



Teacher Survey
on Social Emotional Learning

Findings & Observations





Contents

Executive Summary

Survey Findings

Discussion

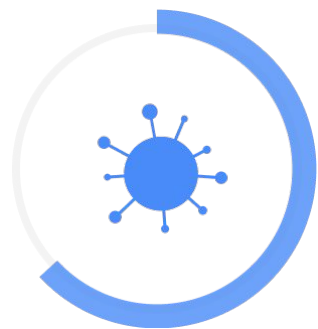
Appendix

01

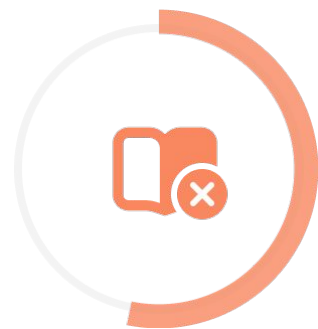
Executive Summary

Executive Summary

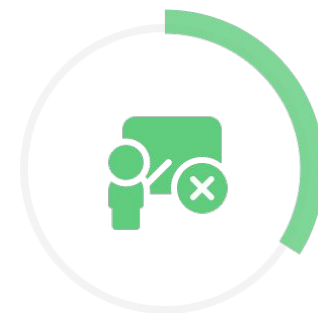
- In 2021, 37 percent of high school students reported poor mental health during the pandemic, while 44 percent said they persistently felt sad or hopeless during the past year.
- Schools are increasingly turning to social emotional learning (SEL) programs to help students – and teachers – cope. Spending for SEL instructional materials was \$1.725 billion for the 2021-2022 school year.
- ReadTheory surveyed hundreds of teachers to get their insights into the challenges of implementing SEL programs and came up with extremely interesting results and recommendations for schools
- The survey revolved around 4 topics: teachers' sentiment about SEL, resources spent on teaching SEL, understanding social emotional needs and the level of support families provide in the effort to teach SEL



63% of teachers believe that **mental wellness throughout the pandemic has impacted instruction**



53% of teachers stated that they **did not receive any SEL training**



34% of teachers indicate that they **rarely or never teach SEL skills**



47% of teachers feel that **families do not have the resources to teach SEL at home**

02

Survey Findings

Survey Methodology

- In May 2022, ReadTheory surveyed 1,777 teachers, separated into 4 groups
- Each group received a 5-question survey about one of the following topics:
 - General background on social emotional learning
 - Time and resources spent on teaching social emotional learning
 - Understanding social emotional needs
 - Literacy and family support
- Teachers were prompted to take the survey at ReadTheory.org
- Of the 1,777 teachers that started the survey, 1,685 (95%) completed it

Survey Findings

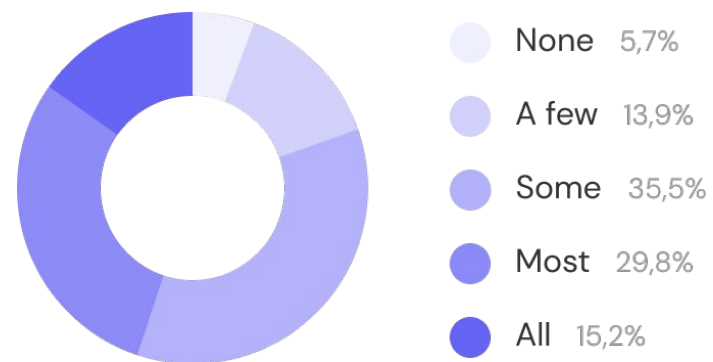
- Teachers believe that teaching SEL skills is important

- 80% of survey participants indicated that some, most, or all students need support with social emotional needs

- 89% of survey participants indicated that teaching social emotional learning skills is important, fairly important, or very important

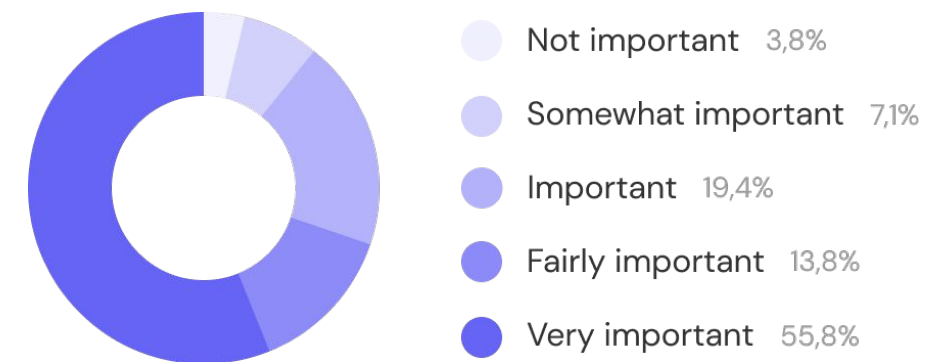
Question 1.3

Approximately how many of your students need support with social-emotional needs?



Question 1.1

How important do you think it is to teach social-emotional skills?

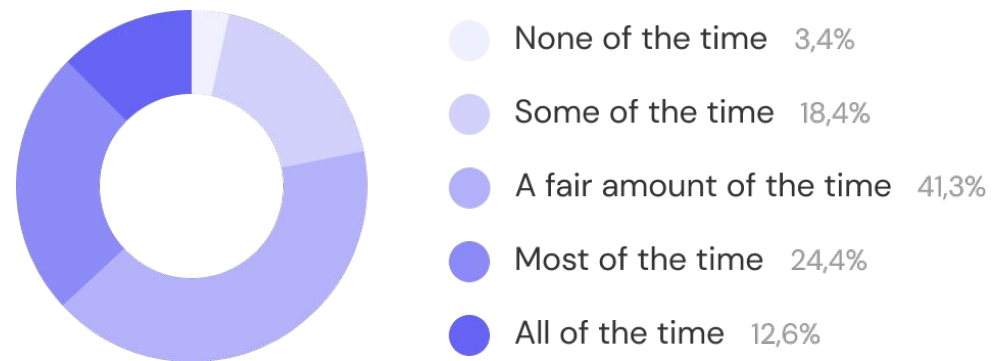


Survey Findings

- Students’ social emotional needs affect their academic performance in school
- 97% of survey participants indicated that social emotional needs affect academic performance some to all of the time

Question 3.2

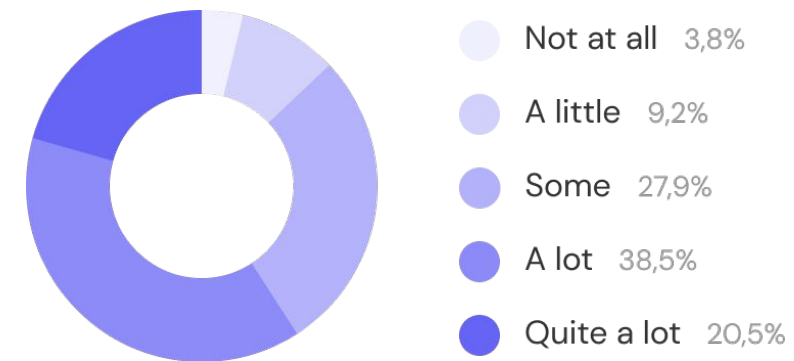
How often do student social-emotional needs affect their academic performance in school?



- The pandemic has impacted students’ motivation to learn
- 59% of survey participants stated that the pandemic has impacted their students’ motivation a lot or quite a lot

Question 3.3

How much has the pandemic appeared to have impacted students' sense of motivation to learn?



Survey Findings

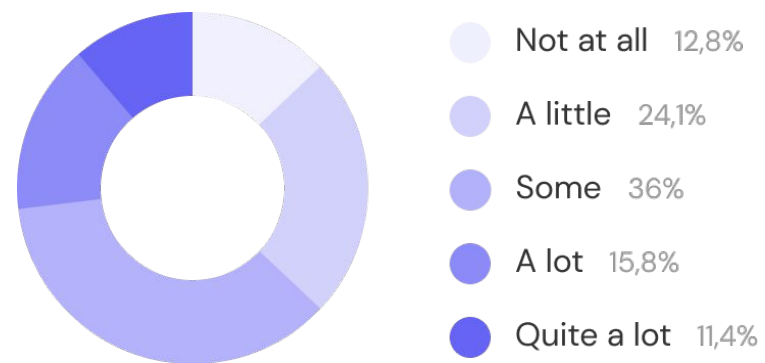
- Teachers' own mental wellness throughout the pandemic has affected their performance

- 63% of survey participants stated that their mental wellness throughout the pandemic has impacted instruction some, a lot, or quite a lot

- 11% of survey participants indicated that their mental wellness had impacted their instruction quite a lot

Question 1.5

How much has your own mental wellness throughout the pandemic impacted your instruction?



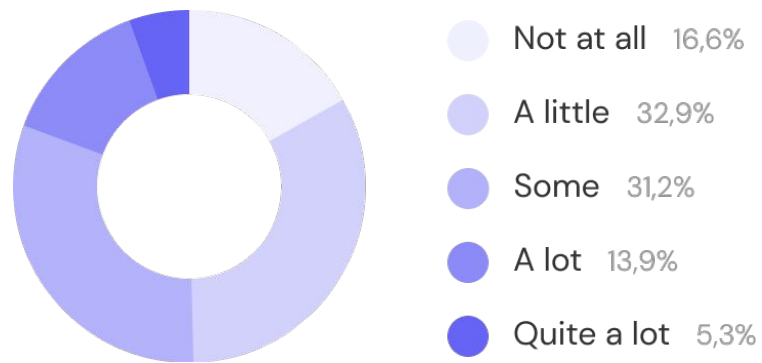
Survey Findings

- Lack of time prevents teachers from teaching SEL skills

- 50% of respondents indicated they “do not at all” or “little” agree with the statement that they have enough time to teach SEL skills in the classroom (2-1)

Question 2.1

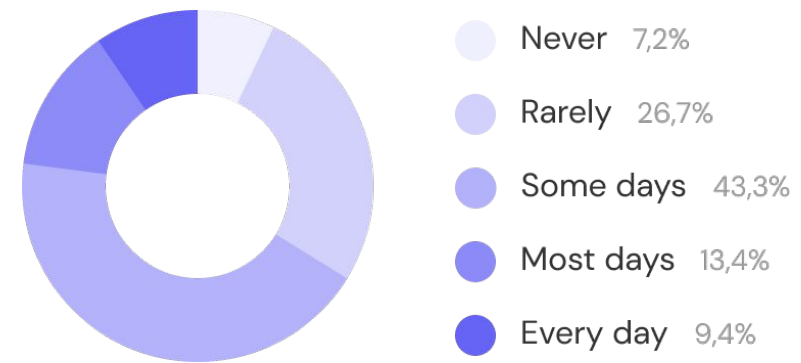
To what extent do you feel that you have enough time to teach social-emotional skills in the classroom?



- 34% of survey respondents indicated that they “rarely” or “never” teach SEL skills

Question 2.2

How often do you teach social-emotional learning in your classroom?



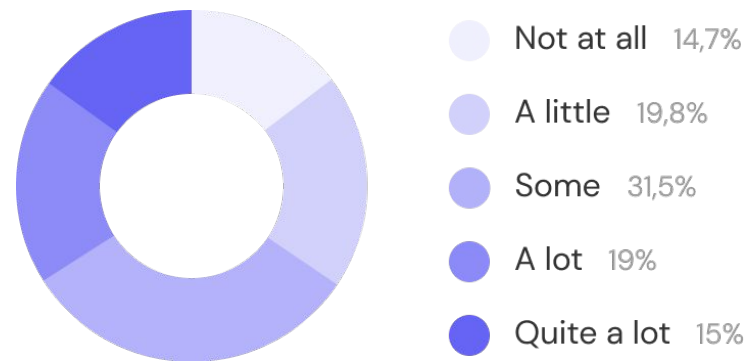
Survey Findings

- Lack of time prevents teachers from teaching SEL skills

- 15% of survey respondents indicated that their school leadership teams do “not at all” support allocating classroom time to teach SEL

Question 2.4

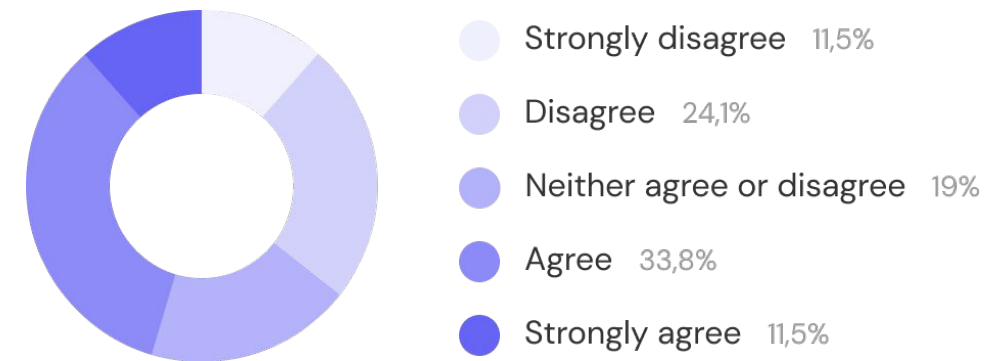
To what extent does your school leadership team support the use of time to teach social-emotional learning in the classroom?



- 36% of survey respondents indicated that they strongly disagree or disagree with the statement that they have protected time during the school day to teach SEL skills

Question 4.1

To what extent do you agree with the statement, "I have protected time during the school day to teach social emotional learning skills to my students"?



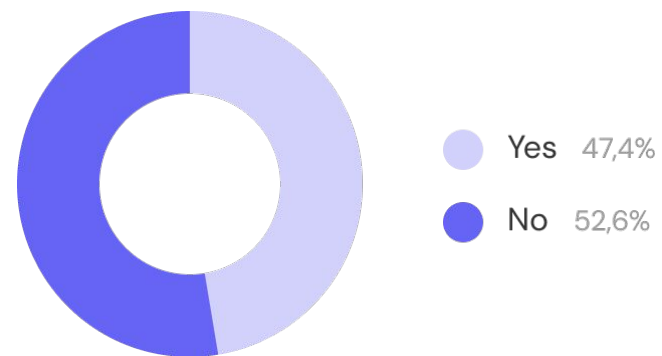
Survey Findings

- Teachers lack the training to teach SEL skills

- 53% of survey respondents have not received training to teach SEL

Question 2.5

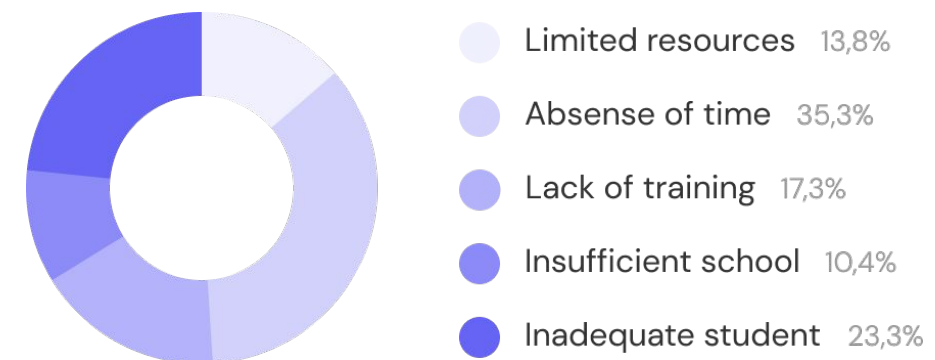
Have you received training to teach social-emotional learning skills to your students?



- 17% of survey respondents stated that lack of training was the greatest challenge they face in helping students' develop strong SEL skills

Question 1.4

What is the greatest challenge you face in helping your students develop strong social-emotional skills?



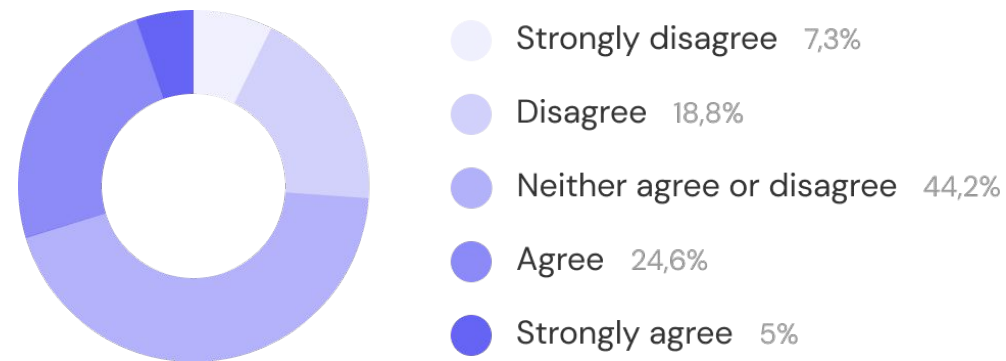
Survey Findings

- Teachers also feel that they lack support from families to teach SEL skills

- 26% of respondents strongly disagreed or disagreed with the statement that their students' families support SEL learning at home

Question 4.4

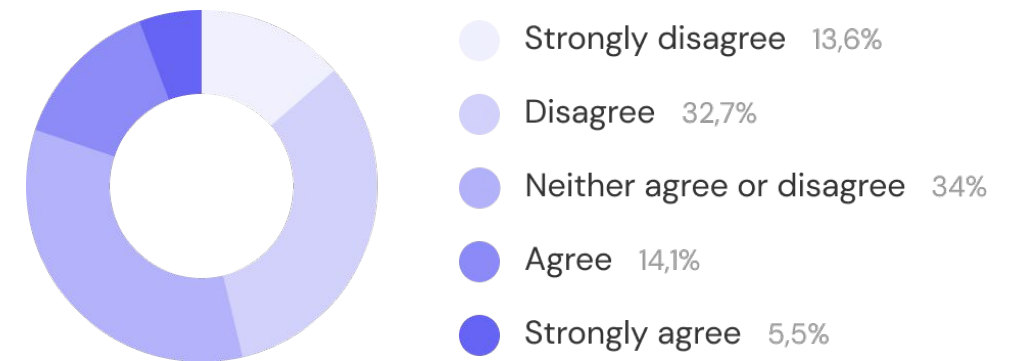
To what extent do you agree with the statement, "My students' families support social emotional learning at home"?



- 47% of survey respondents strongly disagreed or disagreed that families have the resources they need to teach SEL at home

Question 4.5

To what extent do you agree with the statement, "Families have the resources they need to support social emotional learning at home"?

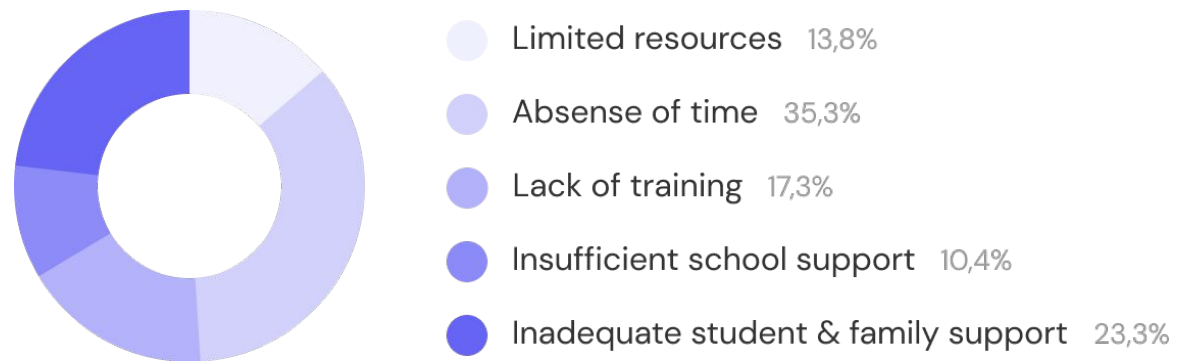


Survey Findings

- Teachers also feel that they lack support from families to teach SEL skills
- 23% of survey respondents stated that the greatest challenge in helping their students develop strong social emotional skills is inadequate student and family support

Question 1.4

What is the greatest challenge you face in helping your students develop strong social-emotional skills?



03

Discussion

3 Pillars of SEL Curricula

1. Cultivating self-awareness

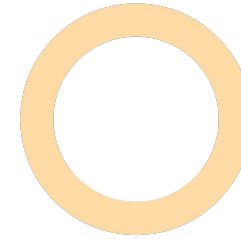
- a. Identifying one's feelings
- b. Communicating one's feelings with others

2. Building empathy

- a. Identifying others' feelings
- b. Valuing the perspectives of others

3. Problem-solving skills

- a. Learning coping skills to manage emotions
- b. Developing social skills to communicate effectively
- c. Resolving conflicts with peers



Recommended Action Plan

- 1. Evaluate the professional learning needs of educational practitioners for teaching SEL skills**
 - a. Schools need to identify the learning needs of their teachers before implementing an SEL curriculum. (Utilize tools such as Google Forms or Survey Monkey to survey teachers and families anonymously)
 - b. Analyze survey results to determine the highest-priority needs

- 2. Select resources and instructional strategies to implement SEL instruction across all grade levels**
 - a. Using the survey results, identify an SEL curriculum that will address the needs of teachers and families
 - b. Gather resources that are explicit and easy to implement
 - c. Allocate time during the school day for teachers to implement the SEL curriculum

- 3. Schedule and implement professional development**
 - a. Staff training is critical for success in implementing SEL programs. Identify two dates during the school year for teacher training, one at the beginning of the year to introduce the curriculum and one in the middle of the year to fine-tune and provide additional strategies and tools
 - b. Implement professional development for all school staff – from teachers to cafeteria workers

Recommended Action Plan

4. **Create a school committee** with a wide range of stakeholders to oversee the implementation of new instructional strategies
 - a. Schools need to identify the learning needs of their teachers before implementing an SEL curriculum. (Utilize tools such as Google Forms or Survey Monkey to survey teachers and families anonymously)
 - b. Analyze survey results to determine the highest-priority needs

5. **Implement SEL curriculum** and provide opportunities for families to engage in school activities
 - a. Communicate to families what students are learning
 - b. Provide opportunities for families to engage in follow-up conversations and learning activities at home
 - c. Offer support to families engaging in these conversations with their children

Recommended Action Plan

6. Evaluate effectiveness of SEL curriculum through teacher and student surveys

- a. Set timetables for measuring your progress, e.g. quarterly or monthly surveys
- b. Interview families and stakeholders
- c. Analyze feedback from surveys and interviews
- d. Share the results with teachers

7. Make modifications to SEL and implement the changes

- a. Make modifications on a timely basis
- b. Communicate the changes to staff
- c. Implement them with fidelity

Additional Suggestions

- Establish positive, nurturing learning environments that foster the development of student and teacher relationships (Weissburg & Cascarino, 2013). For example:
 - Greet students at door
 - Get to know students' interests and learn about their home lives
 - Create time during instructional day to discuss non-academic topics
 - Provide consistent positive feedback
 - Affirm students' strengths
- Integrate SEL into other curriculum areas (Daunic et al, 2013)
 - Select read-alouds that have SEL content, such as characters navigating anxiety, perfectionism, or depression
 - Teach vocabulary to help students articulate their thoughts and feelings
 - Provide writing prompts that allow students to express themselves and relate instructional content to their own lives

Additional Suggestions

- **Teach social emotional learning through morning meetings**
 - Establish routine of a daily meeting with the class before instruction begins for the day
 - Have students sit in a circle and take turns discussing a prompt about non- academic topics
 - Explicitly teach students how to make eye contact, actively listen, and respond to peers

- **Foster social emotional learning through 1:1 and small group discussions**
 - Talk with students individually about their frustrations, needs, and struggles
 - Validate students' concerns
 - Express interest in supporting students and making them feel safe
 - Facilitate discussions among small groups of students to resolve conflicts

Additional Suggestions

- Provide families with resources and strategies to support social emotional learning at home (Lila, 2020)
 - Build relationships with families early in the school year
 - Communicate to families what is being taught at school and how they can follow up at home
 - Connect families with community partners that can provide counseling or resources for students who have experienced trauma

04

Appendix

What is ReadTheory?

ReadTheory provides high-quality reading comprehension practice to students at all levels and is used by millions of teachers and students around the world.

Our adaptive technology selects reading passages to match each student's abilities, creating an individualized program for every student that keeps them all motivated as they learn and grow, providing the right balance of challenge and support.

With a simple plug-and-play approach, teachers are able to get their students up and running quickly.

Students practice on their own, and based on advanced insights and dashboards, teachers intervene when they feel it is appropriate.



Survey Questions

- **General background on social emotional learning**
 1. How important do you think it is to teach social-emotional skills?
 2. How have you seen the pandemic impact your students' social-emotional wellbeing?
 3. Approximately how many of your students need support with social-emotional needs?
 4. What is the greatest challenge you face in helping your students develop strong social-emotional skills?
 5. How much has your own mental wellness throughout the pandemic impacted your instruction?

- **Time & resources spent on teaching social emotional learning**
 1. To what extent do you agree with the statement, "I have protected time during the school day to teach social emotional learning skills to my students"?
 2. How often do you teach social-emotional learning in your classroom?
 3. To what extent do you have the resources you need to teach social-emotional skills to your students?
 4. To what extent does your school leadership team support the use of time to teach social-emotional learning in the classroom?
 5. Have you received training to teach social-emotional learning skills to your students?

Survey Questions

- Understanding social emotional needs

1. What is the most common social-emotional challenge that students are facing in schools today?
2. How often do students' social-emotional needs affect their academic performance in school?
3. How much has the pandemic appeared to have impacted students' sense of motivation to learn?
4. How much has the pandemic appeared to have negatively impacted students' self esteem?
5. What do you feel is the most important way schools can better address students' social-emotional needs?

- Literacy and family support

1. To what extent do you feel that you have enough time to teach social-emotional skills in the classroom?
2. How often do you teach social emotional learning in literacy?
3. To what extent do you agree with the statement, "I have access to diverse literature to help me teach social emotional learning skills"?
4. To what extent do you agree with the statement, "My students' families support social emotional learning at home"?
5. To what extent do you agree with the statement, "Families have the resources they need to support social emotional learning at home"?

References

Ashdown, D. M., & Bernard, M. E. (2012). Can explicit instruction in social and emotional learning skills benefit the social-emotional development, well-being, and academic achievement of young children? *Early Childhood Education Journal*, 39(6), 397-405.

<https://doi.org/10.1007/s10643-011-0481-x>

Daunic, A., Corbett, N., Smith, S., Barnes, T., Santiago-Poventud, L., Chalfant, P., Pitts, D., & Gleaton, J. (2013). Integrating social-emotional learning with literacy instruction: an intervention for children at risk for emotional and behavioral disorders. *Behavioral Disorders*, 39(1), 43+.

<https://link.gale.com/apps/doc/A366864691/AONE?u=wilm99594&sid=bookmark-AONE&xid=20748ea9>

Lawson, G. M., McKenzie, M. E., Becker, K. D., Selby, L., & Hoover, S. A. (2019). The core components of evidence-based social emotional learning programs. *Prevention Science*, 20(4), 457-467.

<https://doi.org/10.1007/s11121-018-0953-y>

Philibert, C.T. (2016). *Everyday SEL in Elementary School: Integrating Social-Emotional Learning and Mindfulness Into Your Classroom* (1st ed.). Routledge.

<https://doi-org.liblink.uncw.edu/10.4324/9781315697079>

Weissberg, R. P., & Cascarino, J. (2013). Academic learning + social-emotional learning = national priority. *Phi Delta Kappan*, 95(2), 8.

<https://www.proquest.com/scholarly-journals/academic-learning-social-emotional-national/docview/1438894163/se-2?accountid=14606>