What can we learn through replication?
The role of individual-level risk factors and implementation supports in the impact of Social-Emotional Learning Programs on student outcomes

Social Emotional Learning (SEL) programs aim to support children’s development and success in school by improving their social-emotional skills (e.g., behavioral/emotional regulation, attention). The body of evidence linking social-emotional competencies to a range of positive child outcomes is well established. Policymakers and practitioners have responded by encouraging support for implementation of SEL programs in schools. Indeed, in May 2013, a bipartisan group of lawmakers introduced the Academic, Social, and Emotional Learning Act to the 113th Congress to expand the availability of evidence-based SEL programs.¹

Replication of impact studies across populations and implementation conditions will provide needed generalizability for evidence on the efficacy of SEL programs. The proposed symposium will present findings from four IES-funded efficacy studies in the Social and Behavioral Context for Academic Learning (Social/Behavioral) program.

**Study 1** will present findings from the evaluation of the *Social Skills Improvement System-Classwide Intervention Program* on urban and rural elementary school students’ prosocial behaviors, academic engagement, and motivation. Results suggest that the program had small to medium effects on behavioral and academic outcomes, and that effects were driven by children who had low levels of these competencies prior to the intervention. The second study (*Study 2*) will build on these findings and present effects of the SEL program *INSIGHTS into Children’s Temperament* on low-income urban kindergarten and first grade students’ behaviors and academic engagement. Results suggest that there were medium effects of *INSIGHTS* on outcomes, specific to children at the highest levels of risk prior to the program’s implementation. Findings from these studies will be compared to previous randomized trials of the same programs, conducted in different populations.

Two separately designed and implemented studies (**Studies 3 and 4**) of a teacher-directed SEL intervention for early elementary students will be presented next. Both studies evaluated the efficacy of the *Incredible Years Teacher Classroom Management Program* for improving teachers’ management skills and enhancing children’s social-emotional skills. However, **Study 3**, which randomized teachers within schools, was conducted in an urban sample, and included 6 days of training with a significant classroom coaching component. **Study 4**, in contrast, randomized teachers by grade-level within schools, was conducted in a rural sample, and provided 5 days of training and minimal consultation. As illustrated in the papers’ abstracts, results from Study 3 show more promise than those from Study 4.

After the papers have been presented, Emily Doolittle, the IES program officer for the Social/Behavioral program, will reflect on these papers. Her commentary will focus on study replication and implications for policy and practice. Examining and discussing results from these IES-funded studies will provide a unique opportunity to consider the role of sample characteristics and implementation supports in the beneficial impacts of SEL interventions.

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¹ The bill is an amendment to the Elementary and Secondary Education Act (ESEA), popularly known as No Child Left Behind.