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TO: Tamu Lucero, Superintendent

FROM: Michael Fernandes, Associate Superintendent for Student Support 

DATE: May 2, 2024

RE: **Presentation on Social Emotional Learning (SEL) Assessment- DESSA**

Attached is a copy of the DESSA SEL presentation I shared at the BOE meeting on Tuesday, April 30, 2024.

Using DESSA Data to Support Social Emotional Learning

BOE Teaching and Learning Committee meeting

April 30, 2024
Dr. Michael Fernandes



CT SEL Assessment Initiative

(Partnership with APERTURE EDUCATION)

Improve K-12 students' Social-emotional skills and habits, contributing to a positive school climate and academic outcomes

Implement a statewide, SEL assessment system that includes:

- Universal screening
- Progress monitoring
- Data Reporting
- Social-emotional resources and lessons



Phased Roll Out

2021-2022

- **Westover**
- KT Murphy
- Hart Magnet
- Newfield
- **Cloonan**
- Turn of River
- SHS

2022-2023

- Davenport
- Stillmeadow
- Toquam
- Roxbury
- Rippowam
- Anchor

2023-2024

- Stark
- Springdale
- Northeast
- Strawberry Hill
- Rogers
- Dolan
- Scofield
- AITE
- WHS



What is Social Emotional Learning?

SEL is the process through which children and adults acquire and effectively apply the knowledge, attitudes and skills necessary to understand and manage emotions, set and achieve positive goals, feel and show empathy for others, establish and maintain positive relationships, and make responsible decisions.



Shared Mission and Vision

The mission of Stamford Public Schools (SPS) is to provide an education that cultivates productive habits of mind, body and heart in every student.

Our vision is to challenge, inspire and prepare all students to be productive contributing members of society.



DSIP Goal 4: Social Emotional Learning (Productive Habits of Heart)

All schools will implement evidenced based SEL programming and practices that support students' capacity to build social-emotional competencies.



The Importance of SEL in Education

Improved Academic Performance

- Students who receive SEL instruction demonstrate higher academic achievement, better attendance, and reduced disciplinary issues.

Enhanced Social-Emotional Skills

- SEL helps students develop empathy, communication, and problem-solving abilities essential for success in school and life.

Positive School Climate

- SEL fosters a caring, inclusive environment where students feel safe, supported, and able to take academic risks.



What is the DESSA?

Devereux Student Strengths Assessment (DESSA) is an evidence-based assessment of social and emotional competence to support student growth and development

- Strength-based
- Research based
- CASEL aligned



APERTURE 8



Self-Awareness



Goal-Directed Behavior



Self-Management



Personal Responsibility



Social-Awareness



Decision Making



Relationship Skills



Optimistic Thinking

DESSA Assessments



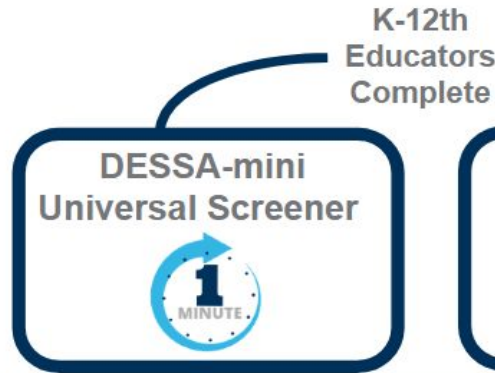
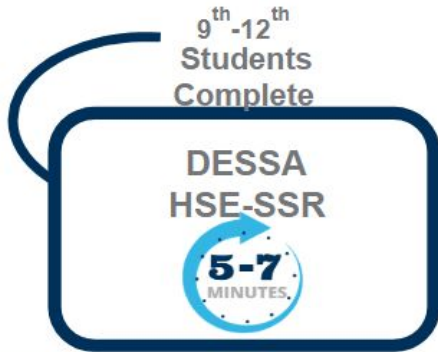
Standardized



Norm-Referenced



Strength-Based



The DESSA Mini (Screenener)

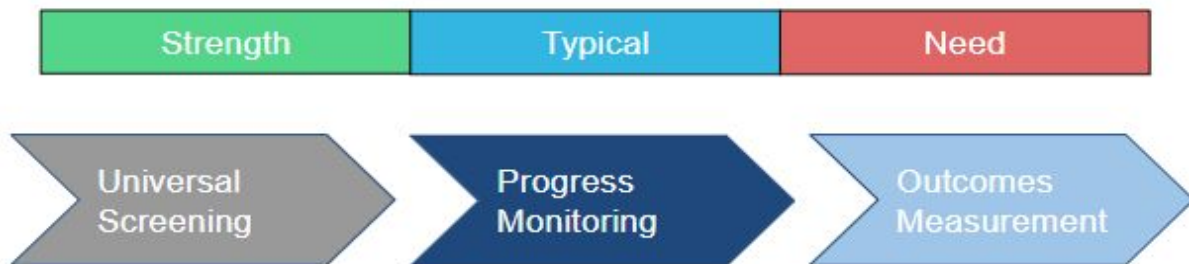
Only screener to meet universal Criteria set forth by the **World Health Organization**

- **8 questions**
- **1 minute** to complete
- **4 forms**
- **Screenener and progress monitoring**

DESSA-Mini Questions

During the past 4 weeks, how often did the youth...

- Accept responsibility for what she/he did?
- Do something nice for somebody?
- Speak about positive things?
- Pay attention?



The DESSA

- 72 questions
- 5-7 minutes to complete
- Normed on nationally representative sample of students, grade k-12, various racial, ethnic and socioeconomic groups were represented
- 8 CASEL-aligned competencies

During the past 4 weeks, how often did the youth...

2. stay focused despite a problem or distraction?
3. respect another person's opinion?
4. show concern for someone?
5. work carefully on projects or schoolwork?
6. follow the example of a positive role model?
7. try to do their best?
8. say good things about their classmates?



DESSA HSE-SSR (Self-Report)

- 55 questions
- 5-7 minutes to complete
- Normed on nationally representative sample of students, various racial, ethnic and socioeconomic groups were represented
- 8 CASEL-aligned competencies



During the past 4 weeks, how often did you...

- think about positive things?
- ask somebody for feedback?
- get along well with different types of people?

Answer Selection
Options

- Never
- Rarely
- Sometimes
- Often
- Almost Always



DESSA Scores: Assessment Results

Educator
View:

T-Scores, categorized into 3
descriptive ranges

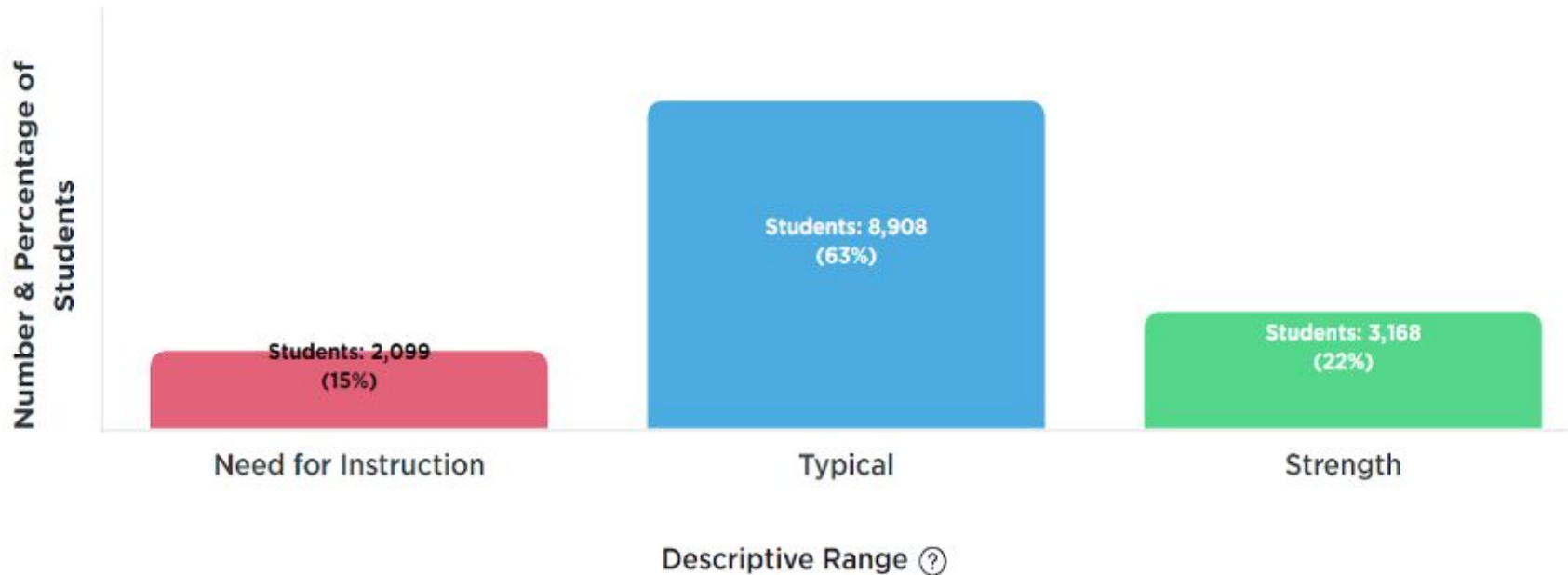
**Data views differ in the student portal/Aperture System for
educators*

Need for Instruction T-Scores: 40 and below	Typical T-Scores: 41 – 59	Strength T-Scores: 60 and above
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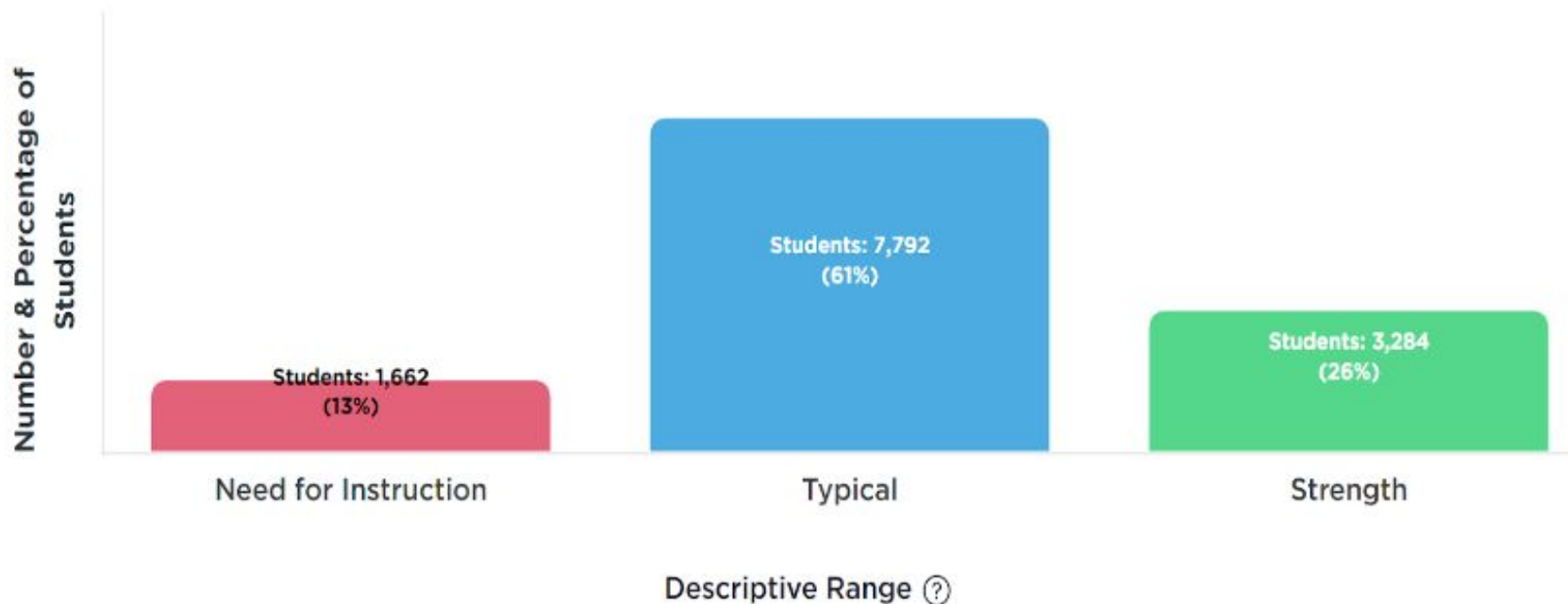
Reflects a lack of **skill acquisition**



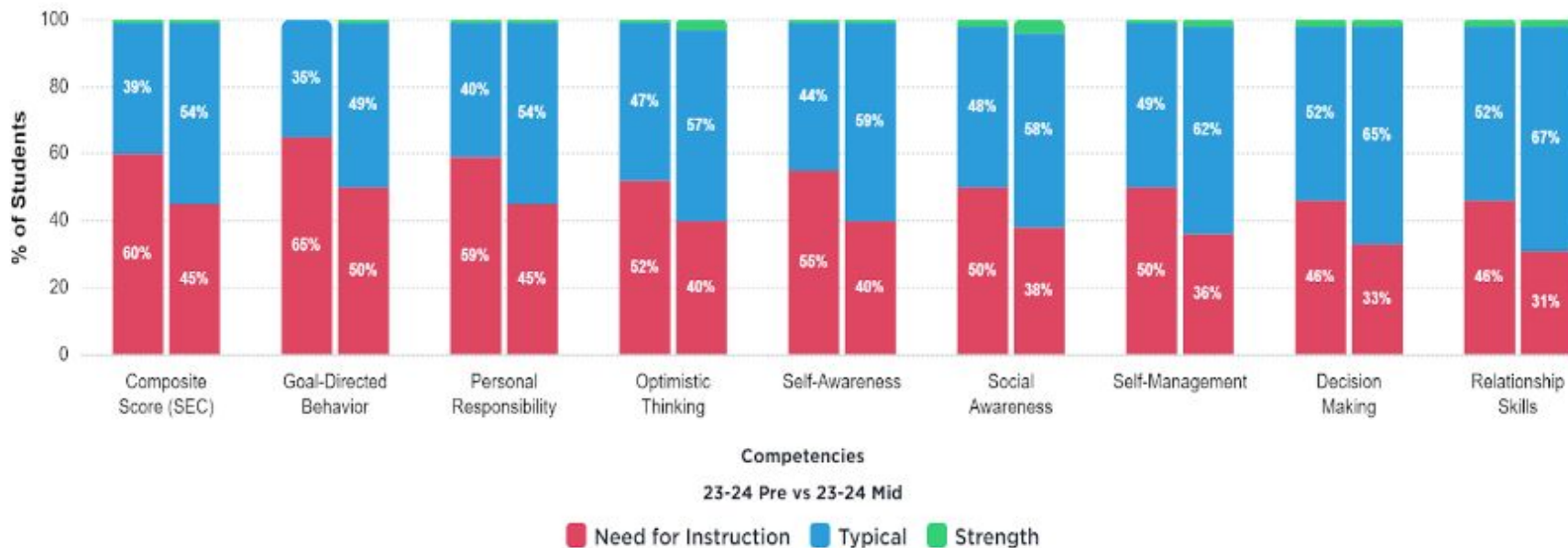
Changes in Students' Overall Social Emotional Competence (BOY-October)



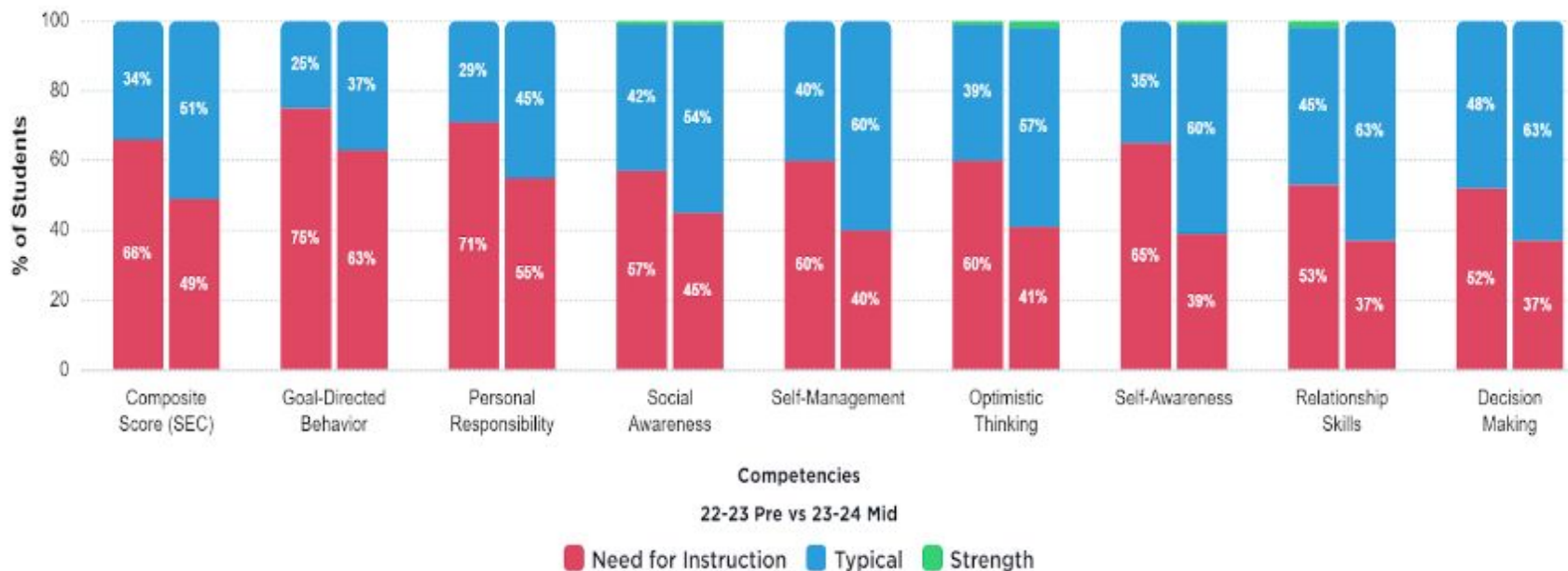
Changes in Students' Overall Social Emotional Competence (MOY-February)



Change in DESSA Social Emotional Competencies- 2023-24 BOY to MOY

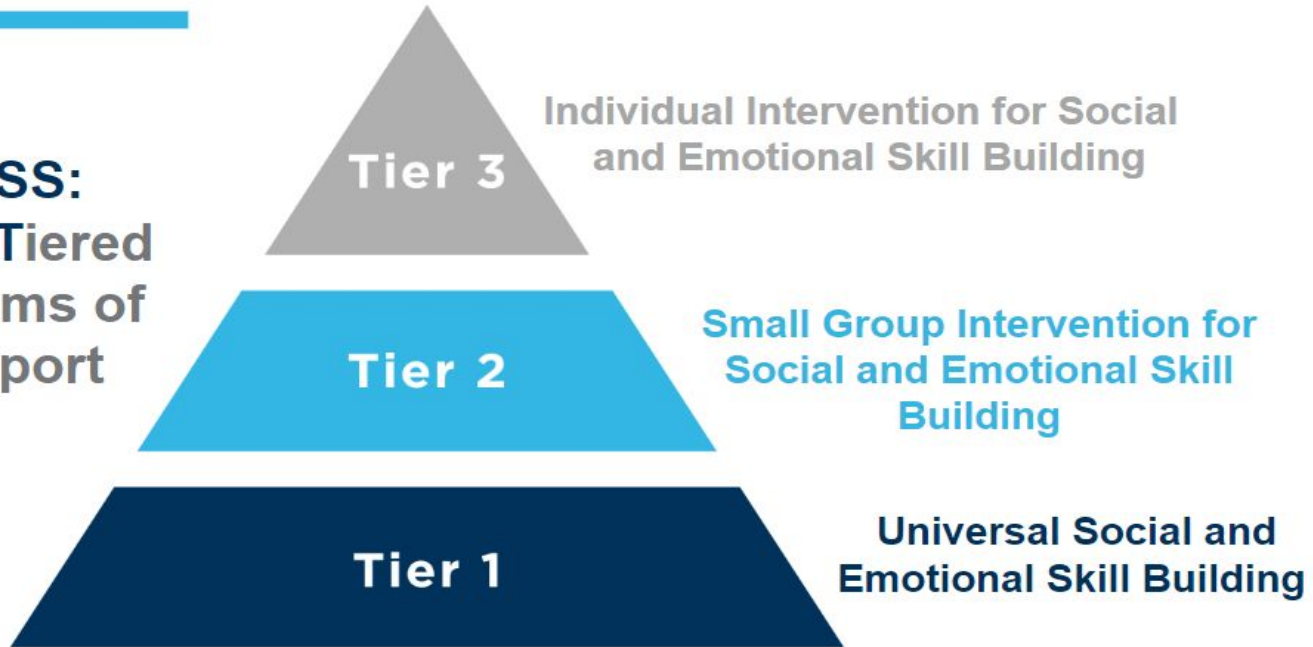


Change in DESSA Social Emotional Competencies (2022-23 BOY to 2023-24 MOY)



MTSS & DESSA

MTSS:
Multi-Tiered
Systems of
Support



Using DESSA Data for Multi-Tiered SEL Programming



Foundational Practices

Foundational Practices Resources:

- Cover a variety of SEL-related topics
- Universal (all settings/grade levels)
- Can be used by any educator/administrator
- **Purpose:** Support culture and climate



Practices, routines, rituals, traditions

Quality and character of school life

(Cohen & Elias)

Foundational Practices

▶ APERTURE EDUCATION



Collaborate!



Purpose:

Teamwork and collaboration are skills that can help us be successful in many different facets of life. However, sometimes students struggle with collaborative work because they do not get enough practice or support in learning collaborative skills. Providing opportunities for collaboration within the classroom can give students valuable learning experiences, safe spaces to ask questions, and opportunities to make mistakes and get valuable feedback.

Some of the benefits of incorporating student collaboration within your classroom are:

1. Increased self-esteem of students
2. Exposure to working with students of different backgrounds
3. Natural development of communication skills, higher-level thinking, self-management skills, and leadership skills

Key Principles:

- Students might initially need support and/or instruction on how to collaborate. You might need to assign roles and clearly define responsibilities until students have more chance to practice.
- Make sure that you and your students set and review norms for group work and collaboration before you get started.
- It will be helpful to monitor student success to make sure

Ideas and Examples:

- Use the jigsaw technique – working in small groups, assign each student a smaller piece of a larger topic to research or learn about, that they then teach the rest of their group about.
- Think-pair-share activities are easy to incorporate into any topic. Students work in pairs or small groups to respond to a question or prompt – they formulate their responses in their small groups and then share with the larger class.
- Peer review of work is a great collaboration strategy. Whether students review each other's math assignments, writing, or other work – the goal is to teach students to use a set of criteria (e.g., a rubric) to provide their peers with feedback. This strategy teaches students to give and receive feedback – coaching and teaching to make this technique effective is required!

Growth Strategies

Self-Awareness

Ability to understand emotions and develop healthy identity and a sense of purpose

15 Resources



Self-Management (with Goal-Directed Behavior)

The ability to engage in goal directed behaviors and manage emotions across contexts

15 Resources



Social Awareness

Understanding social and ethical norms and the ability to take the perspectives of others

15 Resources



Relationship Skills



Growth Strategies

HE EDUCATION



DAILY EMOTION CHECK

Elementary School

Use emojis to help students identify and name emotions. Use an electronic document to explore emotion with students.

 **Duration:** 1-2 minutes.

Activity Overview

Students can share about how they are feeling using an emoji "check-in" during class. Educators can monitor students' emotions across time, as well as pay attention to patterns of emotions in response to class activities. For best results, use this strategy as a daily practice. Consistency fosters growth in self-awareness skills!

Implementation Considerations



This strategy can be paired with the Self-Awareness strategy, *Learning About Emotions*.



Italicized text is recommended language to lead the conversation or activity with your students.

How to Implement This Activity

Set up an emoji "check-in" sheet for students to use.

- For example, use a Google sheet so all students have access, like the *Emoji Check-In Sheet Template*.

Access your emoji keyboards.

- On Windows, click on the keyboard icon (at bottom right corner of your screen).
- If the keyboard icon isn't on your screen, right click on the bottom taskbar and choose "Show touch keyboard button" if you are running Windows 10. If you are running Windows 11, right click on the bottom taskbar, select "Taskbar Settings," and then select "Always" for the "Show Touch Keyboard" option.



Why this Works

EMOTIONAL RECOGNITION HELPS STUDENTS IDENTIFY FEELINGS

When students practice identifying how they feel, they can attend to their emotions during different experiences.



Purpose

- Students use emojis to share how they feel during class.
- Students provide a check-in on how they are feeling.
- Teachers can monitor students' emotions during their class.



Materials

- Computers or tablets



DESSA Theme

Recognizing and understanding emotions, thoughts, and behaviors



Integrating SEL Programming

Whole-School/Foundational Practices

- Foster a school-wide culture that prioritizes SEL and supports students' holistic development.

Modeling and Reinforcement

- Ensure that teachers and staff model and reinforce SEL skills throughout the school day.

Explicit Instruction

- Embed SEL competencies into lessons (morning meeting, advisory/HEART) and activities across all subject areas.



The Role of Teachers in Fostering SEL

Mentors

- Provide personalized guidance and support to help students navigate social-emotional challenges.

Role Models

- Demonstrate and reinforce SEL skills through their own behaviors and interactions.

Facilitators

- Create opportunities for meaningful dialogue and collaborative problem-solving among students.



Cloonan Middle School

SEL Leadership Team

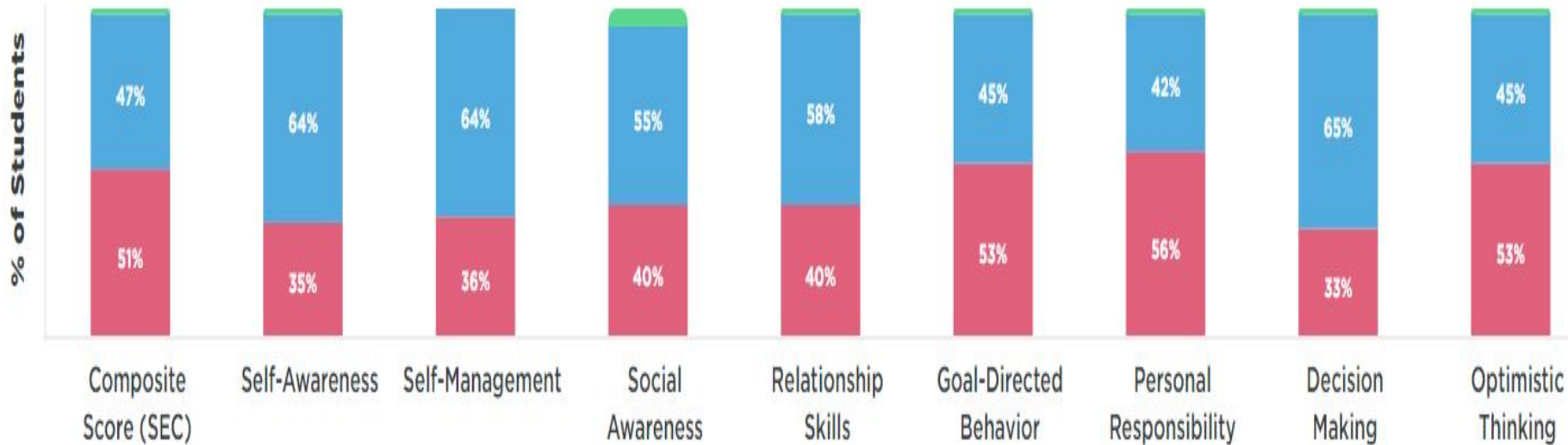
Acceleration Coach, Core Teachers, Restorative Student Support Facilitator, School Counselor, School Psychologists, Social Worker and Principal.

- Meets bi-weekly facilitated by our Urban Assembly SEL Specialist.
- Plans supplemental data collection, analyzes data, determine trends
- Sets whole school Social Emotional Competency focus by time period (e.g. quarter, semester or full year.)
- Plans Professional Development around SEC
- Collects resources and supports for staff.



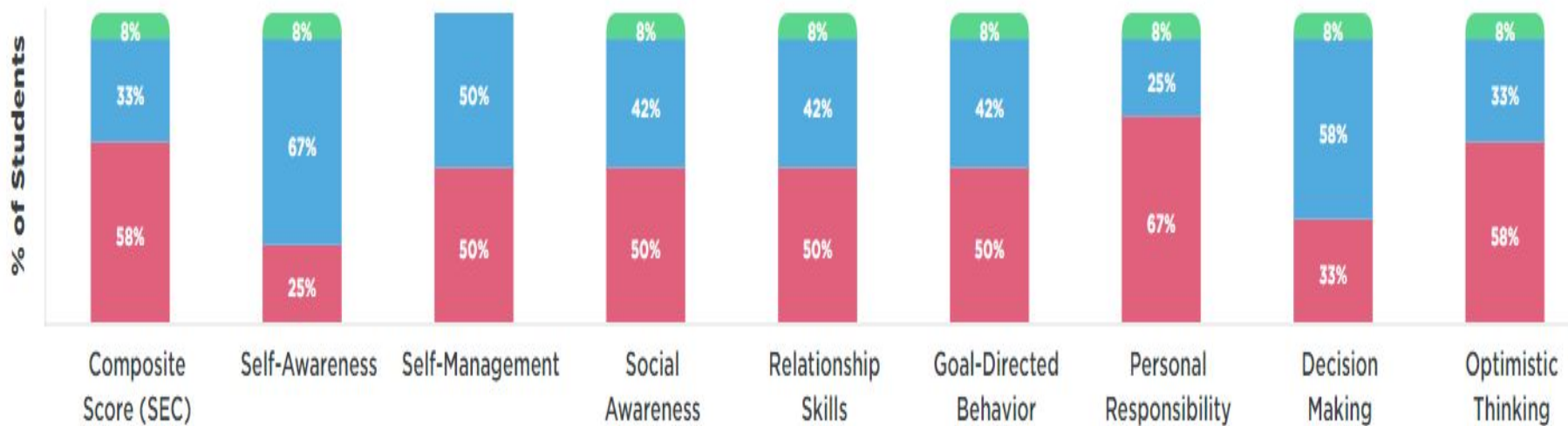
Cloonan Middle School

Analysis continues with comparisons of school wide competencies. This information is used to determine the school wide focus for a given time period.



Cloonan Middle School

Analysis continues with comparisons of grade level competencies. This information is used to determine the grade level focus for a given time period.



Westover Elementary School

SEL Leadership Team: Administration, TLSS, SRBI, School Psychologists, Social Worker, Parent Facilitator, Choose Love Committee Chair



Tier 1 SEL Program: Choose Love, Morning Meeting (MM)
DESSA mini vs full DESSA (23 students)

Tier 2/3 Support: MM, Mentoring Program, lunch bunch, monthly SRBI meeting, BIF/Attendance Data

Next Steps: Aligning DESSA competency lessons and common language with Choose Love curriculum



Westover Elementary School

Grade	SPED/ SRBI	Fall 2023	Winter 2024	spring 2024	SRBI Drop	Self Awareness	Self Awareness WINTER	Self Management	Self Mgt WINTER	Social Awareness	Social Aw. WINTER	Relationship Skills	Relation skills WINTER	Goal Directed Behavior	GDB WINTER	PR	PR WINTER	DM	DM WINTER	OT	OT WINTER	Note
1st	(SRBI)	33 NEED	N35		YES	29	36	37	39	39	39	32	34	36	36	33	39	39	38	32	32	Ment Rodr
1st	opt out	48 dessa mini	T48				55		48		44		52		46		44		41		51	
1st	IEP	41 dessa mini	T42																			
1st	(SRBI)	37 NEED	N36		YES	34	30	41	34	51	47	47	42	31	29	31	33	35	39	39	43	Emil HOLI
1st	(SRBI)	39 NEED	N36		YES	46	46	34	36	44	32	40	39	35	35	37	37	41	35	45	42	Ment Rodr
1st	(SRBI)	44 TYPICAL	T55		YES	50		37		40		52		45		36		46		49		Char
1st	(ATTEND)	45 TYPICAL	T47																			
1st	(Springdale)	49 TYPICAL	T53																			
1st	(IEP)	34 NEED	N37		NO	33	36	33	38	35	34	40	46	33	36	33	36	39	41	37	37	
1st	(IEP)	36 NEED	N39		NO	36	36	37	43	41	45	40	44	32	33	36	38	43	46	37	37	
2nd	(SRBI)	29 NEED	N33		YES	36	40	28	28	31	30	32	36	32	35	31	32	32	38	30	37	SRBI Kath
2nd	(SRBI)	36 NEED	N32		YES	36	34	39	33	38	35	39	38	36	35	38	35	34	32	37	32	SRBI Kath
2nd	(SRBI - Math)	40 NEED	N37		YES	36	34	39	38	47	43	47	40	36	34	39	36	43	41	42	40	Assig Nanc
2nd	(IEP)	48 dessa mini	N40		NO		42		41		40		42		41		39		45		39	
		46 dessa mini	N31		NO		38		34		29		33		33		32		37		31	
2nd	(IEP)	36 NEED	N35		NO	35	36	40	34	34	35	40	40	36	37	37	36	41	37	39	39	
2nd	(IEP)	39 NEED	N39		NO	38	38	41	38	41	40	40	42	41	40	42	38	41	41	40	39	
2nd	(IEP)	40 NEED	N37		NO	42	38	42	40	41	38	42	42	38	37	38	37	42	35	40	40	
2nd	(SRBI)	DECLINED																				SRBI
3rd	(IEP)	IEP	33N				35		32		34		36		35		33		35		37	
3rd	(SRBI)	32 NEED	40N		YES	33	46	37	42	31	35	32	35	41	47	38	47	29	38	32	37	Ment Ama casa



Any Question

