INNOVATIONS IN SEL RESEARCH

Joseph E. Zins Awards Webinar
featuring Laura Hamilton, Ph.D. and Clark McKown, Ph.D.

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2020 Joseph E. Zins Award for SEL Action Research

The award honors the legacy of Joseph E. Zins.

Joseph E. Zins was a Professor in the College of Education at the University of Cincinnati, an SEL research pioneer, and original member of the Leadership Team of CASEL.

CASEL presents the awards to investigators and researchers at distinct phases in their careers.
2020 Joseph E. Zins Awards for Social and Emotional Learning Action Research

CASEL celebrates research leaders who have advanced SEL in schools and school districts in important and meaningful ways.

LAURA HAMILTON, Ph.D.
General Manager of Research Centers, ETS

CLARK MCKOWN, Ph.D.
Founder and President of xSEL Labs

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Assessment and the Future of SEL

CLARK MCKOWN, Ph.D.
Founder and President
xSEL Labs
Why care about assessment?

The future of the field depends on it.
Part I: What is important to assess?

Student competence and a better mousetrap
Part II: What is important to assess?

Competence + Implementation + Climate
An emerging practice model

1. Assess SEL
2. Review data
3. Act
4. Measure and Support Implementation
5. Re-Assess SEL
6. Review data
The future of the field depends on it.
Where do we go from here?

• Continued investment in assessment development.
• Support effective data use practices.
• Position assessment to support an evidence-based equity focus.
• Advocate for state and federal policy that supports constructive assessment.
Supporting Students’ Civic Learning through SEL
Supporting Students’ Civic Learning through SEL
Laura Hamilton
November 18, 2020

Report co-authors: Christopher Doss, Julia Kaufman, Lynn Hu
Presentation outline

• Supporting civic learning through SEL
• Gathering teachers’ perspectives
• What teachers told us
• Where we go from here
Presentation outline

- **Supporting civic learning through SEL**
- Gathering teachers’ perspectives
- What teachers told us
- Where we go from here
Several conditions make this a good time to revisit schools’ civic mission

• Changes to accountability policies
• New research on long-term school outcomes
• Concerns about how schools promote equity and racial justice
• Widespread enthusiasm for SEL in schools
What is civic learning?

- **Civic knowledge**: an understanding of government structures, government processes, and relevant social studies knowledge and concepts, along with history and the ways that history affects today’s government and society.

- **Civic skills**: abilities that allow students to engage in democratic processes in an active and informed way, such as critical thinking, communication, and collaboration.

- **Civic dispositions**: attitudes that are important in a democracy, such as a sense of civic duty and concern for the welfare of other people as well as for one’s country and community.

  *Sources: Carnegie Corporation of NY, 2011; Brookings Institution, 2018*
Civics-related competencies can be found in commonly used SEL frameworks

Five broad and interrelated areas of competence:

- Self-awareness
- Self-management
- Social awareness
- Relationship skills
- Responsible decision-making
Civics-related competencies can be found in commonly used SEL frameworks

Self-awareness
- Developing interests and a sense of purpose
- Identifying personal, cultural, and linguistic assets
Civics-related competencies can be found in commonly used SEL frameworks

Self-management

Demonstrating personal and collective agency
Managing one’s emotions
Civics-related competencies can be found in commonly used SEL frameworks

**Responsible decision-making**

Learning how to make a reasoned judgment after analyzing information, data, & facts

Evaluating personal, interpersonal, community, & institutional impacts
Civics-related competencies can be found in commonly used SEL frameworks

Relationship skills

Practicing teamwork and collaborative problem-solving

Demonstrating cultural competency
Civics-related competencies can be found in commonly used SEL frameworks

Social awareness

- Identifying diverse social norms, including unjust ones
- Understanding the influences of organizations and systems on behavior
Ten promising practices can promote civic learning

| 1. Classroom instruction in civics, government, history, law, economics, and geography | 6. Simulations of democratic processes and procedures |
| 2. Discussion of current events | 7. News media literacy |
| 4. Extracurricular activities | 9. Social and emotional learning (SEL) |
| 5. Student participation in school governance | 10. School climate reform |
CASEL framework identifies key settings for SEL

Service learning

News media literacy

Simulations of democratic processes and procedures

Discussions of current events
Presentation outline

• Supporting civic learning through SEL
• Gathering teachers’ perspectives
• What teachers told us
• Where we go from here
K-12 teachers are key to promoting social, emotional, and civic learning

Teachers...
• spend significant time connecting directly with students
• implement, modify, and create instructional materials
• create the classroom conditions that support students’ development
• exert long-term effects on student learning
We gathered nationally representative survey data to gauge teachers’ experiences

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>SEL Survey</th>
<th>Civic Education Survey</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Timing</strong></td>
<td><strong>Timing</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td>Late spring 2019</td>
<td>Late fall 2019</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Sample</strong></td>
<td><strong>Sample</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td>1238 K-12 U.S. teachers of all subjects (62% completion rate)</td>
<td>820 K-12 U.S. teachers of social studies (51% completion rate)</td>
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<td><strong>Funder</strong></td>
<td><strong>Funder</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td>The Wallace Foundation</td>
<td>RAND philanthropic funding (Truth Decay initiative)</td>
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<td><strong>Topics</strong></td>
<td><strong>Topics</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td>Practices, beliefs, school and system supports, state policy</td>
<td>Practices, beliefs, school and system supports, state policy, observed student behaviors</td>
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Teachers reported a variety of SEL and civics practices that differed across grade levels

• SEL survey (K-12 teachers of all subjects)
  • Use of SEL curricula and efforts to promote positive climate were common, as were SEL-supportive practices in other subjects (e.g., collaboration)
  • Elementary teachers were more likely to engage in explicit SEL instruction; secondary teachers reported greater reliance on community engagement, teacher/student check-ins, and student involvement in school decisions

• Civics survey (K-12 teachers of social studies)
  • Teachers emphasized SEL and climate as strategies to promote civic learning
  • These were the most commonly used strategies for elementary teachers; secondary teachers also reported discussions of current events, participation in extracurricular activities, and several other more civics-specific practices
Teachers perceived synergies with academics, along with some barriers

Survey Question: How much do you agree or disagree with the following statements about your work with students this year (2018-19)? Response options: strongly disagree, disagree, agree, strongly agree.
Teachers need better instructional guidance and materials

• Teachers expressed a need for professional development to integrate SEL and civic learning into their instruction.

• Lack of access to engaging materials was a perceived barrier to civics instruction, as was perceived low level of student engagement and interest, especially among older students.

• Teachers had to modify instructional materials to make them culturally relevant for their students.

• Addressing student misuse of media was an area of particular need.

*Incorporating SEL pedagogy into civics materials and instruction could address many of these challenges.*
Navigating today’s media landscape is especially challenging

Survey question: To your knowledge, how much is each of the following issues a problem for the majority of your students?
Additional supports for use of standards and data are needed

- Teachers lack PD on how to use SEL and civics assessment data.
- Assessment options are limited for many social, emotional, and civic competencies.
  - Student surveys are commonly used to assess SEL.
  - To assess civic learning, elementary teachers relied most on observations of behaviors; secondary teacher relied most on multiple-choice tests.
- Many teachers were unaware that their state standards addressed SEL and civic learning.
Several conditions predict teachers’ engagement in SEL and civics practices

- Belief that state/district had SEL or civic education standards
- High reported workplace well-being
- High-quality instructional materials provided by school or district
- Preservice or in-service professional development
- Supportive school culture

Many of these conditions are inequitably distributed across schools.
Several instructional and assessment resources promote civic learning through SEL.
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Where we go from here

- Communicate the benefits of SEL for college, career, and civic life
- Promote collaboration to advance the field
- Attend to both youth and adult development
- Improve measurement and data use
- Support integration of social, emotional, civic, and academic learning
- Ensure equity and excellence
Thank you!
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