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The Heart of the Matter: Integrating Social-Emotional Learning Skills into Teacher Preparation

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Abstract

This paper provides a description of an on-going development and research project known as the *SJSU Collaborative for Reaching & Teaching the Whole Child* (CRTWC)* and first year findings of a three year longitudinal study of our work. CRTWC is situated at San José State University in a 5th year Multiple Subject Credential/Masters teacher preparation program. Approximately 100 teacher candidates are enrolled in the teacher credential program each year. The over-arching mission of CRTWC, which began in 2009, is to integrate social-emotional learning (SEL) knowledge, skills and dispositions into the course and field experiences required in this K-8 credential program. The focus of CRTWC's work is on fostering candidates' ability to use an "SEL lens" as part of their teaching practice. Our intention is to develop candidates who will become competent and caring teachers of culturally, racially, and linguistically diverse learners in various settings; and assessment strategies in teacher preparation that guide on-going inquiry and improvement. This paper includes the rationale for the project; the processes used to promote programmatic change toward SEL integration across the program; a description of the materials and strategies developed to support this effort; the means of assessing project goals; and the outcomes to date.

*This project is funded by a generous grant from the Morgan Family Foundation.

Description of the Collaborative for Reaching & Teaching the Whole Child (CRTWC)

Over the past six years, the Collaborative for Reaching & Teaching the Whole Child (CRTWC) has worked with the SJSU Department of Elementary Education faculty to integrate SEL skill development into the preparation of candidates for the teaching profession. The founder and Executive Director of CRTWC is a professor within the Elementary Education department. CRTWC's approach has been to expand attention to social-emotional learning (SEL) skill development of both the learner and the teacher. We thus refer to the Social-Emotional Dimensions of Teaching and Learning (SEDTL) rather than SEL. At the beginning of this project, we made an intentional decision to integrate SEDTL skill development throughout the K-8 credential program rather than develop a single course that would focus on SEDTL. We did so for the following reasons. First, we believe that to assign SEDTL skill development to one class would reinforce it being seen as a separate curriculum rather than first, and foremost, as a lens to guide teacher intentions, data gathering, and response to students. Second, we want to emphasize the importance of attention to SEDTL throughout the curriculum, particularly with the implementation of the new Common Core State Standards (CCSS), which require such skills as perseverance and reflection to successfully master the rigor of these new academic expectations. Third, given that our vision is to foster self-growth, social awareness, and responsible decision-making in students, it requires that the teacher also embrace these dispositions and model them throughout the school year in their classrooms. Working with the SEL core competencies identified by CASEL (www.casel.org), and the research on culturally responsive teaching (CRT) (Ladson-Billings, 1995; Ladson-Billings, 1992; Schussler & Knarr, 2012; Schussler, Stooksberry, & Bercaw, 2010), project staff and our outside consultants, Acknowledge Alliance, created an SEL-CRT "wheel" as a framework to guide our efforts to integrate SEL into teacher preparation. (Appendix A)

In this paper, we provide 1) a rationale for the importance of addressing SEDTL in pre-service teacher preparation; 2) a description of the work of CRTWC whose mission is to integrate SEDTL into the pre-service course and field experiences of teacher candidates; 3) a description of the processes and materials that we have developed in the service of our mission; 4) a description of the assessment strategies we have used to assess the effectiveness of our effort; and 5) the research results from Phase I of our work.

The case for attending to social-emotional learning skills in teacher preparation

"The ultimate goal is that SEL becomes so embedded that to the naked eye, you can't tell it's going on."
(Ashley Bondi, Cooperating Teacher, Spring 2015)

SEL is defined as a process through which "children enhance/their ability to integrate thinking, feeling, and behaving to achieve important life tasks." (Zins et al., 2004). Durlak et al (2011) states that SEL improve(s) students' social-emotional skills, attitudes about self and others, connection to school, and positive social behavior; reduce(s) conduct problems and emotional distress; and improve(s) students' achievement. Students with strong SEL skills are resilient, self-aware, and socially competent. They are able to manage their emotions, establish healthy relationships, set goals, organize and prioritize tasks, and make responsible, ethical decisions (Elias,1997; Medoff, 2010; Zins et al. 2004). Teachers must recognize the importance of targeting these skills in schools (Civic Enterprises et al, 2013). A twenty year study just released (Pennsylvania State University, 2015) determined that kindergarteners' social skills, like cooperation, listening to others, and helping classmates, provided strong predictors of how those children would fare two decades later[1].

There is an urgent need to prepare teacher candidates who know how to develop culturally and linguistically diverse children's capacity to use these skills as they face ever-increasing stress and expectations in a rapidly changing world. Pre-service teacher education has a unique opportunity to make a profound difference in teacher practice. At no other time in their professional lives are teachers provided the time and guidance to develop a thorough knowledge base and opportunity to practice key skills required of effective practitioners. Teacher education programs can play an indispensable role in providing a pipeline of new teachers, fully prepared to embrace and enact SEL in their classrooms. There is no shortage of educational papers emphasizing the need to bring SEDTL into teacher preparation. As stated in a report from the National Governors' Association, "… effective teachers do more than promote academic learning – they teach the whole child. Teachers help promote the social and emotional learning skills students need to be college and career ready..." (National Governors Association: Center for Best Practices and Council of Chief State School Officers (CCSSO), 2010a; NGA Center & CCSSO, 2010b). What is missing is the "how to do it".

While much has been published providing powerful reasons for bringing SEL into the classroom, most recently from a twenty year longitudinal study conducted by Jones, Greenberg, Crowley (2015), the recommendation is to provide schools with SEL programs. Thus, school districts are seen as the primary unit of change toward inclusion of SEL skills for students (CASEL Collaborating Districts Initiative, see CASEL.org). Little attention has been paid to the teacher preparation programs that provide the pipeline of new

[1] Pubic Broadcasting Station interview with Damon Brown, Pennsylvania State University, July 16, 2015

teachers who will be employed by those districts. Even with calls for teacher educators to integrate SEL into university teacher education curricula (Fleming and Bay, 2004; Yoder, 2014; Schonert-Reichl et al, 2014), preparation programs have not yet actualized this change, possibly because they have not been provided with specific strategies for doing so. The Harvard Social Policy Report (2012) states that "teachers typically receive little training in how to promote SEL skills, deal with peer conflict, or address other SEL-related issues (Lopes, Maestre, Guil, Kreminitzer and Salovey, 2012; Kreminitzer, 2005). Further, while states such as Illinois, Connecticut, and Massachusetts are adopting SEL standards for the teaching profession (Yoder, 2014), few teacher preparation programs attend to SEL skills in their programs (Schonert-Reichl, 2014).

There have been many programs created to support the development of SEL skills (see CASEL.org.). However, as helpful as SEL programs can be, they may also unintentionally perpetuate the idea that SEL is something you do on Tuesdays and Thursdays. Further, while of use, it is unlikely that they can be taken to scale as schools and/or districts have so many competing priorities for instructional time and limited financial resources available to them. For these reasons, our goal has been to unpack what the development of a social-emotional learning "lens" looks like and how we can foster its development in our teachers. This shift toward development of a teacher's SEL lens has led to the need for different kinds of professional development materials and processes, with a focus on helping teachers learn the questions to ask and acquire the data needed, to effectively respond to the needs of diverse learners. We argue that many SEL programs, while potentially very useful, are inadequate for sustained, systemic change.

CRTWC Project Components

If teachers can look at their students, the learning environment they are creating, and the content they are teaching, with this SEL lens, the actions they take will develop the SEL skills needed for both the teacher and student to succeed. How one may go about developing teacher candidates' SEL lens is the focus of CRTWC's work.

If one is not using an SEL program or a single SEL course to provide development in SEL skills, what is the alternative? First, we identified the professionals occupying three key roles within university teacher preparation who must be included if SEL is to be institutionalized: **faculty** who teach teacher candidates; **university supervisors** who coach them in the field; and **cooperating teachers** who host teacher candidates in their classrooms. Second, we have identified the kinds of support needed by cooperating teachers, university supervisors, and faculty in order to develop an SEL lens in their work. Our model includes creation of a professional learning community that offers many opportunities to practice using an SEL lens

examining videos and teaching cases as "grist for the mill" of discussion. Third, we have identified "pressure points" within the program that will be addressed to grow our candidates' SEL lens. Identification of these "pressure points" have led to the development of a lesson plan template used by teacher candidates that integrates SEL; an observation protocol that addresses teacher actions that promote SEL skill development; and the creation of new faculty position descriptions that include knowledge of, and commitment to SEL practices.

The following is a description of each of the components we have focused on to integrate SEDTL into a teacher credential program.

I. Creation of a Professional Learning Community(PLC) focused on SEDTL in teacher practice
II. Course integration
III. Materials creation to support professional development work
IV. University Supervisor workshops
V. Cooperating Teacher Professional Development series

I. Creation of SEDTL Professional Learning Community

Given the importance of providing new teachers with a foundational background in social-emotional learning and concrete skills to use them in the classroom, CRTWC began by working with university faculty to integrate SEL into their course content. To do so, we used external funding to provide release time for faculty so that we could establish a professional learning community (PLC) that has included monthly meetings, retreats, and work with consultants from an independent non-profit. The PLC expanded in the past two years to include, first two university supervisors and then four cooperating teachers who had participated in the Cooperating Teacher Professional Development sessions for two years. This PLC has been instrumental in developing and piloting teaching tools for use at the pre-service and in-service levels that give faculty, university supervisors, teacher candidates and cooperating teachers practice using an SEL lens.

II. Course Integration

After spending a year reviewing a variety of frameworks that address social-emotional learning, we decided to use and adapt the five dimensions described by the Collaborative for Academic, Social, and Emotional Learning (CASEL): Self-Awareness, Self-Management, Social Awareness, Relationship Skills, Responsible Decision-making. We added to the descriptors of each of the five dimensions by bringing in teaching strategies related to culturally responsive teaching. At the time we began our work, the focus of SEL skill development was almost exclusively on the K-12 learner as opposed to the teachers who work with them.

As we considered the needs of our candidates to become effective teachers, we recognized the importance of addressing both the teacher *and* their students' SEL skill development. As mentioned earlier, this led us to modify our framework on social-emotional learning and refer to the Social-Emotional Dimensions of Teaching and Learning or SEDTL; and to work with faculty in our pre-service program to redesign their course curricula, assignments, and assessments with SEDTL in mind. Our intention has been to ensure that both the SEL skills of the teacher and their ability to develop the SEL skills of their students are addressed.

At the beginning of our work, we conducted a baseline survey of the elementary education courses to identify where SEDTL was already included in course content. The baseline data chart showed almost no explicit attention to SEL in the K-8 program curricular materials other than in Educational Psychology (Appendix B). Over the course of three years, elementary education faculty participated in professional development sessions to help identify desired SEL skills appropriate to various content areas that teacher candidates could practice in their methods courses and then try in the field under the supervision of their cooperating teachers. Evidence of such changes in pre-service course content was demonstrated when faculty shared revised syllabi which highlighted the SEL changes implemented.

Since the Common Core State Standards (CCSS) have been adopted by most states, our project identified the SEDTL skills needed in order for teachers and learners to work with and attain these standards. We created comparison charts showing the connection between the CASEL dimensions and the CCSS standards in math, literacy, and science (Appendix C). We also went one step further in creating a chart identifying the SEL skills needed by teachers in order to implement CCSS (Appendix D).

III. Creation of Professional Development Materials

Teaching Cases and Videos. Identifying those SEL skills most appropriately integrated into literacy, math, social studies, science, and classroom management was more difficult than we initially anticipated. Faculty themselves needed to become comfortable with the SEL dimensions in order to look at their work and contemplate how to integrate these dimensions appropriately into their course content and assignments. Faculty found practice sessions provided at monthly PLC meetings to be extremely helpful in using an SEL lens to analyze and respond to teaching and learning events in the classroom. This need led us to focus on identification and development of teaching videos and written teaching cases to provide further practice. We created some of our own videos and also identified some previously produced films; and developed teaching prompts to help viewers identify explicit ways that attention to SEDTL was in evidence, or in need. Thus far, we have produced three videos showing professors in their teacher preparation classes

implementing lessons that integrate SEDTL. We also created a video with a student teacher trying out one strategy in her classroom that she learned from participating in the original class lesson.

We have also found written teaching cases to be an extremely helpful tool. Faculty, university supervisors, teacher candidates, and cooperating teachers can grapple with real life situations, using role play and discussion questions to unpack SEDTL issues in particular classroom episodes. One reason for starting with teaching cases and videos is that they provide a "third person", less threatening approach to analysis of teaching practice. Once everyone becomes comfortable with asking questions and discussing how to use of an SEL lens in practice with a video or teaching case, they have been more prepared to look at their own course syllabi, as well as their teaching and supervisory practices. One of our participating faculty has developed eight written teaching cases that provide a short scenario along with questions focused on each of the five SEL dimensions.

Dispositions Inventory. Starting in year 2 we completed a literature review of dispositions inventories (DI) currently designed for pre-service teacher education. Nothing we uncovered could be easily mapped onto the CASEL dimensions, so we decided to undertake the development of our own tool. The original intent was to create a tool that would provide focus for faculty, candidates, university supervisors and cooperating/mentor teachers on the SEL skills we wanted the candidates to address in their development as educators. This 29-item tool asks respondents to provide "evidence of practice" as they rated themselves on a Likert scale. Initially using it as a self-rating tool, we piloted it with candidates in three different classes. We found that the candidates tended to rate themselves extremely high across all five dimensions and see it as an assessment rather than a tool to guide growth in SEL practices. We are still at the stage of analyzing how this tool can best be used by supervisors, candidates, and cooperating teachers as an ongoing instructional tool to help candidates grow their SEDTL skills.

Develop and pilot SEL Teacher Observation Protocol. In Fall 2015 WestEd and CRTWC began co-developing a Teacher Observation Protocol that identifies what SEL looks like in classroom. This tool will be used to provide feedback for those in training and those coaching for SEL, and to provide data to help assess the extent to which the preparation program is influencing the actual teaching practice of our candidates and graduates.

Lesson Plan Template. Fortuitously, the SJSU Elementary Education department decided a year ago to implement a common lesson plan template across courses. CRTWC personnel were asked to become

involved, providing input on the new format to include explicit attention to SEDTL. This lesson plan template is currently being piloted by the department on a small scale in Spring 2016, with plans to expand its use to the whole department in Fall 2016.

IV. University Supervisor Workshops

During the 2013-2014 and 2014-15 academic years, CRTWC was invited to facilitate two monthly meetings each year with university supervisors. At these sessions, we provided approximately thirteen supervisors with an overview of the work being done by faculty to integrate SEDTL into their courses and gave them opportunities to practice using an SEDTL lens to analyze videos and teaching cases. We also used two combined faculty/university supervisor meetings to generate connections between the coursework content and fieldwork assignments.

V. Cooperating Teacher Professional Development Series

Over the past 2 ½ years we have developed a series of four professional development sessions for cooperating teachers. They attend these sessions during the school day while their teacher candidates assume responsibility for their classes. The two districts with which we currently work, pay each teacher candidate for a half-day of substitute teaching. We chose to conduct sessions during the day, in part, to send a consistent message that SEDTL is not an add-on but an important part of a teacher's repertoire for teaching academic content and maintaining a productive, safe learning environment. Having the sessions during the school day gives the teacher candidate the chance to practice teaching using their SEL lens, and encourages the cooperating teacher to share session content as they debrief their experiences later that day. The series currently focuses on the following topics/questions:

- What is social-emotional learning and SEDTL?
- How is SEDTL essential to achievement of Common Core Standards?
- How can you give formative feedback using an SEDTL lens?
- What is the "Run Response" and how can SEDTL skills, such as self-management, assist students and teachers react more effectively to perceived difficult academic or social challenges (Swanson, 2014)?

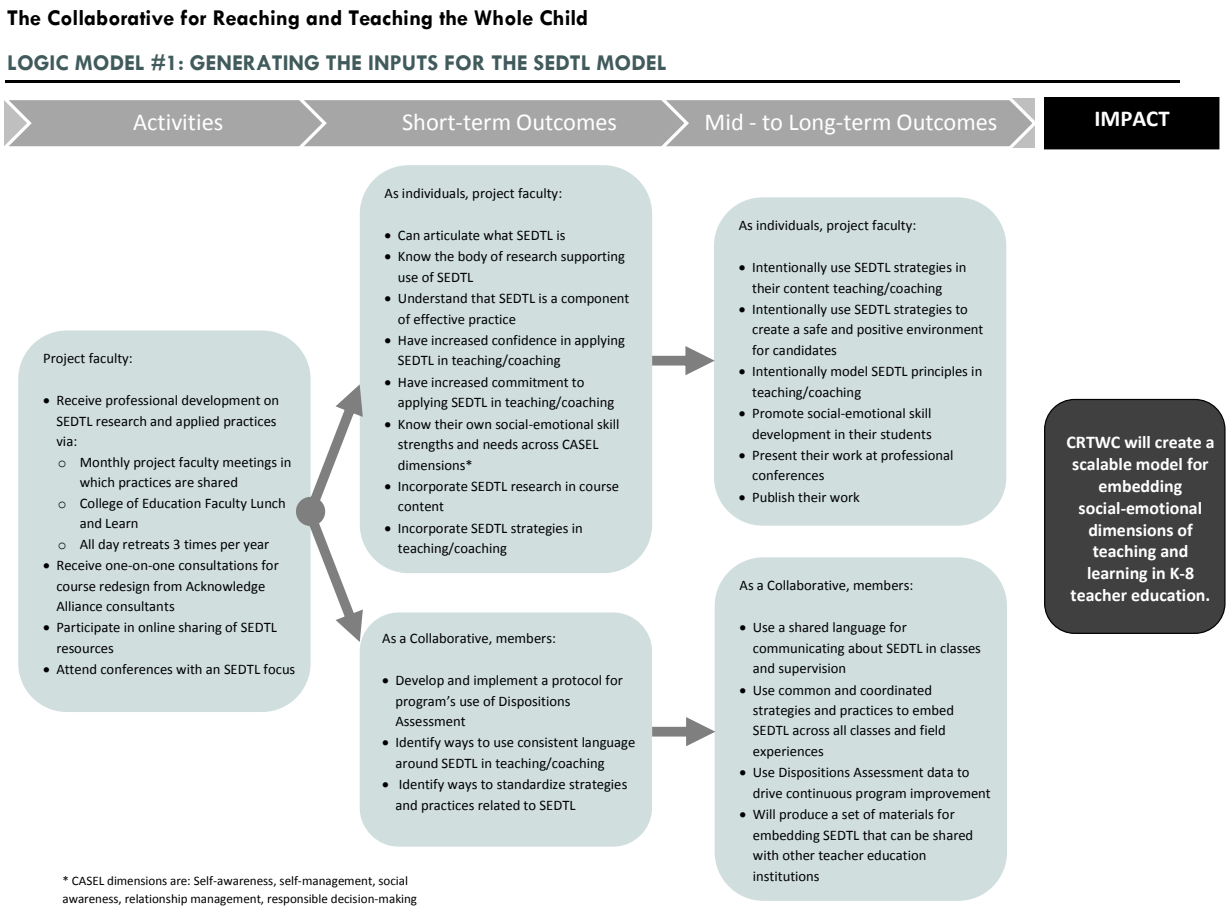
Cooperating teachers are given follow-up assignments after each of our professional development sessions which ask them to try out a strategy with their teacher candidates that we have discussed. In the past year we have begun using co-teaching strategies (St. Cloud University: The Academy for Co-teaching and

Collaboration) to structure how the cooperating teachers and teacher candidates will practice trying the SEDTL strategies discussed in the professional development sessions.

Researching our efforts

> *"Supporting children's social and emotional development creates a foundation of trust between the teacher and the student. A student must feel like they trust the teacher if they are going to explore their academic material with any conviction or depth. I want to be a teacher who provides a safe, caring community in which my students can fully express their needs without fear of rejection or ridicule."* Teacher Candidate [Source: Spring 2015 Survey]

Our three-year longitudinal study, being conducted by WestEd, began in 2014-15. Our purpose is to inquire into the impact of the components we have targeted to bring attention to SEDTL into the teacher preparation program. We are using the following Logic Model I to guide our first ye



Drawing from Logic Model I, three primary research questions guided the initial year of this study:

1) To what extent have faculty and university supervisors committed to the integration of SEDTL in their course and fieldwork with teacher candidates?

2) How have faculty/supervisors in the education department intentionally incorporated SEDTL strategies into their teaching/coaching?
3) To what extent do candidates perceive SEDTL being addressed in their program and competence in using an SEDTL lens in their teaching practice?

Methodology

Our external WestEd evaluator, Dr. Rebeca Diaz, employed a multi-faceted data collection approach that integrates a blend of qualitative and quantitative methods to assess the impact of CRTWC at our university. The evaluation is both formative and summative. The external evaluator developed several data gathering instruments in collaboration with the CRTWC Director and Assistant Director and conducted several data collection activities, described below, to address these questions. The evaluator was also an observer at several of the project's professional development events.

Data sources, evidence, objects, or materials

Faculty Interviews

The evaluator conducted individual interviews with key faculty in the credential program at the onset of the evaluation. The purpose of the interviews was to gather information regarding faculty members' understanding of SEDTL as well as their experience implementing the model.

Faculty and Supervisor Focus Groups

The evaluator conducted focus groups with faculty members and supervisors from the Credential Program. There were two supervisor focus groups—the first with supervisors who were part of the SEDTL Project and the second with supervisors in the Department at large. The purpose of these focus group interviews was to gather information regarding their implementation of the model; their expectations of candidates' use of the model; and whether they needed further support in understanding the model and increasing their commitment to the model in their practice.

Candidate Survey

The evaluator administered a survey to all candidates in the Credential Program. The survey was administered in Spring 2015 and was completed by 125 candidates, achieving a 63 percent response rate. The survey instrument consisted of 10 sections, with both open and close-ended questions.

Candidate Focus Groups

Two focus groups with a total of 16 candidates were conducted. The timing of the focus group was intentionally in Spring 2015 to capture candidates' experiences over the course of the academic year.

Review of Archival Data

The evaluation team reviewed multiple documents including articles published by CRTWC participants, course syllabi, a course redesign matrix, and a newly developed Social-Emotional Learning Dispositions Inventory (SELDI).

Results from Year I Data Collection and Analysis

Faculty Perspectives

Faculty in the Education Department reported that their involvement with the CRTWC has impacted their practice. Faculty described the various ways in which they have changed their teaching, including the content of their courses, to incorporate SEDTL strategies. They also attributed changes in their thinking and their professional development to the CRTWC. And equally as important, key faculty affirmed that SEDTL has become an essential aspect of their practice, to the extent that they would continue to incorporate SEDTL even if they were no longer part of the Collaborative.

Key faculty affirmed that their pedagogy is now informed by SEDTL. Faculty described that they were motivated to become part of the Collaborative and utilize SEDTL strategies because they found that the concepts resonated with their beliefs about how students learn. One faculty member reported that the Collaborative has transformed her work in meaningful ways. Another faculty member stated that in her pre-service teaching she focuses on how to "make a math teacher with an SEL lens." Her goal is to help candidates create an SEL environment for students. She further added that this meant helping students use self-regulation and goal setting when they have a difficult task. Another faculty member stated that she has placed significant emphasis on the social aspects of the model and how people relate to one another. The model provides leverage for the importance of creating environments that are conducive for learning. She further stated that too often teachers create the social-emotional learning environment for children, but do not apply the same ideas to teachers. The same faculty member stated that because she is more mindful of SEDTL, she is better able to "take the temperature" of the room. Her student evaluations provided evidence that her approach worked for her students as well.

Key faculty described the types of changes they made to their courses as they incorporated SEDTL. The types of changes varied from one professor to another—from referencing the CASEL wheel to revising courses to having candidates create projects centered on SEDTL. For example, one faculty member described that he asked his students to use the CASEL wheel every time they came to class. He indicated that as they discussed the course content, they would make connections to the wheel. He conducted this practice as a way to better understand the CASEL concepts and to provide a different lens to what happened in the classroom. He summarized, "It brought a different analytical lens with which to view our work. We definitely looked at candidates' own SEL as well as their students' SEL." Another faculty member stated that she "enhanced" two courses, for which SEDTL is now an important "thread." She spends one class teaching social norms and has developed two discussion prompt assignments. Another faculty member transformed one of her courses where she developed what she refers to as a "touch stone assignment." Her candidates conducted research on specific topics related to teacher burn out and teachers' emotional labor in teaching as well as SEL dimensions of learning. Candidates produced papers where they wrote about engaging their students to learn social emotional competencies. Further, of note, was the fact that faculty reported that one of the most significant benefits of their participation in the Collaborative was allocation of funding and time to conduct research on SEL and SEDTL, which in turn has resulted in literature reviews, publications, and their own ability to deliver professional development and also present at major conferences in the field.

Feedback from faculty suggests the sustainability of SEDTL in education courses at SJSU. When key faculty were asked whether they would continue to incorporate SEDTL into their practice if the Collaborative no longer existed, they did not hesitate to respond affirmatively. For example, one faculty member stated, "This work has changed the way I think and the way I teach." She explained that even when at times she did not know where the research on SEDTL was headed in the future; the framework was embedded in her pedagogy. Another key faculty member agreed that she would continue to incorporate SEDTL and felt certain that other faculty members in the Department would also take that stance. A third key faculty member stated that she absolutely would continue using SEDTL and further stated that "nothing should ever stay the same," suggesting that she would continue to grow her knowledge of SEDTL. Finally, faculty described SEDTL as a cornerstone of the Education program at SJSU.

Supervisor Perspectives

University Supervisors in the Credential Program also reported that their involvement with CRTWC impacted their practice. While some parallels existed between supervisors' and faculty members' incorporation of SEDTL, their experiences differed significantly. The common denominator for both groups of supervisors is that they value SEDTL strategies and are committed to using these in their practice long-term. Supervisors reported that CRTWC has increased their awareness of SEL and also provided them with tools to use in their coaching with candidates.

A unique finding among the supervisors was that part of their motivation to participate in the project was driven by the sense of community that was fostered. Supervisors described the environment promoted by CRTWC leadership as "safe" and "welcoming." One supervisor described that she felt valued. She stated, "What I love about this is that they treat us as co-creators. I long for that; to use my expertise and have it be valuable."

Another finding was the extent to which supervisors discussed the importance of the field experience and particularly the role of the Cooperating Teachers (CTs). Supervisors suggested that CTs should participate in SEDTL professional development. They reported that the CTs who did participate in SEDTL training appreciated it and felt valued by their district for providing them the opportunity.

Supervisors reported that the work of the Collaborative has increased their awareness of SEL and also provided them tools to use in their coaching with candidates. One supervisor reported that the work of the Collaborative "Reconfirmed what I do with my teacher candidates," in making them feel comfortable in the seminar and helping them deal with the stresses of becoming a teacher. Another supervisor stated that, "Work with the collaborative has helped me identify the skills that I've always valued and felt were absolutely essential for the kids." She went on to say that the difference is that now she has the language and the research to support her efforts.

> ***"As a teacher, I must be able to be self aware of my emotions and how it effects the classroom learning environment. I must be able to manage my emotions and be able to take my student's perspective when they are having a problem. Also, I must be able to listen to students, parents and colleagues and I have to make responsible decisions for myself and my classroom. As a teacher I also have to help my students learn these skills so that they can manage their own emotions, listen to other students [respectfully], set goals for themselves, build relationships with other students [that] are positive and productive and learn how to make responsible decisions both inside and outside of the classroom."***
>
> *–Candidate [Source: Spring 2015 Survey]*

Supervisors also reported that the work of the Collaborative helped them understand the importance of making explicit the connections between the research on SEDTL and practice. For example, one supervisor stated:

> *A lot of it is trying to make that explicit connection…we talk about how important it is for classroom management to build relationships with kids…being more explicit about connecting that as a model of social awareness for both students in the classroom and the candidates. There was some of that before but not always as much of a connection with brain research and modeling for students…the Collaborative has made me more aware of the impact.*

The professional development provided by the CRTWC contributed to university supervisors' incorporation of SEDTL strategies into their coaching. One group of supervisors interviewed were part of the Collaborative and therefore participated in various types of professional development activities such as: CRTWC monthly meetings, CRTWC retreats, the annual CRTWC Spring Institute, and training conducted by the CRTWC Director and faculty at the supervisors' meetings. Additionally, one supervisor indicated that she had two productive sessions with a staff person from with a consultant to the project. The second group of supervisors, who were not participants in the Collaborative, received training on SEDTL through the monthly supervisors' meetings and also via the CRTWC Spring Institute. Supervisors described the professional development as "exciting" and "invigorating. Supervisors who were part of the Collaborative described that they found it exciting that the professional development provided through the Collaborative, including a recent presentation and video on the use of SEDTL in formative assessment, was now moving more into the "how" and its practical application.

Teacher Candidates' Perspectives

Candidates' Perceptions of SEDTL Incorporation

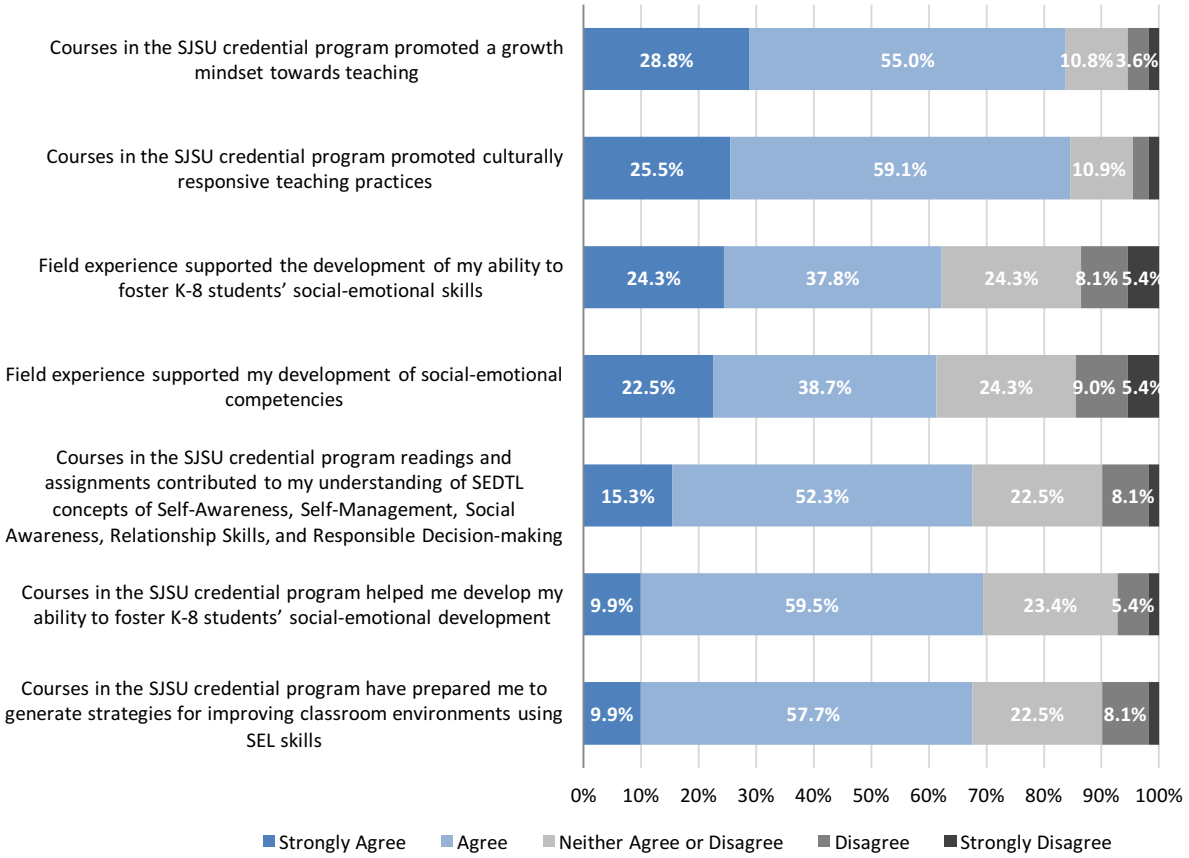
The data gathered from our teacher candidates about how faculty incorporated SEDTL into their teaching and how supervisors incorporated SEDTL into their coaching was very insightful. All candidates reported that faculty and supervisors incorporated SEDTL in their teaching and coaching, respectively. However, student perceptions regarding the depth to which SEDTL was integrated in coursework varied.

Findings from the survey indicate high agreement among the majority of candidates with regard to the incorporation of SEDTL in university courses. The survey asked candidates to rate the extent to which they agreed with seven statements related to the multiple subjects credential program (Exhibit 1). These statements touched on perceptions of SJSU courses and field experiences. Across all statements, the majority of candidates reported strong agreement or agreement. The largest proportions of strong

agreement and agreement were observed for the five items related to SJSU courses. In particular, more than 80 percent of candidates strongly agreed or agreed that courses in the SJSU credential program promoted a growth mindset towards teaching. While more variability was observed across the three remaining course-related items, the proportion of candidates that reported strong agreement or agreement was high, ranging from approximately 67 to 70 percent.

Slightly less positive responses were observed for the two items related to field experiences. More than 13 percent of participants either strongly disagreed or disagreed that *Field experience supported the development of my ability to foster K-8 students' social-emotional skills* and *field experience supported my development of social-emotional competencies.* Despite the higher proportion of disagreement with field experience items, it is important to note that more that 60 percent of candidates either strongly agreed or agreed with each of these items.

Exhibit 1 – Candidate Perceptions of SEDTL Incorporation in University Courses

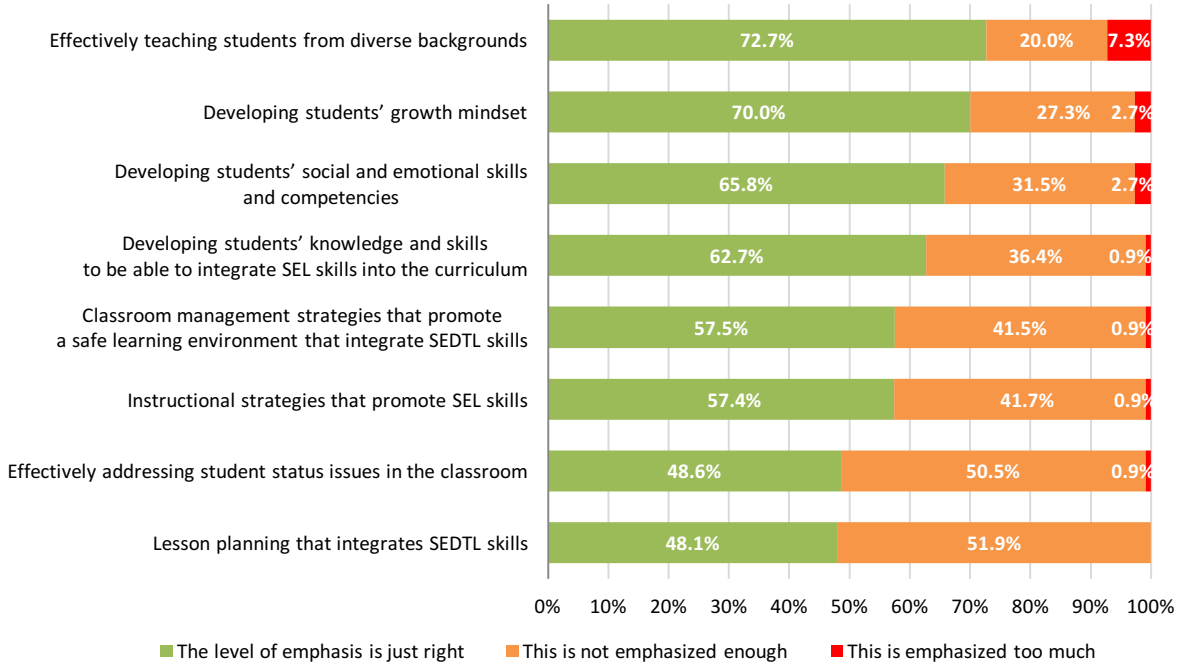


N = 115. Candidates were asked, *Please rate how much you agree or disagree with the following statements regarding the multiple subjects credential program*, and responded using the following options: 1 = Strongly Disagree, 2 = Disagree, 3 = Neither Agree or Disagree, 4 = Disagree, 5 = Strongly Agree. Percentages less than 3.5 percent are not displayed due to spacing limitations. Missing data ranged from 3.5 to 4.3 percent.

We also asked candidates to respond to questions about how well the Department of Elementary Education is addressing the integration of SEDTL. Candidates were presented with eight topics related to SEDTL integration and instructed to determine whether the topic was not emphasized enough, emphasized the right amount, or emphasized too much (Exhibit 2). Across all items, perceptions that a topic was emphasized too much were rare. Ratings of too much emphasis were most prevalent for items that most candidates agreed were emphasized the right amount. For example, while approximately 3 percent of candidates indicated that Developing students' growth mindset and developing students' social and emotional competencies were emphasized too much, 70 and 66 percent of candidates respectively reported that the level of emphasis for these topics was just right.

While over-emphasis does not appear to be a substantial issue, candidates did report that some topics were not emphasized enough in the program. More than half of the respondents reported that lesson planning that integrates SEDTL skills and effectively addressing student status issues in the classroom were not emphasized enough. Similarly, while more than half of the candidates reported that the emphasis was just right, more than 40 percent of candidates indicated that instructional strategies that promote SEL skills and Classroom management strategies that promote a safe learning environment that integrates SEDTL skills were not emphasized enough.

Exhibit 2 – Candidates' Perceptions of Program's Integration of SEDTL



N = 115. Candidates were asked, Based on your experience so far, please rate **how well** the Department of Elementary Education is addressing the integration of the social-emotional dimensions of teaching and learning, and responded using the following options: 1 = This is not emphasized enough, 2 = The level of emphasis is just right, 3 = This is emphasized too much, 4 = I am not familiar with this concept. Candidates who answered, I am not familiar with this concept, ranged from 1.8 to 8.0 percent and were excluded from the analyses. Missing data ranged from 1.8 to 8.0 percent and were excluded from the analyses. Missing data ranged from 1.7 to 2.6 percent.

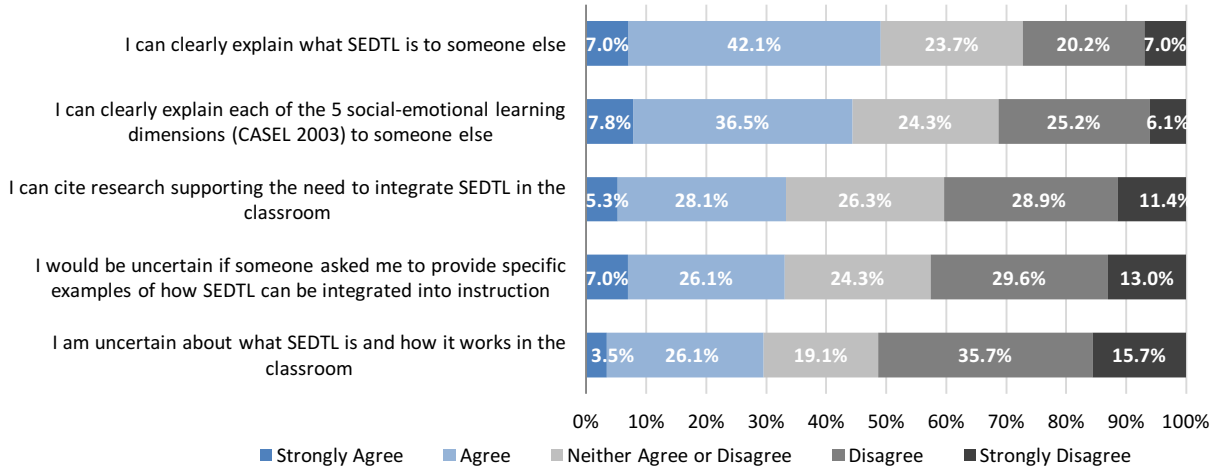
Candidates' Increased SEDTL Content Knowledge

The candidate survey results about the extent to which they demonstrate increased SEDTL content knowledge indicate that while candidates have been exposed to SEDTL strategies in their coursework and through their coaching, there continues to be room for growth in their knowledge and understanding of the model.

Candidate knowledge of SEDTL was assessed with five survey items that asked them to rate their extent of agreement (Exhibit 3). Variation in candidate knowledge was observed across the five items. It appears that candidates feel most prepared to explain SEDTL and each of the five SEL dimensions. Specifically, more than 40 percent of candidates reported they strongly agree or agree with statements about their ability to explain these topics to someone else. Similarly, more than half of candidates strongly disagreed or disagreed that "I am uncertain about what SEDTL is and how it works in the classroom" and more than 40 percent strongly disagreed or disagreed that "I would be uncertain if someone asked me to provide specific examples of how SEDTL can be integrated into instruction".

While a large proportion of candidates reported being knowledgeable about SEDTL across these items, it is important to note that a sizable proportion indicated they neither agree or disagree or responded such that they did not perceive themselves as knowledgeable. For example, while nearly half of participants strongly agreed or agreed that "I can clearly explain what SEDTL is to someone else", the remaining participants (51%) either strongly disagreed, disagreed, or neither agreed or disagreed with this item. The area in which candidates appear to feel least knowledgeable is related to citing research to support the need for SEDTL in the classroom. For this item less than one third of candidates strongly agreed or agreed with this statement and more than one third strongly disagreed or disagreed.

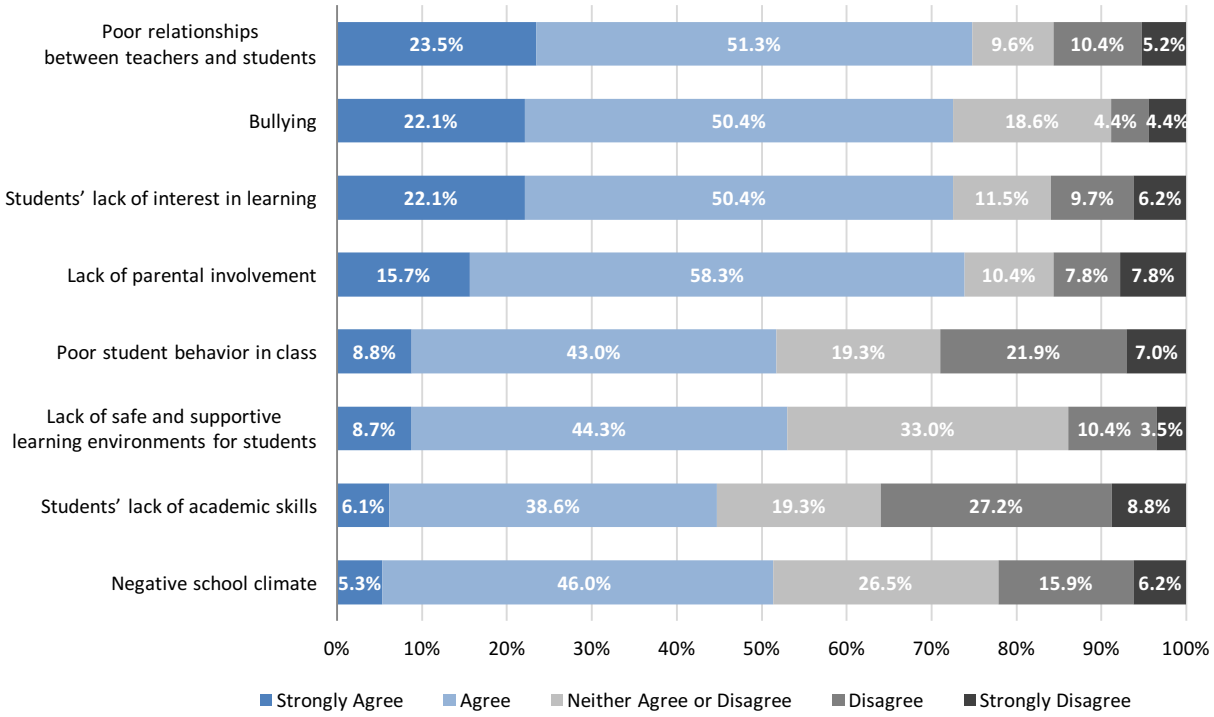
Exhibit 3 – Candidates' Knowledge of SEDTL



N = 115. Candidates were asked, *To what extent do you agree with the following statements about* ***SEDTL****?* And responded using the following options: 1 = Strongly Disagree, 2 = Disagree, 3 = Neither Agree or Disagree, 4 = Agree, 5 = Strongly Agree. Missing data ranged from 0 to 0.9 percent.

In order to better understand Teacher Candidate perceptions toward the students in their classrooms, we asked them to rate their level of agreement with statements about student academic problems (Exhibit 4). Most commonly, candidates perceived student academic problems as largely stemming from poor relationships between teachers and students, bullying, students' lack of interest in learning, and lack of parental involvement. More than 70 percent of candidates strongly agreed or agreed that student problems largely stem from each of these issues. While these issues were most commonly endorsed, more than 40 percent of candidates strongly agreed or agreed that student academic problems stem from each of the remaining issues listed. Among issues that candidates most frequently disagreed with, more than a quarter indicated they strongly disagree or disagree that student academic problems stem from poor student behavior in class or students' lack of academic skills.

Exhibit 4 – Candidates' Perceptions about Students' Academic Problems



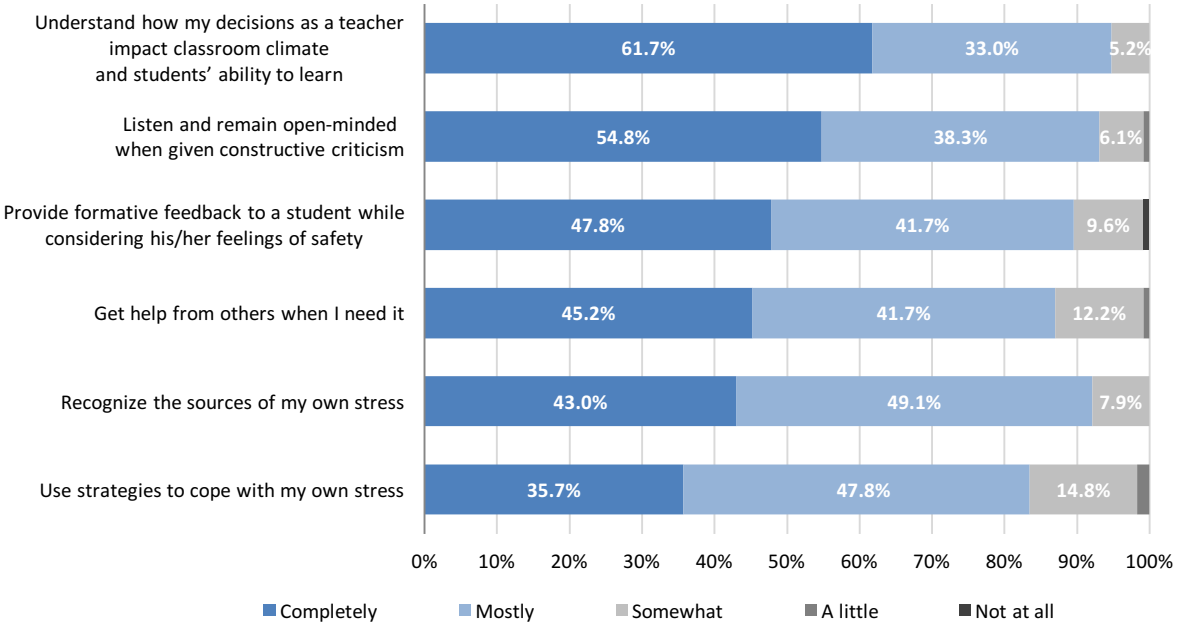
N = 115. Candidates were asked, Based on your own views and experiences, to what extent to do you agree or disagree with the following statements? **Students' academic problems largely stem from…**, and responded using the following options: 1 = Strongly Disagree, 2 = Strongly Agree, 3 = Neither Agree or Disagree, 4 = Agree, 5 = Strongly Agree. Missing data ranged from 0 to 2.1 percent.

Candidates' Incorporation of SEDTL Strategies in their Practice

Two components of the candidate survey and focus group questions were analyzed to address the extent to which candidates incorporated SEDTL strategies into their teaching practice. The survey results overall show that candidates are confident about most SEL skills and the majority feel prepared to teach and use SEL skills. At the same time, focus group findings add another dimension of information regarding the incorporation of SEDTL strategies in their practice. The focus group interviews indicate that a candidate's ability to integrate SEDTL in their practice was largely contingent on the recpetivity of the CT. The focus group interview findings suggest mixed levels of SEDTL incorporation.

Candidates were asked to rate the extent to which they believe they can utilize various practices as a teacher on a 5-point scale ranging from 'completely' to 'not at all' (Exhibit 5). In general it appears that as teachers, candidates believe that they would be able to engage in all six behaviors assessed with at least 83 percent of candidates reporting they would be able to completely or mostly demonstrate each behavior.

Exhibit 5 – Candidates' Self-Rated Ability to Behave Reflectively

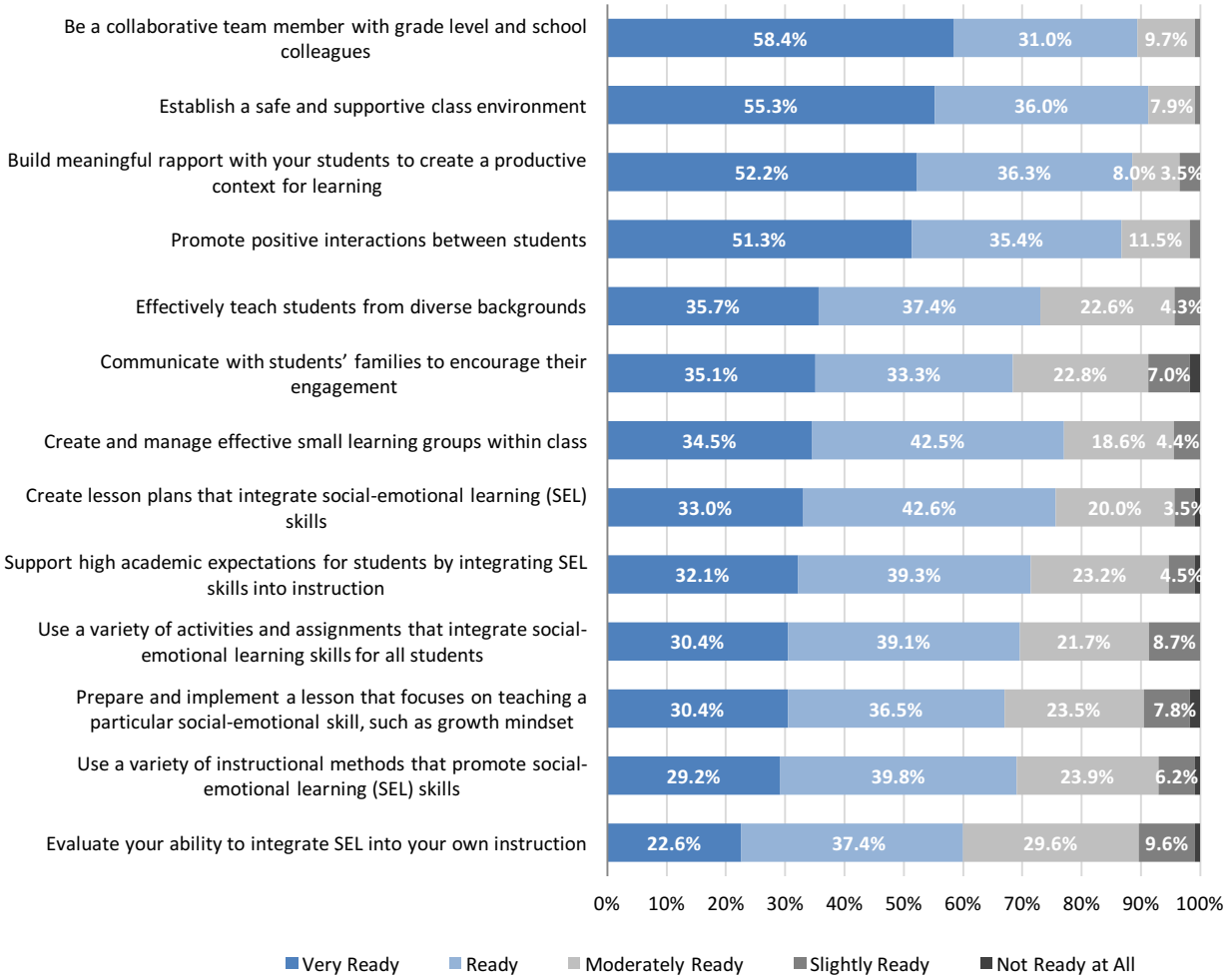


N = 115. Candidates were asked, *Please rate your ability to engage in the following practices as a teacher: As a teacher, I believe I would be able to*…, and responded using the following options: 1 = Not at all, 2 = A little, 3 = Somewhat, 4 = Mostly, 5 = Completely. Percentages less than 3.5 percent are not displayed due to spacing limitations. Missing data ranged from 0 to 0.9 percent.

Candidates' Preparedness for Teaching

Additionally, candidates were asked to rate their level of preparedness for various aspects of teaching (Exhibit 6). More than half of the candidates indicated they were very ready to be a collaborative team member with grade level and school colleagues, establish a safe and supportive class environment, build meaningful rapport with your students to create a productive context for learning, and promote positive interactions between students. For each of these items, at least 86 percent of candidates reported being either very ready or ready to carry out the skill. In addition, for all but one of the remaining items, at least two-thirds of candidates indicated they were very ready or ready to implement the respective teaching skill.

Exhibit 6 – Candidates' Preparedness for Teaching



N = 115. Candidates were asked, *To what extent do you feel ready to do each of the following?*, and responded using the following options: 1 = Not Ready at All, 2 = Slightly Ready, 3 = Moderately Ready, 4 = Ready, 5 = Very Ready, 6 = Not sure what this means. Percentages less than 3.5 percent are not displayed due to spacing limitations. Candidates who answered, *Not sure what this means*, ranged from 0 to 1.8 percent and were excluded from the analyses. Missing data ranged from 0 to 0.9 percent.

The candidate focus group interviews provide another source of evidence regarding candidates' incorporation of SEDTL in their practice. The findings from these focus groups show mixed results, with some candidates experiencing success in using SEDTL in their classroom assignments while others did not have the opportunity to do so. Also of note is that candidates spent a significant amount of time during the focus group interviews connecting their perceived preparedness to the fieldwork experience and levels of support they received from their cooperating teachers. For example, one candidate expressed gratitude about her placement and indicated that the CT positively modeled SEDTL. She stated:

> *I love my [CT]…I feel she does a great job of teaching the whole social emotional learning. She modeled the majority of the first month…then we started doing things together. I feel like she really cares about me as a person. I feel like I put more into my work because I care about her.*

At the same time, candidates shared accounts of CTs demonstrating poor SEDTL use. One candidate stated that observing the CT's lack of attention to SEDTL has helped her growth as a teacher, for she is more aware of practices that she does not want to emulate. The candidate described her CT, who was retiring at the end of the academic year (2014-15) and who had never been a mentor teacher, as regularly put students "on the spot." Another candidate described that the CT repeatedly mocked a low status student in front of the class. When asked how she would define the low status student, she explained that the student was "middle of the road in terms of ability but almost never turned in his homework and had a bad habit of bringing small toys to class. [Also] probably more than once [he] had talked back to her."

Yet, in spite of obstacles in the field placements, when asked if they planned to use SEDTL strategies once they graduated and had their own classrooms, all candidates in the focus groups responded affirmatively. Only one candidate expressed concern that standardized testing requirements and pacing schedules could impede enough time to use SEDTL in the future. This idea triggered an interesting discussion during the focus group, with some candidates suggesting that high stakes testing was more reason to incorporate SEDTL in the classroom.

Programmatic Institutionalization

SJSU Multiple Subject Program Mission/Vision Statement Revision. Given the commitment of faculty to the integration of SEL skill development, the mission/vision statement was changed to include explicit reference to this important strand:

> *This program prepares students to obtain their preliminary credential to teach in K-8 schools, learn to engage in social justice practices, contribute to the development of cultural literacy, provide education that promotes democracy, and develop content knowledge expertise to teach in urban and suburban schools. All the program courses will prepare students to provide instruction for English Learners and students with special needs.* ***They will also learn to set up a supportive classroom environment based on social emotional learning principles*** *and will experience collaborative co-teaching experiences with successful mentor/cooperating teachers in the field.*

Second, the Fall 2015 description for a new tenure track faculty position included as "highly desirable" one's knowledge of, and commitment to the integration of SEDTL practices in teacher preparation. This led the search committee to have conversations with candidates about this topic, something that had never before been mentioned.

District Support

In addition to the commitment the project has received from the SJSU faculty, pilot school districts have offered continuing support for our work with cooperating teachers. As of now, two districts, working with CRTWC project staff, have recruited a growing pool of cooperating teachers to work with our teacher candidates and attend professional development sessions that connect SEL integrated coursework to the field. These pilot districts have also invited project staff to provide professional development for administration, content coaches, and new teacher support providers to begin institutionalizing SEL district-wide.

Conclusion

> *"I believe that beyond being an academic setting, the school environment is an atmosphere of socialization. In addition to ensuring students are academically prepared for the future, it should be the duty of teachers to also ensure they are becoming well-rounded citizens of society. In doing so, elements of SEL should be incorporated into teaching and learning. All the while, as students' social-emotional development is increased; it may lead to a better learning environment for the student, which in turn supports effective teaching."*
> *[Source: Teacher Candidate; Spring 2015 Survey]*

The findings indicate that the CRTWC has made an impact on faculty, supervisors and candidates at SJSU. Both faculty and supervisors changed their practice as a result of their experiences with the CRTWC. Faculty made changes to their pedagogy, their course content, and also the way in which they assess candidates. Supervisors changed their coaching to incorporate SEDTL strategies. The Collaborative provided supervisors with tools to use in their coaching of candidates, and it also provided them a "safe" environment in which they felt valued by other colleagues in the department. Also, candidates gave high marks to the incorporation of SEDTL content in their coursework. Also, the majority of candidates reported that the department placed the right level of emphasis on most of the skills they needed to effectively teach students. Furthermore, candidates rated themselves high on their ability to behave reflectively and on their preparedness for teaching.

The findings also suggest that a high level of commitment among all three groups of stakeholders to the use of SEDTL strategies. The evaluator asked key faculty and supervisors if they would continue using SEDTL strategies in their practice if the Collaborative did not exist, and both groups responded affirmatively with no hesitation. The same was true for the candidates. When the evaluator asked candidates in focus group sessions whether they would continue to use SEDTL after graduating from the credential program, all candidates overwhelmingly responded affirmatively.

Another finding that became evident in the data was the significant role of cooperating teachers (CTs) in the field experiences of candidates. Supervisors raised the issue of CTs as did candidates. Perceptions of the participating CTs were mixed, with reports of both positive experiences as well as negative experiences. While the majority of candidates reported being prepared for teaching, some simultaneously shared that the extent to which they implemented SEDTL strategies in their assigned classrooms was limited due to the CTs.

Study Limitations

While this initial year of data confirms that CRTWC is having an impact, the results are based on people's perceptions rather than their actual activities in the classroom. The SEL Observation Protocol we are now piloting is intended to rectify this limitation by providing a tool to look at actual teacher behavior. An important part of this tool will be not only the in-class protocol but also the follow-up interview questions that will provide a more in-depth look at the extent to which a teacher employs an SEL lens in their instructional decision-making. Second, because of university scheduling issues, we were unable to do both pre and post data gathering of the stakeholders. This has been rectified in Year Two of the study.

Implications for Practice

These findings suggest various implications for the activities of the Collaborative. We highlight the most salient implications here. First, the evidence suggests the need for CTs that understand SEDTL and will encourage these strategies among candidates. This may translate as SJSU placing more of a priority the skill set needed by potential CTs. This also underscores the need for more SEDTL professional development for CTs. Second, the evidence suggests that while candidates express satisfaction with the use of SEDTL concepts and strategies throughout their coursework and the program as a whole, they nonetheless reported limitations in their knowledge of SEDTL. This suggests the need for faculty and supervisors making more explicit the SEDTL research and tools and the links to their courses and the coaching. Third, the evidence suggests a need for faculty and supervisors to identify how the use of SEDTL in candidates' classrooms is making a difference in student learning. The CRTWC Logic Model II (Appendix E) identifies student learning as one of the ultimate goals. Thus far, there is not enough evidence that shows that the Collaborative is making progress toward this goal. This topic will be further explored in Year 3 of the WestEd evaluation.

Next Steps

Identification of high leverage SEL practices

Project staff and faculty became aware of the need to identify high leverage SEL practices that teacher candidates need to see modeled and be able to practice before they are in their own classroom. A guiding question in doing this work has become: What do we want to our candidates doing the first six weeks of school that will provide "SEL anchors" for their work with their students for the rest of the school year?

Identify and address "pressure points" to institutionalize this work in a program

Although the Elementary Education department at San Jose State agreed to add language to their Mission and Vision statement, and to create a series of SEL-related questions to ask of new potential faculty during employment interviews, work still needs to be completed to institutionalize SEDTL in our department. Hopeful steps have been taken; however results of a pilot implementation study during the 2016-17 academic year will provide needed guidance in completing this task.

Final Word

Lasting change that "moves the needle" in our educational system depends, in part, on deep change in teacher preparation. Our work thus far is proof of concept that change in teacher education to integrate SEL is possible. Particularly as states begin to adopt new teacher performance standards that include SEL skills, teacher educators need a roadmap for how to incorporate these skills into their programs and a means of gathering data on the effectiveness of their efforts. Many questions remain such as does the integration of SEDTL in teacher education prepare new teachers who will be more resilient and stay in the profession longer? Would a single course on SEDTL in university preparation programs do just as much as the full integration model we are using? Our work provides the initial highway on that roadmap along with substantiation of its impact. Our hope is that it will support and encourage teacher educators in their efforts to meet the needs of teachers and their students for a diverse democracy.

Appendix A

Social and Emotional Learning (SEL) and Culturally Responsive Teaching (CRT) Competencies

Self-Management

- Demonstrates ability to bounce back from challenges
- Able to persevere in face of challenges
- Uses specific strategies to manage stress effectively
- Sets healthy boundaries between self and others
- Identifies and manages personal and professional goals
- Develops strategies to adapt to new situations

Self-Awareness

- Actions demonstrate awareness of relationship between feelings, thoughts, and behaviors
- Aware of own judgments/biases
- Aware of need for growth mindset
- Aware of cultural components that shape one's world view

Social Awareness

- Able to put self in another's place
- Values diversity
- Able to find and use resources to support all students
- Promotes and encourages multi-cultural viewpoints
- Uses strategies and content to promote social justice
- Involve all students in the learning process

Relationship Skills

- Uses strategies to build/maintain productive relationships
- Listens actively to others
- Able to question others constructively
- Exhibits discretion
- Uses skills/strategies to resolve conflicts productively
- Able to be open-minded when given feedback

Responsible Decision-Making

- Considers well-being of others
- Demonstrates integrity
- Willing to accept responsibility for outcomes
- Considers multiple options before making decision
- Recognized one's ethical responsibility to treat others fairly and with respect
- Maintains high expectations for self and others

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Based on "Social and Emotional Learning Core Competencies." Collaborative for Academic and Social Emotional Learning (CASEL) and work with ePsy Consultancy

Appendix B

The degree to which signature assignments assess the *social-emotional dimensions of teaching and learning* (SEDTL)

Teacher practices	Indirect Assessment Assesses candidate effectiveness in attending to factors associated with SEDTL, but doesn't directly address SEDTL	Explicit prompt Prompts candidates to address SEDTL	Explicit assessment Prompts candidates to address SEDTL, and assesses effectiveness framed in terms of SEDTL	Clearly articulated assessment Prompts candidates to address SEDTL, assesses effectiveness, and provides clear and explicit feedback to candidates framed in terms of SEDTL
Understanding students and their context	103, 108A, 108B, 108C, 108D, 162, 246, PACT	103, 108A, PACT	103, 108A, PACT	103
Identifying or assessing students' needs	108A, 108B, 108C, 108D, 162	108A, 108B, PACT	108B, PACT	
Planning to support students	103, 108A,108C, 108D, 162, PACT, 246	103, PACT	103, PACT	103,
Planning to foster growth	103, 108A, 108C, 108D, 162, PACT, 246	103, PACT	103	103
Enacting plans and monitoring progress	108A, 108B, PACT	108B, PACT		
Collecting, communicating and reflecting on outcomes	108A, 108B, PACT	108B, PACT	PACT	
Setting goals and planning next steps	108A, 108B, PACT	108B, PACT		

Signature assignments included in this analysis:

EDEL 102, Video analysis
EDEL 103, Community Investigation
EDEL 108A, Case Study Assignment
EDEL 108B, Video Analysis of Classroom Teaching
EDEL 108C, Mini-unit in Social Science
EDEL 108D, Integrated Unit Outline
EDEL 162, Lesson Plan Analysis
PACT Teaching Event

Social and emotional dimensions of teaching and Learning (SEDTL) addressed in program assessments

SEL Skills and Assets	Candidates' *own* ability to attend to their own SEDTL skills	Candidates ability to attend to *their students'* SEDTL skills
Self-awareness		
Identifying and recognizing emotions		
Recognizing strengths, needs and values	X	X
Accurate self-perception	X	X
Self-efficacy		X
Self-management		
Impulse control and stress management		
Self-motivation, confidence and perseverance		
Goal setting, organization and follow-through	X	
Social Awareness		
Perspective-taking		
Empathy		
Appreciating diversity	X	
Respect for others	X	
Understanding group dynamics		
Relationship management		
Communication, social engagement, and building relationships		
Working cooperatively		
Negotiation, refusal, and conflict management		
Help seeking and providing		
Decision Making		
Social or emotional problem identification and analysis		
Social or emotional problem solving		
Evaluation and reflection		
Personal, moral and ethical responsibility		

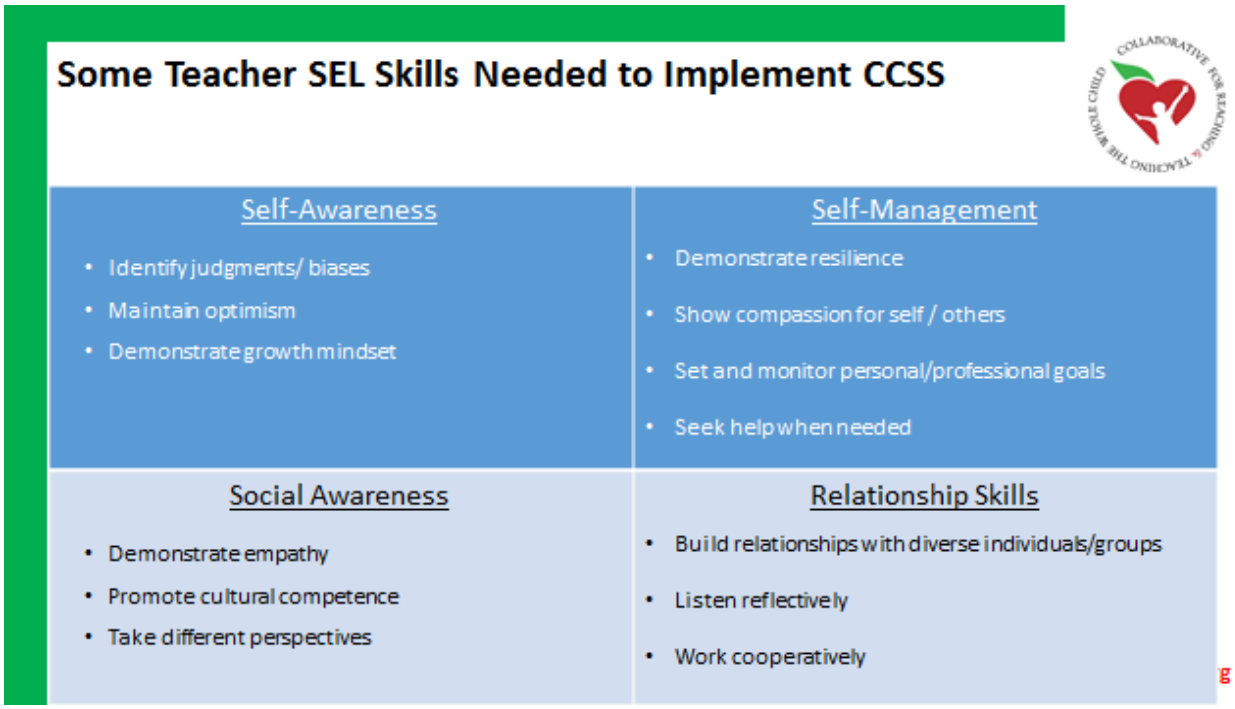
Appendix C

Literacy Common Core Standard	SEL Skills Needed to Achieve Standards
Participate in collaborative conversations with diverse partners	***Social Awareness*** • awareness of strengths in self & others • cultural competence • empathy ***Relationship Skills*** • reflective listening • working cooperatively • conflict resolution
Ask and answer questions to seek help, get information, ask for clarification	***Self-Awareness*** • Able to identify feelings/needs • Has a level of optimism (growth mindset)
Express thoughts, feelings, and ideas clearly SJSU Collaborative for Reaching & Teaching the Whole Child 2014	***Self-Management skills*** • Resilience • Able to regulate emotions • Perseverance

Mathematical Practices (two examples)	SEL Skills Needed to Achieve Standards
Make sense of problems and persevere in solving them	***Self-Awareness*** • Use self talk • Can identify strengths in self • Can identify relationship between feelings, thoughts, and behaviors ***Self-Management*** • Resilience in the face of obstacles • Regulate one's emotions • Persevere • Pause between stimulus and response
Construct viable arguments and critique the reasoning of others	***Social Awareness*** • Identify judgments and biases • Awareness of strengths in self and others • Perspective taking • Reflective listening
SJSU Collaborative for Reaching & Teaching the Whole Child 2014	

NGSS Practices	SEL Skills Needed to Achieve
Asking Questions & Defining Problems	Develop relationships to create a safe, risk-taking environment
Developing & Using Models	Active listening; collaboration skills (Social Awareness)
Planning & Carrying out Investigations	Ask for & receive feedback; have confidence in one's abilities (Self-Awareness); foster growth mindset
Engaging in Arguments from Evidence	Be open to others' ideas; engage in respectful dialogue with diverse partners

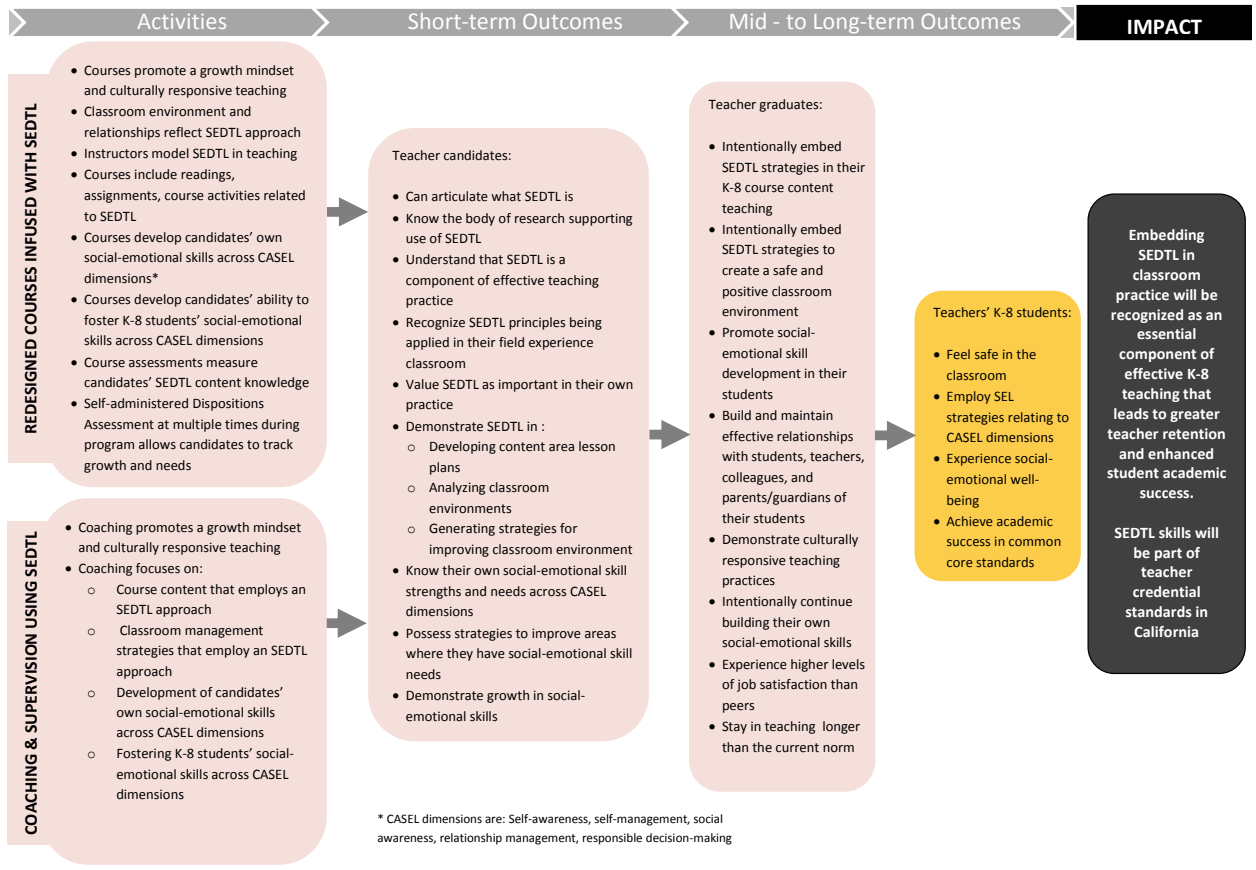
Appendix D


Some Teacher SEL Skills Needed to Implement CCSS
Self-Awareness
• Identify judgments/ biases
• Maintain optimism
• Demonstrate growth mindset
Self-Management
• Demonstrate resilience
• Show compassion for self / others
• Set and monitor personal/professional goals
• Seek help when needed
Social Awareness
• Demonstrate empathy
• Promote cultural competence
• Take different perspectives
Relationship Skills
• Build relationships with diverse individuals/groups
• Listen reflectively
• Work cooperatively

Appendix E

The Collaborative for Reaching and Teaching the Whole Child

LOGIC MODEL #2: ACTIVITIES AND OUTCOMES FOR PRE-SERVICE TEACHERS



* CASEL dimensions are: Self-awareness, self-management, social awareness, relationship management, responsible decision-making

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