

Middle School SEL Adoption Feedback Data, April 2024

4/11/2024

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Data Sources

Student SEL Pilot Survey – CharacterStrong: 640 responses

Student SEL Pilot Survey – Second Step: 619 responses

Teacher SEL Pilot Survey – CharacterStrong: 11 responses

Teacher SEL Pilot Survey – Second Step: 9 responses

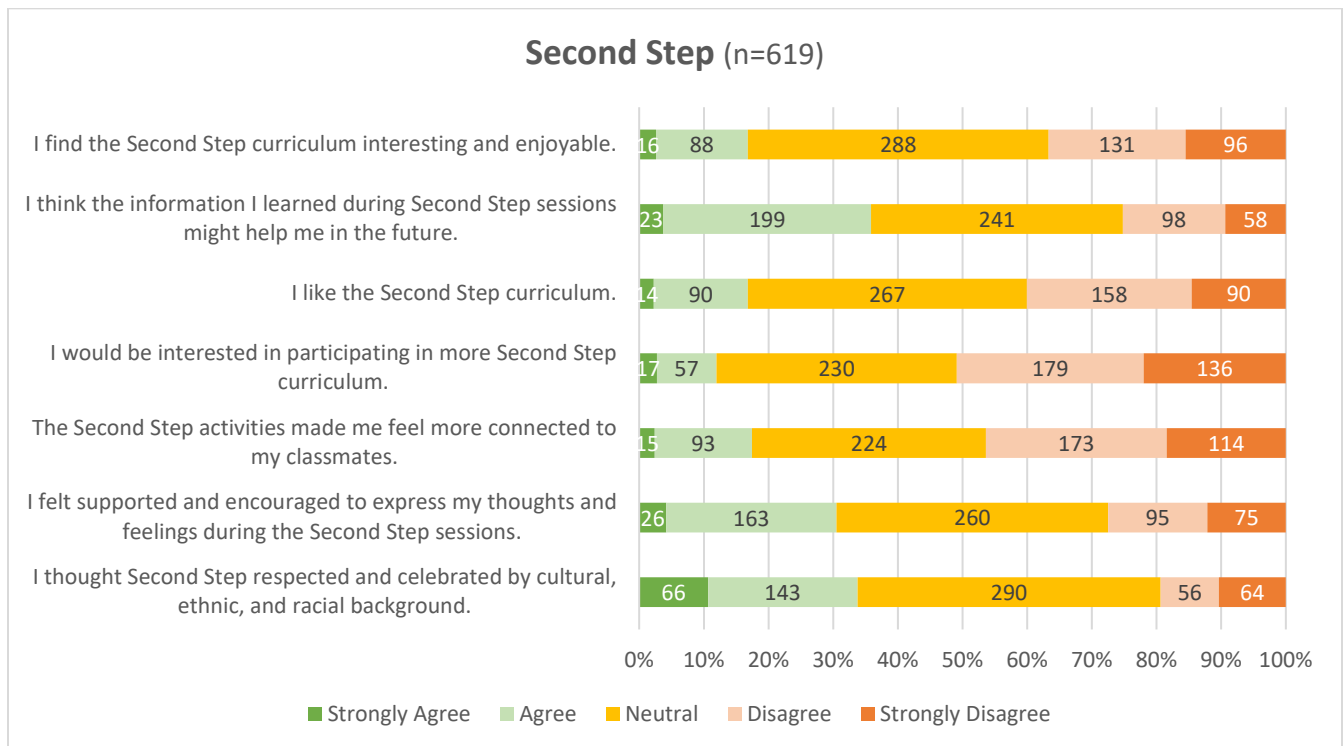
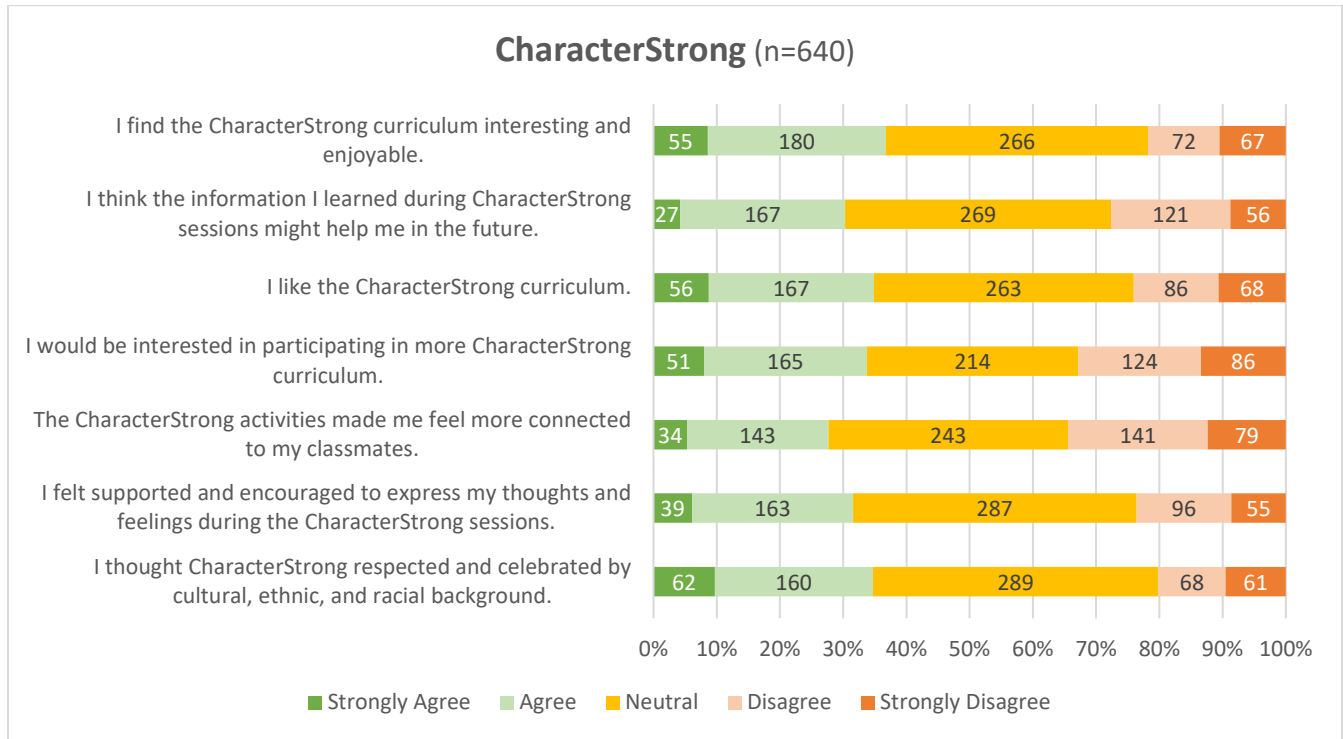
Staff (non-pilot teachers) SEL Curriculum Survey: 12 responses

Family SEL Curriculum Survey: 23 responses

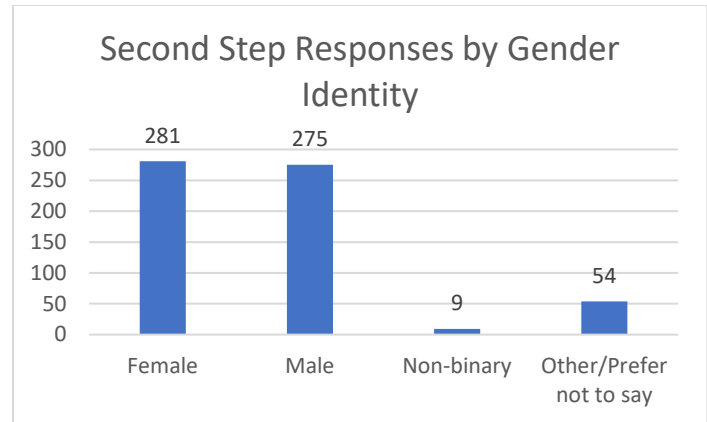
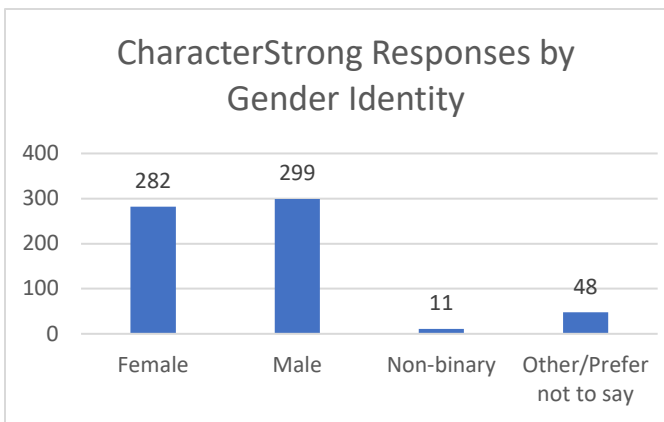
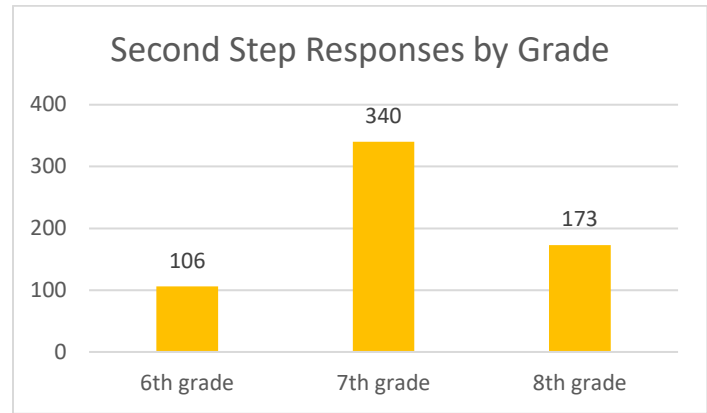
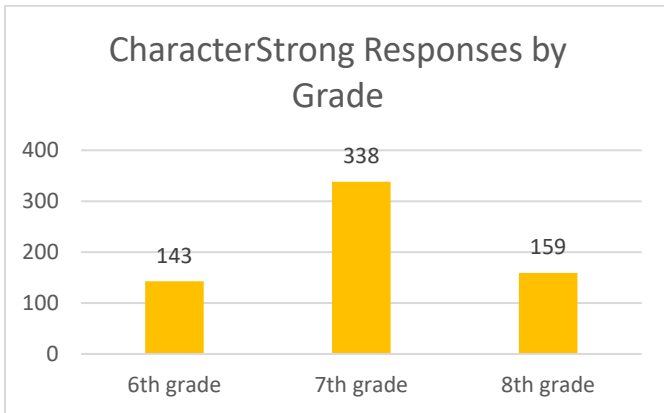
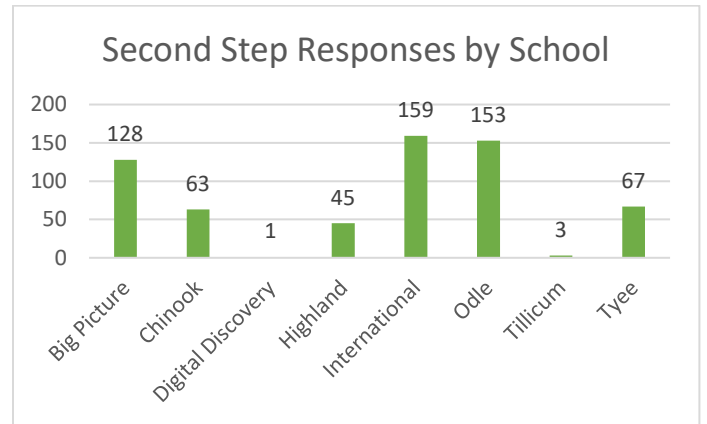
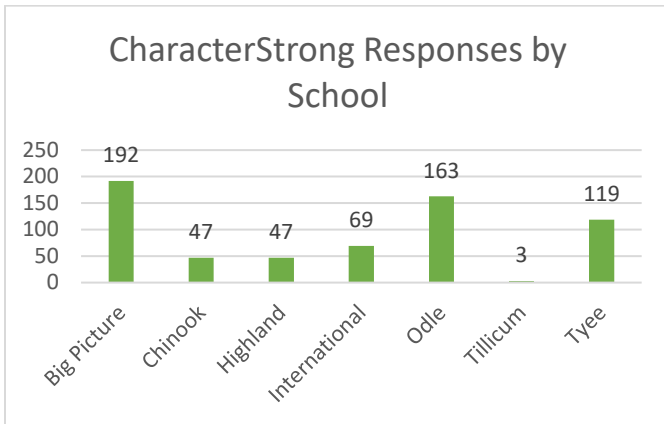
Student Feedback Results

Charts

Please indicate your level of agreement to the following statements about the CharacterStrong/Second Step curriculum sessions.



Student Demographics



Themes

CharacterStrong

What did you like best about the CharacterStrong SEL Curriculum?

- The games and group activities.
- Getting to move around.
- The activities were engaging and interactive.
- Connecting with other students.
- The character dares.

"How i can share my answers without shame."

"I had an opportunity to learn how other people manage stress and was able to learn some fun, interesting details about some classmates."

"I like that it brings groups together for discussion which creates new friendships and allows others to get to know others."

"I liked all the different ways they taught us in like watching videos, character dare, discussions, etc."

"I liked how interactive the CharacterStrong curriculum was, because it would always allow us to choose numbers, or show us a game play area. I also liked how I always felt safe to share my opinion in the curriculum, and especially how, on the warmups (especially the ___ word ones), it made me think, but it was also a safe way of sharing."

"I liked the parts where we could move around and talk to others so that we wouldn't just be reading things on the board or sitting down. It was also fun because you could think about other opinions that may be different from your own. Sharing things you enjoyed because we dont get much oppurtunities to do that and explain like why its important to you and in characther strong when we did that it was a time to share it without judgement,"

What did you like the least?

- Boring, lessons were repetitive or seemed for elementary students, basic, or cringy.
- People were off task or not participating.
- Having to find people to be in groups with, having to share with random people.
- Discomfort with the character dares.
- Scripted feel.

"I didn't like how sometimes the cirriculum went from a light-hearted topic to a strong and heavy topic. I also didnt like some of the complicated instructions on the games."

"I didn't like how there was dares because I had to go outside of my comfort zone to fulfil those dares."

"It still doesn't tell you how to solve huge conflicts that aren't solved with kindness or compromise"

"Some activities may become repetitive over a course of time. Additionally, the enjoyment of SEL is heavily dependent on the teacher as well, meaning if the teacher is not dedicated, then it may not be as enjoyable and effective."

"I didn't like the "character dares" at the end of each lesson because sometimes it felt uncomfortable for me to participate in a few of the character dares."

Your insights are valuable; if there is anything else you would like to add, please do so.

- Make this more engaging, add different games or prizes.

"Adults are always trying to get kids to do stupid things. Maybe we should learn something that was designed by introverts."

"I feel like we should really incorporate this more into our day-to-day curriculum. I seriously enjoyed it; CharacterStrong is a calming, enlightening, social, and empathetic learning experience."

"I would like to see more "social" activities like the talking listening skill thing, it helps build student relationships."

"it could be more interactable and have a better User Experience, it felt like someone reading off of a paper to my face for 50+ minutes. Maybe provide some more community building activities and some turn and talk stuff. When there was fun things they came very rarely and would not last for long. The slides felt like it was made in PowerPoint with designer and it seemed more like a place filler in place of a real "Character Building" activity. I can't stress enough how important having an engaged audience is and i feel like punch card reading is not really engaging. When i look around the room i see people putting their heads down and not participating (Me included). This being 3rd lunch participates some to this, but overall i think this stems from a lack of interest and engagement with the audience."

Second Step

What did you like best about the Second Step SEL Curriculum?

- Learning about the brain and how it works.
- The scenarios were interesting and interactive.
- Learning about managing emotions and stress.
- More individual work and less sharing with the group.
- The videos and comic story boards.

"During the Second Step SEL lesson it was interesting and allowed ways to connect with classmates. I developed a stronger understanding of how other people could view a situation and how this may affect them."

"I got to learn new stuff, and what I can to do calm my self down if there is a complicated situation."

"I liked best that there were videos for us to watch because I feel like watching those videos make us understand the sessions a little better and I also liked that they created real life scenarios that could happen and how to solve them or the decisions that you should and should not make."

"I liked how I was able to understand how and why I would feel the way I was feeling. The Second Step SEL Curriculum let me see what may be happening to cause me to think negatively about the situation I was in. It also allowed me to come up with ways to avoid or decrease those negative thoughts with helpful methods or mantras that could help me memorize them. Something I liked about this course was that it allowed me the freedom to express my thoughts and ideas towards the topics we learned. I also appreciated the privacy it gave me as it wasn't mandatory to share our ideas amongst the class."

What did you like the least?

- Too much writing and paper-based note taking.
- Boring and repetitive.
- Not enough activities or interaction for engagement.

"I didn't like how the answers to their questions were very shallow and not in depth. Also, each lesson seemed like the same thing compared to the last one, and it felt like we were moving very slow, making the course more boring."

"I didn't like the formatting and the "Possible Answers" were often too simple and didn't really add much to out conversations. It also wasn't very engaging in terms of fun activities."

"I think the in-class instruction was a bit less engaging than expected. Sure, there was a lot of discussion, however, I feel like it was bit redundant and dragged on. Thus, I felt as if I had lost a lot of the real knowledge that was supposed to be taught or discussed, and I think that videos, more interactive activities (especially ones with EVERYONE in the class,) would help create a better learning and engaged environment for students."

"What I liked the least was that we had to fill out a whole worksheet each time, it was long, and it wasn't that engaging in my opinion because it wasn't as fun and team-building like activities which we typically do in class."

Your insights are valuable; if there is anything else you would like to add, please do so.

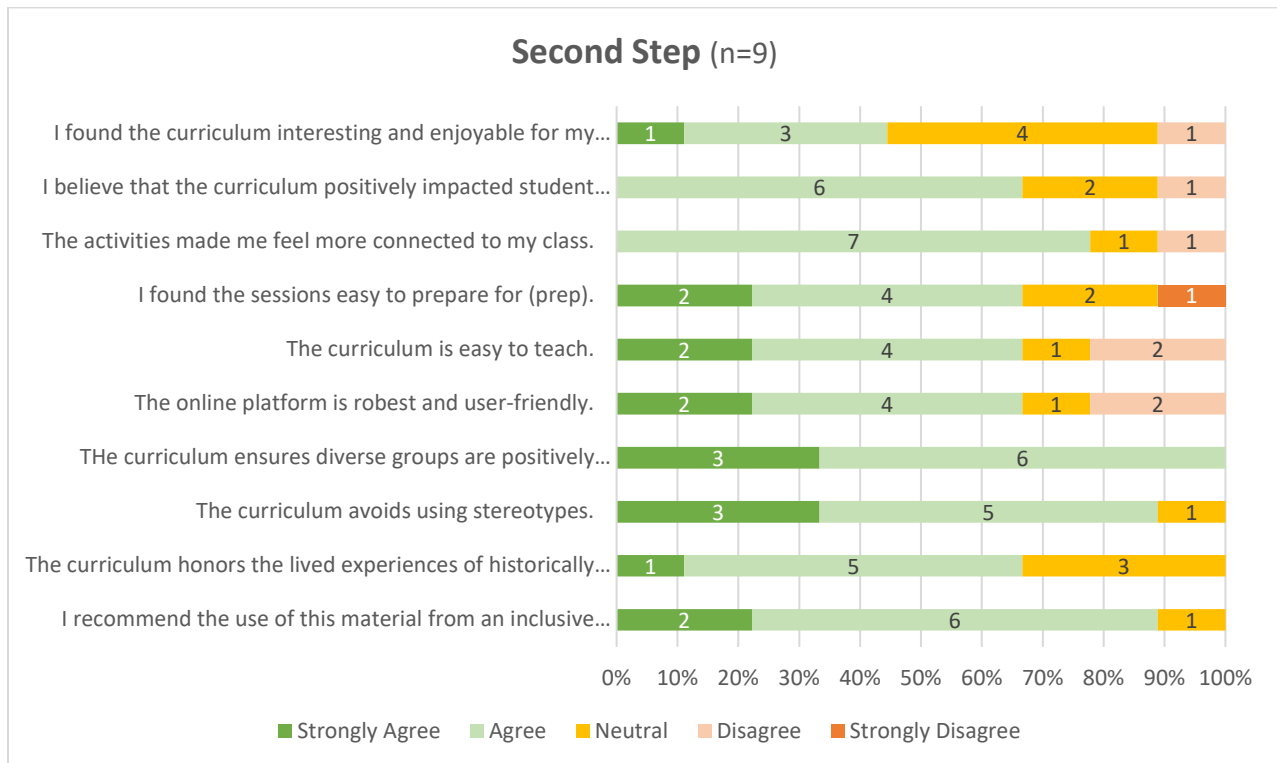
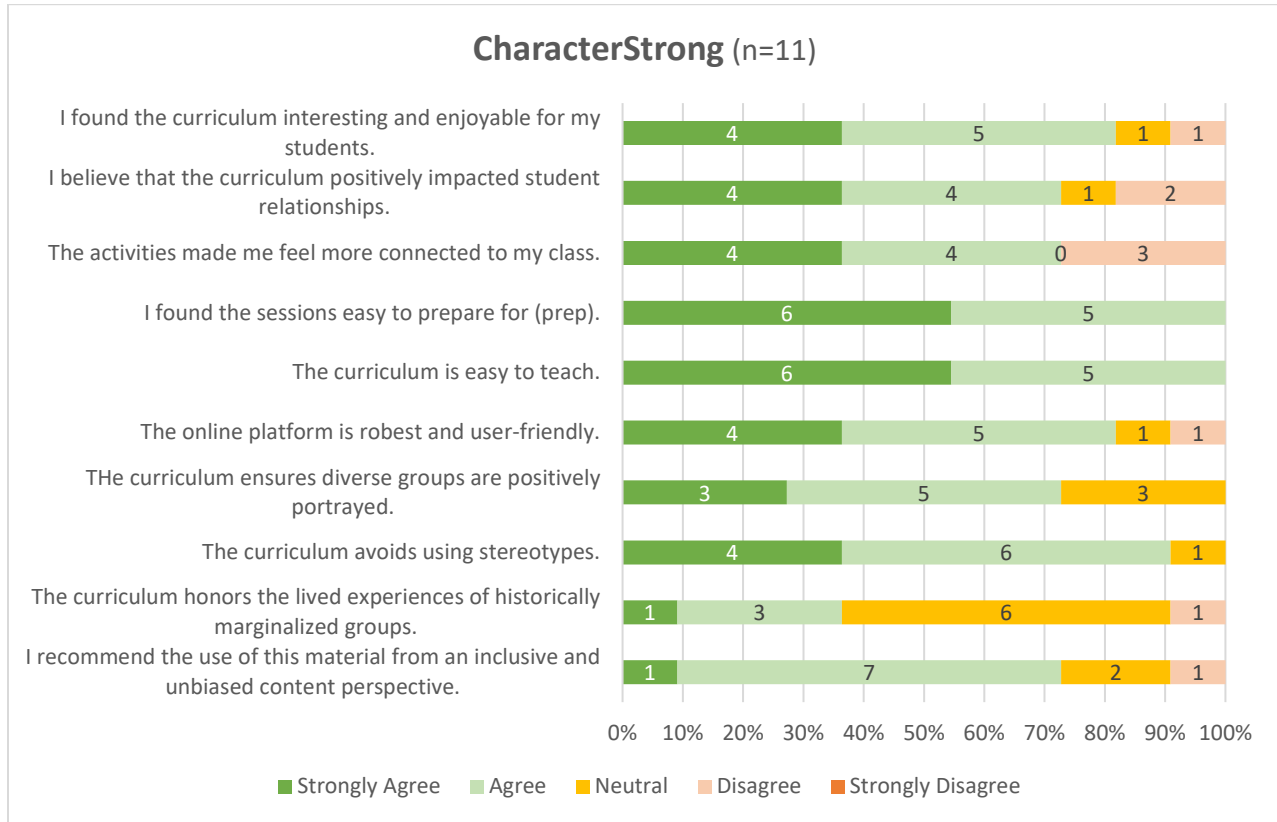
- This would be more valuable with less writing and more talking.

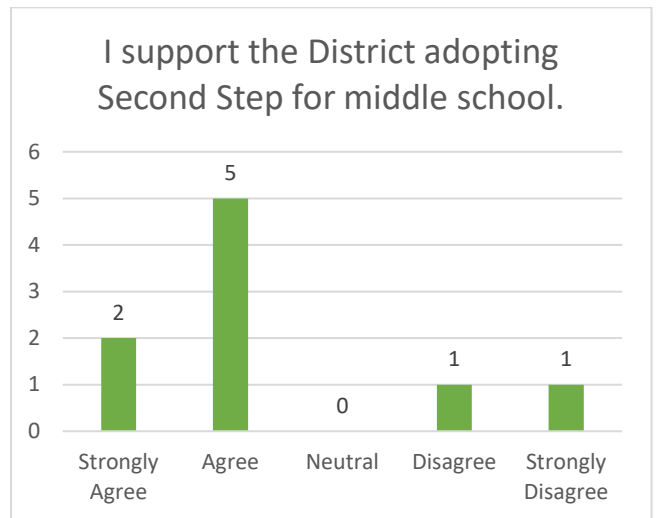
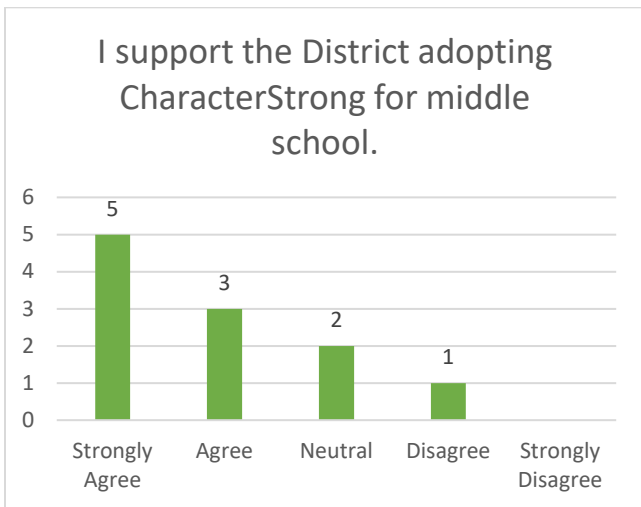
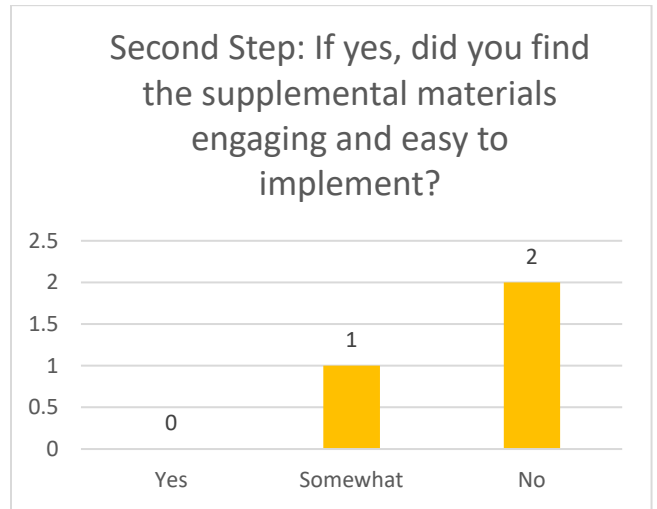
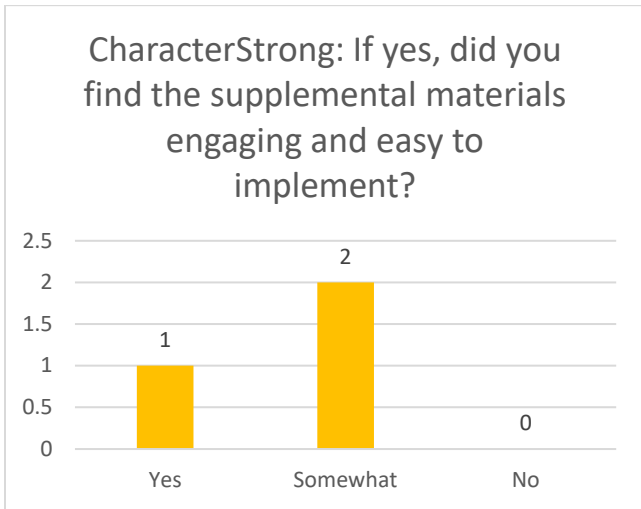
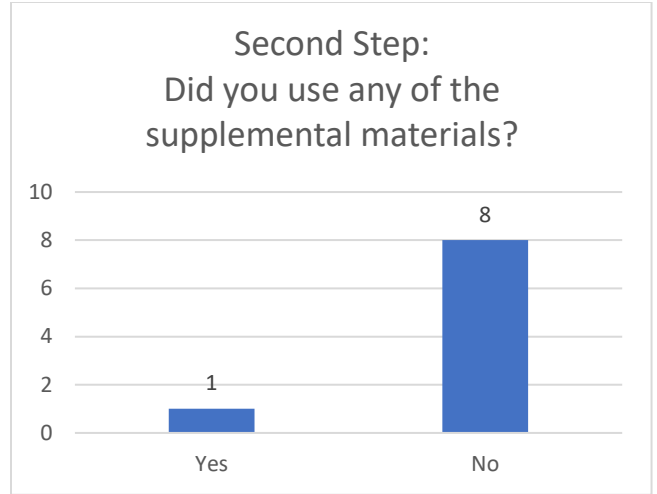
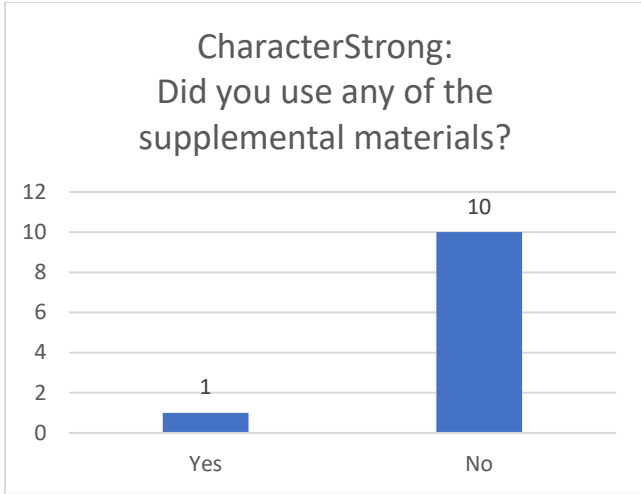
"I feel like Second Step is a little geared towards a sort of classroom learning environment instead of a calm, relaxing lesson like Character Strong. I preferred Character Strong a lot more to Second Step, especially because Second Step was almost like a "this, this, and this, and this is what you need to remember", like a classroom. I felt that Character Strong was more open and didn't mirror the traditional classroom environment as much, which is why I liked it."

"I think that if I could do something to improve the Second Step, I would make the lessons more interesting and complex, using sophisticated words and scenarios we use day to day, so that it makes us more comfortable and feel less childish, rather than using words that elementary school kids use."

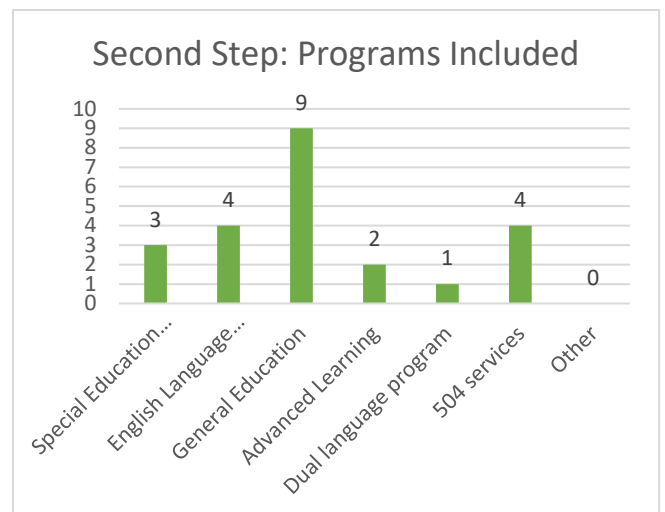
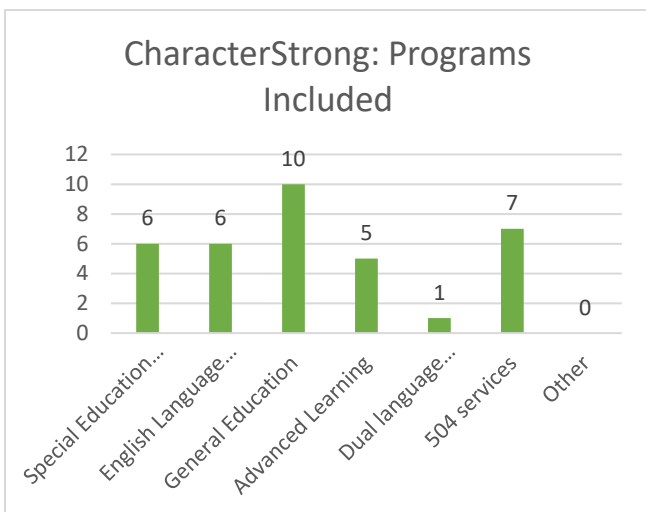
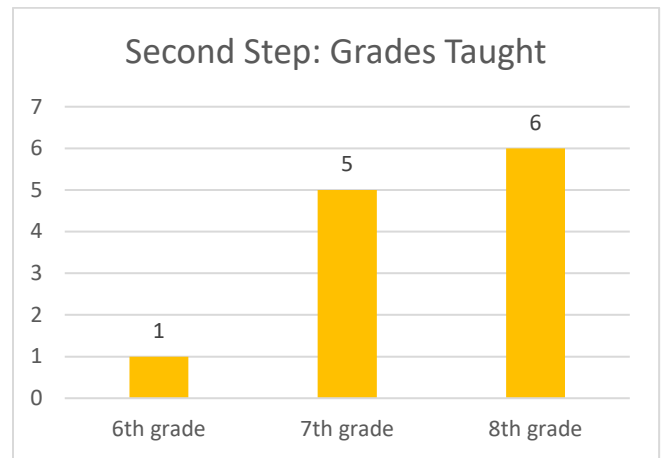
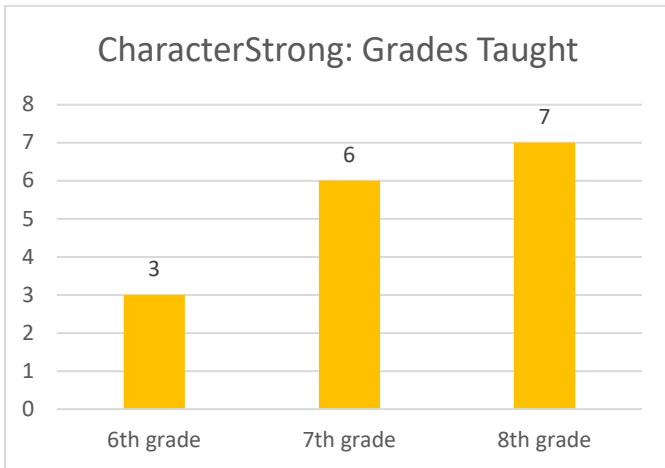
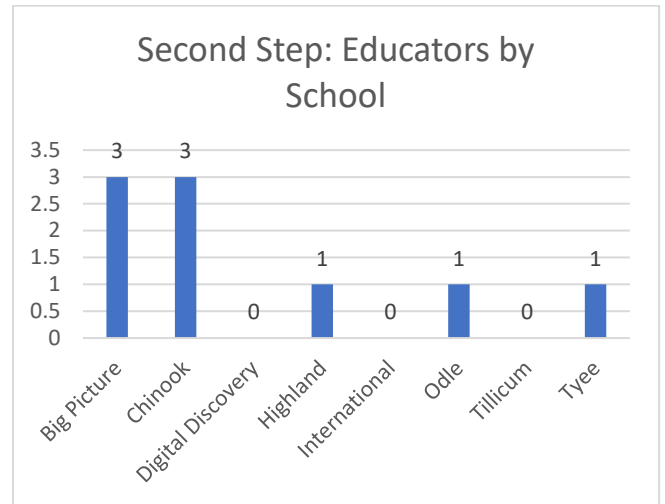
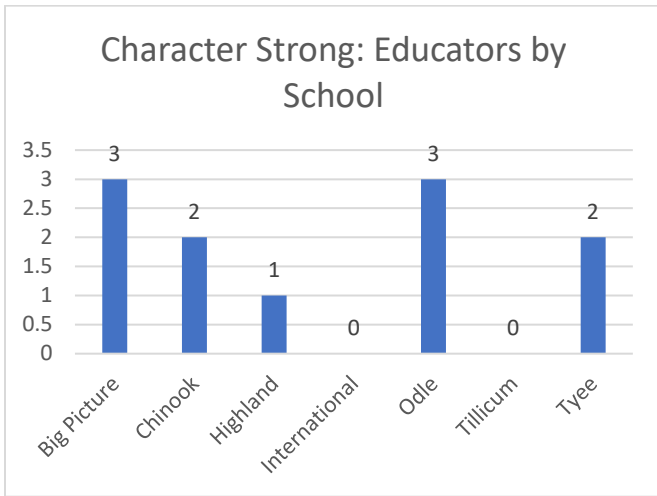
Pilot Educator Feedback Results

Charts





Pilot Educator Demographics



Themes

CharacterStrong

What did you like best about the curriculum?

- The games and activities were engaging for students.
- It was easy to pick up and teach with minimal prep.

"I loved how interactive this curriculum was and how it builds upon itself. Despite only having done the first few sessions, I felt engaged with the students and also that they seemed to enjoy being part of the process of having their voices heard throughout these sessions. It felt more like a community practice than a task that needs to get done."

"My kids loved that they could get up from the desk. During the check in I loved that I could ask multiple kids their response to it. Everyone had to respond because of how simple questions. More voices were heard because of the stand up activity."

"There was a lot of opportunity to actively engage students. A lot less "sit and get". A lot of opportunity to gather insight on them as a person and their thoughts, perspectives, experiences, and ideas. I appreciated the potential of how interactive it was both for the teacher student relationship and for the student peer relationship."

What did you like the least?

- Repetition and redundancy with activities.
- Reliant on student willingness to participate.

"Follow through with the dares or the main activities. Some of the activities took sometime to get the students buy-in. Most students weren't too enthused about most of the main activities and didn't see the connection between the dares and the lessons sometimes."

"My students would lose focus after they got back to their table. They didn't have a handout to follow along so they didn't have to be paying attention. However, it was easy for them to get back on track. It was only available in one language."

"Very reliant on students being willing to participate and I had A LOT of trouble getting my students to interact or discuss. It was mostly silent time and they wouldn't complete the independent reflections or anything that involved them doing any work."

Please share any additional thoughts about the supplemental materials.

- Variety of engaging items.

Your insights are valuable. If there is anything else you would like to add, please do so.

- Needs to be available in multiple languages, especially Spanish.

"I really appreciated the low-key approach and the focus on consistent GTKY in each session. The materials didn't feel like they were talking down to students or 'scolding' them to make them want to be 'better'."

"I think it's a good idea but with nothing physically for them to do but write down reflections, most of my students did not participate. Even though we started later in the year, after the class knew each other, students would still not participate in 70-80% of the activities. It got better as we continued on for some students but unless I was physically with a group, most discussions were not had."

"I think that compared to SecondStep, Character Strong has a stronger insight and engagement into student life and building community that doesn't necessarily feel like a lesson or lecture, which I think is one of the most important things in implementing a social-emotional learning program."

"I think the potential of this curriculum is incredible. I do think it leans into the significance of the student teacher relationship and the "safeness" created in the space already. It was a hard one to pilot at this time of year with a group that did not have that already established. However I do think if the goal is to connect with the students and support connections to others in addition to building skills this one has a stronger foundation to do that."

"I think this is a great curriculum once the students know the format and use it often. Coming in and only doing 3 lessons was awkward and I don't think the students got anything out of it. If the whole school was doing this curriculum and it was the norm, I think it would be great. I also feel like the lessons we did were too sporadic and didn't flow well."

Second Step

What did you like best about the curriculum?

- Student worksheets, also available in Spanish.
- Materials were easy to use and navigate, inclusion of videos.
- Realistic and relatable scenarios.
- More intentional teaching of skills.

"If there is not a relationship established it is easy to still teach a message or this curriculum. There are a variety of mediums like a video, slides, pictures, that can operate with less talking/reading from instructor."

"I loved that it came with a worksheet and could hold my students accountable for it. The worksheet was also available in Spanish and the slides were as well. It was easy to switch from one language to the other. My students enjoyed the videos, they were interesting, and the videos were short. Everything that the lessons talked about was relatable to their lives."

What did you like the least?

- Boring and repetitive, lacked variety.
- Too much writing and not enough interaction beyond partner talk.

"There was too much to do and a lot of writing. There were extra activities that I think would have been much more engaging for the students than think and shares or writing. The first 2 lessons we did, the students didn't get anything out of it and seemed to think that it didn't need to be a whole 45 minute lesson. Some of the activities felt redundant or a stretch to work with."

"Lacks real people feel - all scenarios - what if's - not really engaging. lacks variety. seated work if done by the recommendation so the experience would vary greatly depending on the teacher delivering the lesson."

Please share any additional thoughts about the supplemental materials.

- Mostly sit and talk in a circle.

Your insights are valuable. If there is anything else you would like to add, please do so.

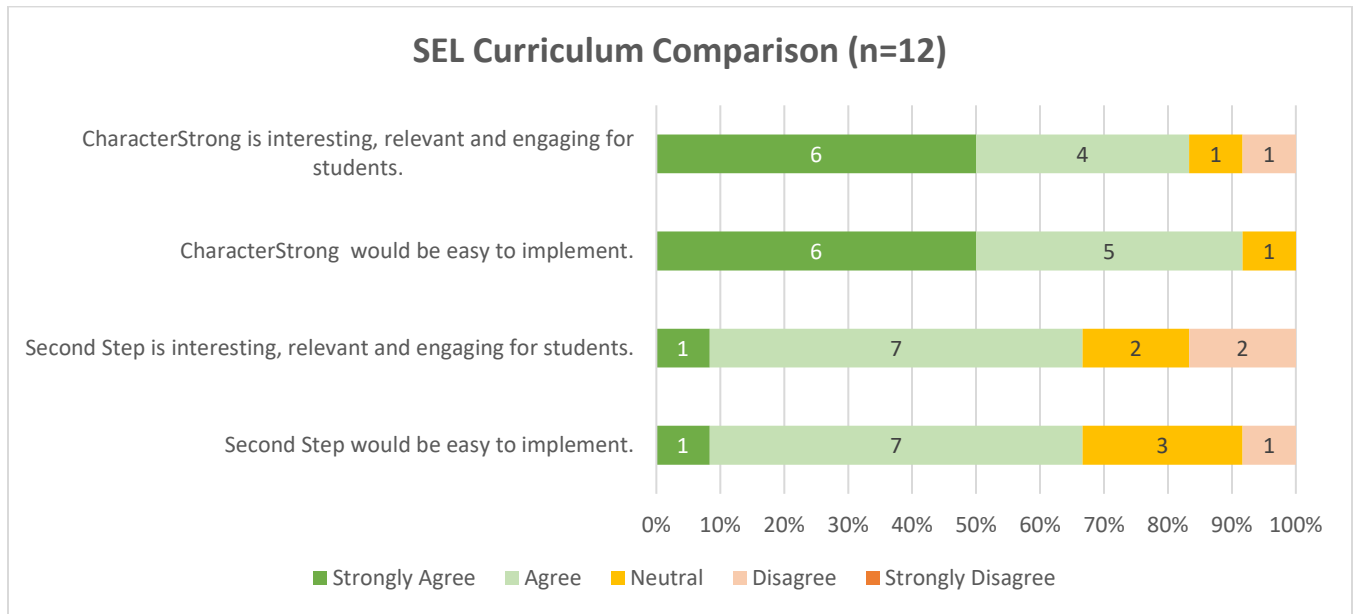
"I think it would be awesome to keep BOTH curriculums. Second Step is good for the teaching and thoughtful conversations. Character Strong is good for the fun engaging community building. In a perfect world I feel like we would do one lesson from each, per week (and they are so easy to use I think it would be easy to do)."

“The approach to the content felt more juvenile than CS and some of the questions were confusing. The review summaries provided by SS were much more simplistic than what my students generated on their own/with a partner”

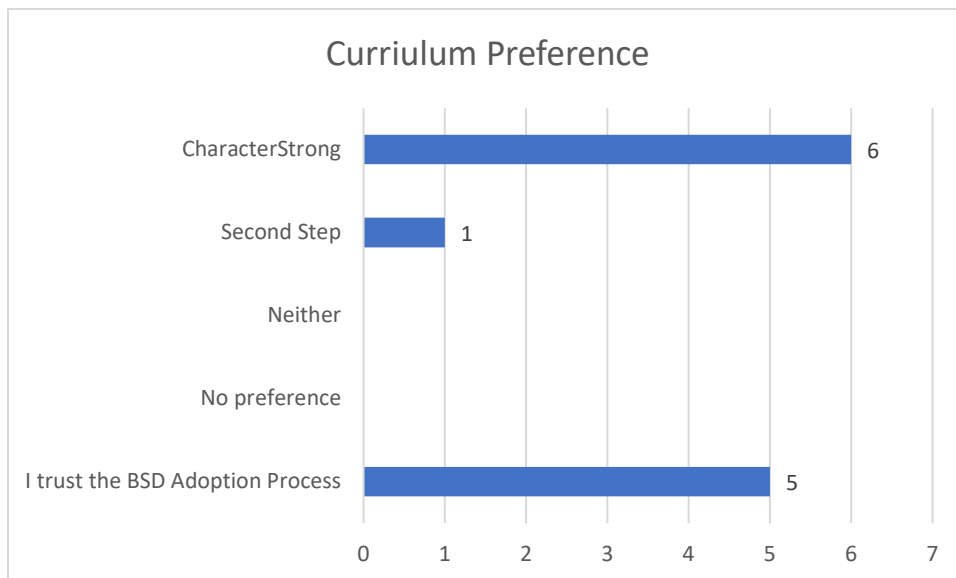
Staff (non-pilot educators) Feedback Results

Charts

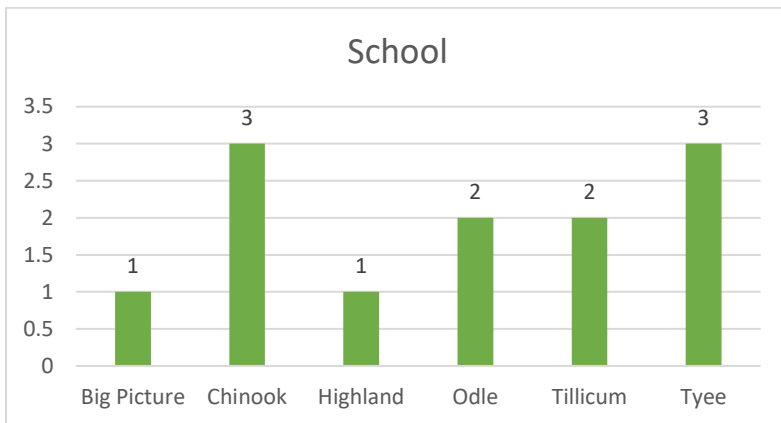
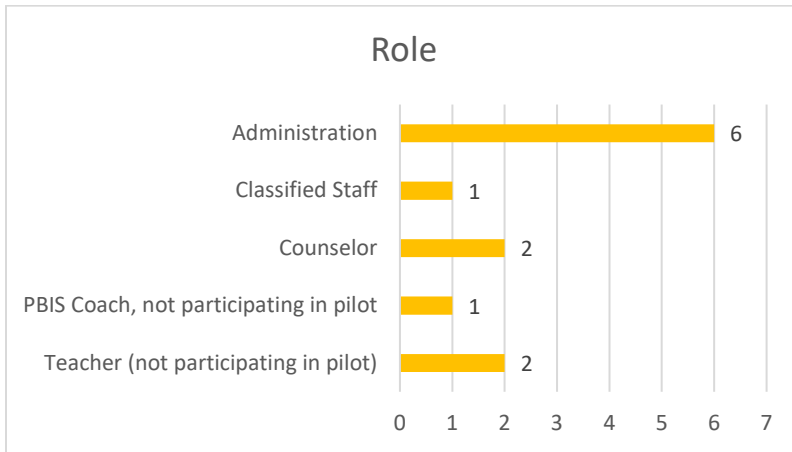
Please express your degree of agreement with each statement regarding the two curriculums.



Which curriculum do you believe would best serve the SEL educational needs of our middle school students?



Staff Demographics



Themes

Are there specific aspects of CharacterStrong that you believe are particularly beneficial or challenging?

- Helpful materials and supplements for Tier 2.
- User interface easy to use and engaging; easy to click into the Spanish version.

"Beneficial-tier 2 and 3 supplements as well as all school connective activities. Our school could really use this and it's so helpful to have it all in one place."

"Nice user-interface, feels engaging, incorporates humor w/memes, pictures."

"I find that whatever curriculum we choose, it is vital that the teacher be bought-in to the implementation or it will not be successful."

"It feels easier to do schoolwide activities with this outside of just advisory. Not sure if the lesson content is as robust as second step."

"The tier two materials were AMAZING! I was able to pick and choose lessons to meet specific student(s) needs. The students really enjoyed it and loved having the games and warmups. I even had one student ask if they could earn doing CharacterStrong once a week."

Are there specific aspects of Second Step that you believe are particularly beneficial or challenging?

- Lack of quality Tier 2 and 3 supplements; not easy to use for students with specific SEL needs.
- Use of Second Step in elementary grades may be a good continuation of learning or a challenge for middle school implementation.
- Lessons do not require prep but also feel scripted.

“No tier 2 or 3 supplements. This is huge. In my mind it's only half as supportive as Character Strong because it's missing this. I also think that Second Step's design will get old quickly. The cartoon characters already seem dated and kids will tune anything out that seems outdated.”

“Doesn't seem to provide good tier 2 and 3 stuff. Not engaging, in my opinion, for middle school students- I think there would be some eye rolling.”

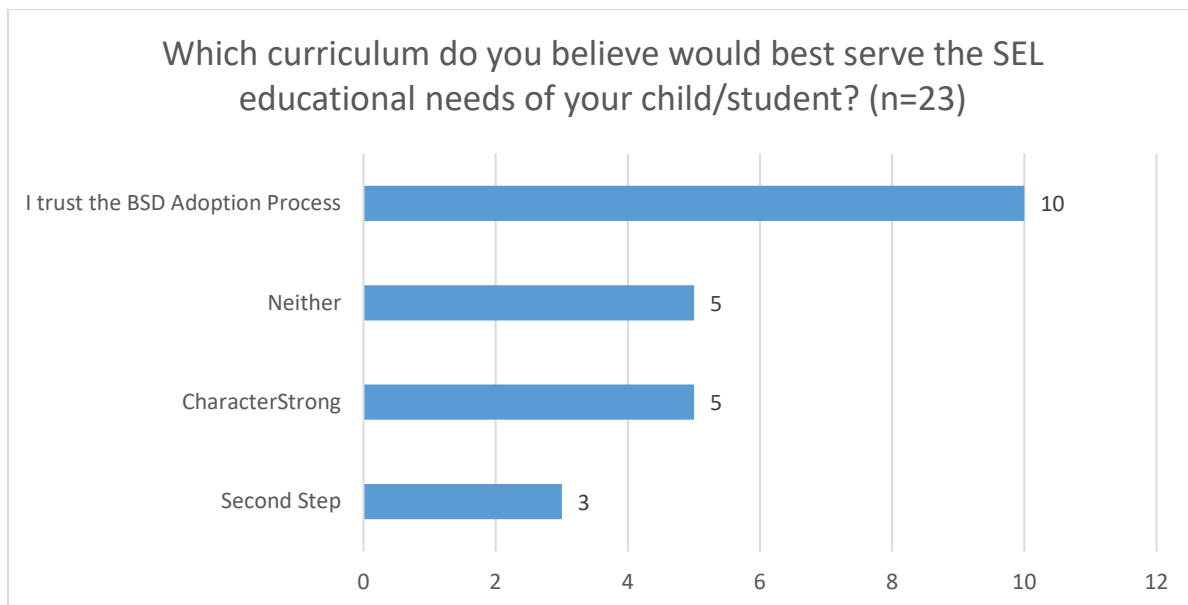
“Lessons seem a little on the dry side and may not have as strong of student engagement. May be more challenging for teachers outside of advisory to interact with.”

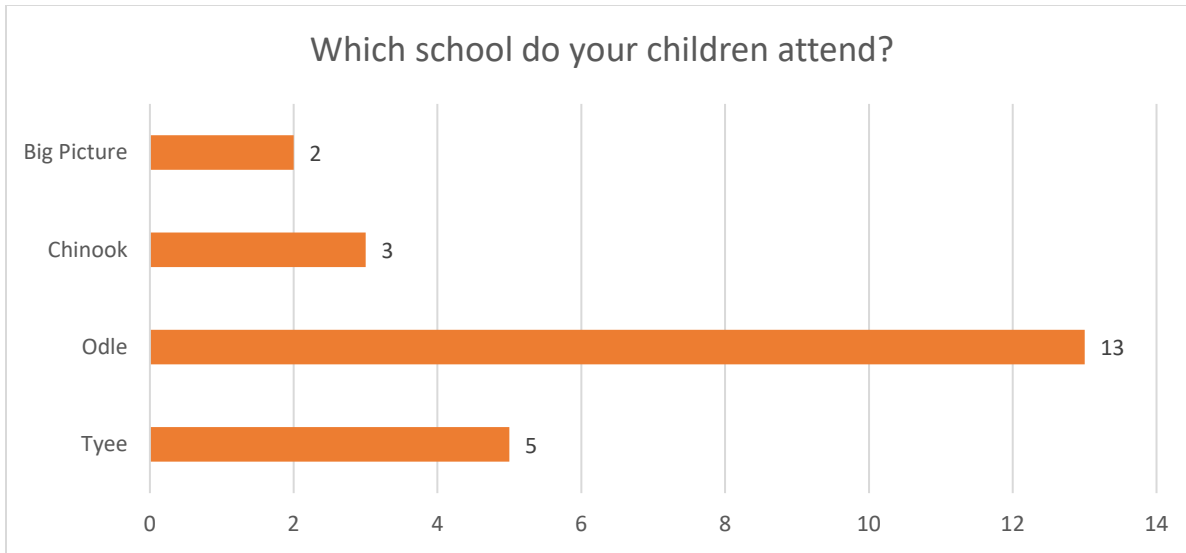
“Second Step was not easy for me to implement in small groups or 1:1 with students who needed specific SEL needs met. Some second step language was triggering to a few of the students I work with as it is the same curriculum they grew up with in elementary.”

“Second step is used in Elementary School-would be a nice way to continue the learning and use similar language with students to continue their SEL development.”

Family Feedback Results

Charts





Themes

Are there specific aspects of the two curriculum that you believe have been particularly beneficial or challenging? Please provide details.

- Several respondents observed benefits for their students in having an SEL curriculum, not necessarily tied to one or the other curriculum option.
- Several respondents used this opportunity to object to SEL curriculum in general, or to request other changes to student experience.

“Student come back told me about mix AI and GE students together. They respect other students ‘questiones and progress, even if they already know the content meaning. I think that is a proof about the real life respect.”

“The second step lessons were less engaging than the character strong, but the second step had more information to help in the future”

“I am grateful that we are looking at SEL curriculum. I am optimistic that we can focus on implementing with high levels of integrity to ensure that all students (and staff) benefit.”

“I think that identifying emotions and learning how to make decisions based on them is very helpful.”

Your insights are valuable; if there is anything else you would like to add, please do so.

“I have heard of inconsistencies in various classrooms in holding to community values; i.e. allowing mischief and at times harrassment go unchecked.”

“I think that a focus on social emotional learning is very important at the middle school level. Our kids need it!”

“i think we could do some introduction into mental health during character strong, instead of hopping into mental health immediately.”

“In second step, the students didn’t get to move around as much as in character strong.”

"The children make fun of the classes and use it to there advantage to goof off!!!!"