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Social Emotional Learning

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Capstone Project: A School Improvement Plan

Northwestern College, Orange City, Iowa

Abstract

This article looks at how the implementation of a social-emotional curriculum can improve academics, behavior, and school climate at an Elementary school level. The articles examine research from various research papers to communicate a need for a social-emotional curriculum and outline a plan for the implementation of a school-wide social-emotional curriculum.

Keywords: Social Emotional Learning, Academics, Professional Development, School Climate

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Social Emotional Learning

“Poor mental health can result in serious negative outcomes for the health and development of adolescents, which can last into adulthood” (CDC, 2011. Pg, 61). When High School students were asked, “Have you experienced persistent feelings of sadness or hopelessness almost every day for at least two weeks in a row that they stopped doing their usual activities”? In 2011, 28 percent of students said yes. In 2021, 42 percent of students said yes. This is a 14 percent increase in ten years.

As educators, we know our children are not as self-aware and developed as adults. “As experiential learners, kids need to move, imagine, and use all their senses to absorb new information. Move This World is designed to meet students on their level for meaningful and long-lasting SEL development while protecting and supporting classroom instruction time” (Move This World, 2021).

The purpose of this school improvement plan is to bring awareness of the growing needs of the mental state of our young learners. It is the author’s goal to provide guidance on how we can successfully implement a Social Emotional Learning Curriculum into our classrooms at the Council Bluffs Community School District to benefit our student’s mental state to improve their social, emotional skills.

Research for this project’s literature review was conducted using journals available through the DeWitt Library at Northwestern College and Google Scholar. All the articles were peer-reviewed, and a majority were published within the past ten years. The author focused on the importance of having a Social Emotional Learning Curriculum into the classrooms, the growing changes of mental health, and a wonderful approach to finding a Social Emotional Learning curriculum that spirals when working with kindergarten through 12th grade students.

The curriculum is scaffolded and the skills are built upon each other throughout the course of the school year.

The belief throughout this school improvement plan is Kindergarten students through 12th graders will have a Social Emotional Learning curriculum imbedded into their morning meeting time in the classroom. This will help our students become more regulated with their emotions and their peers around them. Another belief is we hope to lower the increasing mental health statistics of our young learners so they can be more successful inside and outside of the classroom and within their daily life.

Review of the Literature

Mental Health

“Mental health is an important part of children’s overall health and well-being. Mental health includes children’s mental, emotional, and behavioral well-being” (Data and Statistics on Children’s Mental Health | CDC, 2022b). A person’s mental state is such an important part of anyone’s health as it affects your social, emotional, and behavioral way of life. Specifically, in a child’s life, their mental health can affect how they handle stress, how they control their emotions, how they relate to others, and how they perform academically can be related with a child’s mental state as well.

According to a study by the Centers for Disease Control (CDC), a group of High School Students were interviewed and were asked “one question addressing persistent feelings of sadness or hopelessness that affect students’ abilities to participate in their daily activities and another question assessing poor mental health during the past 30 days” (Youth Risk Behavior Survey, CDC, 2021). According to the CDC, in 2011 there were 28 percent of students whom felt persistent feelings of sadness or hopelessness. In 2021, there were 42 percent of students whom felt persistent feelings of sadness or hopelessness. This is an 11 percent increase in only ten years.

Mental health is connected to Social Emotional Learning because your mental health is going to affect your social, emotional well-being. Improving a child’s Social Emotional Learning will also impact and improve their mental health as well. Similar findings were uncovered by Hill, K (2011) when researching the psychological well-being of students. In this study, teachers expressed their concerns in not only stress levels but also mental health issues. “Stress levels and

mental health issues impact a student's ability to fully learn in an academic setting resulting in lower academic performance for schools and districts" (Hill, K. 2011).

According to these findings, we are now currently living in a society where students and adults are starting to be more open to and accepting of talking about emotions and mental health. For the longest time, these subjects were off-limits to discuss. Moreover, a slow shift has now started with topics being openly discussed about mental health in new and authentic ways. When social emotional skills are implemented, it creates a safe environment for all students where students are more willing to openly discuss their emotions and feelings resulting in a healthier mental health state. "In regard to mental health concerns with students are emotional awareness and the creation of an environment where feelings are openly discussed. As a result, students feel more confident in speaking up when there start to be signs and symptoms of a concern" (Hill, K. 2011). In other words, mental health has a huge impact on social emotional development for students, therefore, impacting their academic performance as well.

Importance of Social Emotional Learning

Having Social Emotional Learning skills helps a person regulate their emotions, have a conversation with someone, and shows how we can show empathy towards another person. Social Emotional Learning is beneficial for all students, Pre-K through twelfth grade. Social Emotional Learning is composed into five different core competencies: self-awareness, self-management, social awareness, relationship skills, and responsible decision making. The five core competencies are being taught in the classroom through every grade level. These five core competencies are also encouraged and recommended to use and continue in the home and throughout the community.

In a study by Hill, K (2011), teachers were discussing the importance of Social Emotional Learning and continued the conversation of these five core competencies. “The five competencies make up the model of Social Emotional Learning, and working on strengthening one area will directly impact other areas of wellness. Each competency occurs in the context of the world in which we live” (Hill, K. 2011, pg. 18). The results of using these five core competencies are how we show Social Emotional Learning in the way that we experience wellness through life.

Similar findings were also uncovered in a study Hoerr, T (2020) when researching the importance and impact of Social Emotional Learning has in a classroom setting. An analysis of more than 300 research studies, “SEL programs appear to have as great a long-term impact on academic growth as has been found for programs designed specifically to support academic learning.” They continue: “SEL programs are both feasible and effective in a variety of educational contexts around the world. SEL is neither a fad nor a flash in the pan but represents a useful way to improve students’ social and emotional skills, which are associated with several positive behavioral and academic outcomes” (Hoerr, T, 2020. Pg, 5).

In yet another similar study by McCormick, Cappella, O’Connor, and McClowry (2015) more research was discovered when discussing the importance of Social Emotional Learning. The research of this study found “increased SEL competencies were the best predictor of long-term benefits and that these benefits were experienced equally regardless of students’ socioeconomic status, race, or zip code” (McCormick, M. P., Cappella, E., O’Connor, E. E., & McClowry, S. G., 2015. Pg, 2). Moreover, throughout this study stated how Social Emotional Learning has many benefits for our students. These benefits include, a decrease in aggression and

emotional distress among students, an increase on helping behaviors at school, improvements on positive attitudes toward self and others, and an increase on students' academic performance.

Trauma Informed Practices

Having a Trauma Informed Practice set into your school's culture is essential for student success. Our students struggle with mental health and have experienced a significant amount of trauma in their life. Moreover, having trauma informed practices imbedded within our daily conversations with students will improve their mental health and facilitate their healing and recovery process of their trauma they have experienced. Trauma Informed Practices are not an approach whom targets the students that have experienced trauma in their life, we can use trauma-informed practices with every single student because Trauma Informed Practices benefits all students.

“Trauma-Informed Care recognizes the presence of trauma symptoms and acknowledges the role trauma may play in an individual's life- including service staff” (What Is Trauma-Informed Care?, 2022b). Trauma Informed Care follows five guiding principles which are: safety, choice, collaboration, trustworthiness, and empowerment. These five guiding principles serve as a framework for how service providers and systems of care can work to reduce the likelihood of re-traumatization.

In a study by Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration, creating a physically and emotionally safe environment, establishing trust and boundaries, supporting autonomy and choice, creating collaborative relationships and participation opportunities, and using a strengths and empowerment-focused perspective to promote resilience are ways in which the principles of Trauma-Informed Care work to reduce re-traumatization and promote healing.

Similar findings were also uncovered by Alex Vanet in a study where he explained trauma in childhood and adolescence can impact a person's development, and these students often benefit from extra support in learning how to manage emotions in healthy ways. But learning healthy coping strategies can benefit all students, and incorporating the teaching of these strategies can be as simple as teacher modeling.

Importance of Mentor Programs on Social Emotional Learning

“Mentoring allows people to learn from one another and facilitates the transmission of knowledge. Mentoring, rather than developing specific academic abilities or information, focuses on building confidence and relationships, developing resilience and character, and raising expectations” (Martha, 2022b). My goal is every school within the school district has a mentor program focusing on supporting educators and students who are teaching or learning the new Social Emotional Learning Curriculum.

In a study by Diane Travenner, there are three benefits of mentorship for students. These benefits are individualized goal setting, relationships built on trust, and developing self-awareness and fostering passions. When mentors meet with students, personalized learning begins where they can set personalized reachable goals for themselves. Mentors also serve as a thoughtful partner for students on their academic journey and help empower students. Mentors help build a relationship of trust with the students whom they work with. When working with mentors, you also have weekly self-reflections, which gives students the chance to build awareness around their ability to set and follow through on academic and social goals.

Similar findings were also uncovered and found benefits of mentorship for teachers which include, reaching all students, opening doors to possibilities, and a more rewarding

teaching experience. Mentorship offers a structured, consistent time and space for teachers to get to know the whole student, apart from a whole-class or even small-group setting. In addition to the personal connections made during meetings with your mentor, they also have access to assessment data for each subject and can collaborate with other grade-level teachers to better set learning goals for students.

Mentorship does include more benefits such as, educators will have a unique opportunity to help open doors to future academic and career possibilities and cultivate a student's sense of purpose. Regardless of their academic achievements, all students have an authentic curiosity and desire to better understand their world. A significant part of mentorship is helping students develop the dispositions, mindsets, and behaviors that students need to make a successful transition from high school to college and careers. Just as students are more likely to succeed in school when they have had opportunities to develop life skills such as self-directed learning and a growth mindset, educators who explicitly help students develop these habits are more likely to be successful in impacting every student.

School Profile

School Characteristics

The Council Bluffs Community School District is a public school located in Council Bluffs, Iowa. The district is comprised of one early learning center opening in the Fall of 2023 which serves infant and toddler programs from six weeks of age to three-year-olds. They also have a preschool program, half, and full day options for three to four-year-olds. The Council Bluffs Community School District also has eleven Elementary schools, two Middle Schools, and two High Schools. One Elementary school within the Council Bluffs Community School District is Franklin Elementary which is located in the West End of the Council Bluffs Community.

Student Performance

Three times a year every grade level in the district takes the District MAP testing. Depending on the grade level, the students are tested in Reading, Math, and Science. Students take it in the Fall, Winter, and Spring. In the 2022-2023 school year at Franklin Elementary, 72% of Kindergarten through Fifth-grade students met their Spring growth goals for both Reading and Math. 64% of Kindergarten through Fifth-grade students were meeting proficiency in both Reading, Math, and Science.

Student and Community Characteristics

Franklin Elementary is located on 31st and Ave C in Council Bluffs, Iowa. Council Bluffs is a low economic class, especially in the West End of town. In the 2022-2023 school year, Franklin served 498 students. 57% of students are female and 43% are male students. We serve a wide range of all students including Asian, Hispanic, African Americans, and Caucasian

students. We participate in the NSLP (National School Lunch Program) where almost all the students receive free or reduced lunches.

Parent Involvement

Franklin Elementary and the district has a variety of ways that we reach out to parents to create a culture of togetherness. The district has a Facebook, Twitter, and Instagram page you can follow for important updates, but they also have an application called Peach Jar where anyone in the district can find information on as well. These different applications for Franklin Elementary are often chosen by the classroom teacher in ways they would like to connect with parents/guardians. Some classroom teachers use their classroom Facebook page, Class Dojo, or even a simple phone call or meeting to discuss their child's progress. Franklin Elementary also has their own Facebook page, along with their Booster Club, to send out notifications or updates to parents/guardians.

School Mission and Vision

At Franklin Elementary, we follow the mission and vision statements for the Council Bluffs Community School District but we also have our own mission statement, as a school community. The mission statement for the Council Bluffs Community School District is “to guarantee that every student graduates with the knowledge, skills and character to become a responsible citizen and to succeed in a changing world by creating a leading-edge, inclusive educational system which provides challenging expectations, diverse experiences, engaging curriculum and innovative teaching within a collaborative, caring community” (About Us / Mission Statement, Objectives and Strategic Plan, n.d.). The districts vision statement is “Every student graduates with a high school diploma and a second credential”. At Franklin Elementary,

we follow and live through these mission and value statements from the district, however, we also have a vision statement of our own. Franklin Elementary's vision statement is "Franklin staff and students are HAPPY, HOPEFUL & HIGHLY PREPARED for career & life."

Current Student Learning Goals

At Franklin Elementary, we set student learning goals in our building School Improvement Plan as a staff and leadership team meetings. We set three learning goals for our students for the 2022-2023 school year. The first goal being, 75% of K-5 students meet spring growth goals as measured by the MAP test. As a building, we did come up a little short on this goal as our percentage was 72. The second goal was, 50% of K-5 meet or exceed proficiency level measured by the MAP test. As a building, we did exceed this goal as our percentage was 64. Our last goal was 60% of K-5 students are on target with their Lexia. Lexia is an online Reading platform that every student is required to complete by fifth-grade. We did exceed this goal by the end of the 2022-2023 school year as we had 67% of students meet their target goal with Lexia.

Curriculum, Instruction, and Assessment

Every school in the Council Bluffs Community School District uses the same curriculum. For Reading, we have a curriculum called Wonders. Wonders is designed to foster a love of reading in all children. Through exploration of texts and daily development of their skills as readers, writers, speakers, and active listeners, students experience the power of literacy. Our focus on teaching the whole child – and every child – prepares students to be lifelong learners and critical thinkers (Wonders 2020, n.d.). For Math, we have a curriculum called Bridges. Bridges in Mathematics is a comprehensive PK–5 curriculum that equips teachers to fully

address state standards in a rigorous, engaging, and accessible manner. Students gain a deep understanding of concepts, proficiency with key skills, and the ability to solve complex problems. The curriculum is composed of three distinct but integrated components: Problems & Investigations, Work Places and Number Corner (Bridges in Mathematics | the Math Learning Center, n.d.).

Professional Development Practices

As an employee at the Council Bluffs Community School District, we can attend multiple professional developments throughout the school year. Every employee is trained at the beginning of the year to be Trauma Informed and to use the strategies they give us to work with students. At Franklin Elementary, we dismiss our students early every Monday afternoon and we have an hour and a half for professional development. Often, this includes CHAMPS training, data digs, curriculum spotlights, and more.

Needs Assessment

Franklin Elementary School needs to improve in the area of curriculum and instruction, specifically in the area of Social Emotional Learning. Franklin Elementary School has social emotional needs in the areas of emotional safety, school climate, and emotional regulation for both students and staff. The mental state of our students is concerning and the number of students who have experienced trauma is only rising, in return, is causing large amounts of stress for staff and students.

Due to these discrepancies and increased levels of stress, Franklin Elementary needs to implement a Social Emotional Learning Curriculum to help build students social emotional skills to help cope with the stress they may be experiencing in their life. A Social Emotional Learning Curriculum can easily be embedded into every classroom's morning meeting time with their students. This curriculum will help our preschool through fifth-grade students regulate their emotions by placing their emotions in the right category based on how they are feeling and how to cope with these feelings. As a result of implementing a Social Emotional Learning curriculum, students learn how to better manage their emotions, develop empathy for others, build skills for more effective communication, and improve their overall wellbeing.

When students are experiencing trauma and high levels of stress in their life, they have an extremely hard time regulating their emotions with themselves and their peers. When a student is unable to regulate their emotions, an increase in behavioral challenges is often noticed, which has been noted by the staff at Franklin Elementary. According to the research by Roger Weissberg, "Social and emotional learning (SEL) provides a foundation for safe and positive learning, and enhances students' ability to succeed in school, careers, and life" (Weissberg, 2016).

Data Analysis

Data was collected in the 2022-2023 school year where students, Third-grade to Fifth-graders, were asked to take our Culture Olweus Survey. This survey is done online and is only a couple questions long. This survey helps staff understand which students may need more one-on-one attention with another adult, besides their classroom teacher. It also informs the staff on what we can improve on, as a school, in terms of our culture and our social emotional learning skills.

Franklin Elementary students were asked if students reported that they were verbal teased by another student during the 2022-2023 school year. Figure 1 shows Franklin Elementary’s goal in the red data point in different quarters of the school year. The blue data point represents our actual score from our third-graders through fifth-graders. Based on this data point, 43% of our third-grade through fifth-grade students get verbal teased at school.

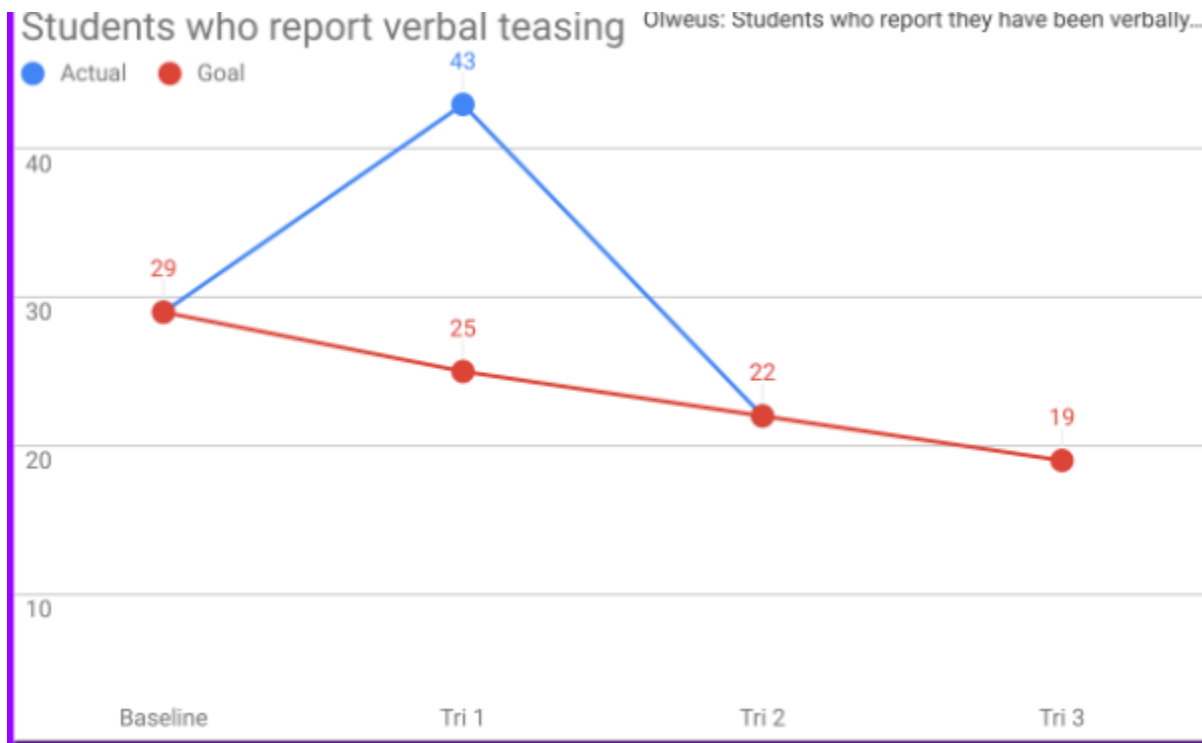
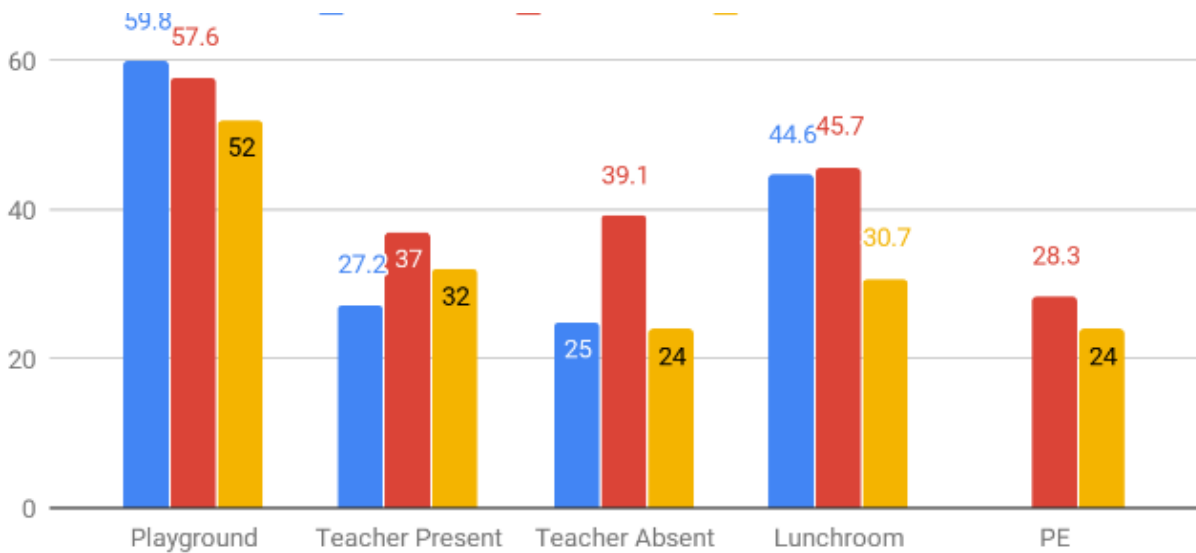


Figure 2 represents the past three years of data where students have been bullied, and if teachers were present or not during this altercation. The orange represents the 2022-2023 school year, the red represents the 2021-2022 school year, and the blue represents the 2020-2021 school year. Please keep in mind, the data point for the blue was during the COVID-19 Pandemic. The data shows the percentages are going down every year, however, it is still at an alarming rate. The highest percentage being at 52% of students were bullied on the playground during school hours.



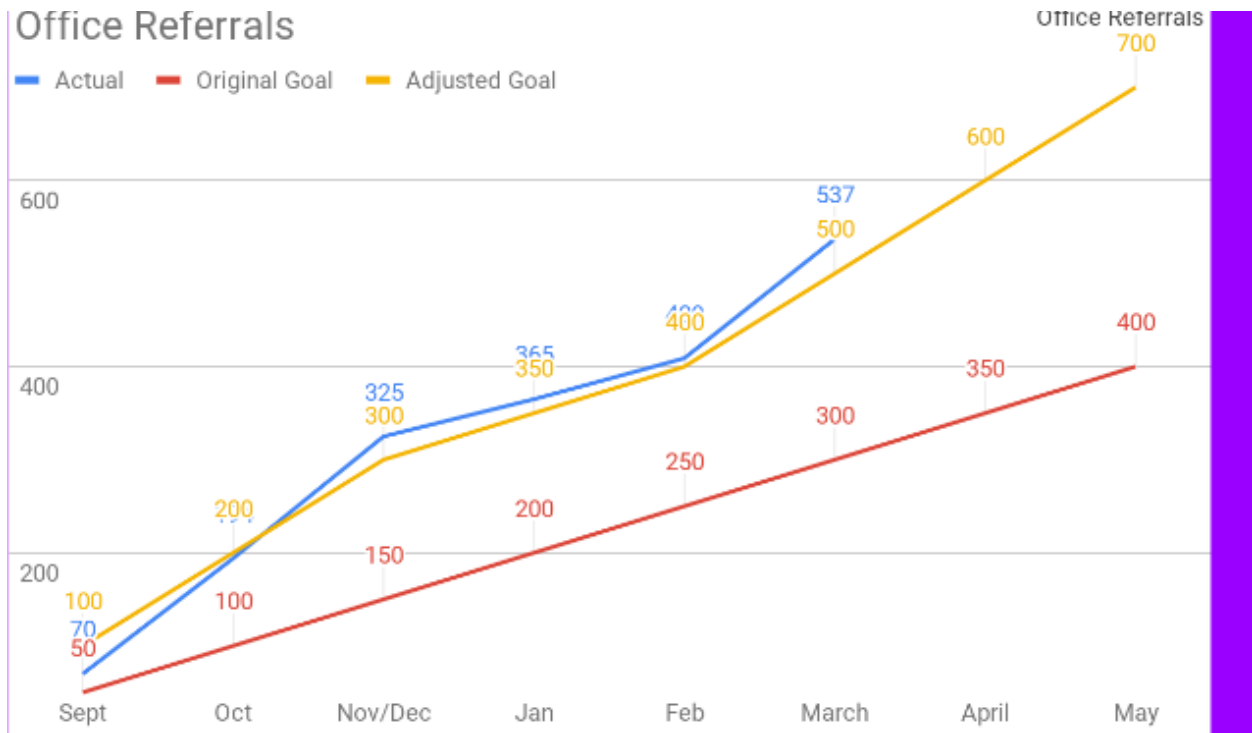


Figure 3 shows the amount of office referrals during the 2022-2023 school year for all classrooms at Franklin Elementary. The red data point represents Franklin’s original goal, which was set by our school improvement team. The yellow data point represents Franklin’s adjusted goal, again set by our school improvement team. Lastly, the blue data point is our actual number of office referrals for a certain month of the year. As you can see, the amount of office referrals increases in November and December, which is expected with the amount of change every student experiences around the holiday time.

Action Plan

Based on the information and data collection provided by the staff members at Franklin Elementary, action needs to be taken to boost our student's mental health, reduce office referrals, and make student interactions more positive to reduce bullying and verbal teasing. The comprehensive steps to implement a Social Emotional Curriculum for Kindergarten through Fifth-grade students at Franklin Elementary are laid out below. When implemented consistently, students and staff at Franklin Elementary will benefit from the many social emotional, and academic benefits of having this 'Move This World' Curriculum. Research has shown that Social Emotional Learning has many benefits, which include, a decrease in aggression and emotional distress among students, an increase on helping behaviors at school, improvements on positive attitudes toward self and others, and an increase on students' academic performance (McCormick, M. P., Cappella, E., O'Connor, E. E., & McClowry, S. G., 2015. Pg, 2).

Before getting into the action plan, it is imperative to identify research-based strategies provide evidence and support for the plan. Multiple studies have shown that social emotional learning programs appear to have as great a long-term impact on academic growth as has been found for programs designed specifically to support academic learning. Once the teachers and staff have been trained in what social emotional learning looks like at the Elementary level, the next step would be to have the grade level teams collaborate with each other and get each other's input on how the social-emotional skills can build upon each other as the students grow and progress through school. The next step would be to have the teachers start discussing the strategies that are implemented within this Move This World Social Emotional Learning Curriculum and how each classroom can have this be a part of their morning meeting sessions every Tuesday through Friday mornings. Mentor teachers can also be a part of these discussions

as they will be supporting and modeling for each grade level team when they are implementing this new curriculum with their students.

Teachers will set aside approximately 15 minutes a day Tuesday through Friday (No Mondays as it is an early release) to implement this Social Emotional Learning Curriculum into their morning meeting time. Once the skill has been taught during this time, it should be discussed and practiced throughout the day to ensure mastery. A curriculum which builds upon itself and follows the students as they progress through the grade levels at Franklin Elementary will also give teachers skills to try when misbehavior occurs, using language and strategies that are developmentally appropriate. Every teacher being Trauma-Informed will also benefit staff and students to ensure consistency with all students, no matter what grade level they may be in. Trauma Informed Practices have been shown to create a physically and emotionally safe environment, establishing trust and boundaries, supporting autonomy and choice, creating collaborative relationships and participation opportunities, and using a strengths and empowerment-focused perspective to promote resilience are ways in which the principles of Trauma-Informed Care work to reduce re-traumatization and promote healing.

The purposed improvement plan for Franklin Elementary is to be completed in different phases; the first phase will focus on a grade level team approach to determine the readiness of implementing a social-emotional curriculum. Phase two will be training teachers on our new Move This World Social Emotional Learning Curriculum. Phase three will be coaching, support, and modeling within our grade level mentor teachers. The three phases of the purposed improvement plan will help to improve the comfort level of teachers and to improve the teaching and learning happening at Franklin Elementary.

Implementation of School Improvement Plan

Introduction

When implementing a school improvement plan, there are a lot of important variables to consider including the time it will take to complete the improvement plan, different challenges could arise as the plan is implemented, and what roles everyone involved will need to make the school improvement plan the most successful. When considering the time that it will take to implement the plan of starting a Social Emotional Learning Curriculum, it is important to allow sufficient training time for teachers and staff. If teachers and staff members are not given adequate time for training in the area of social-emotional learning, the improvement plan will be unsuccessful as the staff will not be equipped with the necessary resources to therefore benefit our students. The first step of this school improvement plan is to provide adequate training for our staff members in our new Social Emotional Learning Curriculum, Move This World. Our staff members will have already had previous training in using Trauma-Informed Practices with our students, which benefits this new curriculum rolling out into classrooms.

After receiving adequate training, professional development would be four weeks in duration where we spend the first two weeks as a building staff reviewing the curriculum, then the rest of the two weeks will be spent with your grade level teams ensuring when and how this piece of the curriculum will fit into your morning meetings Tuesday through Friday. The second step is once teachers have ensured they are comfortable and understand the curriculum, then classroom teachers will be given support from instructional coaches when available and mentor teachers who are specialized and familiar in teaching a social emotional learning curriculum, like Move This World Curriculum. The second step of having collaborative teaching teams work with instructional coaches and mentor teachers to discuss how the social-emotional skills being

taught will build upon each other will take eight weeks. Then, implementation of these new strategies, with support and modeling from the mentor teacher, will take six weeks. Progress monitoring and collaborative teaching team discussions will happen for a minimum of two years to track any difficulties that arise, as well as any changes in behaviors and academics. This school improvement plan does have potential barriers including the need for approval from the principal and teacher readiness to implement the strategies.

Timeline

The total timeline for this school improvement plan would be two academic years. The first step in the plan is to determine teacher readiness where teachers would be sent a survey and given one week to respond. The principal and mentor teachers would then spend one week looking over the responses from teachers and looking for any patterns shown in the survey results, while the building leadership team would spend two weeks determining professional development training days for social-emotional curriculum training. Teachers would then spend six weeks in social-emotional curriculum training. Once the teachers have been trained in what social-emotional learning looks like, the principal, instructional coach, and mentor teachers would spend two weeks with each collaborative teaching team, so eight weeks total, to determine how the social-emotional skills being taught can build upon each other as the students' progress through their time at Franklin Elementary. Teachers would then implement the strategies they learned within their classrooms for six weeks while the mentor teacher conducts coaching cycles with teachers a minimum of once per week for six weeks to ensure that strategies are being implemented with fidelity. Following implementation, coaching cycles, and progress monitoring would continue throughout the remainder of the academic year, and for the following two academic years, and then be re-evaluated as needed.

Role Assignments

Throughout this process of implementing a Social Emotional Learning Curriculum, there are multiple people taking on additional roles to make sure our students and teachers are successful when implementing this new curriculum. The first portion of the plan includes the building leadership team, which is a group of teachers made up of one representative from each collaborative teaching team, the special education resource teacher, the instructional coach, and the principal. This team would design the professional development calendar for the social-emotional curriculum training. We would also have a mentor teacher where they would be rotating between the different grade level teams. The instructional coaches would also be assisting when needed as well. The teachers will be responsible for attending the trainings, relaying the information back to their classroom paraprofessionals, and implementing the new curriculum.

Progress Monitoring

Each teacher will take records weekly to identify success and challenges with the curriculum, changes in behavior or academics, and to note any need for re-clarification. The teachers will bring these records to their weekly collaborative teaching team meetings with the instructional coach, principal, and mentor teachers to discuss any patterns and determine any change over time. Teachers will submit an additional survey at the end of year one discussing their new comfort level with teaching social-emotional learning and the building leadership team will compare these survey results to those collected before implementation began. All collected data will be analyzed to determine the success of the social-emotional curriculum depending on growth in student academics and social-emotional behavior.

Limitations

The first potential limitation of this improvement plan is the time to adequately train all teachers and still have adequate time left in the current academic year to begin implementation. Teachers will need adequate training to feel comfortable but also need adequate time to implement these new strategies and skills within their classrooms. Another limitation is the willingness of teachers to take on this new curriculum and devote time in their schedules to teach these new skills. If teachers are not implementing the social-emotional curriculum with fidelity, the results will not be reliable and will not align with what has been found in other studies conducted in this field.

Conclusion

Social-emotional curriculums and learning are greatly supported by research studies and provide multiple benefits of developing long-lasting relationships with peers and positive behavior and school climate. It was found by Hoerr that SEL programs appear to have as great a long-term impact on academic growth as has been found for programs designed specifically to support academic learning. SEL programs are both feasible and effective in a variety of educational contexts around the world. SEL is neither a fad nor a flash in the pan but represents a useful way to improve students' social and emotional skills, which are associated with several positive behavioral and academic outcomes (Hoerr, T, 2020. Pg, 5). For a school to see these benefits of social-emotional learning, they need to implement a social-emotional curriculum with fidelity.

The purpose of this school improvement plan is to bring awareness of the growing needs of the mental state of our young learners. It is the author's goal that this school improvement project will provide guidance on how we can successfully implement a Social Emotional Learning Curriculum into our classrooms at the Council Bluffs Community School District to benefit our student's mental state to improve their social, emotional skills.

With the data showing that social-emotional development is an area of need for the students at Franklin Elementary, and the research supporting that a social-emotional curriculum has the potential to improve skills in this area, the development of a social-emotional curriculum would be a great asset. If this curriculum is implemented with fidelity, it will help raise student scores and help students outside of school with the multiple benefits social-emotional learning has to offer.

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