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# Social Emotional Learning: The Impacts of an Implemented Plan at a Private Christian School in the Urban Setting

## **Abstract**

This action research study investigated the effects of a social emotional learning plan implemented in a third grade classroom at a Christian school in an urban setting. Participants were seventy three third grade students. These students participated in a pre and post survey to determine the difference a social emotional learning plan may have on student behavior. The experimental group participated in five embedded social emotional lesson plans as well as weekly class meetings for a six-week period. The results of this study suggest that a social emotional learning plan benefits students in a behavioral way.

## **Document Type**

Thesis

## **Degree Name**

Master of Education (MEd)

## **Department**

Graduate Education

## **First Advisor**

Steve Holtrop

## **Keywords**

Master of Education, thesis, social emotional learning, school children, behavioral assessment of children, Christian education

## **Subject Categories**

Curriculum and Instruction | Education

## **Comments**

Action Research Report Submitted in Partial Fulfillment Of the Requirements for the Degree of Master of Education

Social Emotional Learning:  
The Impacts of an Implemented Plan at a Private Christian School in the Urban Setting

by  
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Dordt College  
B.A. Calvin College, 2010

Action Research Report  
Submitted in Partial Fulfillment  
Of the Requirements for the  
Degree of Master of Education

Department of Education  
Dordt College  
Sioux Center, Iowa  
April, 2017

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### **Abstract**

This action research study investigated the effects of a social emotional learning plan implemented in a third grade classroom at a Christian school in an urban setting. Participants were seventy three third grade students. These students participated in a pre and post survey to determine the difference a social emotional learning plan may have on student behavior. The experimental group participated in five embedded social emotional lesson plans as well as weekly class meetings for a six-week period. The results of this study suggest that a social emotional learning plan benefits students in a behavioral way.

*Keywords:* Social Emotional Learning



## **Introduction**

The Collaborative for Academic, Social, and Emotional Learning (CASEL) is proposing an interesting practice: promoting integrated academic, social, and emotional learning for all children. A survey of teachers commissioned by CASEL in 2013 found 93 percent of teachers want a greater focus on social and emotional learning in schools. Social emotional learning (SEL) can be defined as the processes 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 a maintain positive relationships, and make responsible decisions (Durlack, 2011). Through the lens of a social emotional learning plan, students' learning is driven by five developmental competencies: self-awareness, self-management, social awareness, relationship management, and responsible decision-making. Notice that the competencies are driven by the self. Preparing a student to be their best self begins with giving them the tools needed to navigate this life. The need for a SEL program at a private Christian school in an urban setting is only increasing as students' needs increase – inability to manage emotions, lack of empathy, unable to work in a group, unable to follow rules, unable to act respectfully.

## **Problem**

As teachers in a Christian school setting, we view our students as image bearers of God. If they are image bearers, we need to be teaching in such a way that reaches the heart of who they are. We teach in a holistic way. We view the student not only based on his or her academic ability, but we also take into account his or her spiritual, social, emotional, athletic, musical, artistic, etc. abilities. The problem is that the social emotional needs of each student can get lost within the rigorous desire for academic gain. While academic achievement is something to be

proud of and give glory to God for, there are other factors in a student's life that build a foundation of truth. Often in education, the end goal is driven by intellectual growth alone. Bouffard and Jones (2012) write that the baggage our students are carrying into the classroom outweighs the perseverance to do well, the desire to make friends, and the motivation to succeed. When students are not socially and emotionally ready for class, they suffer cognitively, affectively, and behaviorally. When students are not socially and emotionally cared for, we are doing them a disservice. School culture has shifted over the years, but we are dealing with the same basic factor: children. These children need to be cared for socially, emotionally, spiritually, and academically.

### **Research Questions**

A social emotional learning plan makes sense for the Christian educator. Developing the student as a whole is an important piece of the puzzle. Through holistic education, a SEL plan can arise and play a vital role in the school experience each child receives.

The main questions driving this research are:

- 1) Is there a need for a SEL plan at a private Christian school in an urban setting?
- 2) Are there cognitive, affective, and behavioral rationales for a SEL plan?
- 3) How can the research be used to implement a SEL plan in a private Christian school in an urban setting?

### **Definitions**

*Affective* is used in terms of a student's feelings or emotions.

*Behavioral* is defined as a student's reaction to an environmental situation.

*Cognitive* means the mental activity within a student's mind (such as thinking, understanding, learning, and remembering).

*Holistic Education* refers to an education that treats the child as a whole, taking into account the many parts that make them who they are: spiritual, social, academic, athletic, artistic, musical, etc.

*Self-awareness* is accurately assessing one's feelings, interests, values, and strengths; self-confidence falls under this description.

*Social awareness* is taking the perspective of and empathizing with others; recognizing and appreciating individual and group similarities and differences; recognizing and using family, school, and community resources.

*Self-management* is regulating one's emotions to handle stress, control impulses, and persevere in overcoming obstacles; setting and monitoring progress toward personal and academic goals; expressing emotions appropriately.

*Relationship management* is establishing and maintaining healthy and rewarding cooperative relationships; resisting inappropriate social pressure; preventing, managing, and resolving interpersonal conflict; seeking help when needed.

*Responsible decision making* is making decisions based on consideration of ethical standards, safety concerns, appropriate social norms, respect for others, and probable consequences of various actions; applying decision-making skills to academic and social situations; contributing to the well-being of one's school and community.

**Summary**

The reality is that the world is changing around us. The world twenty years ago is not the same as it is today. Students are facing different struggles and coming to school with different kinds of baggage. Vernon (2006) writes that while many young people master life challenges, childhood stress is becoming an epidemic and as a result depression and suicide are on the rise. As a result of the world changing, school culture is also changing. Schools need to come together on this issue of social emotional learning and stand next to their students coming from so many different walks of life in a tangible way. Schools need to provide the opportunity for all learners to be successful, supported, and secure. Providing the professional development necessary for teachers to effectively implement a social emotional learning plan in their classrooms will begin to restore the world around us.

## Literature Review

In order to understand the impacts of an implemented social emotional learning (SEL) plan, it is first important to define what social emotional learning is. The Collaborative for Academic, Social, and Emotional Learning (CASEL) (2013) defines SEL as the processes 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. In a report entitled *The Missing Piece* (2013) authors further describe SEL as involving five specific areas: self-awareness, self-management, social awareness, relationship skills, and responsible decision-making. There is increasing research that defends and recommends that a social emotional approach to learning will benefit students cognitively, affectively, and behaviorally. For example, as recently as 1994, the Institute of Medicine reported that mental health promotion would not be considered as a preventative intervention. However, as more research was conducted, in 2009 the Institute of Medicine reported that the promotion of competence, self-esteem, mastery and social inclusion can be a foundation for prevention and treatment of mental, emotional, and behavioral disorders. Research has come a long way in just 15 years. In the present paper, the results of an implemented social emotional learning plan are investigated. It is hypothesized that the implementation of a SEL plan will aide in the reduction of behavior related incidents at a private Christian school in the urban setting. The following literature review attempts to demonstrate and support this hypothesis as well as give foundational evidence for the importance of an implemented plan. The literature review takes a closer look into teacher surveys surrounding the idea of social emotional learning,

bullying tendencies over the years, the documented results of an implemented SEL plan in schools across the nation, and the proven need for an SEL plan within schools.

CASEL has been a driving force behind much of the research on social emotional learning. *The Missing Piece* (2013), a report generated from CASEL research, provides evidence for the benefit of a SEL plan based on a national survey. The survey took into account over 600 educators nationwide ranging from prekindergarten to high school. There are three main themes that the researchers found as a result of the survey: teachers understand, value, and endorse SEL, teachers believe SEL helps students achieve in school and life, and teachers identify key accelerators for SEL. Research supports the explicit SEL strategies and approaches, and the researchers encourage immediate implementation. Nearly all teachers included in this report (95%) believe that SEL is teachable and beneficial to students of all ages. The survey also found that 80% view SEL as a solution to the problem of negative school climate. One limitation to this study is the lack of student opinion in the survey. Teachers make up an important implementation piece; they may even affect the results of the implementation plan, but this research does not specifically discuss the behavioral impact of a SEL plan.

While teachers play a vital role in the implementation, it is also important to find research related to the benefits of a social emotional learning plan in relation to a student's cognitive, affective, and behavioral areas. Another report generated from CASEL (2008) researchers is a meta-analysis of 317 studies including 324,303 students. This report examines the results of three large scale reviews of research on the impact of social and emotional plans implemented in elementary and middle school classrooms. The three areas reviewed were universal, indicated, and after-school. The universal review was conducted with a general student body and no known behavioral or emotional difficulties. The indicated review took into account interventions for

students who displayed early signs of behavioral or emotional problems. The after school review took a closer look at how implemented programs worked in an after school setting. Six main findings were identified as a result of the meta-analysis. One finding was that students in an SEL program improved socially, academically, and personally. Another finding was that SEL programs were effective in both school and afterschool settings. A third finding was that positive effects of the SEL implementation remained over time, but the most apparent effects were right after the intervention was conducted. Fourth, staff implementation was the most beneficial. Fifth, SAFE (sequenced, active, focused, and explicit) practices were the most effective across the schools. Finally, SEL programs are among the most successful interventions in relation to a student's holistic education. The two limitations found throughout the meta-analysis were: the difficulty to determine if teaching certain skills affected some outcomes more than others, and the difficulty to measure the persistence of SEL programs. Despite the limitations, the research supports the positive impact a SEL plan can have on schools, classrooms, and students.

Transitioning into the second research question, discussing the implementation of a SEL plan, it is important to note a few effective plans that have already been researched. Over the course of a three year period, Porche, Grossman, Biro, MacKay, and Rivers (2014) reviewed the implementation and results of Open Circle Curriculum. The research included approximately 7,000 students, 400 classrooms, and 23 schools. Open Circle encourages teachers to have circle time with their students twice weekly. During this fifteen minute time, community is being built. The idea is that through community, students will build prosocial behaviors and will feel as though the climate in the classroom is conducive to learning and succeeding. The teachers were given professional development on the curriculum and expected to implement it in their

classrooms. Through observation, and annual pre and post teacher surveys, the researchers were able to conclude that almost 90% of the staff endorsed the plan and 40% strongly agreed that the plan should be shared with others. The importance of creating a school culture that is inclusive of a student's social and emotional state is clear through this Open Circle Curriculum review.

Another intervention that has been researched is Student Success Skills (SSS). Researchers Webb, Carey, Villares, Wells, and Sayer (2013) conducted their research in schools in Massachusetts while Mariani, Webb, Villares, and Brigman (2013) conducted research in schools in Florida. There were 4,321 fifth graders across 235 classrooms in 60 different schools that were involved in the student success skills intervention. This intervention was created to teach students social and emotional learning skills that are fundamental for their future. The students were clustered by random design. There were baseline data collected, data collected at the six week mark, and data again collected at the thirty week point. As a result of the implemented intervention, students had lower test anxiety, higher engagement in lessons, higher levels of cooperation, and improvement in social skills.

Studies have shown that bullying is quite prevalent in schools today. SEL is a promising way to impact students at the individual and peer level. SEL meets students where they are and gives them tools to combat bullying. Smith and Low (2013) in their article on social emotional learning and bullying prevention defend the practice of SEL as one of the most validated methods to preventing bullying. They make the claim that by building a student's skills and confidence in attitudes on the individual and peer level schools are doing themselves a service. Students gain the skills to positively interact with others and assert themselves in a social setting, bullies and victims alike can gain adequate skills to de-escalate or dissolve social confusion. In their research, Smith and Low also mention the limitation that SEL plans cannot stand alone.



Teachers and schools cannot expect to implement a lesson every once in a while on social emotional learning and see results. An SEL plan needs to be infused regularly throughout the curriculum. The toolbox students are able to develop over the course of the imbedded lessons can be crucial when they face difficult peer situations. More tools in the toolbox can help students become more independent in dealing with tough situations in and out of school.

While a curriculum rich in social emotional skills can aide in the reduction of bullies, it can also benefit student's cognitive potential. In a study completed by Durlack, Weissberg, Dymnicki, Taylor, and Schellinger (2011), a meta-analysis was conducted asking the question: What works for SEL interventions? The research included 213 school based SEL programs and 270,034 kindergarten through high school aged students. An important finding in their meta-analysis was an 11-percentile gain in academic achievement. The cognitive aspect of a student's academic career is one piece of the social emotional learning plan. When students are more self-aware and confident about their learning, chances are they will try harder. Self-awareness is important when students talk about their behavior and the why behind what they did, but self-awareness is also beneficial in academics. When students are asked to reflect on their learning and share how they can improve their shortcomings, they are becoming more self-aware of what needs to be done to do a better job next time. While extensive studies have been done correlating a SEL plan and academics, there is not as much research done on the behavioral impacts. One reason for this could be the fact that behavior is more difficult to measure.

Even though behavior seems difficult to measure, it is gaining traction in the world of standards based grading. In their social policy report, Bouffard and Jones (2012) discuss the importance of a social emotional section on standards based report cards. While many report cards have a behavior section, it is interesting to connect the idea of SEL to standards. But, if

teachers are teaching something, it should be reflected on the report card. Bouffard and Jones encouraged the integration of SEL skills in daily lessons. Having SEL as an integrated part breaks down the barriers of disconnect. Instead of a lofty idea that is considered to be added on to a subject, a well-planned out social emotional learning plan has the potential to enhance lessons and the connection between teacher, student, and subject. As a result of SEL skills in daily lessons, they should also be documented on the report card.

Another study, piloted by Marques-Pinto and Raimundo (2013), focused on the psychological adjustment as a result of a social emotional learning program. The researchers conducted a quasi-experimental study for a one year period. The research investigated 213 fourth-grade students and 16 teachers using the Slow but Steady program. The results of this program showed that boys had a higher improvement rate when it came to social interactions partly because the boys had more room to grow from the prequestionnaire to the post questionnaire.

It can be assumed from these surveys, studies, and research conducted that an implemented SEL plan is beneficial for schools. Yoder (2014), in his journal on teaching the whole child, outlines ten teacher practices to begin to set the stage for a social emotional learning plan. Many of the steps teachers already do informally in their classrooms. Social emotional learning plans are not a burden, but rather a realization of the many things teachers are already doing to help students feel confident at school. More research needs to be done on the behavioral impacts of a social emotional learning plan. The limitation when dealing with behavioral changes is the question of how to collect data in this area. Finding a solution to accurately assess student behavioral development as a result of a social emotional learning plan would greatly benefit the research that has already been done.

## **Methods**

Previous research has shown a great deal of evidence for the support of a social emotional learning plan in relation to a student's improved academic (cognitive) ability. In addition, students have also shown improvement in affective responses in the classroom. This study looked to discover the behavioral impact of a social emotional learning plan within a self-contained upper elementary classroom. The researcher conducted a survey of upper elementary students in relation to behavior prior to the implemented plan, implement social emotional lessons within the curriculum, and conducted a survey after the lessons were taught.

## **Participants**

The participants in this study included 78 third grade students from an urban Christian school. There are three third-grade classes at this school, and the previous teachers and principal determine the assignment of each class. One of the third-grade classes was the treatment group, while the other two were the control group. The demographics included students and families from a variety of backgrounds, cultures, and areas. Being a private Christian school, students are drawn from many communities. Unlike a neighborhood school, the students come from near and far to come to this school. This gives a wider range of types of students in the school since the school is not drawing from one area or city. The school's current racial diversity breaks down as 78% Caucasian, 8% African American, 7% Hispanic American, 4% Asian American, and 3% Other. Within the participant group, the racial diversity is as follows: 77% Caucasian, 14% African American, 5% Asian American, and 4% Hispanic American.

## **Materials**

All participants completed a pre and post survey created by the researcher. The researcher used ideas and questions from two different resources. One resource was a behavior survey found on survey monkey (<https://www.surveymonkey.com/r/J8XFP6S>) and the other was created by an organization called Students as Allies ([http://www.whatkidscando.org/specialcollections/student\\_as\\_allies/pdfs/saa\\_samplesurveys\\_final.pdf](http://www.whatkidscando.org/specialcollections/student_as_allies/pdfs/saa_samplesurveys_final.pdf)). The survey (Appendix A) took approximately 15 minutes for each student to complete and was kept confidential by the test administrator. The test administrator was the classroom teacher. The survey was based on a Likert scale and represented how each student ranged in opinion about himself/herself as well as others in relation to behavior in the classroom.

The independent variable of this experiment was the classroom curriculum. The treatment group had imbedded in the curriculum five social emotional lessons, while the control group remained the same being taught the curriculum under normal circumstances.

The dependent variable of this experiment was the pre and post surveys given to the students as a result of the implemented social emotional learning plan in the treatment group classroom. A limitation of the study is participant size. Another limitation is the way in which each teacher handles behavior management.

## **Data Analysis**

At the completion of the implementation of five social emotional learning plans, the data from the pre- and post- tests was tabulated to find the individual growth of the participants. The results from the survey were used to determine whether any students found an integrated social emotional learning plan beneficial to their behavior as well as the behavior of those around them.

## Results

### Research Question One

The first research question chosen by the researcher asks the following: Is there a need for an SEL plan at a private Christian school in an urban setting? In order to answer this question, the researcher had to first gather data on student social and emotional needs. This data included information on how often students were not listening, being disrespectful, using mean talk, getting out of their seat, exhibiting poor attitudes, not raising their hand before speaking, talking back, and being goofy. Table 1 shows the results of this data collection. This data was collected only from the experimental group as a pre and post tally chart to see the difference a SEL plan made. The researcher tallied how many times the twenty-six students in the experimental group showed poor behavior in the eight different behavioral areas. The first and last week of the six week implementation period were the data collection weeks.

The results show that after five integrated SEL lessons and weekly class meetings there was a decrease in poor behavior in the classroom. The greatest change occurred with students being out of their seats. The two areas that changed the least were respect and talking back. One reason for respect and talking back showing low average changes could be because they were also the two areas in which the students had the least amount of difficulty in following expectations and therefore had the least room for improvement.

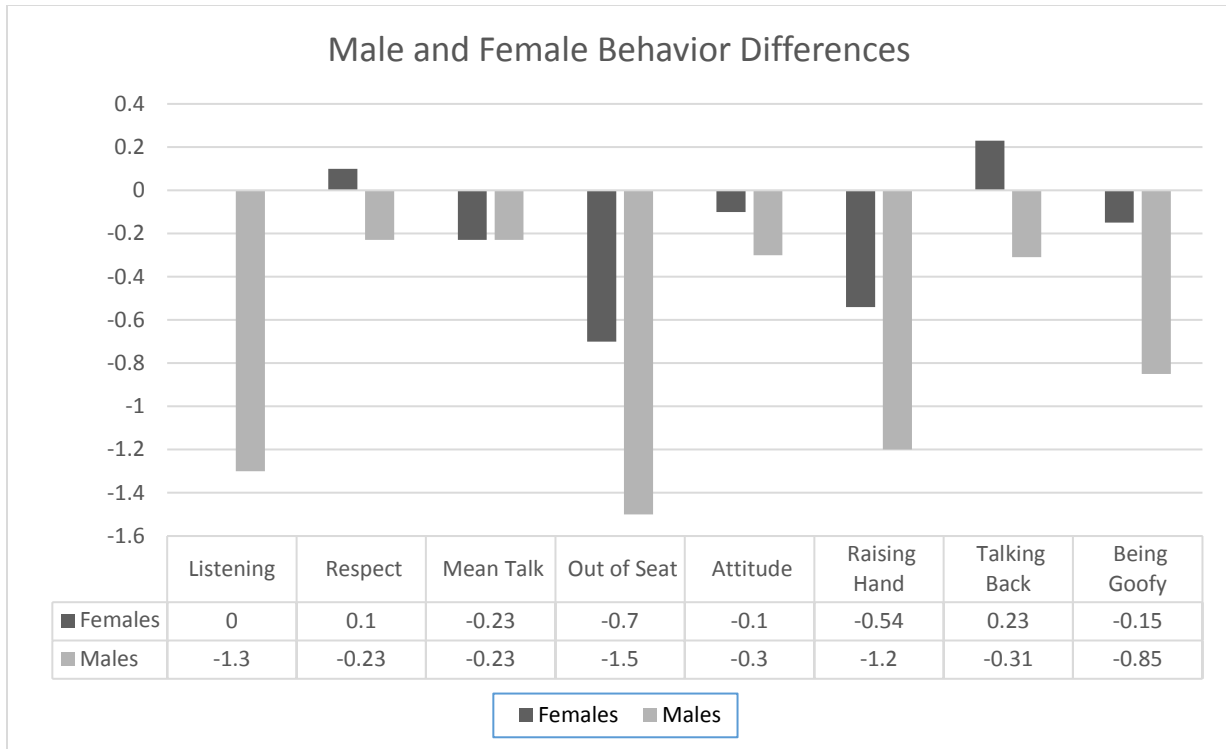


Figure 1. Bar graph showing the average differences in behavior of males to females in the third grade classroom over the six week implementation period.

Table 1  
Most Improved Listening Scores

Student	Gender	Listening	Out of seat	Raising hand
C3	M	-3	0	-2
C18	M	-3	-2	-1
C23	F	-2	-1	0
C12	M	-2	-2	-1
C15	M	-2	0	-1

This table shows the five most improved students in listening during the six week implementation period and the correlation of other improved behavior areas.

Table 2  
*Least Improved Listening Scores*

Student	Gender	Listening	Out of seat	Raising hand
C6	F	3	-1	1
C14	F	2	0	2
C5	F	1	0	-1
C13	M	0	-2	-2
C9	M	0	-3	-1

This table shows the five least improved students in listening during the six week implementation period and the correlation of other behavior areas.

The differences between males and females is interesting. The males had greater improvement from the beginning of the data collection period to the end. While many of the average changes are not notable, the three areas that had an average difference greater than one were listening, out of seat, and raising hands.

The idea of behavior tallies was discussed at the first class meeting following the researcher's data collection. Students were informed of the areas that were being monitored, and discussed ways to improve. The students became the driving force behind the change. Consequences for certain behaviors were also discussed during class meetings. While the teacher had the final decision on what consequences went with what poor behavior choices, the

students did help to brainstorm consequence ideas and therefore felt more ownership over the final decision.

One explanation for the greater male improvement during the data collection period could be the fact that one of the consequences of poor behavior was time served in class during recess. Many of the male students in third grade live for recess and note that it is their favorite time of day. When a consequence for poor behavior takes time away from something they greatly enjoy, they will have increased focus on doing what is right. The consequence also fit with the behavioral mistake. For example, if students were out of their seats during a time they were supposed to be seated, they gave a minute of their own time, which is during recess.

After six weeks of intensive implementation the students could tell the difference as well. Three students on different occasions requested that we have class meetings until the end of the year. Opening the classroom in such a vulnerable way proved to be a great way to monitor behavior and relate to students in a more social and emotional way. Creating a space to openly talk was beneficial for this class of twenty-six third graders.

### **Research Question Two**

The second question the researcher chose to ask was: Are there cognitive, affective, and behavioral benefits for a SEL plan? While this specific research looked only at behavioral benefits, the literature review indicated many resources that showed a positive impact both cognitively and affectively for a SEL plan.

A pre and post survey was given to the 73 participants (Appendix A). The teacher-guided the students through the survey and explained any questions the students might have. The first section of the survey asked students about themselves and why they might have poor



behavior. Students were asked to be self-reflective. All statements on the survey began with “I”. Students were also reminded that the survey questions could refer to any teachers and any friends at the specific school. Some students were confused about who the survey was being referred to as “teachers” and “friends.”

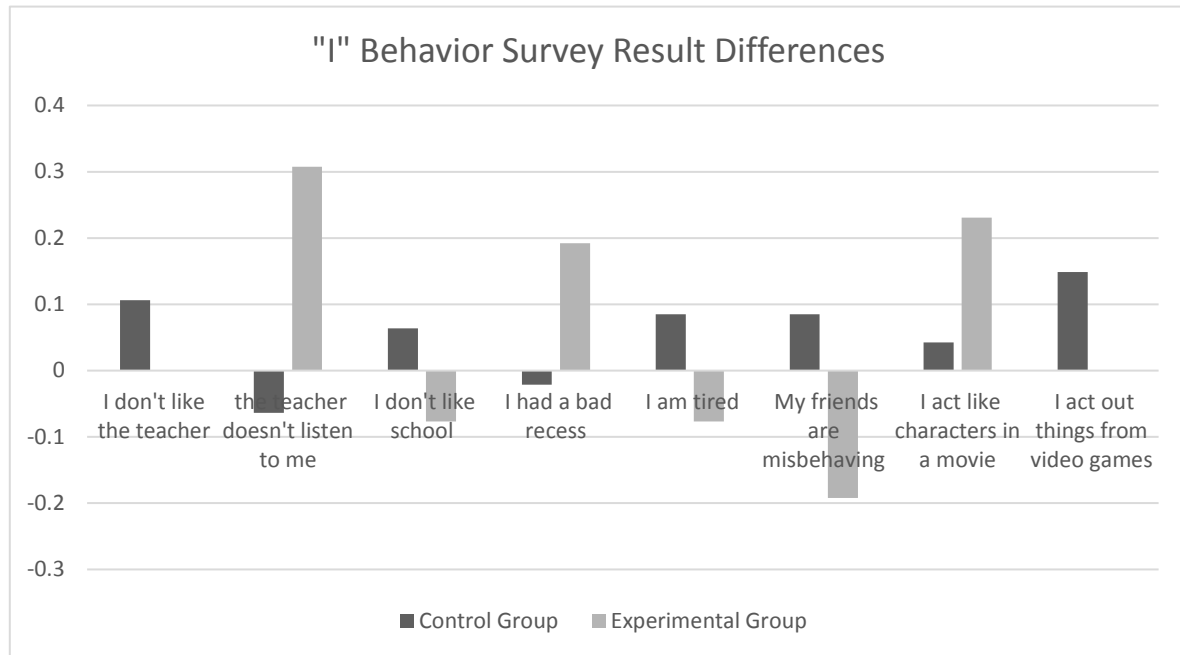


Figure 2. Bar graph showing the differences in averages of the “I” statements pre to post survey of the control group and the experimental group.

The data for Figure 2 was found by first finding the difference between the surveys (Post Survey-Pre Survey). Then the average of the differences was found for each question. While many of the average differences between pre and post survey were not notable, it is interesting to see which questions the control group and experimental group differed.

The second section of the survey focused on why “others” might behave poorly. Students were asked to think of other third graders and respond accordingly. Teachers directed

students through this section of the survey by repeating the phrase, “Think about other students in our class or at our school.”

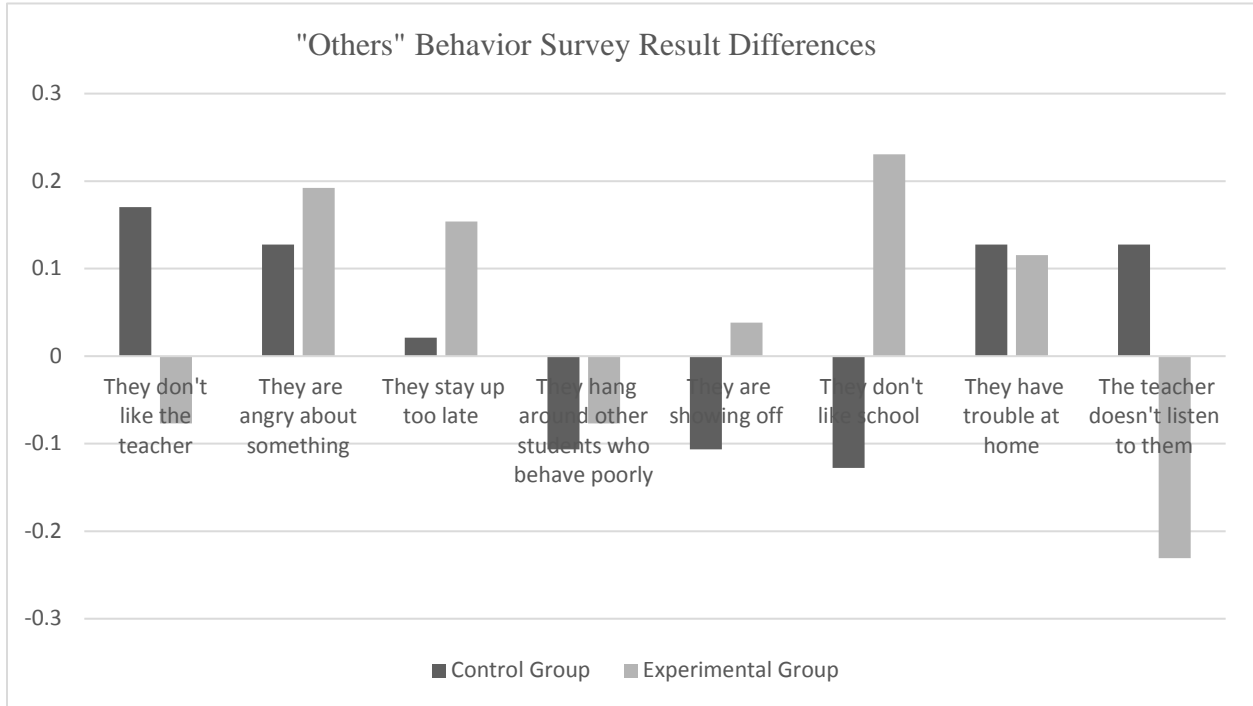
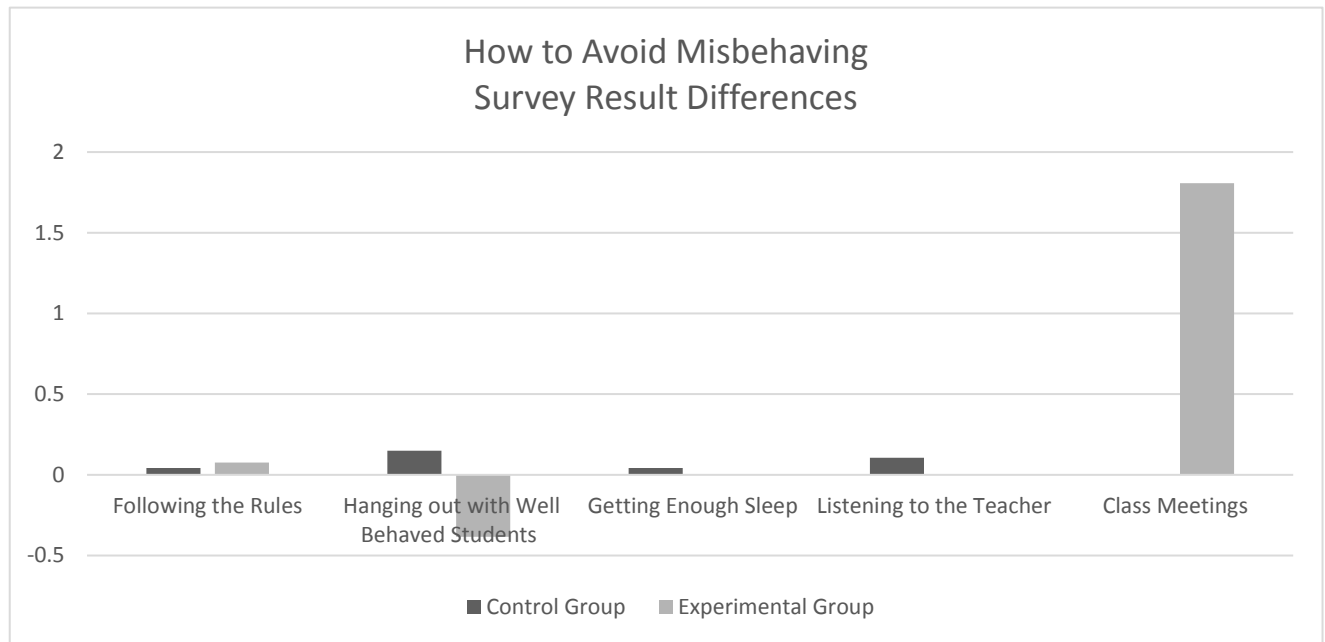


Figure 3. Bar graph showing the differences in averages of the “others” statements pre to post survey of the control group and the experimental group.

The third section of the survey focuses on how students could avoid misbehaving. Below the charts show the difference in average differences of responses from the experimental group in comparison with the control group.



*Figure 4.* Bar graph showing the average differences in responses to the “how students can avoid misbehaving” from the pre to post survey.

The most notable piece of this graph is the responses to the class meetings. While the control group remained without change, the experimental group had an average change of response of 1.8. On a three point scale, this is significant. The control group remained at zero for the average difference, because it did not have class meetings implemented during the six week period. A majority of the control group, 84.6% of the group, answered false on the pre survey question on whether class meetings would make a difference in their behavior. This majority, over the course of six weeks, changed their minds about class meetings and the benefit of them.

They all changed their answer to true on the post survey when asked if class meetings make a difference in their behavior.

The researcher incorporated class meetings into the schedule on Fridays. This allowed students to discuss problem areas or situations with her before Friday and these things could be added to the agenda for that week. The idea of giving students the power to self-reflect and determine if something is important enough to be added to the agenda is an important tool for them.

### **Research Question Three**

The third and final question the researcher asked was this: How can the research be used to implement a SEL plan in a private Christian school in an urban setting? Figure 1 showed the evidence that having a clear behavioral plan in the classroom benefited the students. Figure 4 showed the benefit of having an important piece of an SEL plan, class meetings, incorporated into a weekly schedule. Using the data as a platform, the researcher would encourage an SEL plan to be implemented with as much integration to the students' normal schedule as possible. Students flourished with a clear plan and looked forward to engaging in a class meeting.

## **Discussion**

### **Overview of the Study**

The goal of this research project was to answer this question: Is there a need for a SEL plan at a Christian school in an urban setting? The researcher did the following to answer this question: conducted pre and post surveys asking third-graders to answer what they believed could be a reason they behave poorly and others behave poorly, and then how they could avoid these poor behaviors. The students answered *true*, *don't know*, or *false* on the survey. The

experimental group was observed for the first week of the implementation period and tallies were given if a student behaved poorly in one of eight different behavior areas. These tallies were again collected in the sixth week of implementation. In addition to the pre and post survey and behavior tallies, students in the experimental group participated in class meetings. These class meetings were conducted mostly by the students, with the teacher as facilitator. Class meetings were held on a weekly basis.

### **Summary of Findings**

Overall, the differences in findings from the pre to post survey did not offer significant data for or against the implementation of a social emotional learning plan. However, the difference in response from pre to post survey on the topic of class meetings was notable. 84.6% of the students who participated in weekly class meetings changed their responses from *false* on the pre survey to *true* on the post survey. They said that it was true that class meetings helped them avoid misbehaving. Class meetings offered a time for students to have a voice and to “own up” to the ways in which they misbehave. Class meetings also offered a time for the students to brainstorm how to best handle situations in which others were misbehaving and tempting them to join in.

Another interesting result of the behavior tally from week one to week six was the difference between males and females. The researcher found that males tended to respond in a positive way to the consequence being related to the misbehavior. So, for example, when students were out of their seat at the inappropriate time during class, the consequence was to stay in during recess and practice sitting properly.

## **Recommendations**

While a six week implementation period does not begin to do justice to something as important as a social emotional learning plan, it does show the benefits of the beginning stages of a well thought out plan. Teachers often know the behavior issues within their own classroom and therefore could easily begin brainstorming agenda items for a weekly class meeting. Behavior issues such as rough soccer games at recess, tattling versus telling, or lack of self-control. Based on the data collected, students were most receptive to a weekly class meeting. While the class meetings were not able to run exclusively on student input, the researcher found that students wanted ownership over the meetings and took pride in their ability to bring issues to the agenda in a mature way.

## **Limitations of the Study**

Even though the researcher planned and implemented this action research, there were some factors that could have affected the findings. The data collected for this action research study was collected from only three third-grade classrooms with a fairly homogenous population. For this research to be applied in a greater fashion, more widespread research needs to be conducted. Research needs to be done in many third grade classrooms, in many different settings, and over a longer period of implementation time.

Due to the nature of school and the unexpected events that take place in a week or month, students did not have a consistent implementation of social emotional lesson plans. Consistency is one part of a SEL plan that makes it successful.

## **Conclusion**

When considering future research on the topic of social emotional learning, there are many factors to think through. Social emotional learning affects many different areas of a student's learning. A focus could be put on cognitive, affective, or behavioral results. While this study only touched the surface of the behavioral impacts a social emotional learning plan may have, more research in this area will greatly benefit both teachers and students. Implementing an integrated social emotional learning plan at a private school in an urban setting proved to be helpful not only to student behavior, but also in relation to student management in the classroom. Having weekly class meetings that are student led and teacher facilitated is one way to begin the implementation process of a social emotional learning plan.

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Appendix A

SURVEY

Why do YOU sometimes behave poorly:					
	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Undecided	Agree	Strongly Agree
I don't like the teacher					
The teacher doesn't listen to me					
I don't like school					
I had a bad recess					
I am tired					
My friends are behaving poorly, so I do too					
I want to act like characters in a movie					
I act out things from video games					
Other reason: _____					

Why do you think OTHER students behave poorly:					
	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Undecided	Agree	Strongly Agree
They do not like the teacher					
They are angry about something					
They stay up too late					
They hang around other students who behave poorly					
They are showing off					
They don't like school					
They have trouble at home					
The teacher doesn't listen to them					
Other reason: _____					

	True	Don't Know	False
I can avoid misbehaving by following the rules.			
I can avoid misbehaving by hanging out with well-behaved students			
I can avoid misbehaving by getting enough sleep.			
I can avoid misbehaving by listening to my teacher.			
I can avoid misbehaving by doing what my teacher and other students taught me during our class meetings.			
Other reason: _____			