building but outside of the regular classroom setting for a continuous period of time not to exceed a regular school day.

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Millcreek Township School District   Student Infraction and Disposition Matrix

L. **Middle School (MS)**- refers to students at J.S. Wilson, Walnut Creek, and Westlake, grades 6-8

M. **Office Detention**- retention of a student outside of the regularly scheduled school day for a period of time not to exceed one (1) hour in length and proctored by a School District administrator or their designee.

N. **Out of School Suspension**- the placement of a student outside of the School District building.

O. **Parental Contact**- communication with the parent(s) or guardian(s) by means of conference, telephone, email, and/or letter.

P. **Policy**- indicates the School District policy by which the infraction and related disposition is enforceable.

Q. **Secondary**- refers to students at the high schools and middle schools, grades 6-12

R. **Teacher Detention**- retention of a student outside of the regularly scheduled school day for a period of time not to exceed one (1) hour in length and proctored by the regular classroom teacher.

S. **Saturday Detention**- retention of a student outside of the regularly scheduled school day (Saturday) for a period of time not to exceed three (3) hours in length and proctored by a building administrator or his/her designee.

T. **School Property**- is any building, facility, or property owned by the School District.

U. **Season**- is that period of time defined by School District guidelines or specific dates established by the Pennsylvania Department of Education or the PIAA that govern when an activity or sport takes place.

Appendix F

SlipperyRock
University
of Pennsylvania

RESEARCH PARTICIPANT INFORMATIONAL LETTER
Examining the Efficacy of Universally Delivered Social and Emotional Learning

Curriculum, Second Step: A Mixed-Method Study of the Effects on Regular and Special

Education Student Behavior and Teacher Instructional Competence

Joseph A Jablonski – jaj1014@sru.edu

Invitation to be Part of a Research Study

You are invited to participate in a research study. In order to participate, you must be a teacher employed by the Millcreek Township School District with a placement at Grandview Elementary School. Taking part in this research project is voluntary. If you choose to participate, you will click the survey link in the email you received this letter.

Important Information about the Research Study

Things you should know:
- The purpose of the study is to examine the effectiveness of the "Second Step" social and emotional learning curriculum. If you choose to participate, at the end of your instruction of the curriculum, you will be asked to complete a questionnaire that includes ratings and open-ended questions. This will take approximately 15 minutes.
- There should be minimal risks from this research as it is an anonymous and voluntary survey based on your own experiences.
- The study will add to the research concerning the effectiveness of social and emotional learning. Specifically, it will provide information on Second Step in regard to student behavior, school climate/culture, and teacher levels of comfort while instructing.
- Taking part in this research project is voluntary. You do not have to participate and you can stop at any time.

Please take time to read this entire form and ask questions before deciding whether to take part in this research project.

What is the Study About and Why are We Doing it?

The purpose of the study is to examine the effectiveness of the "Second Step" social and emotional learning curriculum as it pertains to student behavior, school climate/culture, and teacher comfort level of instruction.

What Will Happen if You Take Part in This Study?

If you agree to take part in this study, you will be asked to complete a questionnaire at the completion of teaching your Second Step curriculum. This questionnaire will be disseminated through an anonymous Google form that will be sent as a link, along with this letter, to your preferred email address. I expect this to take about 15 minutes. Examples of questions will be relative to your thoughts on the effects of student behavior, the implementation of the curriculum, and the attitudes that you have about providing social emotional instruction. The information that you provide, along with the anonymous behavior provided by the district, will be used to determine what effect, if any, the program had on student behavior, school climate/culture, and teacher attitudes about social emotional instruction. All information will remain anonymous.

How Could You Benefit from This Study?

You might benefit from being in this study because the feedback that you provide will help the school administration in making decisions to increase a positive teaching and learning environment that lowers student problem behaviors.

What Risks Might Result from Being in This Study?

We believe there to be minimal risks from participating in this research study. Participation is in the form of completing an anonymous, voluntary questionnaire about your experiences with the instruction of the Second Step curriculum and what you perceive the effects on student behavior to be. On the questionnaire, there are demographic questions that may lead your supervisor, who is also the co-investigator on this study, to have demographic information associated with your responses. If you feel uncomfortable responding, you may opt-out at any time. If you have questions or concerns related to these questions and the data collected, you may contact the Principal Investigator or the SRU IRB Board, whose contact information is listed below. Furthermore, when data is being analyzed, it will be done as a group set, as opposed to individual responses.

How Will We Protect Your Information?

I plan to publish the results of this study. To protect your privacy, I will not include information that could directly identify you, as the survey will be anonymous. All survey results will be kept on a password protected Google Drive that only I have access to.

What Will Happen to the Information We Collect About You After the Study is Over?

I will not keep your research data to use for future research or other purposes. Upon conclusion of the study, all raw data will be destroyed in five years.

What Other Choices do I Have if I Don't Take Part in this Study?

If you choose not to participate, there will be no consequences.

Your Participation in this Research is Voluntary

It is totally up to you to decide to be in this research study. Participating in this study is voluntary. Even if you decide to be part of the study now, you may change your mind and stop at any time. You do not have to answer any questions you do not want to answer.

Contact Information for the Study Team and Questions about the Research

If you have questions about this research, you may contact
Eric J. Bieniek, Ph.D., BCBA-D
724.738.4106
eric.bieniek@sru.edu

Joseph Jablonski, BM, MM
814.836.6300
jaj1014@sru.edu

Contact Information for Questions about Your Rights as a Research Participant

If you have questions about your rights as a research participant, or wish to obtain information, ask questions, or discuss any concerns about this study with someone other than the researcher(s), please contact the following:
Institutional Review Board
Slippery Rock University
104 Maltby, Suite 008
Slippery Rock, PA 16057
Phone: (724)738-4846
Email: irb@sru.edu

Your Consent

Before agreeing to be part of the research, please be sure that you understand what the study is about. We will give you a copy of this document for your records [or you can print a copy of the document for your records]. If you have any questions about the study later, you can contact the study team using the information provided above.

By clicking on the survey link, I understand what the study is about and my questions so far have been answered. I agree to take part in this study. I understand that I can withdraw at any time.

Appendix G

Millcreek Township School District

Millcreek Education Center
3740 West 26th Street • Erie, Pennsylvania 16506-2096 • (814) 835-5300

"Building Foundations for Life"

June 10, 2020

To Whom it may Concern,

Joseph Jablonski is a Principal in our District and has been granted permission to conduct his doctoral research at Grandview Elementary School during the 2020/2021 school year.

Thank you.
Sincerely,

Darcie L. Moseley
Acting Superintendent
Millcreek Township School District

Appendix H

Anonymous Google Form

Anonymous Teacher Questionnaire-Second Step Follow-up

This is a self-administered, voluntary, anonymous questionnaire used to assess your attitudes, perceptions, and feelings after having provided social and emotional instruction through the "Second Step" curriculum.

This should only take 15 minutes.

Please rate how strongly you agree or disagree with each of the following statements.

1. Programs such as Second Step are effective in helping children learn social and emotional skills.

   Mark only one oval.

	1	2	3	4	5	6	
Strongly Disagree	◯	◯	◯	◯	◯	◯	Strongly Agree

2. Second Step can help all kids regardless of their temperament.

   Mark only one oval.

	1	2	3	4	5	6	
Strongly Disagree	◯	◯	◯	◯	◯	◯	Strongly Agree

3. It is worth my effort to implement Second Step lessons.

Mark only one oval.

	1	2	3	4	5	6	
Strongly Disagree	○	○	○	○	○	○	Strongly Agree

4. Second Step has helped my children to improve their social and emotional skills.

Mark only one oval.

	1	2	3	4	5	6	
Strongly Disagree	○	○	○	○	○	○	Strongly Agree

5. I deliver Second Step lessons effectively.

Mark only one oval.

	1	2	3	4	5	6	
Strongly Disagree	○	○	○	○	○	○	Strongly Agree

6. I understand the goals of Second Step.

Mark only one oval.

	1	2	3	4	5	6	
Strongly Disagree	○	○	○	○	○	○	Strongly Agree

7. I feel competent teacing Second Step lessons.

Mark only one oval.

	1	2	3	4	5	6	
Strongly Disagree	◯	◯	◯	◯	◯	◯	Strongly Agree

8. I have thorough knowledge of Second Step lessons.

Mark only one oval.

	1	2	3	4	5	6	
Strongly Disagree	◯	◯	◯	◯	◯	◯	Strongly Agree

9. I don't have time in the day or week to deliver Second Step lessons.

Mark only one oval.

	1	2	3	4	5	6	
Strongly Disagree	◯	◯	◯	◯	◯	◯	Strongly Agree

10. I have enough time to prepare for Second Step lessons.

Mark only one oval.

	1	2	3	4	5	6	
Strongly Disagree	◯	◯	◯	◯	◯	◯	Strongly Agree

11. Spending time on Second Step lessons take time away from academics.

Mark only one oval.

	1	2	3	4	5	6	
Strongly Disagree	◯	◯	◯	◯	◯	◯	Strongly Agree

12. The administrative staff has arranged training in Second Step

Mark only one oval.

	1	2	3	4	5	6	
Strongly Disagree	◯	◯	◯	◯	◯	◯	Strongly Agree

13. I recieved sufficient training in Second Step.

Mark only one oval.

	1	2	3	4	5	6	
Strongly Disagree	◯	◯	◯	◯	◯	◯	Strongly Agree

14. The training I received provided me with sufficient knowledge about the content of the program.

Mark only one oval.

	1	2	3	4	5	6	
Strongly Disagree	◯	◯	◯	◯	◯	◯	Strongly Agree

15. The training I received was a hands-on training where I could practice what I had learned.

Mark only one oval.

	1	2	3	4	5	6	
Strongly Disagree	◯	◯	◯	◯	◯	◯	Strongly Agree

16. The Principal is an active supporter of Second Step.

Mark only one oval.

	1	2	3	4	5	6	
Strongly Disagree	◯	◯	◯	◯	◯	◯	Strongly Agree

17. The Principal has watched me deliver Second Step lessons.

Mark only one oval.

	1	2	3	4	5	6	
Strongly Disagree	◯	◯	◯	◯	◯	◯	Strongly Agree

18. The Principal acknowleges teachers who do a good job delivering Second Step.

Mark only one oval.

	1	2	3	4	5	6	
Strongly Disagree	◯	◯	◯	◯	◯	◯	Strongly Agree

19. Other than at orientation, the Principal has discussed Second Step at staff meetings.

Mark only one oval

	1	2	3	4	5	6	
Strongly Disagree	○	○	○	○	○	○	Strongly Agree

20. The Principal has scheduled specific times for delivery of Second Step lessons.

Mark only one oval

	1	2	3	4	5	6	
Strongly Disagree	○	○	○	○	○	○	Strongly Agree

21. The Principal gives more importance to learning academics than learning social and emotional skills.

Mark only one oval

	1	2	3	4	5	6	
Strongly Disagree	○	○	○	○	○	○	Strongly Agree

22. Other teachers in my school implement Second Step consistently

Mark only one oval

	1	2	3	4	5	6	
Strongly Disagree	○	○	○	○	○	○	Strongly Agree

Please answer the following questions as best as you can.

23. Number of years of experience as a teacher:

24. Number of years of experience as a teacher at Grandview Elementary:

25. Number of years of experience in delivering Second Step lessons:

26. Are you classified as a Special Education teacher or a Regular Education teacher?

    Mark only one oval.

    ( ) Special Education

    ( ) Regular Education

Please provide a response to the following open-ended questions. Please do not use any specific student names.

27. How do you feel Second Step affected the overall behavior of the student body?

28. How do you feel Second Step affected the behavior of Special Education students in need of Emotional Support services?

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

29. How do you feel Second Step affected the overall climate and culture of Grandview Elementary?

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

This content is neither created nor endorsed by Google.

Google Forms

Appendix I

IRB Approval

Protocol #: 2020-052-15-B
Protocol Title: Examining the Efficacy of Universally Delivered Social and emotional Learning Curriculum, Second Step: A Mixed-Method Study of the Effects on Regular and Special Education Student Behavior and Teacher Instructional Competence

The Institutional Review Board (IRB) of Slippery Rock University received the requested modifications to the above-referenced protocol.

The IRB has reviewed the modifications and approved the protocol under the EXEMPT category of review.

You may begin your project as of July 17, 2020. Your protocol will automatically close on July 16, 2021 unless you request, in writing, to keep it open.

Please contact the IRB Office by phone at (724)738-4846 or via email at irb@sru.edu should your protocol change in any way.

Thanks,
Casey

Casey Hyatt
Interim Director
Grants Research and Sponsored Programs

Slippery Rock University
1 Morrow Way
008 Old Main
Slippery Rock, PA 16057
Grants Office Direct Line: 724-738-2045
IRB & IACUC Office Direct Line: 724-738-4846
Fax: 724-738-4857
www.sru.edu

A ROCK **SOLID EDUCATION**

Appendix J

Joseph Jablonski

From:	David Schultz <dschultz@umbc.edu>
Sent:	Saturday, July 18, 2020 7:50 PM
To:	Joseph Jablonski
Subject:	Re: TASEL permission

CAUTION: This email originated from outside your organization. Exercise caution when opening attachments or clicking links, especially from unknown senders.

Hi Joseph,

No problem....would love to have you use the TASEL. Good luck with the project/dissertation. I would love to know what you find both in general and with the TASEL.

Take care,

Dave

On Fri, Jul 17, 2020 at 12:23 PM Joseph Jablonski <jablonski@mtsd.org> wrote:

Dr. Schultz,

I am writing to request permission to use your TASEL questionnaire for use in a proposed dissertation study. My study will be examining the efficacy of an SEL curriculum, Second Step, as implemented in a K-5 setting. There will be a particular focus on emotional support students who receive the instruction in a universal setting. Part of the study will also measure teacher attitudes and perceptions during the first year of implementation. As you have already established validity and reliability with your questionnaire, I would like to use it as one data point.

Thank you and I appreciate your consideration.

Regards,

Joseph Jablonski

Principal

Grandview Elementary

1

Response Frequency Distribution Table

Appendix K

	Strongly Agree-6	Agree-5	Somewhat Agree-4	Somewhat Disagree-3	Disagree-2	Strongly Disagree-1
Programs such as Second Step are effective in helping children learn social and emotional skills.	9	8	3	1	1	0
Second Step can help all kids regardless of their temperament.	5	9	3	2	2	1
It is worth my effort to implement Second Step lessons.	5	12	2	1	2	0
Second Step has helped my children to improve their social and emotional skills.	2	9	7	2	1	1
I deliver Second Step lessons effectively.	6	10	5	1	0	0
I understand the goals of Second Step.	15	5	2	0	0	0
I feel competent teaching Second Step lessons.	7	11	2	2	0	0
I have thorough knowledge of Second Step lessons.	6	11	3	1	1	0
I don't have time in the day or week to deliver Second Step lessons.	2	5	2	4	5	4
I have enough time to prepare for Second Step lessons.	2	11	3	2	2	2
Spending time on Second Step lessons take time away from academics.	2	5	2	2	7	3
The administrative staff has arranged training in Second Step	10	9	2	1	0	0
I received sufficient training in Second Step.	10	5	5	0	2	0
The training I received provided me with sufficient knowledge about the content of the program.	9	7	4	0	2	0
The training I received was a hands-on training where I could practice what I had learned.	6	7	3	4	1	1
The Principal is an active supporter of Second Step.	20	2	0	0	0	0
The Principal has watched me deliver Second Step lessons.	4	4	3	8	2	1
The Principal acknowledges teachers who do a good job delivering Second Step.	8	6	6	1	1	0
Other than at orientation, the Principal has discussed Second Step at staff meetings.	21	1	0	0	0	0
The Principal has scheduled specific times for delivery of Second Step lessons.	19	1	1	1	0	0
The Principal gives more importance to learning academics than learning social and emotional skills.	1	5	2	2	5	7
Other teachers in my school implement Second Step consistently	4	9	6	2	0	1

Appendix L

Response Frequency Distribution Graph
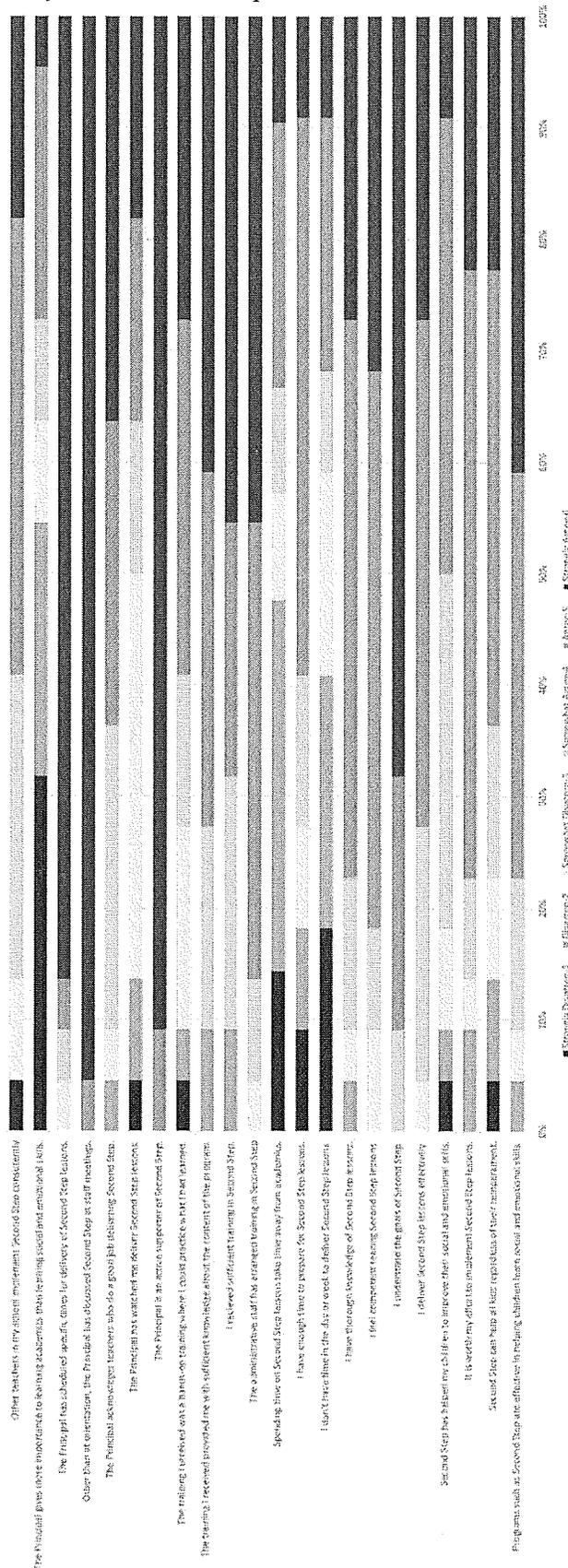
Mean Response Distribution Table

	Average
Programs such as Second Step are effective in helping children learn social and emotional skills	5.05
Second Step can help all kids regardless of their temperament.	4.45
It is worth my effort to implement Second Step lessons.	4.77
Second Step has helped my children to improve their social and emotional skills.	4.27
I deliver Second Step lessons effectively.	4.95
I understand the goals of Second Step.	5.59
I feel competent teaching Second Step lessons.	5.05
I have thorough knowledge of Second Step lessons.	4.91
I don't have time in the day or week to deliver Second Step lessons.	3.23
I have enough time to prepare for Second Step lessons.	4.14
Spending time on Second Step lessons take time away from academics.	3.24
The administrative staff has arranged training in Second Step	5.27
I received sufficient training in Second Step.	4.95
The training I received provided me with sufficient knowledge about the content of the program.	4.95
The training I received was a hands-on training where I could practice what I had learned.	4.45
The Principal is an active supporter of Second Step.	5.91
The Principal has watched me deliver Second Step lessons.	3.86
The Principal acknowledges teachers who do a good job delivering Second Step.	4.86
Other than at orientation, the Principal has discussed Second Step at staff meetings.	5.95
The Principal has scheduled specific times for delivery of Second Step lessons.	5.73
The Principal gives more importance to learning academics than learning social emotional skills	2.82
Other teachers in my school implement Second Step consistently	4.55

Appendix N

Mean Response Distribution Graph