Welcome to

Measuring Soft Skills Doesn’t Need to Be Hard

A Q&A with Hunter Gehlbach on SEL Measurement
Poll Question:

Where are you in the SEL measurement process?

a. SEL? What’s SEL?
b. Early – just starting to consider it
c. Midway – have a measure selected and are planning to start collecting data soon
d. Late – the SEL data are already rolling in
Poll Question:

Why are you considering collecting SEL data?

a. To learn where the kids I work with are struggling in terms of their SEL
b. To learn if the kids I work with have grown in terms of their SEL
c. To compare the SEL skills of students in the schools/programs I work with
d. Other – please describe in the chat
Agenda

Welcome and introductions

Measuring Social and Emotional Learning: A Brief Guide

Using SEL measures for formative purposes

Audience Q & A

Close
Today’s Speakers

Karyn Lewis
Education
Northwest

Hunter Gehlbach
Panorama
Education
Academic Success
Content Knowledge

Academic Skills

Academic Success
Terminology for the “Other Stuff”

What to call the “other stuff”? 

• Social-emotional learning (SEL)
• Non-cognitive or non-academic skills
• 21st century skills
• Mindsets, essential skills, and habits (MESH)
Terminology for the “Other Stuff”

What to call the “other stuff”?

• Social-emotional learning (SEL)
• Non-cognitive or non-academic skills
• 21st century skills
• Mindsets, essential skills, and habits (MESH)
Why the Confusion?

“It is a very diverse group of factors and the reason it’s been hard to come up with a name is that they don’t necessarily belong together.”

Dr. Carol Dweck
Toolkit for School Success
Home environment/neurobiology

Content Knowledge

Social Skills

Emotional Competence

Self-Regulation

Self-Efficacy

Academic Skills

Academic Success
Home environment/neurobiology

School Context

Academic Success

Content Knowledge

Social Skills

Emotional Competence

Self-Regulation

Self-Efficacy

Academic Skills
Implications for Measurement

- The Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA) requires schools to track at least one “non-academic” measure of school quality or student success.

- Opened up unprecedented opportunity for schools to consider success more broadly, and many schools proposed using SEL as a potential indicator.
Implications for Measurement

Testing for Joy and Grit? School Nationwide Push to Measure Emotional Skills

Now some schools are testing kids for their 'grit' and 'joy' levels. Really.

By Valerie Strauss

Kate Zernike

Jade Cooney with her fifth-grade class at Visa...
Summary of Controversy

• There’s no standard benchmark of healthy SEL development and therefore no appropriate way to “grade” kids or schools
• Might be possible to “game” the surveys
• An annual assessment isn’t likely to give you actionable data for interventions
What to Make of the Controversy?

SEL measures, like all measures, are flawed

“All measures suck, and they each suck in their own way.”

Angela Duckworth
SEL is important, and *formative* information about students who are struggling can be useful for schools.
SEL Measurement Guide

- Distill key decisions for implementing SEL measurement projects
- Promote the collection of high-quality SEL data that are robust and actionable
1. Clarify the purpose for measuring
SEL Measurement Guide

1. Clarify the purpose for measuring
2. Decide which constructs to measure
SEL Measurement Guide

1. Clarify the purpose for measuring
2. Decide which constructs to measure
3. Select the appropriate tool
Questions for Dr. Gehlbach

Hunter Gehlbach
Director of Research
Associate Professor, UCSB
How do you define SEL? What advice can you give for selecting SEL capacities to measure?
What do you think about the possibility of measuring SEL? What are the goals of the measurement process?
When is it best to survey students?

When is it best to survey teachers and other adults?
How do SEL measures relate to climate surveys? What can you learn from one type of data that you can’t from the other?
What keeps you up at night when it comes to SEL measurement?
Do you have a favorite SEL measurement success story?
What are the most pressing future challenges for the field of SEL measurement to tackle?
Audience Q & A
Want to Learn More?

Are you ready to assess social and emotional development?

American Institutes for Research

Assessing social & emotional skills in out-of-school time settings: Considerations for practitioners
University of Minnesota Extension

Encouraging social and emotional learning in the context of new accountability
Learning Policy Institute

Practical measurement
Carnegie Foundation for the Advancement of Teaching

Measurement guide
Coming soon from CASEL’s work group on SEL measurement
Let’s Chat:

How are you seeing SEL surveys being used in the field?
Thanks for Coming - Stay in Touch!

Karyn Lewis
karyn.lewis@educationnorthwest.org

Hunter Gehlbach
gehlbach@ucsb.edu