

EARLY LESSONS FROM SCHOOLS AND OUT OF SCHOOL TIME PROGRAMS IMPLEMENTING SOCIAL AND EMOTIONAL LEARNING

A REPORT BY THE WALLACE FOUNDATION & RAND EDUCATION AND LABOR

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DALLAS COHORT PRESS KIT

OCTOBER 2020



INTRODUCTION

Social and emotional learning (SEL) is becoming an increasingly important part of the education model. The COVID-19 pandemic has increased the urgency to better address the social and emotional well-being of students along with academics.

The **PARTNERSHIPS FOR SOCIAL AND EMOTIONAL LEARNING INITIATIVE (PSELI)** is a six-year national study to gain knowledge on how to help children develop SEL skills. The study is sponsored by The Wallace Foundation, a philanthropy that fosters improvements in learning and enrichment, and it has been undertaken by RAND Education and Labor, a division of the RAND Corporation that conducts research on education and workforce issues.

The Wallace Foundation has outlined two goals for PSELI: for local partners to strengthen their capacity to deliver benefits to children in their communities, and to develop new knowledge that will be useful to the field. The Wallace Foundation and RAND Education and Labor published Volume I of a series of reports based on findings from this initiative that provides insights into early lessons from the six-community, 38-site study.

Six communities, including Dallas, were selected to be part of the initiative through a competitive nationwide review process. The other participating communities are Boston, MA, Denver, CO, Palm Beach County, FL, Tacoma, WA, and Tulsa, OK.

THE DALLAS PSELI COHORT:



BIG THOUGHT, DALLAS ISD, DALLAS AFTERSCHOOL & DALLAS PARK AND RECREATION

Seven Dallas ISD elementary schools were part of PSELI Phase 1. Big Thought and Dallas Afterschool served as the Out of School Time Intermediaries (OSTI), providing technical support and coaching. Dallas Park and Recreation is the after school provider for five of the seven Phase 1 sites, and Big Thought is the after school provider at two sites. Collectively, the Dallas effort is referred to as **SEL DALLAS**.



DALLAS INDEPENDENT SCHOOL DISTRICT sits in the heart of a large, diverse and dynamic region and comprises 384 square miles. Dallas ISD is the second-largest public school district in the state and the 14th-largest district in the nation.

Dallas ISD serves as the lead educational partner and co-fiscal agent for PSELI in Dallas. The department of Social and Emotional Learning (SEL) oversees social and emotional learning implementation for the district, including PSELI, with the goal of scaling these critical systems and practices district-wide by 2025. Dallas ISD's Expanded Learning Opportunities department is also an integral partner in supporting the out of school time components of the work.



BIG THOUGHT is an impact education organization focused on closing the opportunity gap and equipping all youth in marginalized communities with the skills, competencies and experiences necessary for them to imagine and create their best lives and world.

Big Thought serves as the co-fiscal agent of the PSELI grant, along with Dallas ISD, overseeing the coordination and implementation of the grant with a focus on the out of school time components. Big Thought shares, in collaboration with Dallas Afterschool, the out of school time intermediary functions of the project, providing on-site coaching and technical assistance, co-creating and delivering professional development and curricular resources.



DALLAS AFTERSCHOOL'S mission is to increase the quality and availability of after school and summer programs in the Dallas community. Dallas Afterschool works with 35 different nonprofits and more than 180 after school and summer program sites annually to provide coaching, training and resources through their Program Quality Initiative to ensure that programs are more likely to observe positive outcomes for students.

Dallas Afterschool shares, in collaboration with Big Thought, the out of school time intermediary functions, supporting program quality and co-creating and delivering professional development and curricular resources.



The **DALLAS PARK AND RECREATION** Department offers after school programming at select Dallas ISD partnering schools, including five of the seven PSELI sites, providing academic and recreational programs that expose youth to a wide variety of activities that will help broaden their interests and challenge them to learn and master new skills, thus increasing self-esteem. Dallas Park and Recreation plays an integral role in implementing SEL practices, testing tools and resources and providing feedback.

HERE ARE THE SEVEN DALLAS ISD PHASE 1 ELEMENTARY SCHOOLS

BAYLES ELEMENTARY

[Visit →](#)

2444 Telegraph Ave., Dallas, TX 75228

- Grades served: PK-5
- Trustee District 3
- Feeder Pattern: Bryan Adams High School
- After school provided by Dallas Park and Recreation

ASCHER SILBERSTEIN ELEMENTARY

[Visit →](#)

5940 Hollis Ave., Dallas, TX 75227

- Grades served: PK-5
- Trustee District 4
- Feeder Pattern: Skyline High School
- After school provided by Dallas Park and Recreation

LEILA COWART ELEMENTARY

[Visit →](#)

1515 S. Ravinia Drive, Dallas, TX 75211

- Grades served: PK3-5
- Trustee District 7
- Feeder Pattern: Moises E Molina High School
- After school provided by Dallas Park and Recreation

DANIEL WEBSTER ELEMENTARY

[Visit →](#)

3815 S. Franklin Street, Dallas, TX 75233

- Grades served: PK-5
- Trustee District 6
- Feeder Pattern: Justin F Kimball High School
- After school provided by Big Thought

LORENZO DE ZAVALA ELEMENTARY

[Visit →](#)

3214 N Winnetka Ave, Dallas, TX 75212

- Grades served: PK-6
- Trustee District 5
- Feeder Pattern: LG Pinkston High School
- After school provided by Big Thought

MARTIN WEISS ELEMENTARY

[Visit →](#)

8601 Willoughby Boulevard, Dallas, TX 75232

- Grades served: PK-5
- Trustee District 6
- Feeder Pattern: David W Carter High School
- After school provided by Dallas Park and Recreation

EDWIN KIEST ELEMENTARY

[Visit →](#)

2611 Healey Drive, Dallas, TX 75228

- Grades served: PK-5
- Trustee District 3
- Feeder Pattern: Bryan Adams High School
- After school provided by Dallas Park and Recreation

EARLY LESSONS LEARNED, OUR APPROACH IN DALLAS & WHAT'S NEXT

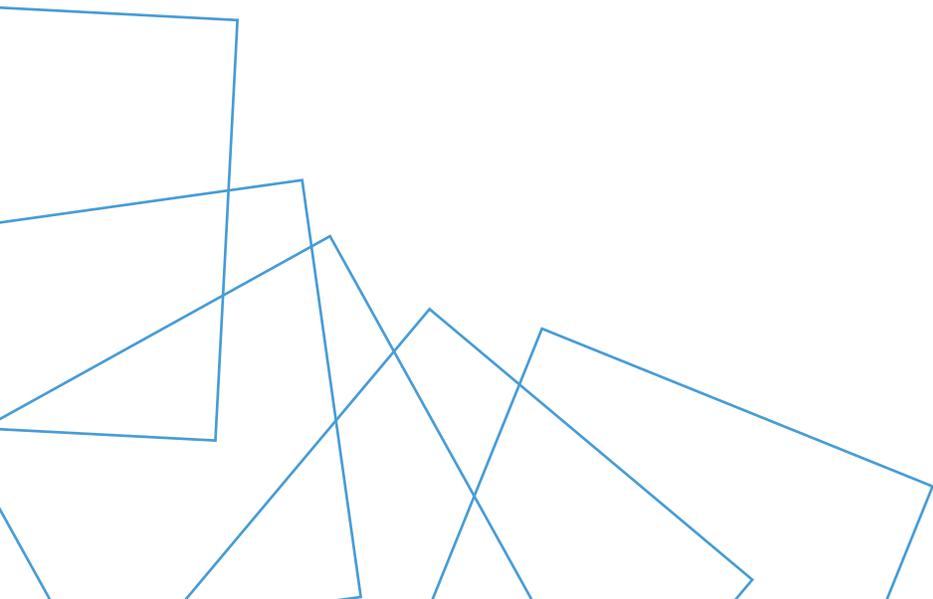


Early lessons from the study offer considerations on how schools and out of school time (OST) programs can implement social and emotional learning supports for students.

- The experience of PSELI communities suggests benefits in developing adult understanding of SEL and skills in order to foster these in students.
- Creating a shared vision of SEL, determining roles and responsibilities and identifying which SEL skills to develop were helpful early steps in implementing SEL.
- Communities approached SEL implementation in three ways: through explicit skills instruction, integrating SEL into academic instruction and OST activities and creating a positive in-school and out of school culture and climate.
- SEL-focused partnerships (between schools and OST programs and/or districts and OST coordinating entities or intermediaries) face barriers — but there are strategies to help overcome them.

The unique approach we took in Dallas was to develop thematic alignment between in-school and out of school time SEL curricula.

- Dallas ISD created an SEL department with a dedicated team focused on SEL implementation.
- Big Thought and Dallas Afterschool co-developed a 36-week SEL content and pacing guide based on Sanford Harmony units and lessons that provided weekly SEL themes (e.g., being respectful or having empathy) and activities for OST instructors to implement at least once per week.
- Big Thought provided SEL Specialist for both in- and out of school programming funded by Big Thought. A full-time SEL Specialist met with OST instructors each week to explain and expound upon the guide and co-plan SEL activities for the following week.
- The interdisciplinary PSELI Steering Committee worked together to align IST/OST work in partnership with school personnel and OST program personnel.



WHAT'S NEXT?

PHASE 2 PSELI IMPLEMENTATION BEGINS THIS ACADEMIC YEAR.

- Each Phase 2 site will collaborate on SEL implementation at their respective campuses with a focus on fostering an intentional in- and out of school time partnership.
- SEL Dallas will provide support in the form of one Dallas ISD SEL Coordinator and one SEL Specialist from Big Thought who will support in- and out of school time partnership development, collaborative SEL planning and implementation.
- SEL Guidebook: The SEL Dallas team is drafting an SEL Guidebook that will serve as an implementation reference and Dallas-focused resource for in- and out of school time partners. This resource will be shared with Phase 2 sites by Fall 2020.
- Phase 1 Mentorship: The SEL Dallas team will connect Phase 2 sites with relevant Phase 1 leaders (principals, teachers, site leads, etc.) to provide additional “on the ground” support and guidance.
- Intensive training will begin for seven Phase 2 sites during the 2020 -21 academic year.



HERE ARE THE SEVEN DALLAS ISD PHASE 2 ELEMENTARY SCHOOLS

JOHN Q ADAMS ELEMENTARY

[Visit →](#)

8239 Lake June Road, Dallas, TX 75217

- Grades Served: PK-5
- Trustee District 4
- Feeder Pattern: W. W. Samuell High School
- After school provided by Dallas Park and Recreation

HARRELL BUDD ELEMENTARY

[Visit →](#)

2121 S. Marsalis Ave., Dallas, TX 75216

- Grades Served: PK-5
- Trustee District 5
- Feeder Pattern: Franklin D. Roosevelt High School
- After school provided by Dallas Park and Recreation

CEDAR CREST ELEMENTARY

[Visit →](#)

Address Line 1, Dallas TX Zip

- Grades Served: PK4-5
- Trustee District 5
- Feeder Pattern: Franklin D. Roosevelt High School
- After school provided by Boys & Girls Club of Dallas

WILLIAM LIPSCOMB ELEMENTARY

[Visit →](#)

5801 Worth Street, Dallas, TX 75214

- Grades Served: PK-5
- Trustee District 2
- Feeder Pattern: Woodrow Wilson High School
- After school provided by Boys & Girls Club of Dallas

B.H. MACON ELEMENTARY

[Visit →](#)

650 Holcomb Road, Dallas, TX 75217

- Grades Served: PK3-5
- Trustee District 4
- Feeder Pattern: Spruce High School
- After school provided by Dallas Park and Recreation

MEDRANO ELEMENTARY

[Visit →](#)

2221 Lucas Drive, Dallas, TX 75219

- Grades Served: PK3-5
- Trustee District 8
- Feeder Pattern: North Dallas High School

RUSSELL ELEMENTARY

[Visit →](#)

3031 S. Beckley Ave., Dallas, TX 75224

- Grades Served: PK-5
- Trustee District 6
- Feeder Pattern: South Oak Cliff High School
- After school provided by Dallas Park and Recreation

DALLAS COHORT PSELI LEADERSHIP

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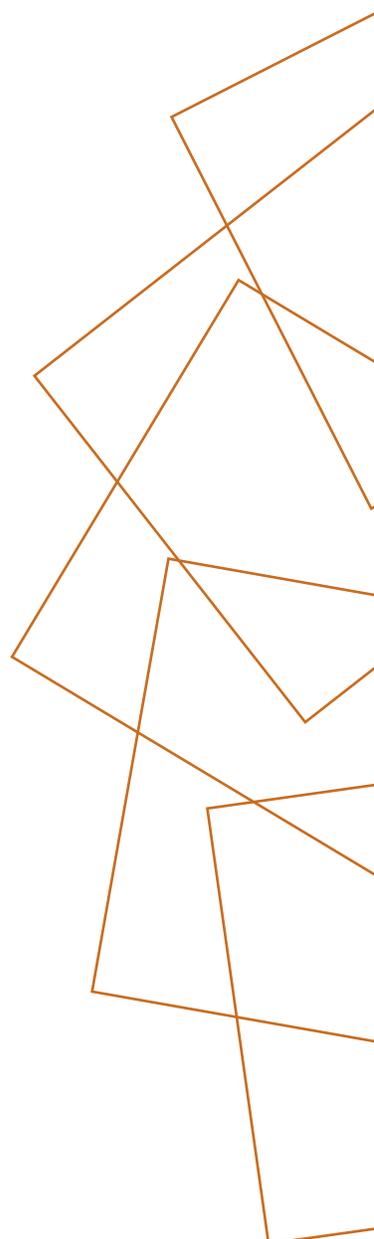
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DALLAS ISD, BIG THOUGHT, DALLAS AFTERSCHOOL AND DALLAS PARK AND RECREATION SHARE EARLY LESSONS FROM NATIONAL STUDY ON SOCIAL EMOTIONAL LEARNING SUPPORT FOR STUDENTS

Dallas is one of six communities selected by The Wallace Foundation and RAND Education and Labor for this six-year project



October 21, 2020 - DALLAS, TX - **DALLAS ISD, BIG THOUGHT, DALLAS AFTERSCHOOL** and **DALLAS PARK AND RECREATION** share early lessons from a six-year national study they are participating in called the **PARTNERSHIPS FOR SOCIAL AND EMOTIONAL LEARNING INITIATIVE (PSELI)**. Dallas was selected to be one of six communities to be part of the initiative via a competitive nationwide review process. PSELI was launched in 2016 to gain knowledge about how to help children develop SEL skills. Evidence points to the importance of social and emotional skills – including teamwork, persistence, goal-setting and self-control – for success in school and careers. These skills are developed over time and through repeated experiences in school, out-of-school settings, and at home.

The study was sponsored by **THE WALLACE FOUNDATION**, a philanthropy that works to foster improvements in learning and enrichment and undertaken by **RAND EDUCATION AND LABOR**, a division of the RAND Corporation that conducts research on education and workforce issues.

The Wallace Foundation has two goals for PSELI: for local partners to strengthen their capacity to deliver benefits to children in their communities, and for PSELI to develop new knowledge that will be useful to the field. Today, The Wallace Foundation and RAND Education and Labor published Volume I of a series of reports based on findings from this initiative that provides insights into early lessons from the six-community, 38-site study.

Key global findings include:

- The experience of PSELI communities suggests benefits in developing adult understanding of SEL and skills in order to foster these in students.
- Creating a shared vision of SEL, determining roles and responsibilities, and identifying which SEL skills to develop were helpful early steps in implementing SEL.
- Communities approached SEL implementation in three ways: through explicit skills instruction, integrating SEL into academic instruction and OST activities, and creating a positive in-school and out-of-school culture and climate.
- SEL-focused partnerships (between schools and OST programs and/or districts and OST coordinating entities, or intermediaries) face barriers - but there are strategies to help overcome them.

Seven Dallas ISD elementary schools were part of PSELI Phase 1. Big Thought and Dallas Afterschool served as the Out of School Time Intermediaries (OSTI), providing technical support and coaching. Dallas Park and Recreation is the after school provider for five of the seven Phase 1 sites, and Big Thought is the after school provider at two sites. Collectively, the Dallas effort is referred to as [SEL DALLAS](#).

Early analysis of the SEL Dallas initiative indicates that students at SEL Dallas campuses have fewer disciplinary referrals, that campus culture is perceived to be more positive and that staff have fewer absences than non-SEL Dallas campuses.

Superintendent Michael Hinojosa said, “Dallas ISD is excited to be a participating community in this SEL study. Our staff and schools have intentionally implemented SEL since 2017, and we are beginning to realize its benefits. In today’s challenging environment, schools are relying on tools like SEL more than ever to help children and adults cope and thrive,” he said. “Dallas ISD is honored to have helped inform this RAND report, and we look forward to the continued collaboration and benefits SEL will bring to our students and school district.”

“The unique approach we took in Dallas was to create social and emotional learning content that aligned school and out-of-school time learning. Themes and sequencing were consistent across learning environments, allowing students and educators alike to be learning from the same playbook, using the same terminology,” said Byron Sanders, Big Thought President and CEO.

“That early decision to create aligned curricula has been key to our effectiveness. We approached the planning and implementation of SEL with a common goal and a shared commitment,” shared Dallas Afterschool CEO Christina Hanger.

This six-year study began in the 2017–2018 school year. Each summer from 2018 to 2020, RAND is providing non-public formative feedback to each community along with an interactive website in which each grantee community can view the data RAND has collected about their sites. In 2020 and beyond, RAND will publish public reports about the implementation and effects of PSELI.

A separate nationally representative survey released this month by RAND – [SUPPORTS FOR SOCIAL AND EMOTIONAL LEARNING IN AMERICAN SCHOOLS AND CLASSROOMS](#): Findings from the American Teacher Panel – found that 80% of teachers surveyed expressed a desire for more professional development in a variety of topics related to social and emotional learning.

To read the [FULL PSELI REPORT](#) and the American Teacher Panel survey and for more information on social emotional learning, visit the [WALLACE KNOWLEDGE CENTER](#).



ABOUT DALLAS ISD

DALLAS INDEPENDENT SCHOOL DISTRICT is continually preparing its more than 153,000 students for college or a career. The district offers a competitive mix of innovative programs, choice programs and instructional initiatives that support the increased academic achievement and the social and emotional development of its students.

ABOUT BIG THOUGHT

BIG THOUGHT is an impact education nonprofit that closes the opportunity gap by equipping all youth in marginalized communities with the skills and tools they need to imagine and create their best lives and a better world. Driven by its mission to make imagination a part of everyday learning, Big Thought has become a national model in arts education, out of school time systems, summer learning and juvenile justice intervention.

ABOUT DALLAS AFTERSCHOOL

DALLAS AFTERSCHOOL works to level the playing field for children of all races and economic backgrounds by informing community stakeholders, supporting afterschool and summer programs and their staff members, and coordinating community resources. Dallas Afterschool makes afterschool better with a focus on safety and quality, access and research.

ABOUT DALLAS PARK AND RECREATION

DALLAS PARK AND RECREATION creates year-round recreational programs for all ages at 41 recreation centers, schools and open parks. Recreation centers are actively programmed by professional staff to provide citizens with opportunities to pursue lifelong physical, social, educational, arts and leisure interests.

ABOUT THE WALLACE FOUNDATION

Based in New York City, The **WALLACE FOUNDATION** is an independent national philanthropy that seeks to improve learning and enrichment for children and foster the vitality of the arts for everyone. Current areas of interest include school leadership, expanding and diversifying audiences for the arts, social and emotional learning, summer learning, arts education and after school. Wallace aims to help solve problems facing the fields in which it works, benefiting both the organizations it funds directly and the broader field by developing credible, useful knowledge to inform policy and practice nationwide. The foundation also maintains a free, online Knowledge Center.

ABOUT THE RAND CORPORATION

THE RAND CORPORATION (RAND) is a research organization that develops solutions to public policy challenges to help make communities throughout the world safer and more secure, healthier and more prosperous. RAND is nonprofit, nonpartisan and committed to the public interest.

ABOUT RAND EDUCATION AND LABOR

RAND EDUCATION AND LABOR, a research division of the RAND Corporation, is dedicated to providing objective research and analysis that improves social and economic well-being through education and workforce development. The division does research on early childhood through postsecondary education programs, workforce development, programs and policies affecting workers, entrepreneurship and financial literacy and decision making. E&L's staff include more than 70 experts from a diverse range of backgrounds and disciplines.

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KEY RESOURCES:

[CASEL \(COLLABORATIVE FOR ACADEMIC, SOCIAL AND EMOTIONAL LEARNING\)](#)

[DALLAS ISD SOCIAL AND EMOTIONAL LEARNING DEPARTMENT](#)

[RAND EDUCATION AND LABOR](#)

[SEL DALLAS](#)

[WALLACE FOUNDATION SEL KNOWLEDGE CENTER](#)

[WEIKART CENTER FOR YOUTH PROGRAM QUALITY](#)

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