Research to Practice in Social and Emotional Learning: A National Perspective

Deborah Moroney, PhD
Director SEL and Climate
Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA) supports the “whole child” and “student engagement”
California CORE Districts

K-12 Social and Emotional Learning Standards and Supports

- Freestanding K-12 SEL standards
- Comprehensive standards with developmental benchmarks for early elementary
- Provide resources on SEL
- Collaborating Districts Initiative (CDI)
- Collaborating States Initiative
- Partners and learning community
- California CORE Districts
Collective Landscape

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Factors that Influence Intentional SEL Practice

- Staff Preparation and Retention (Professional Development and Educational Pathways)
- Qualified Staff
- Quality Implementation
- Intentional Practice to Support Skill Building
- Positive Youth Outcomes
- Opportunities to Participate and to Take Leadership Roles in Valued Community Activities
- Positive Relationships Between Youth and Staff
Are we Ready to Implement?
Future Directions for OST in Practice: A New Job Description for SEL

- Avoiding the youth work pivot
- Organizational Support Toward Sustainability
- Adoption of Frameworks and Knowing What That Means
- Culture and Context
- Adult Social and Emotional Competence
- Professional Learning and Development
- Intentionality
- Connections to Other Fields
Future Directions for OST: A Research Agenda

- Implementation studies
- Studies on the characteristics of the workforce
- Impacts of SEL programming on adults.
“Don’t call it a comeback, we’ve been here for years”

(Smith, 1990)
SOCIAL EMOTIONAL LEARNING

WHAT IT MEANS
HOW IT WORKS
WHAT WE CAN DO
1. WHAT IS THE CONNECTION BETWEEN SOCIAL EMOTIONAL LEARNING AND THE LEARNING CLIMATE?

2. HOW CAN AN UNDERSTANDING OF GROUP DEVELOPMENT HELP PRACTITIONERS IMPLEMENT SEL STRATEGIES?

3. IN YOUR EXPERIENCE WORKING WITH OST ORGS, WHAT IS THE DIFFERENCE BETWEEN WORKING FROM PROFESSIONAL SEL CURRICULUM VS STAFF WRITING THEIR OWN CURRICULUM?
THINK OF A TIME YOU LEARNED SOMETHING BY YOURSELF, LIKE...

- Set up a new I-phone
- Tried a New Recipe
- Added special touches to a PowerPoint Presentation
- Used an app to track fitness goals
WHAT “MOVES” DID YOU MAKE TO LEARN THAT THING?

- How did it go?
- How did you feel?
- What made you give up, or keep going?
NOW THINK OF A TIME YOU LEARNED SOMETHING IN A GROUP...

A Social Emotional Learning Session
A Training on Your Attendance Tracking System
A Yoga Class
What was it like to learn this thing in a group?

How did you feel? What made you stay attentive, or lose interest?

How did what was important to you change over time?
Much of our formal education happens in groups. But we rarely consider the impact of the group on one's learning. The group dynamic impacts how we learn!
A Hypothesized Model of How Five Noncognitive Factors Affect Academic Performance within a Classroom/School and Larger Socio-Cultural Context

- **Socio-Cultural Context**
- **School and Classroom Context**
  - **Academic Mindsets**
    - **Social Skills**
    - **Academic Perseverance**
    - **Learning Strategies**
    - **Academic Behaviors**
    - **Academic Performance**

**Student Background Characteristics**
WE IMAGINE GROUPS WILL FEEL LIKE THIS
BUT OFTEN THEY FEEL AND FUNCTION LIKE THIS
WE BELIEVE THAT WE CAN BUILD INTENTIONAL LEARNING COMMUNITIES BY CONNECTING THE DOTS BETWEEN...

WHERE KIDS LEARN (CONTEXT) + HOW KIDS LEARN (NON-COGNITIVE SKILLS OR SEL) → WHAT KIDS DO & KNOW (BEHAVIORS, CHOICES, GRADES)
HOW DO WE USE THIS RESEARCH IN OUR WORK?

1. Practice how to “translate” the research and ideas for the staff in OST.

2. Create “fertile soil” for SEL skills to land by creating a strong group dynamic – a learning community.

3. Look for curriculum that is tailored for your learning context:
   - Strategies to teach SEL skills to High School vs. Middle School students aren’t the same.
   - Curriculum that teachers can use doesn’t necessarily work for OST staff.
THINK OF A TRADITIONAL CLASSROOM

What message does this environment send?