| Core Function | Personalized Learning: Social/Emotional Competency |
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| Effective Practice | Providing instruction, modeling, classroom norms, and caring attention that promotes students' self-respect, management of emotions, concern for others, and responsibility |
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**Indicator:** All staff conducting co-curricular programs fulfill the purposes of the programs including appropriate elements of social/emotional competency.  (F4)

**Explanation:** The evidence suggests that co-curricular program staff should also be knowledgeable about the Social/Emotional Competency and ways in which to implement it in their academic and social activities. Co-curricular programs can reinforce and expand on the habits and knowledge that students are learning in the school day, while providing a smaller and more supportive environment for students. The more aligned the co-curricular program is to the school day and the more opportunities for individual support, the more likely it is for students to fully master the habits of the Social/Emotional Competency.

**Questions:** How are co-curricular programs aligned to the practices of the school day? In what ways are co-curricular and school-day staff communicating to ensure that they are best collaborating for student success? How are co-curricular staff being trained on the Social/Emotional Competency? What types of settings are the co-curricular programs creating to ensure that students receive individual and social supports?

*What is the Social/Emotional Competency?*

The Social/Emotional Competency fosters a level of concern and respect for oneself and others strengthening skills of self-management and productive decision-making (Carreker & Boulware-Gooden, 2015; Educator Competencies, 2015; Redding, 2016). Specifically, social-emotional learning (SEL) helps students use their "sense of self-worth, regard for others, and emotional understanding and management to set positive goals and make responsible decisions" (Carreker & Boulware-Gooden, 2015, p. 2). The Collaborative for Academic, Social, and Emotional Learning (CASEL) (2012) identifies five primary skills in the Social/Emotional domain:

- Self-awareness: Being able to identify and understand one's own emotions, thoughts, behaviors, and abilities;

- Self-management: Being able to regulate these emotions, thoughts, and behaviors in the pursuit of positive and healthy goals;

- Social awareness: Being able to understand and relate to others, identify social supports and resources, and understand social norms for how to act;

- Relationship skills: Being able to communicate and work well with others and develop positive and meaningful relationships; and

- Responsible decision-making: Being able to make productive decisions about how to behave and interact with others, based on an understanding of norms, consequences, and others' needs.

Weissberg and Cascarino (2013) write that, "SEL programming is based on the understanding that the best learning

emerges in the context of supportive relationships that make learning challenging, engaging, and meaningful" (p. 10). Yet many of these skills need to be explicitly taught to children and adolescents, especially as they pertain to the learning process. School staff and volunteers should not only teach these concepts but should also model and provide opportunities for their application throughout the school day, in the context of a safe environment for socializing and learning (Wiessberg & Cascarino, 2013; Carreker & Boulware-Gooden, 2015).

*How Can the Staff of Co-Curricular Programs Work to Promote the Social/Emotional Competency?*

The school day is not the only time that students are receiving academic instruction and interventions. Saturday academies, summer school, and extended school years, as well as traditional after-school time are all co-curricular opportunities for students to learn. During these times, opportunities can be made available to students who need enrichment, academic intervention, and social supports. In addition to schools, it is common to see these programs run by community centers, churches, and non-profit agencies (Closing the Gap, 2008).

Therefore, teachers and parents are not the only adults involved in children's educational experiences and not the only ones who can help students continue to learn, grow, and develop positive personal and social habits. Through co-curricular programs and community activities, there are many other adults willing to help students however they can. These adults can provide additional academic and emotional supports for students, but for them to be most effective, they need to be familiar with the goals, content, and strategies of the classroom. The onus is on the school to fully integrate these partners and treat them as equals and meaningful contributors in the task of educating children (Bayerl, 2014).

Beckett, et al. (2009) present a set of recommended strategies for maximizing the effect of educational activities outside of the classroom. Although these recommendations are primarily for programs serving elementary and middle school students in disadvantaged communities, the wider applicability of these recommendations can be helpful for high school programs as well. The most applicable suggestions for the Social/Emotional Competency are for schools and providers to ensure that the program provides opportunities for one-on-one and

small group supports, as well as for the development of positive relationships. These connections allow program staff to get to know students personally and provide a supportive, non-school environment in which they can practice and hone their academic and social skills.

The Afterschool Alliance (2009) also found that the nature and structure of many after-school programs naturally provide many of the elements that have been shown to better engage at-risk youth in school, such as individualized tutoring and mentoring and a wide range of curricular areas. Charmaraman and Hall (2011) found that many dropout prevention programs used academic activities to develop:

> … the intermediary skills that are critical to academic success, such as developing positive relationships with others, learning how to communicate effectively, and appreciating diversity, [which] are critical for nurturing young people who need a positive and supportive environment to bring their assets to the foreground and become productive citizens (p. 4).

Hartmann, et al. (2011) support this quotation. They talk about how many elements of after-school programs – positive relationships with caring adults and peers, opportunities for small successes, and academic improvement – encourage the concept of positive identity development for teens, which in turn leads to more resilience and success in high school and beyond. By encouraging co-curricular program staff to also build and reinforce the practices of the Social/Emotional Competency within their program activities, students will have even greater opportunities to turn their practices into learning habits.

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