

# *Webinar*

## Advancing Social-Emotional Learning Measurement and Practice: Lessons from the CORE Districts

May 30, 2018



<http://www.edpolicyinca.org/projects/core-pace-research-partnership>

What is SEL  
and how do  
the CORE  
districts work  
to support it?

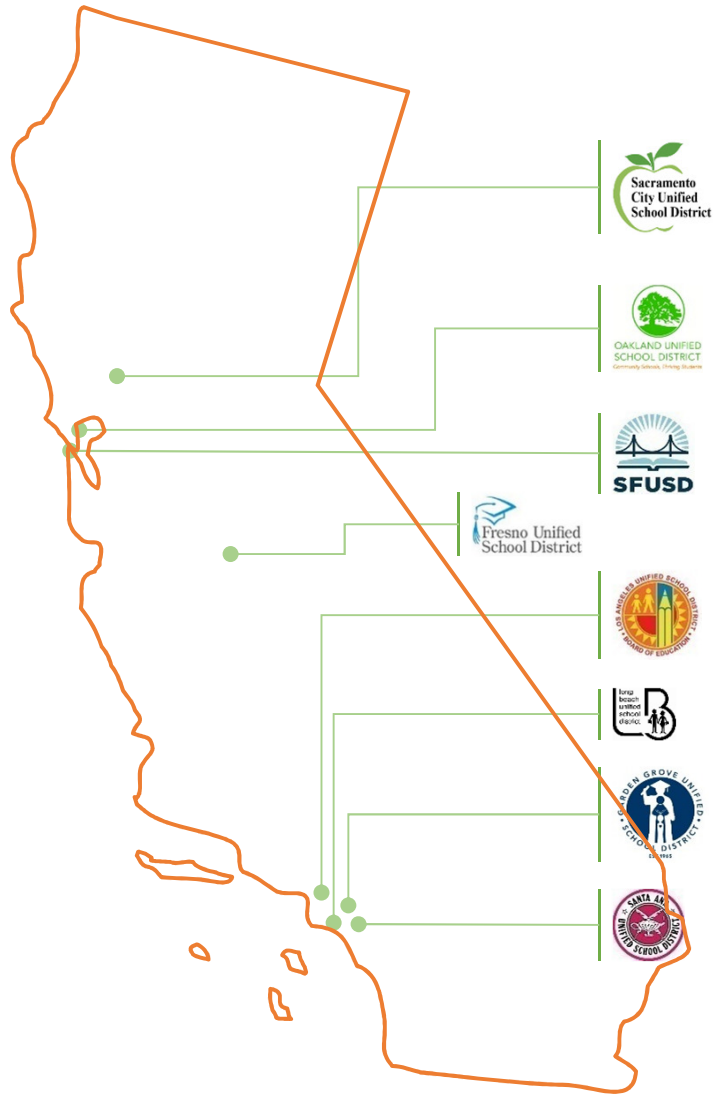
## Social and Emotional Learning



How does CORE  
measure SEL and are  
the measures valid  
and reliable?

Speaker	Organization
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Christine Olmstead (COlmstead@ocde.us)	Orange County Department of Education

# The CORE Districts



8 school districts



> 1M students



~ 1,600 schools



> 51,000 teachers

# How the CORE districts work together

- 2010 to 2013: District Partnerships
  - Standards Implementation
  - Building Relationships
- 2013 to 2016: CORE ESEA Waiver
  - Measuring More than Test Scores
  - Equity Driven Accountability – School Report Cards
  - Continuous Improvement Based Interventions (e.g., School Pairings)
- Current Work: Systems Improvements
  - Equity Driven Analytics - the CORE Data Collaborative
  - Networked Improvement Communities

# School Quality Improvement System

*First in the State to Look at:*

## ■ STATE MEASURES

- ✓ Student Test Results
- ✓ English Learner Progress
- ✓ Chronic Absenteeism
- ✓ Suspension Rates
- ✓ Graduation Rates

## ■ CORE'S LOCALLY DRIVEN MEASURES

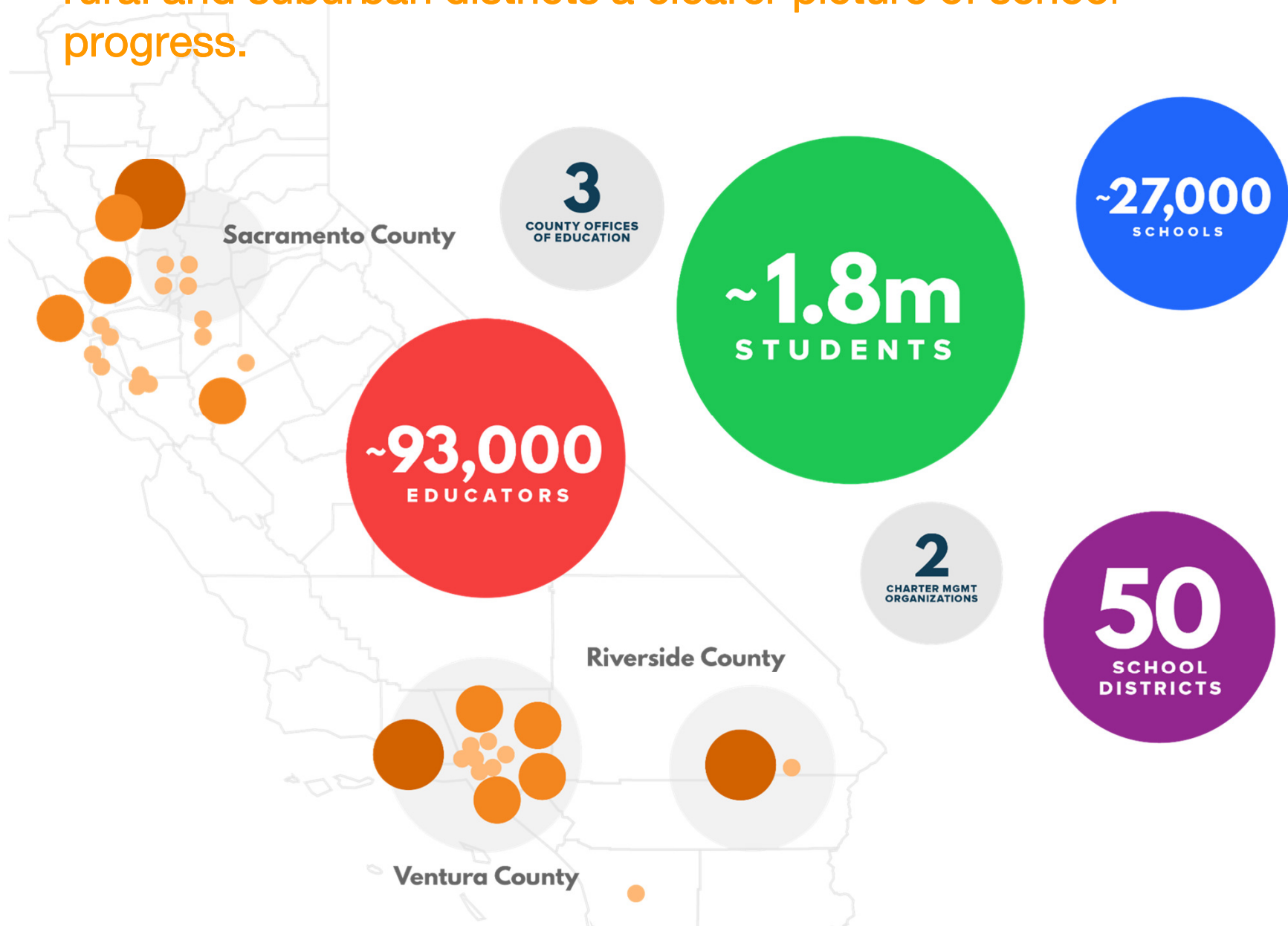
- ✓ Student Academic Growth
- ✓ Student Social/Emotional Learning
- ✓ School Culture and Climate
- ✓ High School Readiness



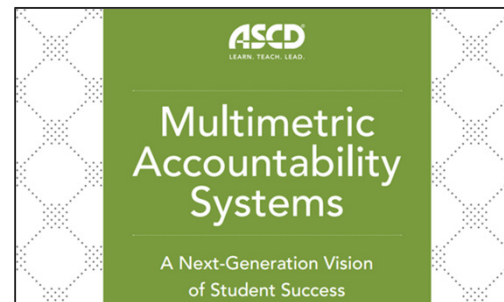
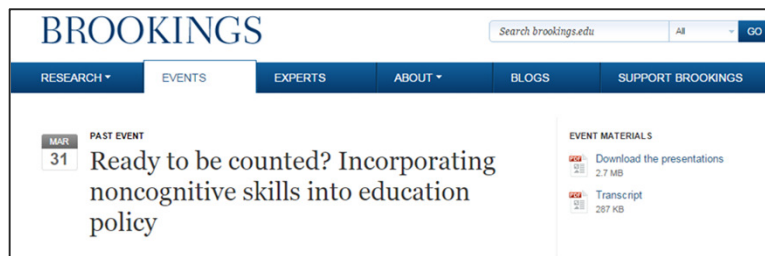
## ■ UNDER DEVELOPMENT

- ✓ College and Career Readiness

CORE DATA COLLABORATIVE provides educators in urban, rural and suburban districts a clearer picture of school progress.



CORE is part of the national dialogue on including Social Emotional Skills in Multiple Measure approaches to school quality



With almost half a million students surveyed across two years, CORE's measures of social-emotional skills let us explore how to measure these essential skills at scale.

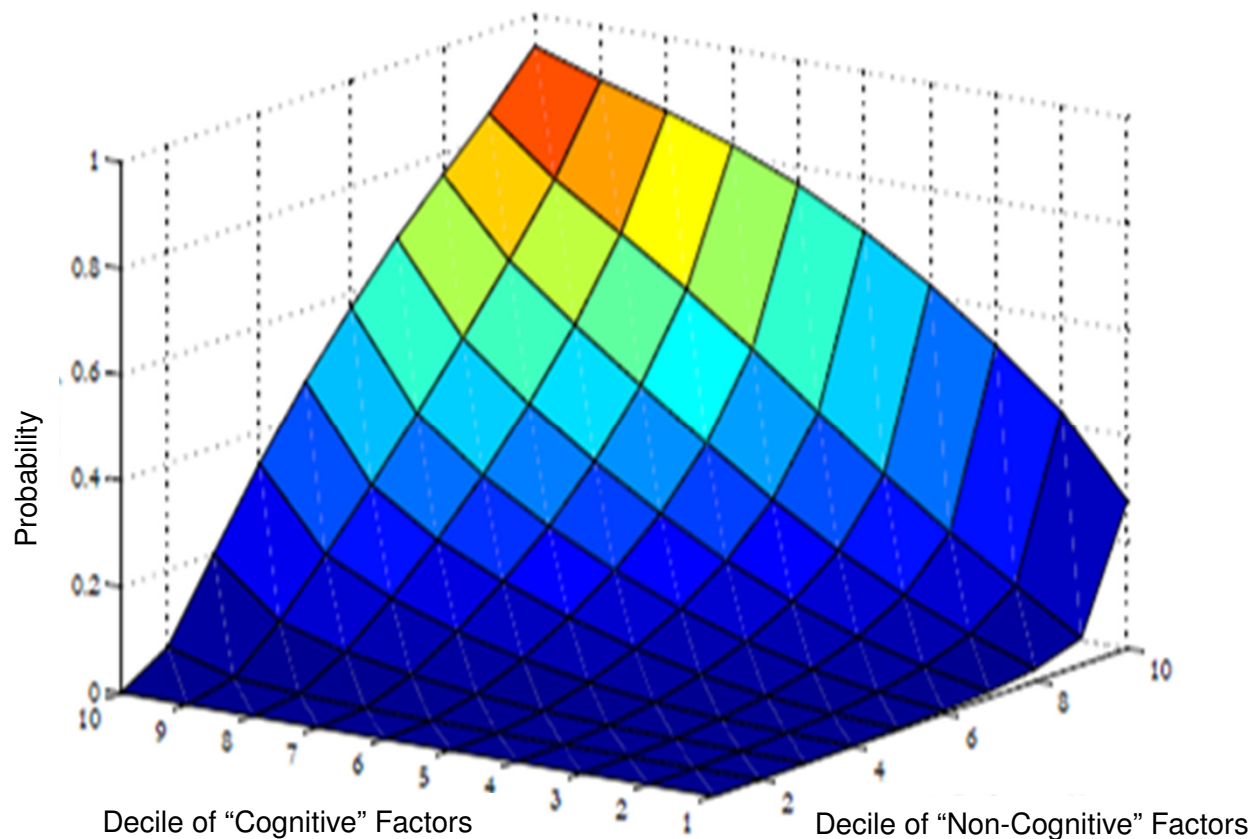




## Why Does SEL Matter?

*James Heckman demonstrated that students' self-esteem and locus of control are important predictors of educational attainment, employment, and salary*

**Probability of Being a 4-Year College Graduate by Age 30  
by Decile of Cognitive and Non-cognitive Factors (males)**

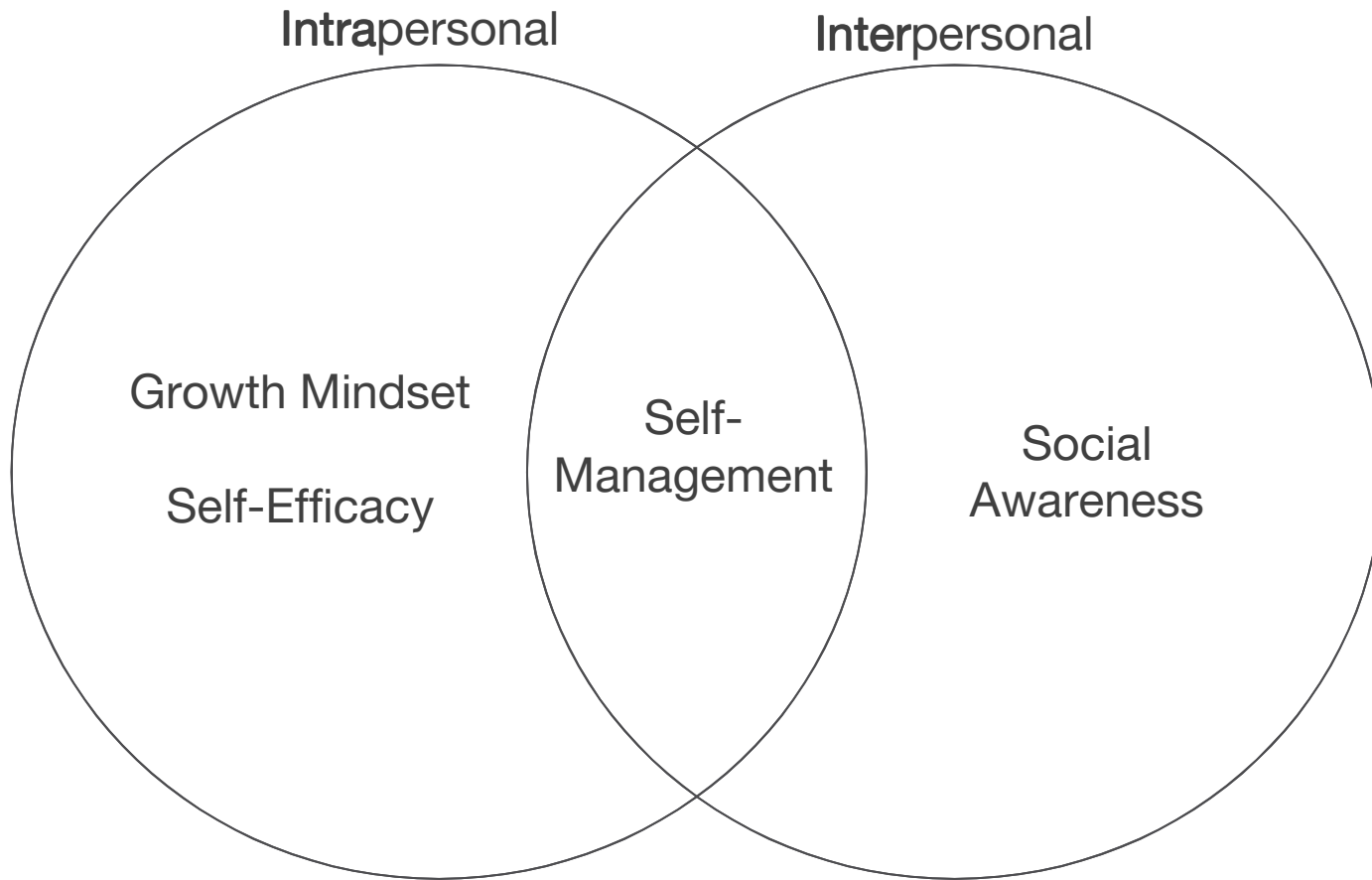


## Surveys of Students' Social-Emotional Learning

SE Competency	Definition
<b>Growth Mindset</b>	The belief that one's abilities can grow with effort. Students with a growth mindset see effort as necessary for success, embrace challenges, learn from criticism, and persist in the face of setbacks.
<b>Self-Efficacy</b>	The belief in one's own ability to succeed in achieving an outcome or reaching a goal. Self-efficacy reflects confidence in the ability to exert control over one's own motivation, behavior, and environment.
<b>Self-Management</b>	The ability to regulate one's emotions, thoughts, and behaviors effectively in different situations. This includes managing stress, delaying gratification, motivating oneself, and setting and working toward personal and academic goals.
<b>Social Awareness</b>	The ability to take the perspective of and empathize with others from diverse backgrounds and cultures, to understand social and ethical norms for behavior, and to recognize family, school, and community resources and supports.



**The identified skills include  
intrapersonal and interpersonal skills**



# Social-emotional indicators prioritized by CORE districts have been mapped to the CASEL framework for social-emotional learning

## Self-Awareness

CORE Indicators: Growth Mindset, Self-Efficacy

## Self-Management

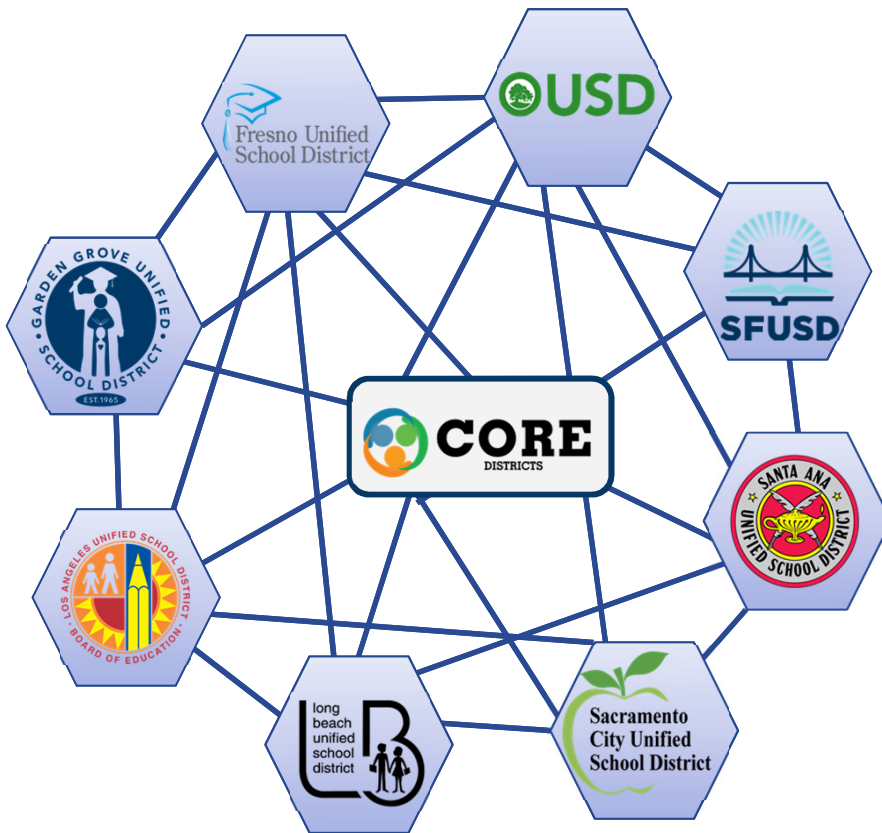
CORE Indicators: Self-Management

## Social Awareness

CORE Indicators: Social Awareness



## In Winter 2017, CORE launched our first Networked Improvement Community

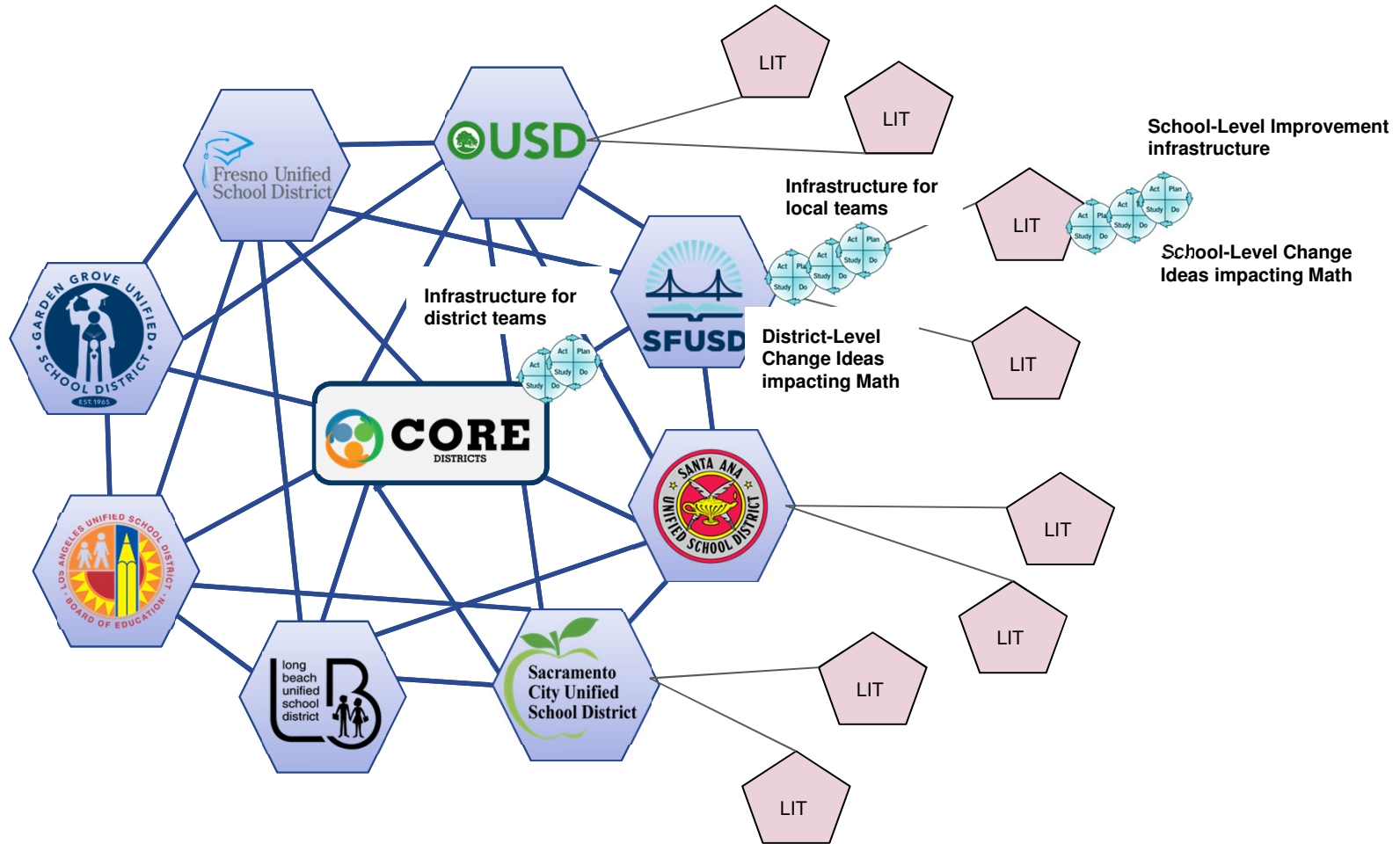


By 2020, we will see the following improvement in math achievement:

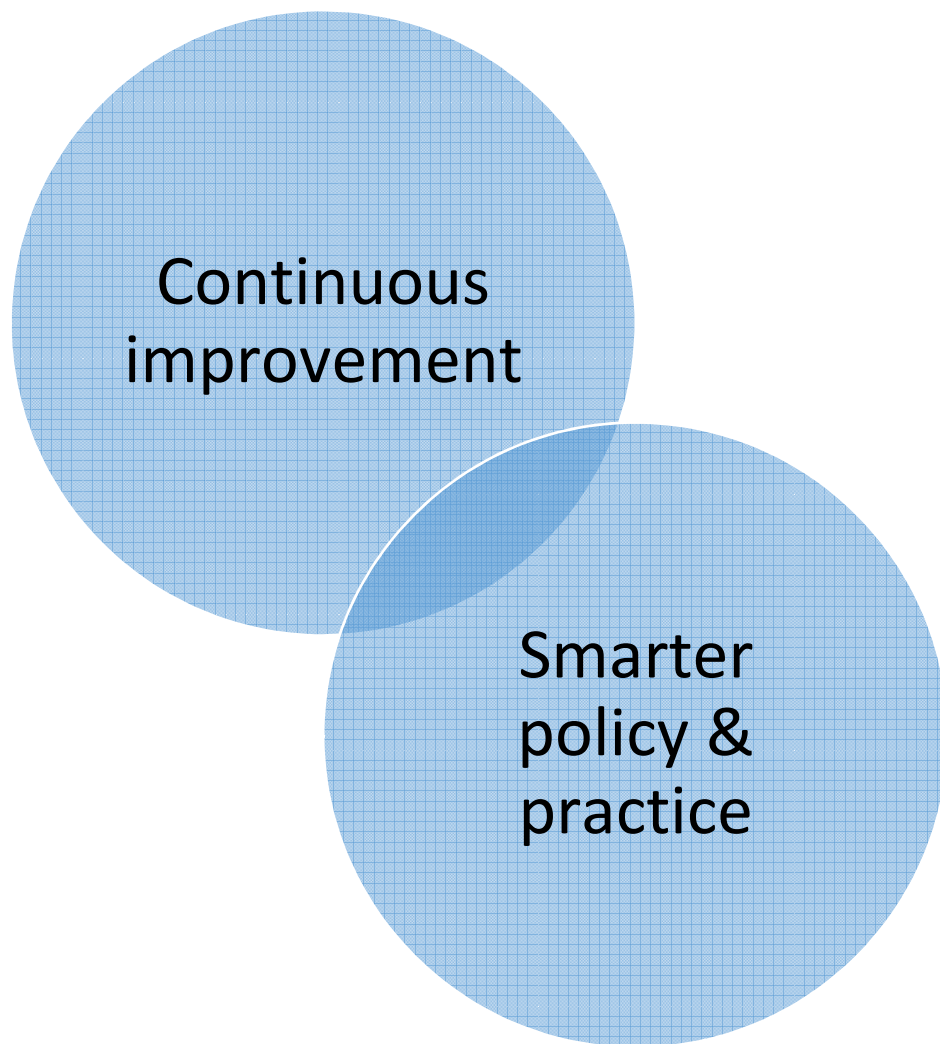
- African American and Hispanic/Latino students will improve by 44 points
- The gaps between these students and white students will decrease by 20 points



As we delve into improvement work with school and district teams, many of the change ideas being tested have a social-emotional factor to them.



# The CORE-PACE Research Partnership

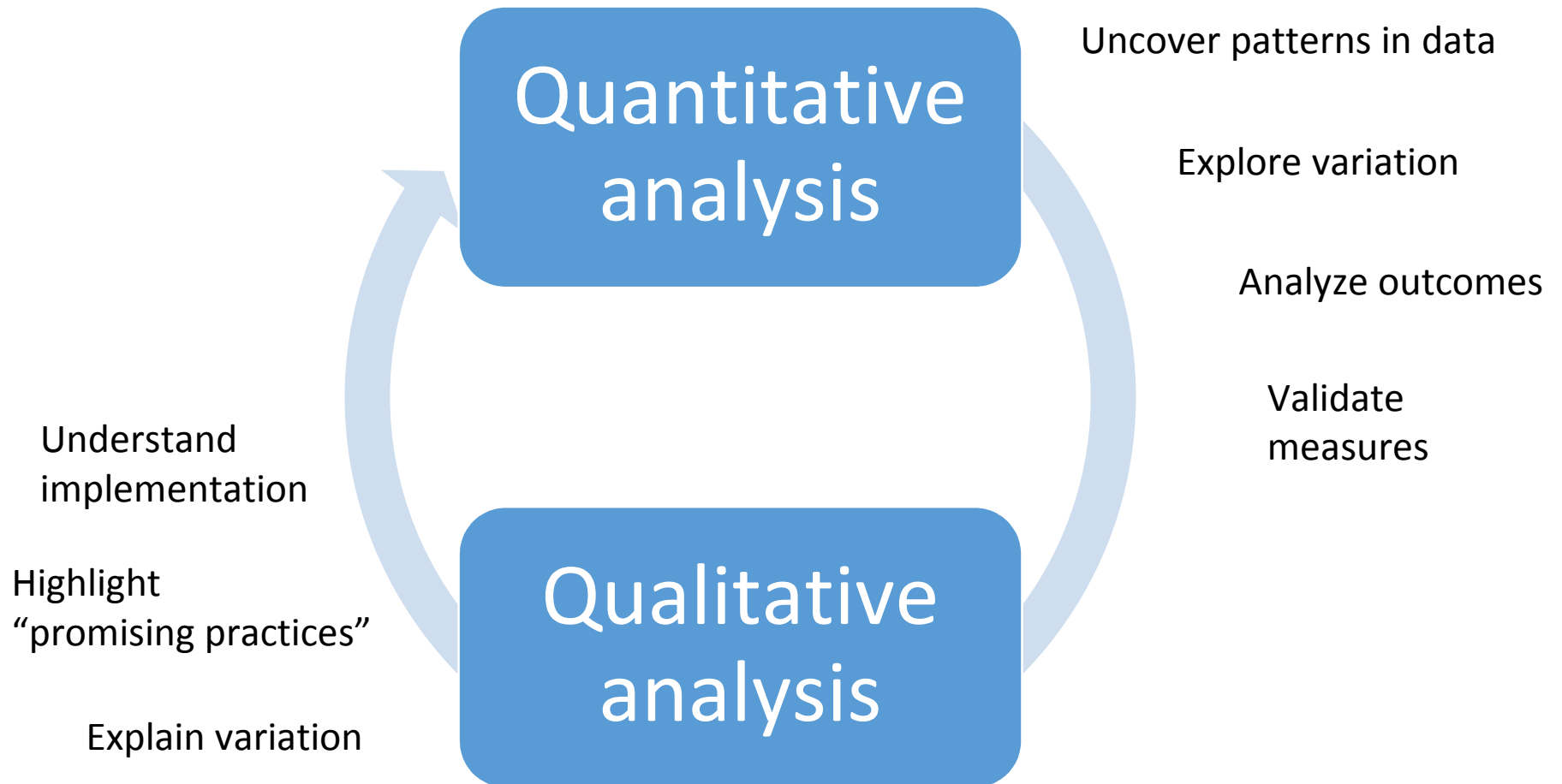


By sharing:

- Lessons learned
- Tools and resources
- Best practices
- Original research with data unique to CORE



# Our Analytic Approach



# CORE-PACE Research Network

Harvard University  
University of Virginia  
Brown University  
Georgetown University  
Transforming Education  
Education Analytics

Stanford University

San Jose State  
University

University of  
California, Santa  
Barbara

University of  
California, Los Angeles

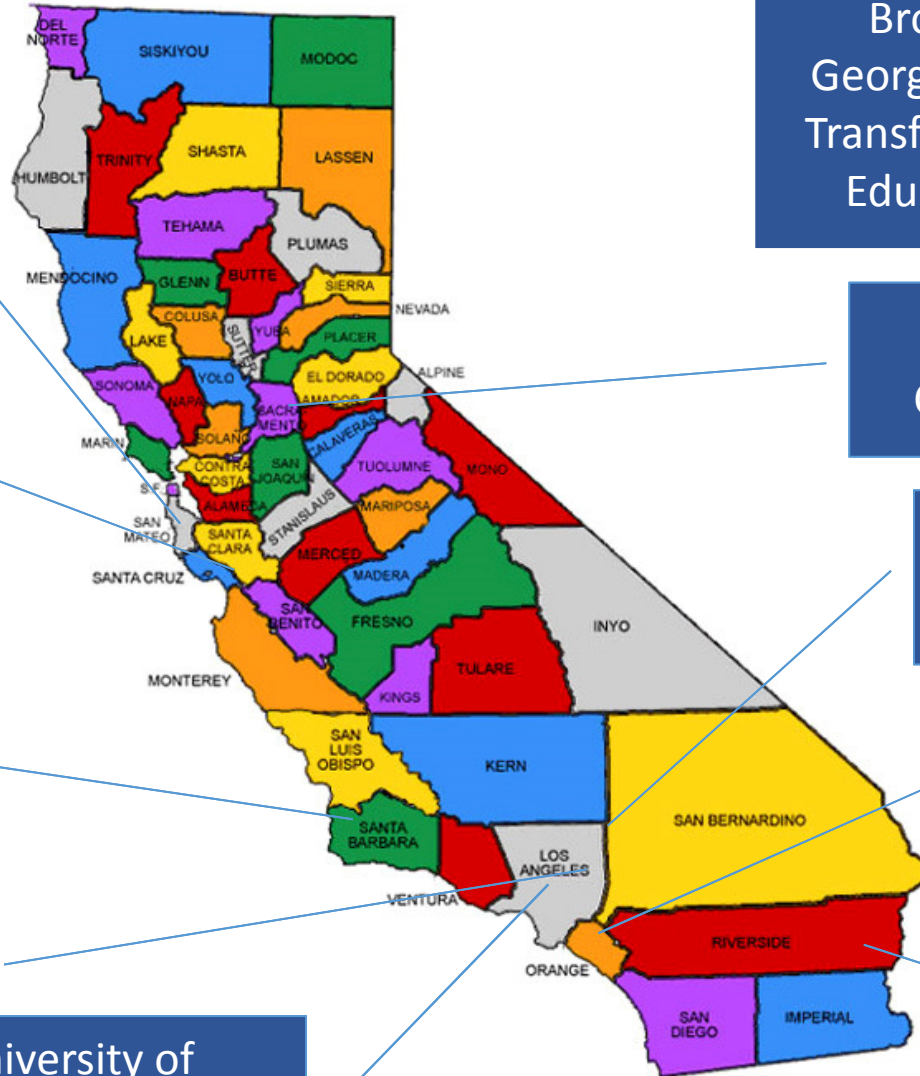
University of  
Southern California

University of  
California, Davis

Claremont Graduate  
University

University of  
California, Irvine

University of  
California,  
Riverside



What is SEL and how do the CORE districts work to support it?

## Social and Emotional Learning



How does CORE measure SEL and are the measures valid and reliable?

# Enacting Social-Emotional Learning:

## Practices and Supports Employed in CORE Districts and Schools

Taylor N. Allbright

May 30, 2018

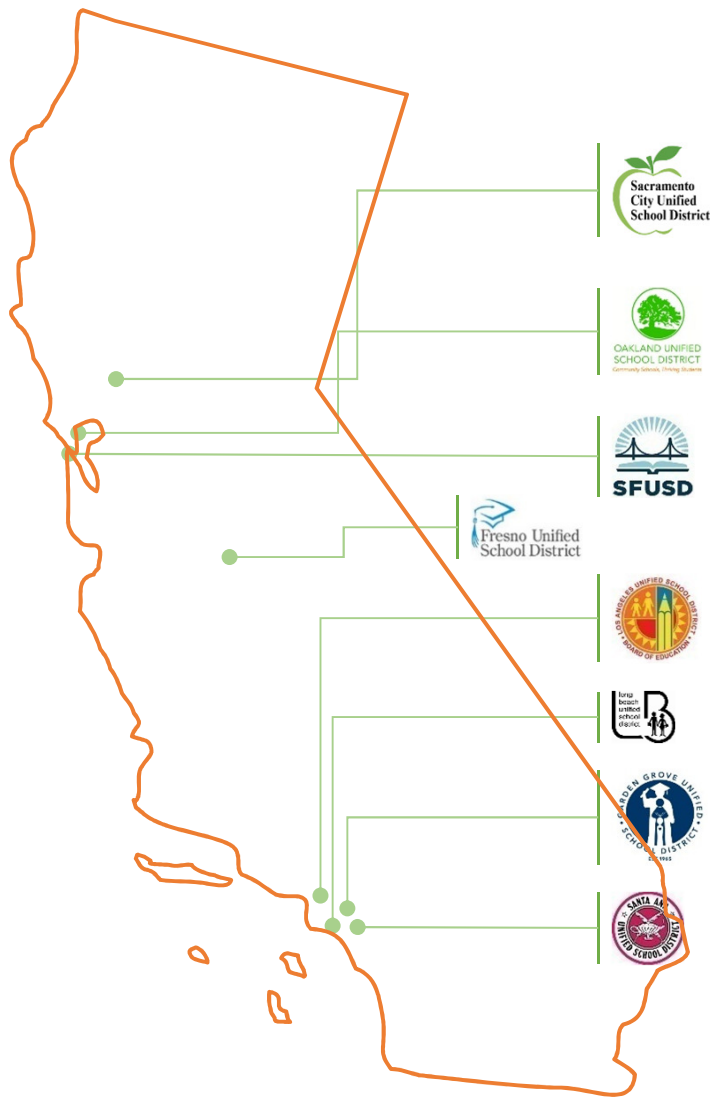
With Julie A. Marsh, Susan McKibben, Heather Hough, Michelle Hall,  
Ananya M. Matewos, Caetano Siqueira



# Research Questions

- How do educators **define** social-emotional learning?
- What **strategies** do schools use to enact and support various conceptions of SEL?
- How do **districts** support schools' SEL practices?

# Context of CORE Districts



- Current focus on accelerating math achievement for African American and Latino students, grades 4-8
- CORE has hypothesized that SEL plays a role in math success
- CORE invited us to examine SEL practices that may support their goals of accelerating math achievement

# Methods

- Multiple case study of “positive outlier” schools, outperforming schools with similar demographics & resources
- Selected 2 schools each in 5 districts
- Selection criteria included:
  - Served large proportions of African American and/or Latino youth, who were top quartile in SEL in both 2015 and 2016
  - Schools were also performing relatively well in math
- Data sources: Interviews ( $n=71$ ), observations, documents

# Research Questions

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# Research Questions

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- How do **districts** support schools' SEL practices?

# Respondents varied widely in conceptions of SEL.



Supporting student mental and emotional well-being



Creating a safe and supportive school climate



Developing social skills and appropriate behavior



Supporting adolescent development



Building a culture of inclusion and acceptance of difference



Addressing the needs of the whole child

# Research Questions

- How do educators **define** social-emotional learning?
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# Six Categories of SEL Strategies

## 1. Promoting positive climate and relationships

- Whole-school culture-building
- Personal interactions for trust and relationships
- Advisory periods
- Organizing schedules and students to support relationships
- Inclusion strategies

## 2. Supporting positive behavior

- Positive behavior management and restorative practices
- Clear values and expectations
- Targeted approaches for struggling or traditionally underserved students

# Six Categories of SEL Strategies

## 1. Promoting positive climate and relationships

- Whole-school culture-building
- Personal interactions for trust and relationships
- Advisory periods

Instead of looking at a punitive approach for everything and also having a blanket zero tolerance policy, we have more case-by-case responses to students.... That's what we do with restorative practice, to sort of to disrupt our punitive ways that we were used to going about responding to discipline.

School administrator

# Six Categories of SEL Strategies

## **3. Elective courses and extra-curricular activities**

- Courses like music or PE support communication & relationships
- Student clubs
- After-school programs

## **4. Classroom practices and curricula**

- Creating a positive classroom environment
- Structures to promote growth mindset
- Modeling communication and mindsets

# Six Categories of SEL Strategies

## 3. Elective courses and extra-curricular activities

- Courses like music or PE support communication & relationships
- Student clubs

So we really put an emphasis on how making mistakes is the only way to we can learn, how mistakes are really put in this special place where we applaud them, look at them ... So we go through all of that to talk about how these things make your brain grow... And every so often throughout the year we will pick...our favorite mistake and have the students do error analysis on those mistakes.

-Math teacher

# Six Categories of SEL Strategies

## 5. Hiring, organizing, and training personnel

- Staff leadership teams
- Using non-instructional staff
- Opportunities for adults to learn about SEL

## 6. Measurement and data use

- Use of CORE survey data to guide school efforts
- School- or staff-led data collection efforts



# Common Themes among Outlier Schools

- **Building on existing assets**
  - Using strengths such as a well-developed sports program or a music program as a vehicle for promoting SEL
- **Implementing with intention**
  - Deliberate structure of trainings, roles, and expectations
  - Investment of staffing and financial resources
- **Promoting student agency and leadership**
  - Using youth-led efforts such as kindness clubs, student-led lessons, and buddy programs

# Research Questions

- How do educators **define** social-emotional learning?
- What **strategies** do schools use to enact and support various conceptions of SEL?
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# District Support for SEL



Priorities and Frameworks



Staffing



Programs and Curricula



Training



Measurement and Data Use

# Implications for Policy and Practice

- Build common understandings and alignment regarding SEL
- Make the connection between SEL and racial equity intentional and explicit
- Develop frameworks for embedding SEL in academic content areas
- Consider the full range of SEL strategies

# Reflections: Olabayo Allen-Taylor

- Introduce yourself and your role
- Tell us about your school context and the students your school serves
- How does your school define social-emotional learning?
- What are some of the specific ways that your school works to advance social-emotional learning?
- Are there any reflections you would like to share on the work we presented in the SEL practices study?

# **SEL in LAUSD**

# **Susan Ward Roncalli**

- Social Emotional Learning Facilitator
- Health Education Programs
- Division of Instruction

# LAUSD

- District serves 618,970 students in over 1000 schools and learning centers spread out over 710 square miles (2017)
- Over 157,000 English learners
- 74% Latino, 9.8 % white, 8.4 % African American, 6% Asian



# LAUSD

- Over 4,000 foster youth.
- 499,283 students are eligible for reduced/ free lunch.
- Trauma screening of 572 LAUSD students, 88% reported experiencing three or more traumatic events in their lifetime, 55% of whom showed symptoms of PTSD, depression, or anxiety.

# Social Emotional Learning

## Definition

- Social and emotional learning (SEL) is the process through which children and adults acquire and effectively apply the knowledge, attitudes, and skills necessary to understand and manage emotions, set and achieve positive goals, feel and show empathy for others, establish and maintain positive relationships, and make responsible decisions.
- <https://achieve.lausd.net/socialemotionalllearning>

# SEL Implementation Teams and Plans

- The six SEL facilitators work with 73 schools.
- Each school has a team of 3-5 teachers and staff. Team members can earn up to 40 hours for work on developing and implementing the school plan
- This team uses data to develop an SEL implementation plan for the year.

# Implementation Plans Are Data Based

- Our team works with each site to look at data as they develop their plans.
- Most schools base their plans on data from the LAUSD School Experience Survey
- Some utilize an SEL Rubric I developed with Transforming Education
- <https://achieve.lausd.net/Page/8397>

# Summative and Formative Goals

- Our SEL teams write summative and formative SMARTER goals based on the SEL construct they decide to concentrate on.
- We ask them to measure growth towards their goals twice during the year.
- They send us this formative data and we meet with them to discuss it.

# Revised SEL Implementation Plans

- The school site SEL implementation plans are living documents.
- Schools revise the plans based on formative data.
- If a strategy is not helping them to meet their goals, they meet to revise their plan.

# Cross District Collaboration

- High Schools met to share promising practices and problems of practice in February
- These conversations allowed schools to share resources they had developed at the school sites

# **Culminating Activity- SELebration Transforming Practice Conference**

- Second annual SEL conference was last Thursday.
- Every school created a display of their work for the year.



# Policy

- Board Resolution
- Board informative
- SUMS MTSS Work
- SEL part of SPSA Plan
- Discipline Foundation policy revision

# Collaborations

Academic English Mastery Program (AEMP) support for standard English learners . Focus on integrating SEL with culturally and linguistically proficient pedagogy.

School Mental Health- integrating SEL and Trauma informed healing educational practices.

Performing and Visual Arts- focus on integrating SEL into Arts instruction

# Reflections

- Brief validated a lot of what I observe at school sites
  - Adult interactions very important
  - Schedule to meet the SEL needs of students also key.

What is SEL and how do the CORE districts work to support it?

## Social and Emotional Learning

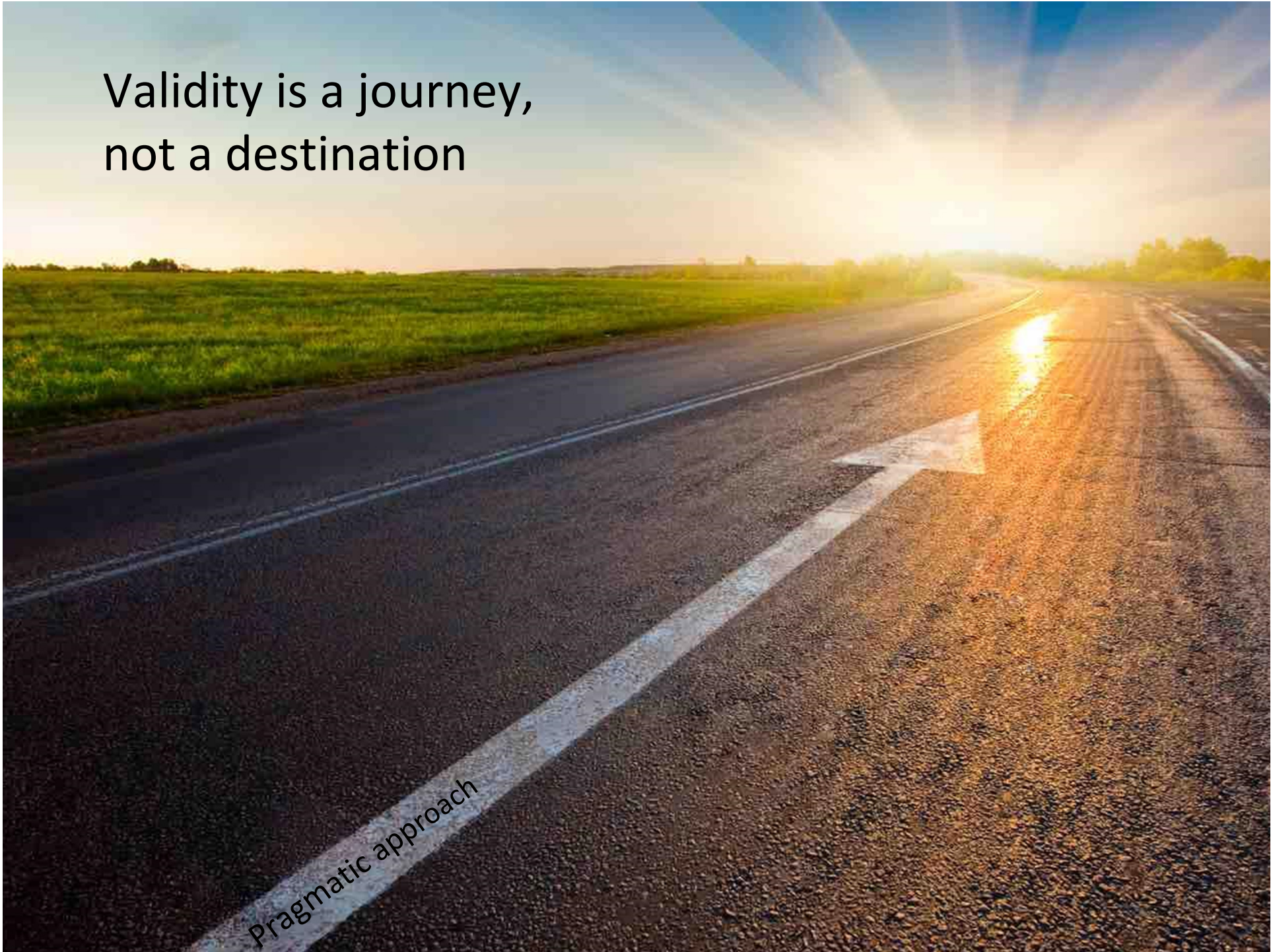


### Measuring Social Emotional Learning through Student Surveys in the CORE Districts: A Pragmatic Approach to Validity and Reliability

How does CORE measure SEL and are the measures valid and reliable?

Validity is a journey,  
not a destination

Pragmatic approach



# 1. How well were the measures designed?

Area	Description
Reliability	Does a scale produce consistent scores over time when no changes have actually occurred?
Content validity	Does each survey scale cover appropriate indicators of that topic or construct? (And do they omit indicators of related but distinct constructs?)
Face validity	Do the items within each scale appear to measure the construct they are supposed to measure? In other words, if taken at face value, do the items seem like appropriate indicators for that scale?
Structural validity	Does a scale that was designed to represent a single construct represent just that one construct or do its psychometric properties suggest it is measuring more than just one construct?
Representativeness	Do the items within a scale provide a representative cross-section of that construct?
Best practices	To what extent are survey items written in ways that adhere to best practices and thereby minimize measurement error to the extent possible?

## 2. How well do the measures fit the context?

Area	Description
Floor/ceiling effects	How well do the items on a scale spread respondents out across a range of responses for a particular population?
Reference bias	To what extent do respondents answer a survey scale differently based on the local peer norms?
Measurement invariance	Does one subpopulation of respondents interpret the items of a survey scale as meaning the same thing as a different subpopulation?

### 3. With what level of fidelity were the data acquired?

Area	Description
Survey administration practices	How well did the survey administration motivate students to answer each item to the best of their abilities?
Satisficing	To what extent did students engage in strategies to avoid putting effort into completing the survey with fidelity?
Social desirability bias	To what extent were students trying to present themselves in a favorable light as they answered (rather than striving to provide truthful responses)?



# 4. To what extent are the measures being used appropriately?

Area	Description
Analysis and measure creation	How appropriate are the decisions made during measure creation, data analysis, and reporting given the intended use of the survey data?
Convergent and discriminant validity	How well does a measure correlate with other, related measures that it should theoretically correlate with? How well does a measure demonstrate a lack of statistical relationships with measures that it is theoretically distinct from?
Predictive validity	How accurately does a measure predict future outcomes that we might care about?
Generalizability	Given the nature of the construct and the nature of the population, to what extent are the results likely to generalize to other related constructs and/or other populations of respondents?
Consequential validity	What are the intended and unintended consequences of a particular use of survey scores?

# 1. How well were CORE's measures designed?



***BEST PRACTICES***

***REPRESENTATIVENESS  
OF ITEMS***

***CONTENT VALIDITY***

***FACE  
VALIDITY***



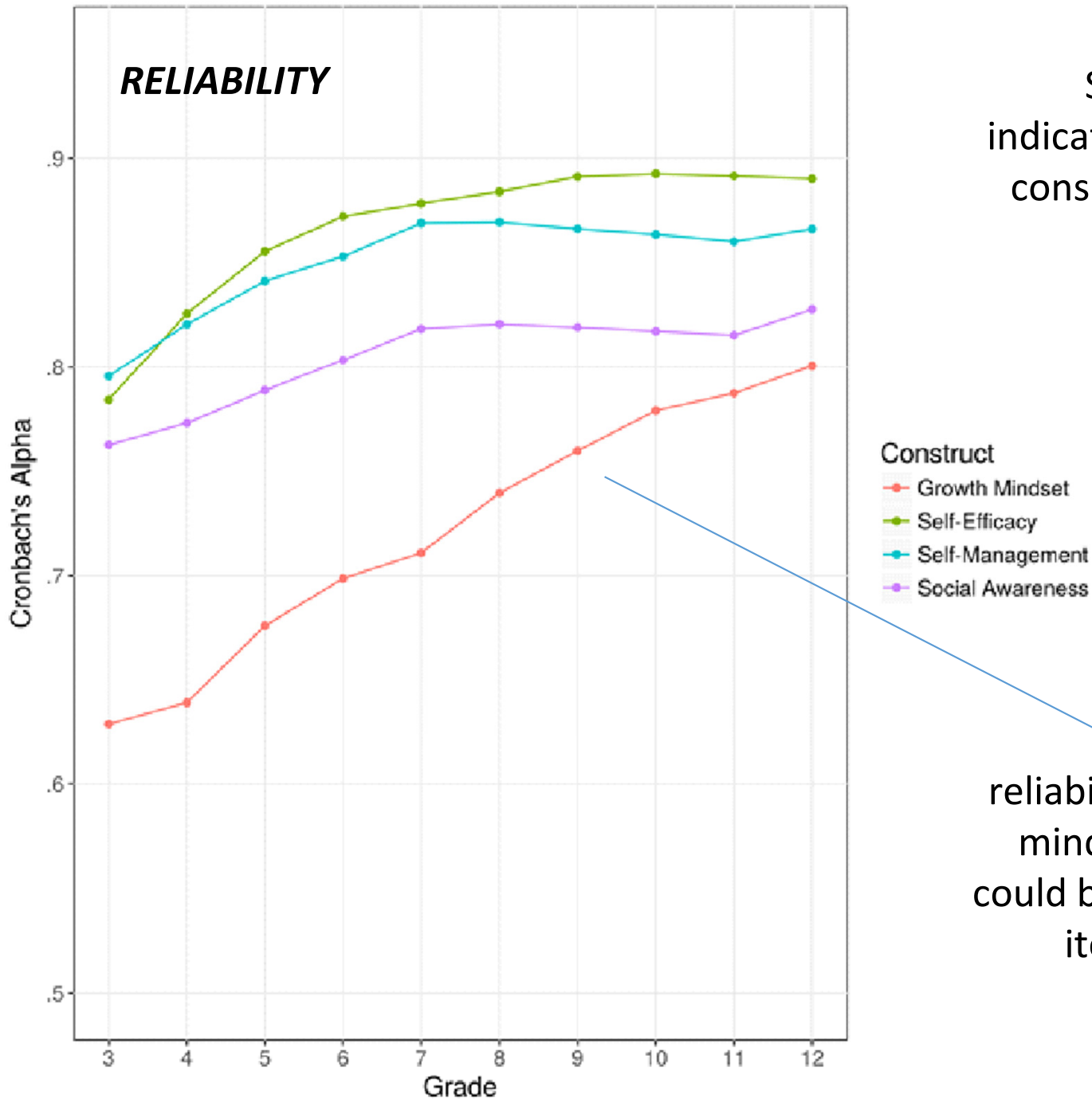
Researchers · Educators · Measurement Experts · Stakeholders

# STRUCTURAL VALIDITY

Factor analysis shows that items on the survey are measuring distinct, separate constructs



## RELIABILITY



Scale reliability is high, indicating that the items are consistently measuring the construct

Note, however, that reliability is low for growth mindset in early grades – could be the low number of items (4) or negatively phrased questions

Do students answer differently depending on their mood, or recent events (like a big test)?

How stable are students' responses across time?

OUTSTANDING QUESTIONS

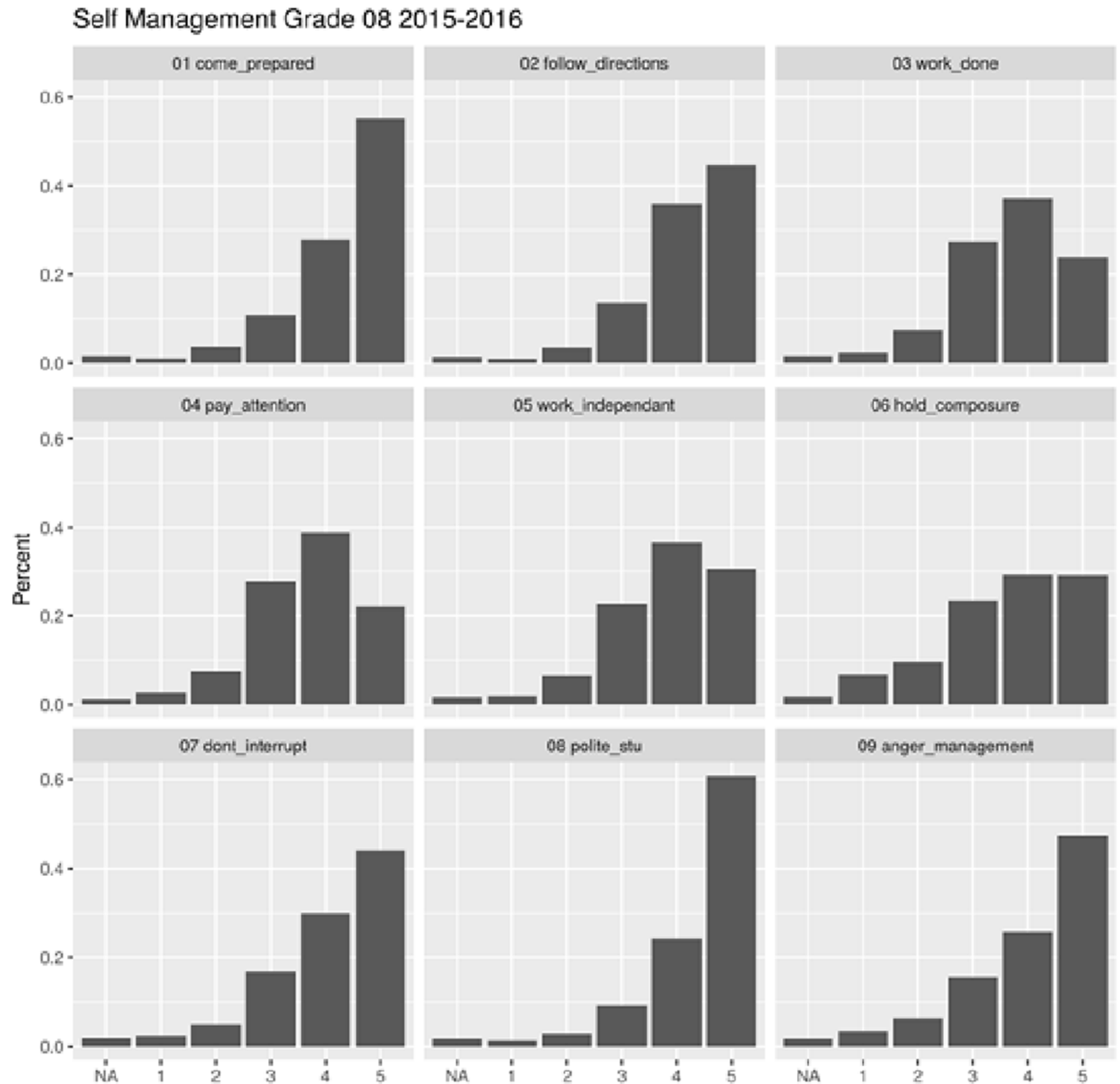
# 1. How well were CORE's measures designed?

How different are students' responses if questioned at multiple points during the school year?

## **2. How well do CORE's measures fit the context?**

## ***FLOOR/CEILING EFFECTS***

This could be an issue, since the SEL questions are on a 1-5 Likert scale, although even the raw data has a good spread



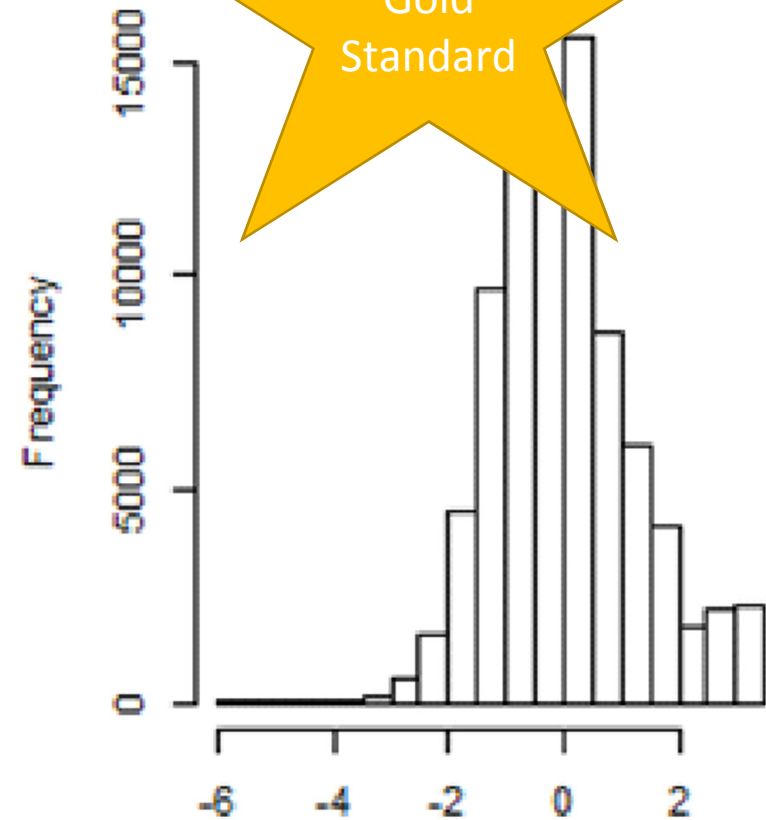
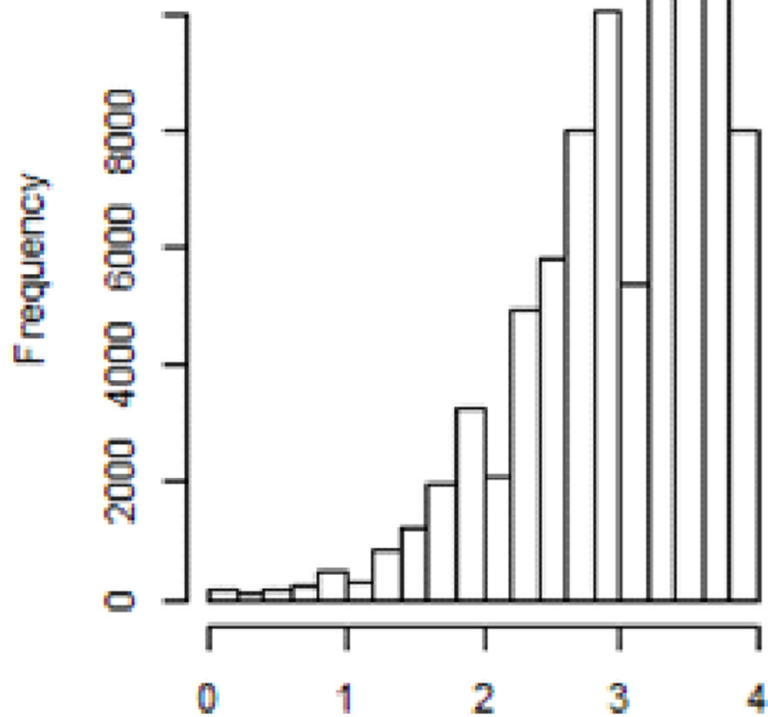
Histograms of Items on the Self Management Scale, Grade 8 (Meyer, Wang, & Rice (2018))



## ***FLOOR/CEILING EFFECTS***

However, Item Response Theory (IRT) models can smooth out the data and produce a more even distribution

### **Self-Management Grade 8 1516**



Raw Score

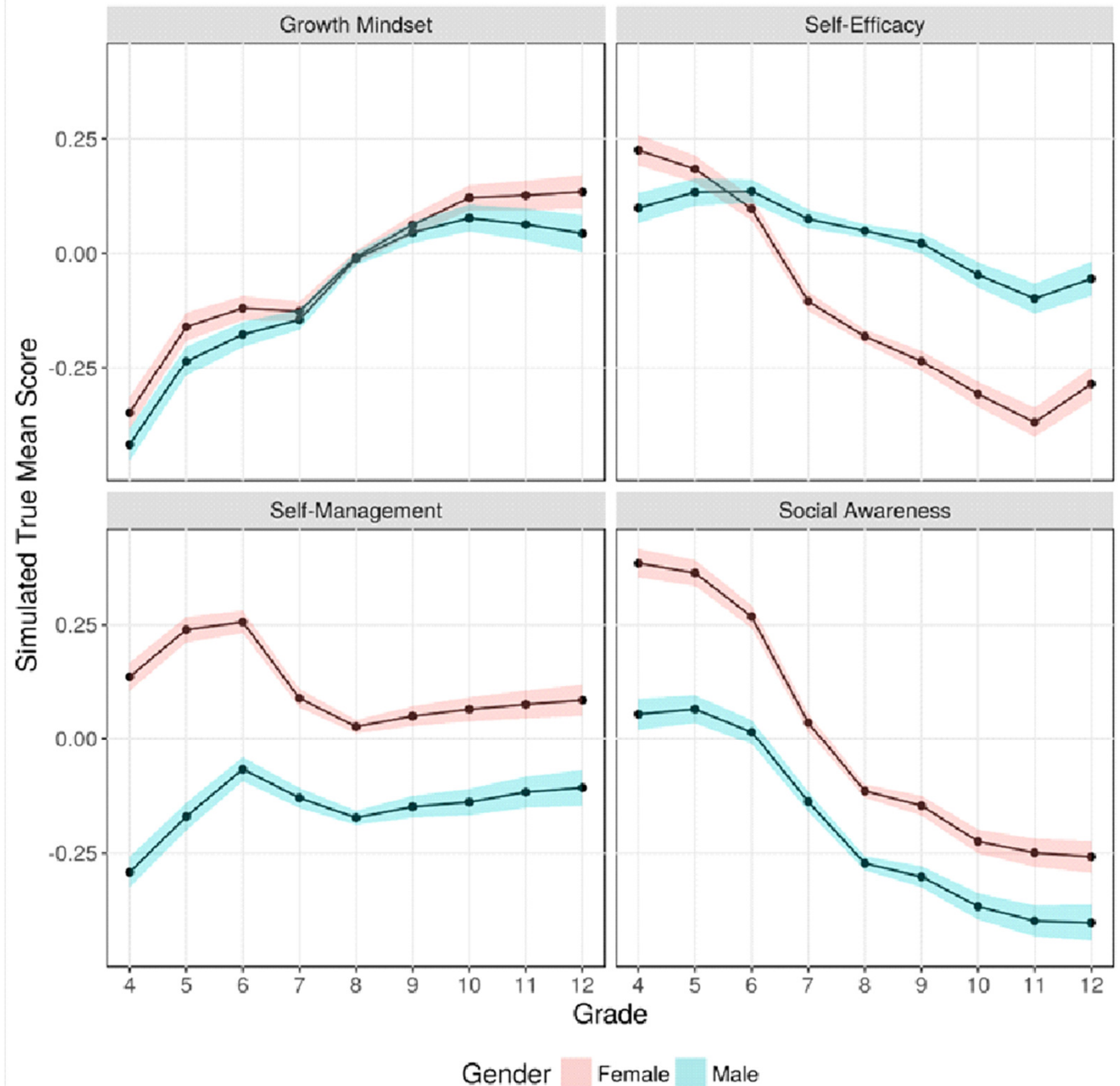
Scale Score

Distributions of Raw Scores, Scale Scores, and True Scores of Self-Management (Grade 8) (Meyer, Wang, & Rice (2018))

## MEASUREMENT INVARIANCE

Recall: This just means that all students are interpreting and responding to the questions in the same way

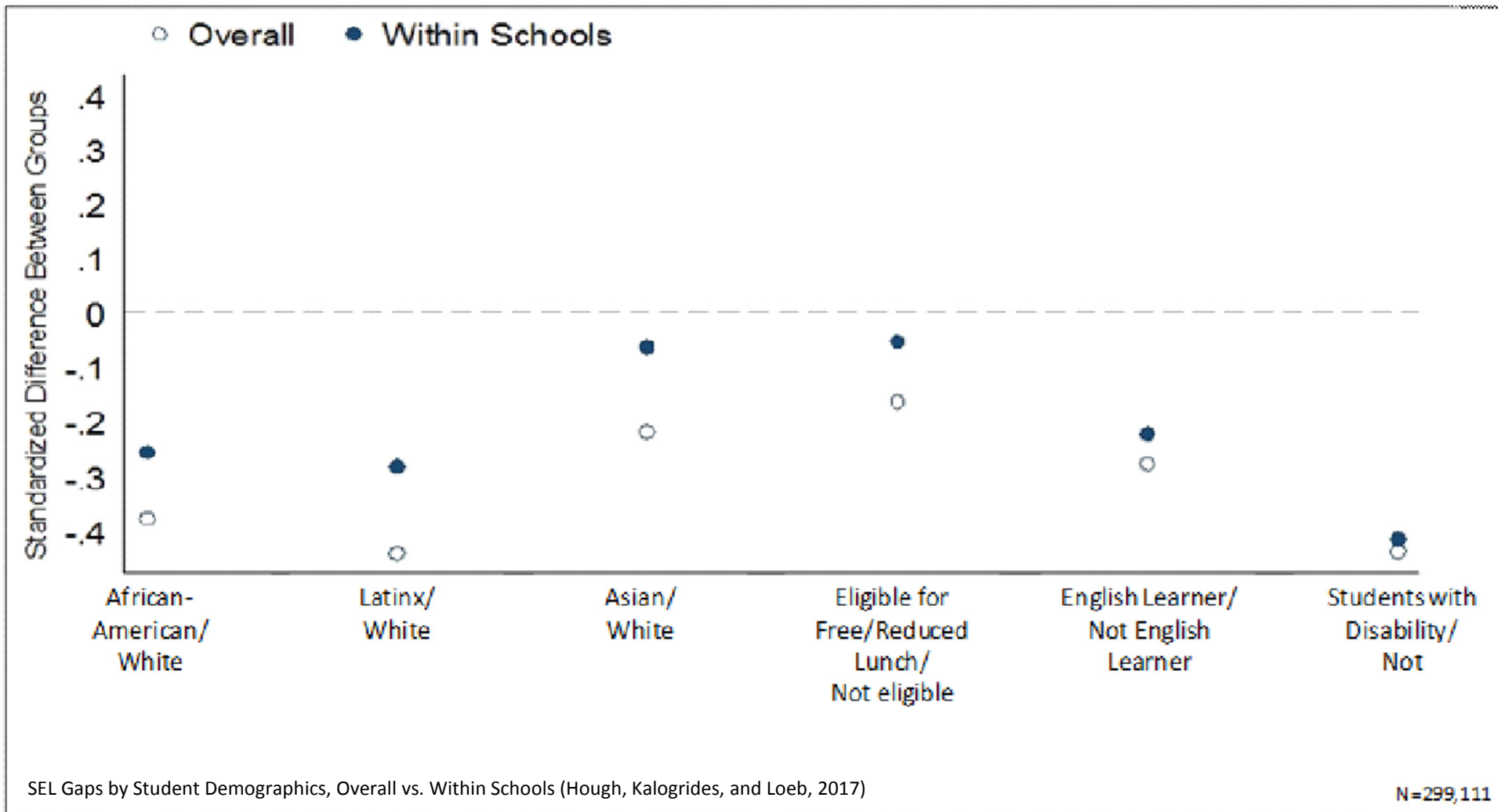
Particularly important in the case of SEL as we see big differences by gender...



## MEASUREMENT INVARIANCE

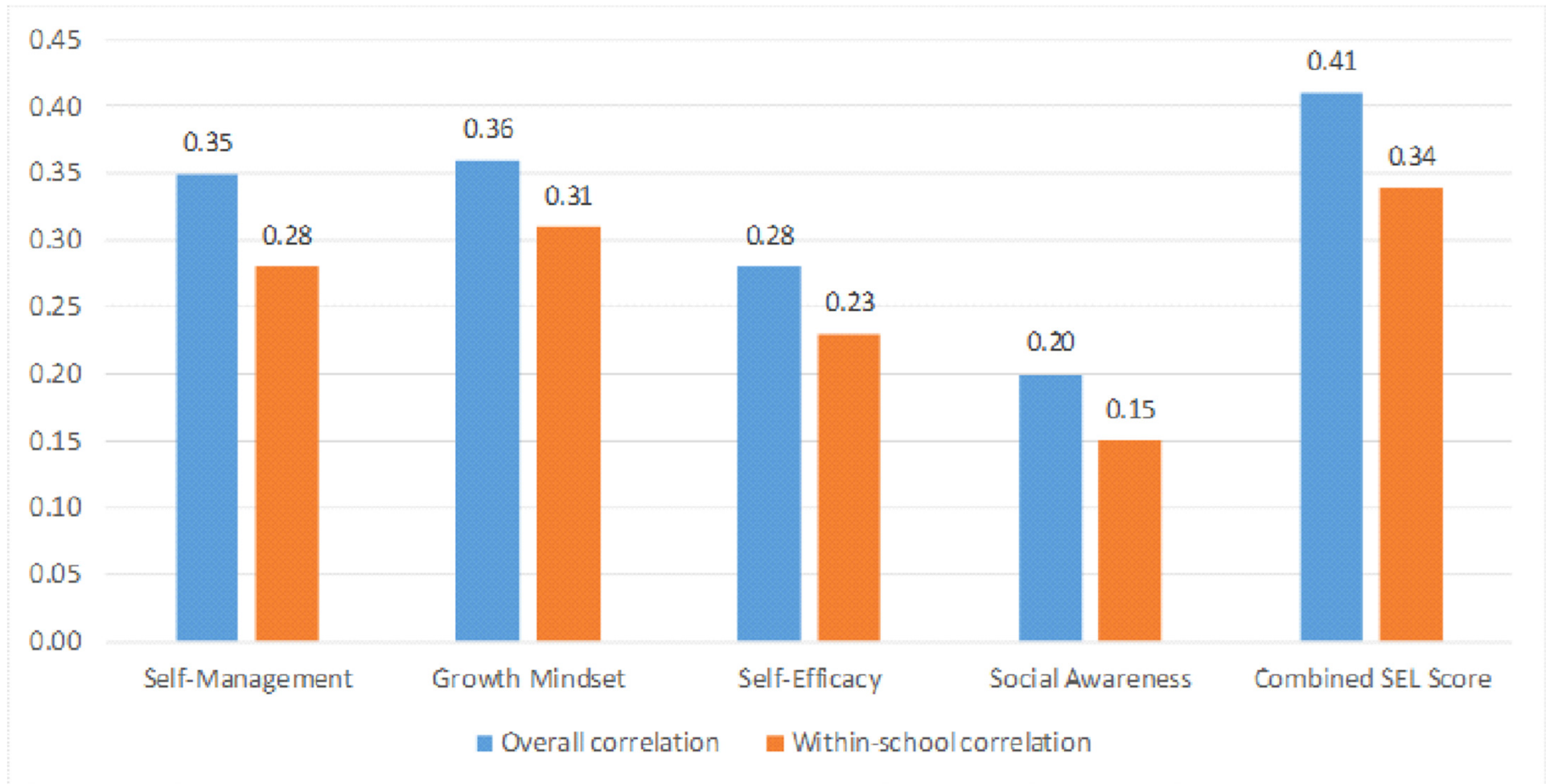
And other student subgroups, even within the same school.

However, using Differential Item Functioning Analysis (DIF), researchers have shown that student subgroups are not responding differently to items within the scales



## REFERENCE BIAS

SEL and ELA are less correlated within school than overall, but if students in higher performing schools rated themselves more critically, the opposite would be true. Provides evidence against reference bias.



Student-level correlations between social-emotional skills and English language arts (ELA) test scores in CORE District middle schools, overall and within schools (West, 2016)

Are students from different cultural backgrounds, or of different races/ethnicities, answering the surveys the same way?

Are students who don't speak English fluently able to interpret and respond to the SEL surveys as intended?

OUTSTANDING QUESTIONS

## 2. How well do CORE's measures fit the context?

Do students in different grades interpret the items the same way?

### **3. With what level of fidelity were CORE's data acquired?**

## ***SURVEY ADMINISTRATION***

CORE allowed for multiple modalities (paper, computer), and most districts work with an external provider



## ***SATISFICING***

- Response rates are high
- Missing item rates range from 1% to 7% per construct, with higher rates in the early grades

## ***SOCIAL DESIRABILITY BIAS***

- Student responses are kept confidential
- Demographic questions are not asked until the end
- Survey administrators stand at the back of the room

How much effort are students putting into the surveys?

Are different survey administration procedures more effective at getting “good” data?

OUTSTANDING QUESTIONS

### 3. With what level of fidelity were CORE’s data acquired?

Are students giving socially desirable responses (e.g., girls should be modest) or reporting their actual perspectives?



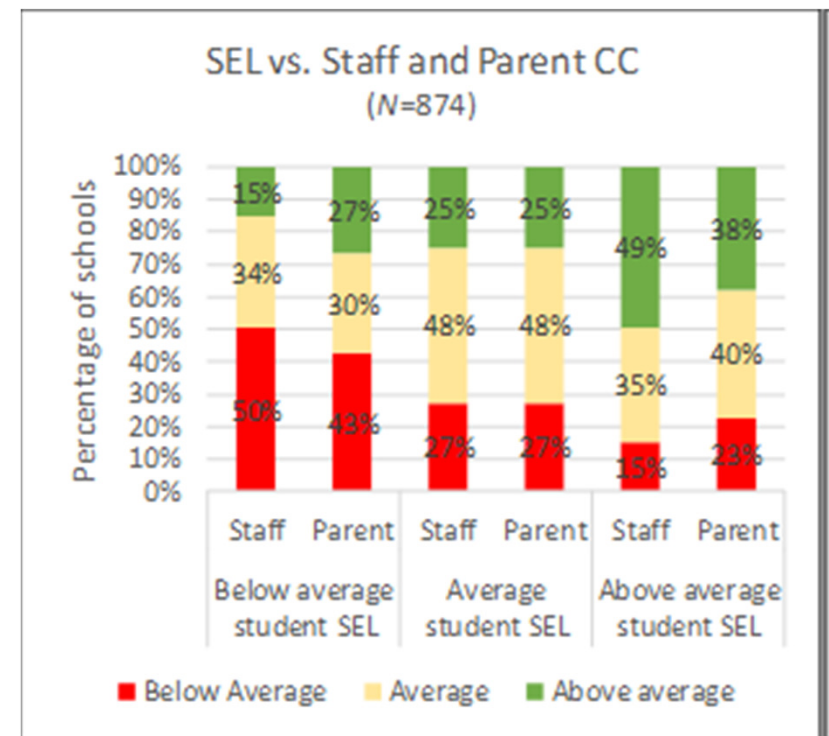
## **4. To what extent are CORE's measures being used appropriately?**

## CONVERGENT VALIDITY

SEL is related to student, parent, and staff reports of the school culture-climate reports

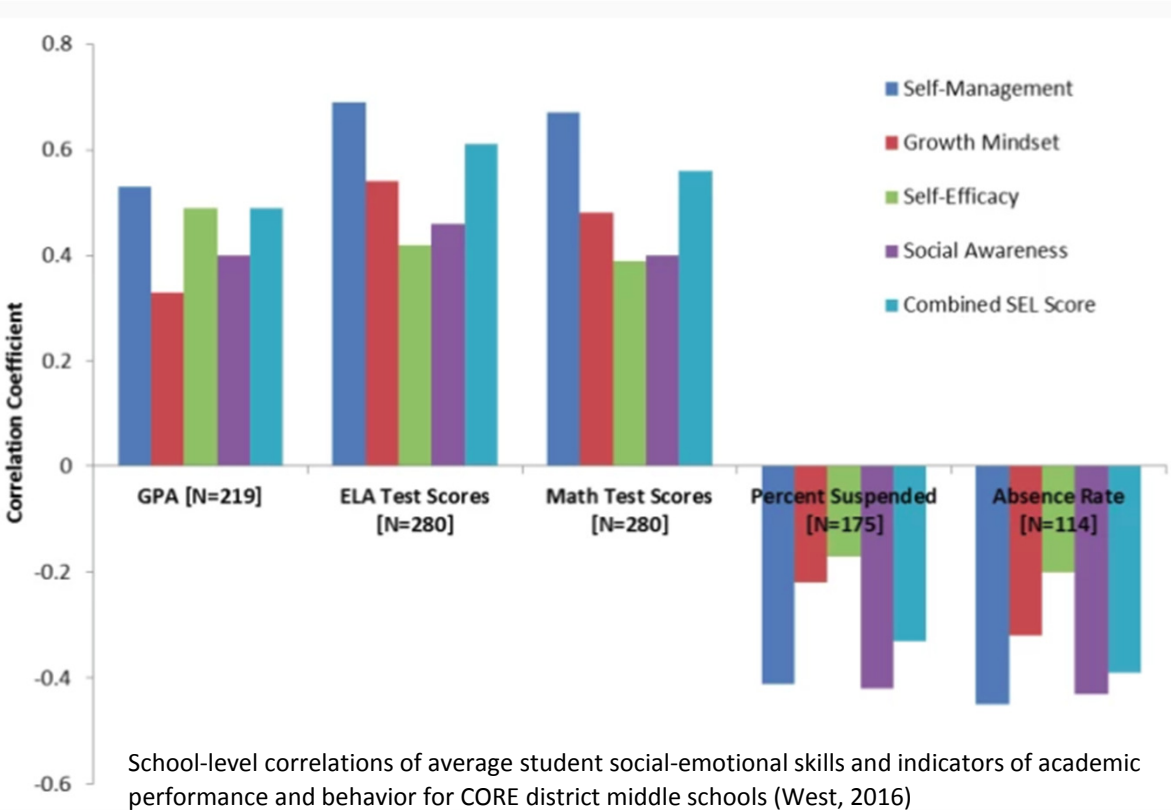
Students' SEL reports are related to their persistence on adaptive tests

Students' SEL reports are highly correlated with teacher reports of the same student



## PREDICTIVE VALIDITY

SEL is related to other academic and non-academic outcomes at the school level



Student-level growth mindset is related to improvement in academic outcomes

## ***ANALYSIS AND MEASURE CREATION***

The measurement team has created a scale that:

1. Provides robust measurement along a continuum of low to high scores
2. Provides valid measurement of scores for all students, including those with missing data
3. Supports the option of modifying the set of survey questions over time to allow for continuous improvement in the quality and utility of survey items

Can we construct an SEL value-added model?

- Researchers have shown promising results: there is variation in the extent to which schools contribute to improvement in SEL constructs, and school effects on each construct are related to each other and academic outcomes
- However, model fit is weaker than for academic outcomes, and there isn't much across school variation

## ***CONSEQUENTIAL VALIDITY***

- The inclusion of SEL measures in an accountability system can change both how the measures are used (e.g., gaming) and how schools are identified for improvement
- CORE's measures were designed to be part of an accountability system but they were never used that way

## ***SURVEY AS INTERVENTION***

- Nonetheless, educators say that including SEL in school performance measurement systems indicated to them that it was an important school and district goal
- Additionally, could contribute to high response rates

What is the school effect on SEL, compared to the teacher or classroom effect?

Do interventions that increase SEL lead to improvements in academic outcomes?

#### OUTSTANDING QUESTIONS

## 4. To what extent are CORE's measures being used appropriately?

How short can the instruments be and still capture useful information?

Can what we have learned from CORE be generalized outside of the CORE districts?

# Guidance for those considering SEL measurement

- What constructs do parents, educators, and students value most in your school/district? What are you trying to accomplish through SEL measurement?
- What is your preference between simple metrics (which are easier to understand) and more sophisticated measures (which provide more information)?
- What can you do to ensure (or improve) survey administration procedures to improve data quality?
- How can you ensure the data will be used appropriately?
  - As a flashlight, not a hammer
  - To support and not scapegoat vulnerable populations

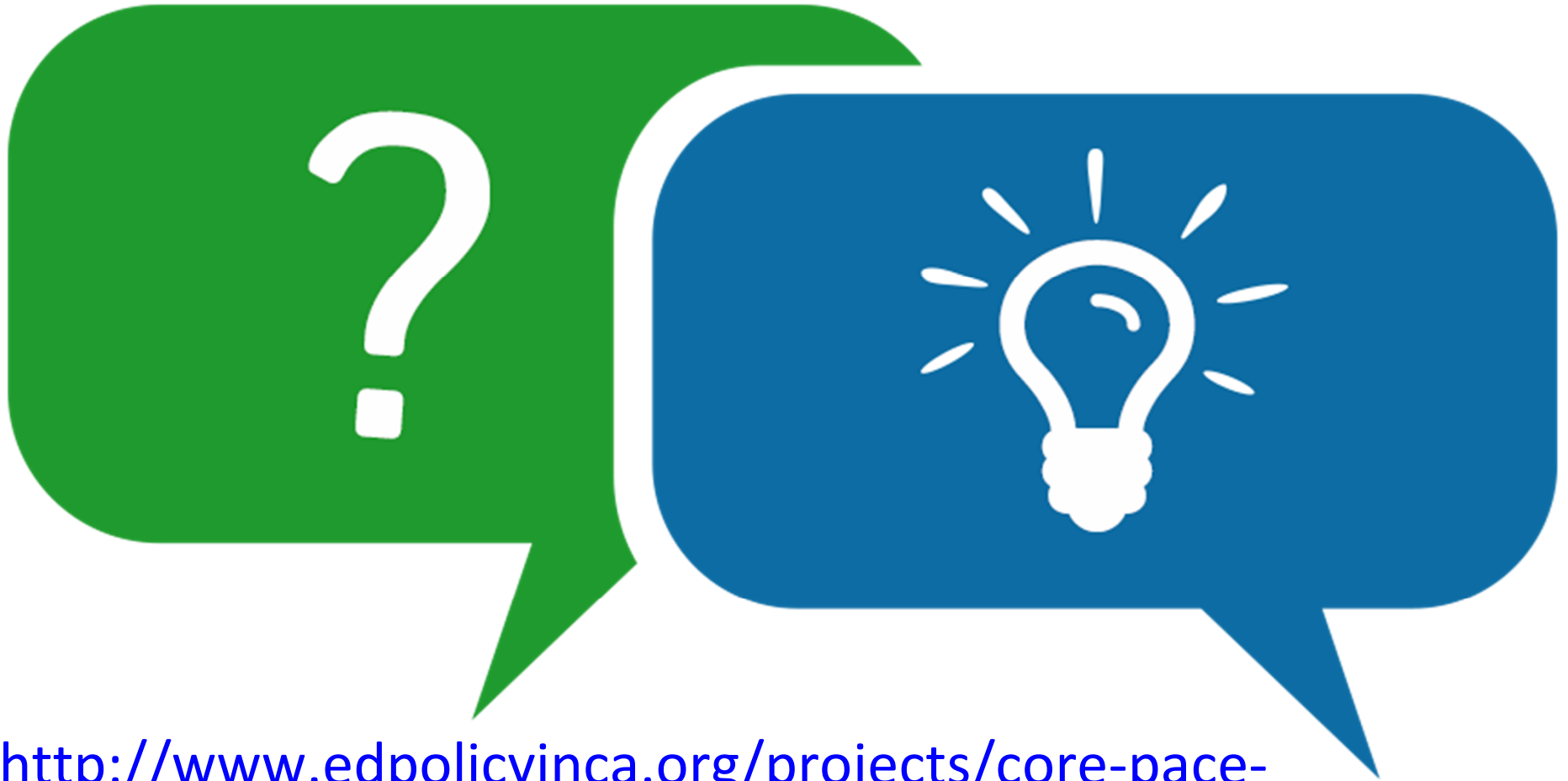
# Reflections: Barbara Richardson

- Introduce yourself and your role
- Tell us about your district context
- How does your district approach SEL practice and measurement? How far along are you in the process?
- Across the studies and practices you have heard about today, what are some of your ideas about how to use them to advance practice within your own district?



# Reflections: Christine Olmstead

- Introduce yourself and your role
- Tell us about your county context
- How does your county approach SEL practice and measurement in your work with districts and schools?
- Across the studies and practices you have heard about today, what are some of your thoughts about the implications for supporting SEL at scale?



<http://www.edpolicyinca.org/projects/core-pace-research-partnership/sel>

[hjough@stanford.edu](mailto:hjough@stanford.edu)