

**Results and Analysis:
NYSED Survey of
Social and Emotional Development and Learning
Practices in NYS Schools**

A Survey of District and School Educators and Partners

**Office of Student Support Services
New York State Education Department
September 2008**

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Executive summary

Introduction: New York's Children's Mental Health Act 2006 legislates for a comprehensive, coordinated approach to children's mental health services and calls upon the Commissioner of the State Education Department (NYSED) in cooperation with the Commissioner of the Office of Mental Health to “develop guidelines for voluntary implementation by school districts that incorporate social and emotional development into elementary and secondary school education programs.” The Board of Regents incorporated this mandate into its P-16 Plan Action 11: “to reduce barriers to learning.”

NYSED felt that the guidelines should be informed by information about current practices to promote students' social and emotional development and learning (SEDL) and conducted a survey (developed originally by the Collaborative for Academic, Social and Emotional Learning for the Illinois public schools) to assess features and levels of SEDL practices. The NYS version of the survey was posted on a dedicated website during June 2008, and participation was encouraged through a variety of mechanisms.

Survey Demographics: A total of 1,430 individuals responded to the survey. Nearly 85% of the survey respondents were pupil personnel service (PPS) professionals, teachers or school administrators; 29% were from high schools, 27% from pre-K/elementary grades and 22% from middle grades schools; suburban districts represented almost two-fifths of the sample, rural areas slightly more than a quarter, Big Four city school districts an eighth and NYC less than a tenth.

Survey Design: Respondents were asked to indicate the degree to which components of SEDL are implemented in their school or district using a 5-point scale ranging from “we have not started this activity” (1.0) to “we have fully carried out this activity” (5.0). Higher mean values reflect greater progress in SEDL implementation. Thus, a response with a 2.5 mean value signifies that the school or district has planned and begun to implement the service, program or appropriate staffing but cannot report progress, much less full implementation of the activity.

Survey Analysis: The survey used 21 questions to inquire about the following eight “dimensions” of what schools can do to be well-equipped to effectively promote students’ social and emotional development and learning: planning, programming, staffing, responsive services, school climate, professional development, parent involvement, and community partnerships. Analysis focuses mostly on the relative progress reported on each dimension. Occasionally, comparisons with Illinois results from 2005 are explored. On select items where there were strong differences among respondent subgroups, comparisons by demographics are made. Caution must be taken against over generalizing from the survey. The disproportionate representation of respondents by various demographic groups may skew some of the results.

Findings

Staffing (mean value 4.3) refers to the provision of unspecified services by certified or licensed school / district pupil personnel professional staff and it showed the highest level of activity among the eight dimensions. However, New York City reports

the lowest levels of nursing and psychological staff. Rural areas report low availability of qualified social workers; responses from Small City Districts report the lowest school counselor availability. Suburban areas are staffed well above the mean in all four categories of pupil personnel support services.

Middle Grade schools report more access to services of qualified counselors, and above average access to psychologists, nurses, and social workers, than other types of schools. High Schools report above average access to school counselors but below average in other PPS staffing. The survey does not explore how well school-based PPS professionals coordinate service delivery with each other or with teachers.

Responsive Services (3.0) is a dimension of ancillary staffing that refers to services provided by outside agencies, typically responding to identified needs, i.e., “students with problems.” These practices rank third among the eight dimensions in terms of making the most current progress.

Safe, Supportive, Respectful School Climate (3.6) ranks as the second highest dimension in terms of progress made: 21% report “we have fully carried out this activity” and another 43% indicate school or district has made substantial progress. Principals and superintendents hold the most favorable view of progress, parents the least favorable saying “activity has begun / is making progress.” The small number of parent responses and our inability to compare perceptions within the same district, region or type of school limits drawing clear conclusions from the findings.

The four dimensions of **Planning, Programming, Partnering** and **Professional Development** share an identical mean value (2.7). NYS schools appear to be very similar to where Illinois’ schools were several years ago in **SEDL Planning**. For

example, 25% of NYS respondents report at least substantial progress “organizing a committee of key stakeholders to oversee SEDL planning and implementation;” however, 53% say their district or school has not started or were only starting this activity. For example, **Programming** serving all children is weakest in the area of “providing SEDL instruction” to students and “evaluating” program impact. Another example of the divide between treatment and prevention practices is in the **Professional Development** finding where 33% say their schools / districts have made substantial progress or better in developing professional staff on how “to respond to students with problems,” but in response to a second item, 34% report their schools / districts have not started professional development “to implement SEDL programming.”

Finally, more respondents report making substantial progress or better in **Partnering with Parents** (29%) than in **Partnering with Communities** (22%); however those reporting “we have not started this activity” is higher for parent partnerships (28%) than community agency partnerships (24%). These results are much weaker than what Illinois reported in 2005. We see in New York’s results commitment to collaboration and room for improvement.

Conclusions and Implications

The predominant theme in NYS survey findings is that schools approach social and emotional development as a "problem prevention" strategy rather than as a proactive “school environment and student skill development” strategy. A second theme is that the role teachers can play is overlooked. Illinois found that meaningful partnerships between schools and families, and between schools and communities, require the involvement of

school staff that have the most contact with students, i.e., teachers and student support services.

Introduction

The Department in collaboration with the Office of Mental Health will be issuing “guidelines for voluntary implementation by school districts that incorporate social and emotional development into elementary and secondary school education programs” pursuant to the Children’s Mental Health Act of 2006 and the Board of Regents P-16 Plan - Action 11: “to reduce barriers to learning.”

In December 2007, the Office of Mental Health created a workgroup, co-chaired by NYSED Associate Commissioner Jean Stevens, to further research, describe and recommend strategies to promote the social and emotional wellness of children and adolescents. These recommendations were reported in five public forums throughout New York State in May 2008 (see <http://www.omh.state.ny.us/omhweb/engage/>). Simultaneously, NYSED staff from the Office of Student Support Services began making presentations to statewide educational organizations that wanted to know about this initiative.

After discussion with P-16 senior managers and BOCES District Superintendents in May, NYSED decided to conduct a survey developed by the Collaborative for Academic, Social and Emotional Learning (CASEL), based at the University of Illinois, Chicago, originally for the Illinois public schools, “to assess the current level of practice” on multiple components of a comprehensive approach to implementing school-wide social and emotional development and learning (SEDL). With the help of New York Institute of Technology, the survey was posted on a dedicated website for one month.

Procedures

In May 2008 Senior Deputy Commissioner of Education P-16, Johanna Duncan-Poitier, sent a field memo alerting superintendents, administrators, teachers, pupil personnel, school boards, parents and community partners of the availability and value of this survey. The survey was highlighted online in NYSED's *P-16 News and Notes* and subsequently communicated to statewide organizations (school boards, parents, teachers, administrators, superintendents), and professional associations (pupil personnel services professionals, family & consumer science educators, etc). In many instances NYSED's request was broadcasted via their listservs and print publications.

The survey was posted from June 1-30, 2008, asking respondents to indicate their district's or school's status regarding the implementation of a variety of SEDL practices. In four weeks 1,430 people responded. NYSED's Office of School Operations and Management Services conducted the analysis of the survey returns.

Demographic Description of the Survey Respondents

Pupil personnel services (PPS) professionals (n=643), such as nurses, school psychologists, school counselors and school social workers, comprise 45% of the respondents. The next largest share of responses (329) is teachers at 23%; 229 school administrators including principals responded; 100 other school staff members; 57 district and BOCES administrators; 29 school superintendents; 29 parents and 14 school board members also participated in the survey.¹ See **Figure 1**.

¹ The teacher "share" of the NYS school workforce is much higher; the PPS share of the work force is much lower than their respective share of survey responses. Superintendents who are a small share of the survey responses nonetheless exceed their work force share, i.e., the number of school superintendents and assistant superintendents is less than 2% of the NYS school workforce.

Figure 1. Composition of Survey Respondents by Role

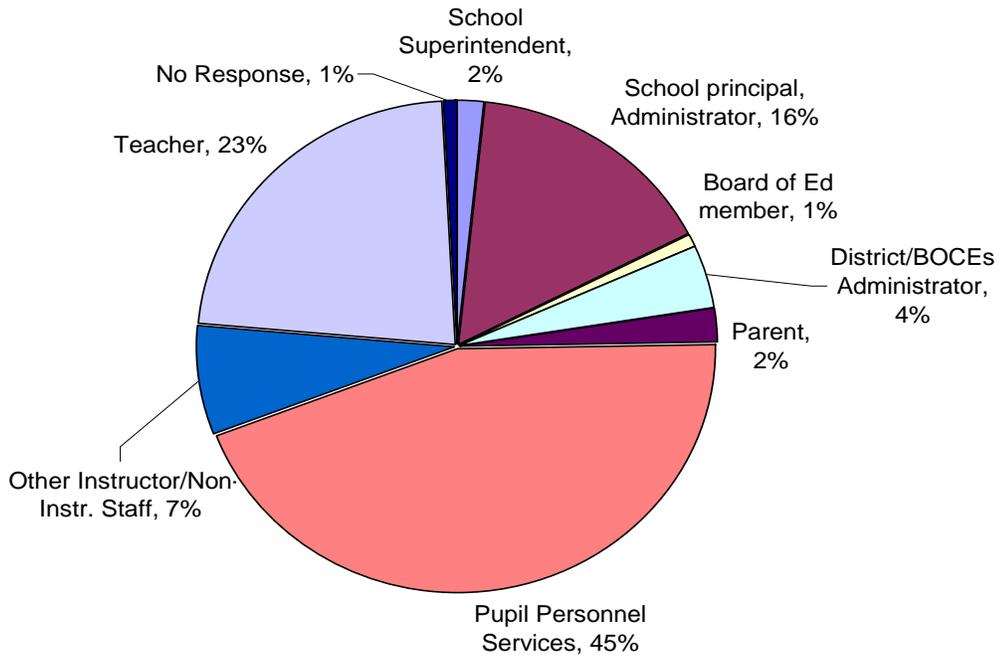
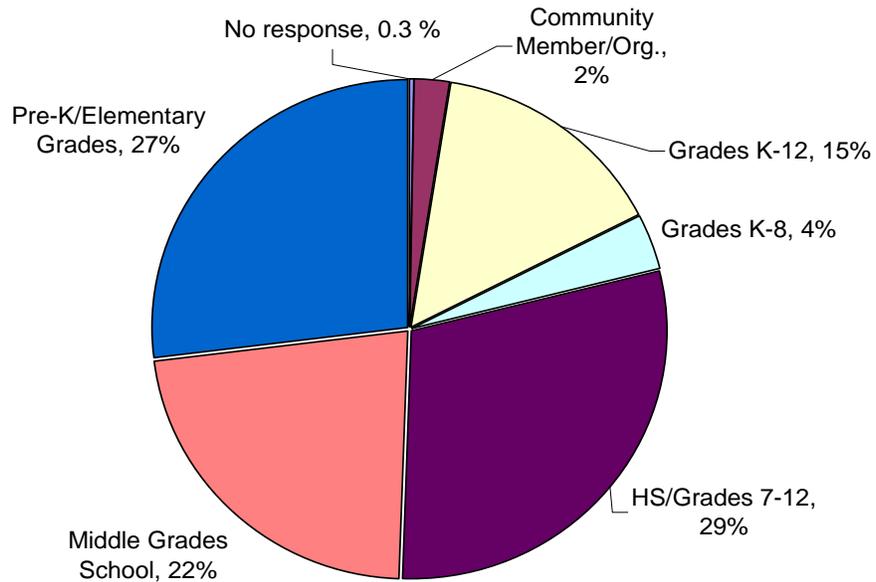


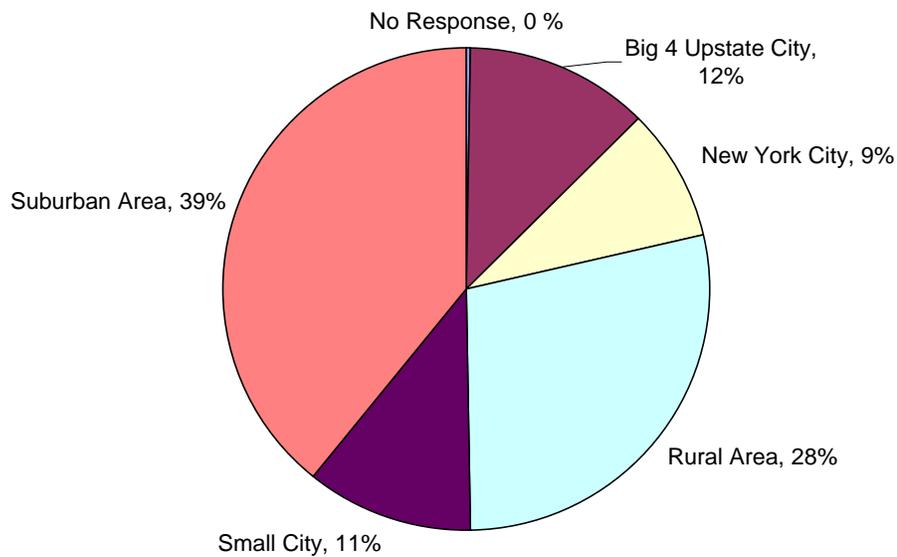
Figure 2. Composition of Survey Respondents by Affiliation



Asked to identify themselves by the school and grade with which they are most closely affiliated, **Figure 2** above shows that 29% (421) of respondents are from “high schools including grade 7-12 schools;” 27% (385) from “pre-K/elementary grades;” 22% (321) from “middle grades schools;” 15% (212) “K-12 schools”, 4% (54) “K-8 schools” and 2% (32) are affiliated as community members.

The geographic distribution of respondents is displayed in **Figure 3**. Respondents from suburban districts (562) are 39% of the sample, followed by rural areas (405) 28%. New York City (129 or 9%) and the Big 4 meaning Buffalo, Rochester, Syracuse and Yonkers (175 or 12%) are disproportionately represented relative to their pupil populations. NYC with more than 35 percent of the State’s public K-12 pupils is underrepresented and Big 4 respondents with more than twice their share of the state’s K-12 public school enrollment are overrepresented.

Figure 3. Survey Responses by NYS Geography



Survey Results

The survey examines two domains: whether and how schools plan and program SEDL, and the commitment of staffing and services to meet student needs. The first emphasizes prosocial development; the second accentuates treatment or response to need.

We asked respondents to indicate the degree to which each of the listed components of SEDL was currently being implemented using a 5-point scale:

1 = We have not started this activity.

2 = We have started planning.

3 = We have begun this activity.

4 = We have made substantial progress on this activity.

5 = We have fully carried out this activity.

Higher values in the mean results reflect greater progress in SEDL implementation. For example, a response that receives a 2.5 mean value signifies that the school or district has planned and begun to implement the service, program or appropriate staffing but cannot report progress much less full implementation of the activity.

Caution must be taken in generalizing from the survey results. The sample population was self-selected and dependent on web based notification. The disproportionate representation of respondents along various locales and roles may also skew some of the results. Nevertheless, the survey results provide a first-ever snapshot of SEDL-related activities in NYS schools, and as such can inform state planning.

Table 1 presents response percentages and means from the total sample for each survey item. The mean values as shown in the final column of the table reflect the average response for each of the survey responses.

Table 1. Response percentage and means (N=1,430)

I. Essential components of a coordinated approach to implementing social and emotional development & learning (SEDL) standards and policies are described below. Please indicate your district's/school's status according to the following 5-point scale.	Percentage					Mean
	We have not started this	We have started planning	We have begun this activity	We have made substantial progress on this activity	We have fully carried out this activity	
	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	
1. Our policies support educational programming to foster all children's social and emotional development	14.6	12.7	25.5	35.0	12.1	3.2
2. We have incorporated SEDL goals and standards into our strategic or school improvement plan.	23.1	13.0	25.8	26.3	11.8	2.9
3. We have organized a steering committee of key stakeholders to oversee SEDL planning and implementation.	41.4	11.6	22.4	15.9	8.8	2.4
4. We have conducted a needs and resources assessment to guide SEDL program planning.	45.9	12.6	20.3	14.2	7.0	2.2
5. We have a school climate that is safe, supportive, and respectful for all students.	6.5	8.2	21.2	43.4	20.7	3.6
6. We provide research-based classroom instruction in social and emotional skills.	30.5	11.4	26.2	21.9	10.1	2.7
7. We have professional development for our staff to implement SEDL programming that includes initial training and on-going support.	33.6	14.8	23.6	18.3	9.7	2.6
8. We conduct classroom assessments of all students' social and emotional skills.	54.4	10.4	18.0	12.7	4.5	2.0
9. We partner with parents and families to promote children's social and emotional skills.	28.1	13.4	29.5	20.3	8.7	2.7
10. We partner with diverse community agencies and organizations to promote children's social and emotional skills.	24.3	12.1	31.2	22.5	9.8	2.8
11. We evaluate how well we carry out our SEL programming.	41.7	14.1	24.0	15.2	5.0	2.3
12. We have procedures in place for responding to students with social, emotional, and mental health problems.	6.8	6.5	27.9	35.5	23.3	3.6
13. We have professional development for our staff on procedures for responding to all students with social, emotional, and mental health problems.	27.0	12.6	27.7	21.7	11.0	2.8
We provide the following services to all students with social, emotional, or mental health problems:						
14. Health services supervised by a qualified nurse	6.6	1.3	9.5	11.2	71.4	4.4
15. Educational and psychological testing services of a qualified psychologist	4.3	1.2	8.4	13.4	72.8	4.5
16. Services of a qualified social worker	16.3	2.4	10.1	15.4	55.9	3.9
17. Services of a qualified school counselor	7.1	1.6	8.6	15.0	67.7	4.4
18. School-site counseling services provided by an outside agency	42.8	5.1	13.3	14.1	24.6	2.7
19. Counseling services provided by a school-based or school-linked health center	40.3	6.5	13.7	14.4	25.1	2.8
20. Counseling services provided off-site through a formal linkage with an outside agency	36.2	7.9	18.5	15.3	22.1	2.8
21. Youth development services (e.g., tutoring, mentoring, after-school programs)	12.6	6.7	23.2	26.3	31.3	3.6

Eight Dimensions

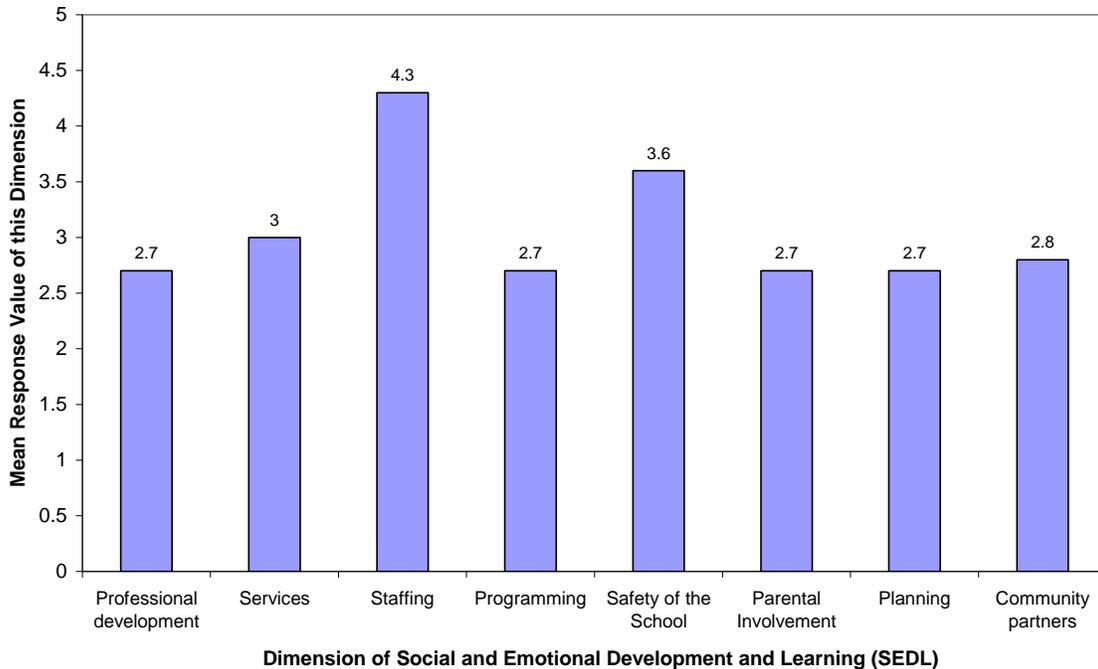
To simplify the display of responses and analysis of responses by respondent characteristics, we group the responses into eight dimensions of effective implementation of SEDL, as follows, adhering with some modification to the original design:

- 1- **SEDL Planning**, Items 1 to 4
- 2- **SEDL Programming**, Items 5 to 11
- 3- **Staffing**, Items 14-17
- 4- **Responsive Services**, Items 12, 18-21

We also take a separate look at Items including several grouped above:

- 5- **School Climate**, Item 5
- 6- **Professional Development**, Items 7, 13
- 7- **Parent and Family Partnerships**, Item 9
- 8- **Community Partnerships**, Item 10

Figure 4. Mean or Average Response Value by the Eight Dimensions



Analysis of the Survey Items by Dimensions

In addition to analyzing the relative progress of the eight dimensions between and among each other, we occasionally examine two other kinds of comparisons, the differences between New York and Illinois results² and the relationships between respondents' demographic and their responses.³

Safe, Supportive, Respectful School Climate (Item 5)

Progress in achieving a positive School Climate was ranked second highest, after Staffing, among the eight dimensions of the survey (see Figure 4). Just over 43% of New York State survey respondents indicate that their school or district has made substantial progress and another 21% reply “we have fully (in place)” a safe, supportive, and respectful school environment. The mean response score of 3.6 suggests progress is midway between beginning this activity and making substantial progress on it.

² See Tanyu, M, Payton, J. Weissberg, R & O'Brien, M (December, 2005). “Social and Emotional Learning Practices in Illinois Schools: A Survey of District-level and School-building Educators.” Collaborative for Academic, Social, and Emotional Learning (CASEL) University of Illinois at Chicago.

Like New York State but three years earlier in 2003, the Illinois legislature passed a Children's Mental Health Act (CMHA) to promote development of a more coordinated mental health system that addresses prevention and early intervention as well as treatment services for Illinois children ages 0-18. Prior to the passage of CMHA, Illinois had the benefit of a high level and widely discussed state commission to study the social and emotional wellbeing of children. After CMHA passage, the Illinois Board of Education (BOE) was directed to create Social / Emotional State Learning Standards <http://www.isbe.state.il.us/ils/>.

Subsequently, school districts worked out policies for incorporating social and emotional development into their educational programs. By the time Illinois BOE conducted its SEDL practices survey, there was a lot of awareness and activity underway.² While differences in the level of practice occurring in each state's schools are to be expected, there are interesting and important similarities in the survey findings.

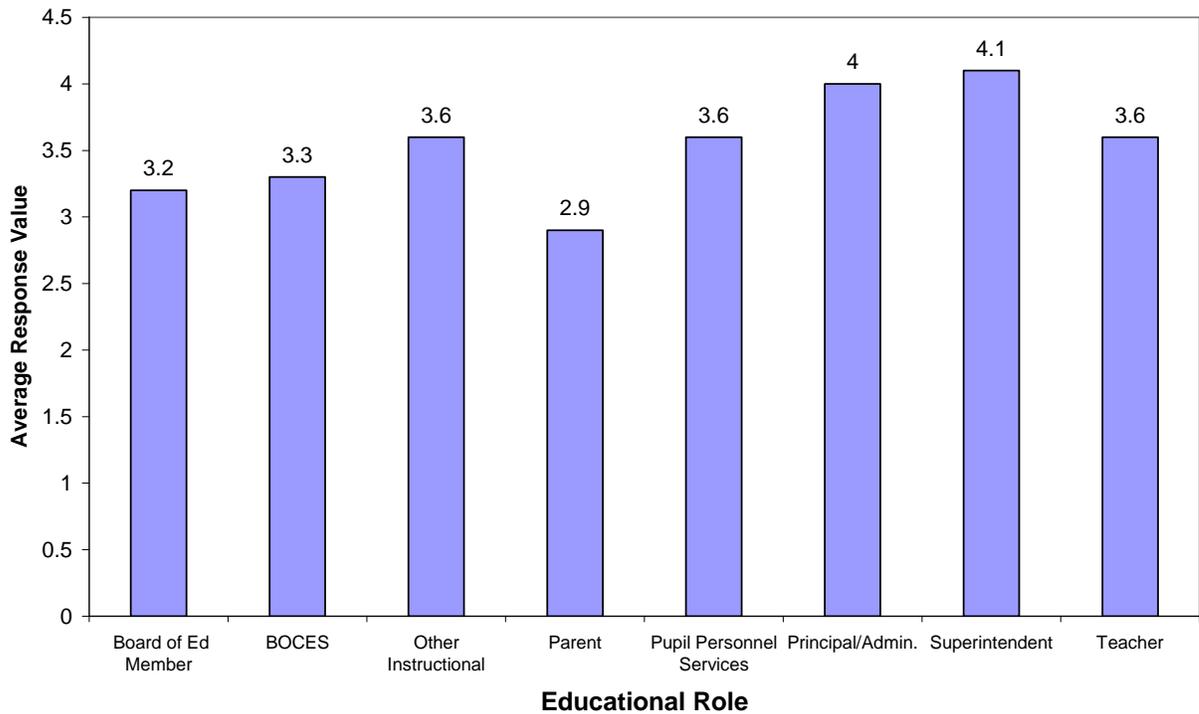
³ There are 18 bivariate relationships between New York's Eight Dimensions and the three demographic indicators (role, geography and school affiliation) that are statistically significant (that is, we can be fairly confident the mean response values are not the result of chance). In no case, however, does role, affiliation or geography explain any more than 4% of the variation among the dimensions. With disproportionate representation of some role groups and geographies, we highlight only four relationships which are strong and / or unique.

The bar graph **Figure 5** shows how attitudes toward progress in school safety differ by educational role of the respondent. Principals and superintendents exhibit the most favorable view of progress in implementation (a mean value just over 4.0 says substantial progress has been made); parents have the least favorable responses about the progress on School Climate (2.9). Teaching-, other support-, and pupil personnel-professionals respond alike, seeing more progress than the parents but not as enthusiastically as the leadership, ranking this activity with a mean value of 3.6, i.e., “has begun / is making progress.”⁴ Both the small number of parent and superintendent respondents and the survey’s inability to compare perceptions within a district or region prevents us from over-generalizing these findings. The lack of discrimination in the survey item may have invited responses that referred only to “safe,” or “supportive” or “respectful.”

The trend of higher values by school leaders compared to teachers and pupil personnel staff, can be seen elsewhere in the data (notably in **Figure 7**). It may be that principals and superintendents are more aware of activities and initiatives underway; or, alternatively, that implementation is less apparent to every part of a school community particularly by parents, support staff or teachers who regularly see youngsters that cannot concentrate or function well throughout the day. New York’s Project SAVE legislation which has required schools to collect and report school safety incidence data the past several years may explain the higher levels of agreement among school role groups than Illinois’ survey reported.

⁴ Illinois’ had even more robust overall results in 2003 (mean 4.1) and also saw significant variance in perceptions on “safe school climate” between administrators / superintendents and teachers / PPS staff.

Figure 5. Average Response Values of Safety of School by Role

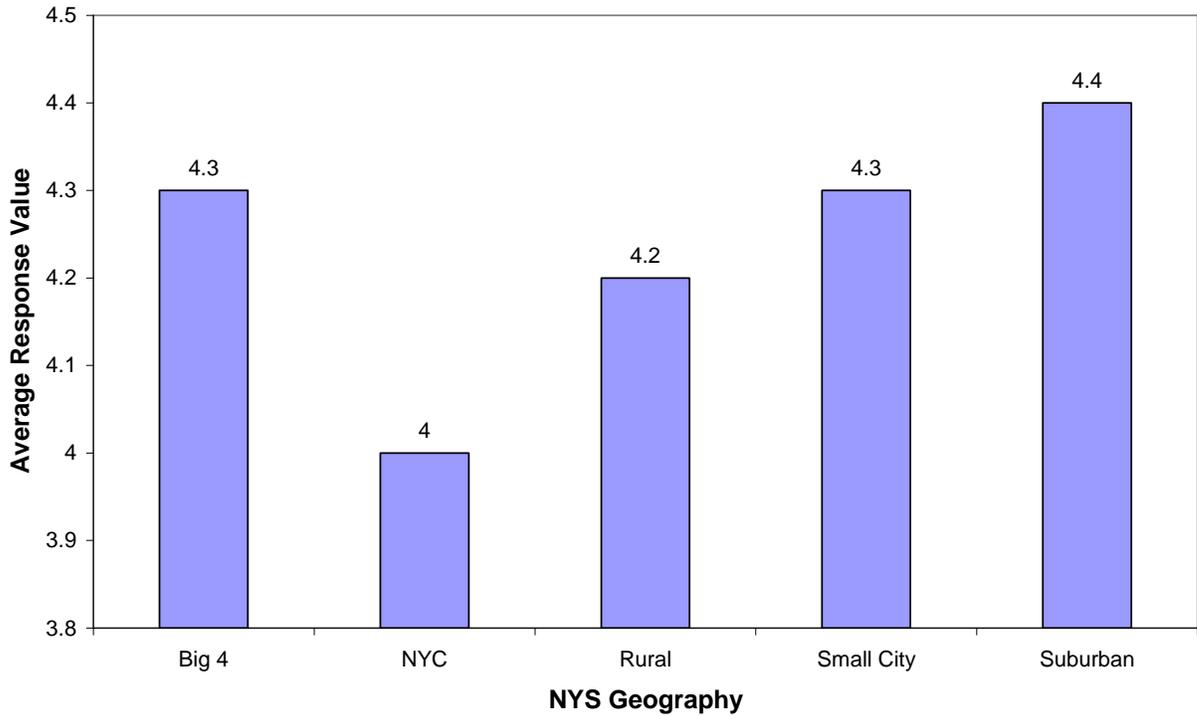


Staffing (Items 14-17)

This dimension refers to the provision of unspecified services by certified or licensed school / district pupil personnel support staff, i.e., school counselors, school social workers, nurses and school psychologists. Together they represent the highest value toward full implementation of the eight dimensions of SEDL, as displayed in Figure 4. A partial explanation for this result is that some staffing is necessary to carry out functions that are mandated by law or regulation.

Figure 6 displays response mean values of staffing by geography. Respondents in New York City report the least progress (4.0); and rural areas the next lowest (4.2), compared to suburban districts in regard to availability in school of qualified nurses, and school social workers, counselors and psychologists. We looked at the data more closely.

Figure 6. Average Staffing Dimension Scores by Geography



Using the value 5 as an indicator of *certain availability* of a qualified staff person, 73% of respondents reported the presence of a psychologist, 71% a nurse, 68% a school counselor and 60% reported having a social worker. This outcome differs from Illinois in two areas where in 2005 a lower proportion (45%) reported having a qualified school counselor and a higher proportion (71%) had access to a qualified social worker.

We investigate this result further by measuring the *certain availability* of each qualified staff person by “type of school” and by “geographical region,” depicted in **Table 2**.

**Table 2. Percent of Value 5 Indicating *Certain Availability* of a Qualified Staff
BY SCHOOL TYPE AND BY GEOGRAPHICAL REGION**

	<u>Nurse</u>	<u>Psychologist</u>	<u>Social Worker</u>	<u>Counselor</u>
Grades K-12	71%	76%	56%	66%
Grade K-8	77%	69%	40%	59%
HS / Grade 7-12	68%	65%	55%	73%
Middle Grades	76%	77%	63%	80%
Pre-K Elem. Grades	74%	79%	55%	56%
	<u>Nurse</u>	<u>Psychologist</u>	<u>Social Worker</u>	<u>Counselor</u>
Big 4 Cities	73%	67%	58%	70%
New York City	51%	60%	55%	67%
Rural Area	71%	74%	42%	68%
Small City	68%	69%	60%	59%
Suburban Area	77%	78%	64%	70%
Total	71%	73%	60%	68%

New York City’s low mean is attributable specifically to sub par access to services provided by nurses and psychologists. Fewer than half the Rural respondents report available services of a qualified social worker and Small City Districts rank lowest in school counselors. Suburban areas are staffed well above the mean in all four categories of staff. Among “school type,” respondents affiliated with Middle Grade schools report the most access to services by qualified counselors and above average access to psychologists, nurses, and social workers. High Schools report above average access to school counselors but below average in other PPS staffing.

New York State Guidance Program regulations (C.R. 100.2(g)) require services in grades 7-12 of a certified or licensed school counselor. Committees on special education (CSEs) must include school psychologists (though those services can be purchased or shared with neighboring districts through a BOCES); and since the student’s individualized education plan (IEP) requires a social history, some districts hire a school

social worker. What we see in these data are regional and type-of school differences. What the survey does not explore is how well school-based PPS professionals coordinate service delivery with each other or with teachers.

Responsive Services (Items 12, 18-21)

Four of the five items ask respondents to assess specific services provided to students mostly by outside agencies. Item #12 inquires more generally about having “procedures for responding to students with problems” and nearly 59% report substantial progress or more. We consider the five items together as “responsive services” to identified needs. Overall, services for mentoring, counseling and health have an average mean of 3.0, i.e., schools have begun this activity. Broken down further, the most advanced implementation of services is to students with problems (Item 12) and “youth development services,” defined broadly as tutoring, mentoring and after school programs (Item 21). Upon reflection, we would formulate the item differently to be certain that youth development services are intended for all students, making it less easy to say “we do this.” How progressively districts coordinate school and community resources to respond to students in need is also not picked up in this survey. We surmise based on subsequent items that few districts have ventured here. In comparison to Programming activities, discussed below, schools report being slightly further along in the provision of services to young people identified with problems that teachers and administrators are unable to address routinely.

Planning (Items 1-4)

The next four dimensions, Planning, Programming, Partnering and Professional Development share an identical mean value (2.7).

The Planning activity that had the highest level of implementation in both New York and Illinois is Item #1 “Our policies support educational programming to foster all children’s social and emotional development.” In NYS, 47% of the respondents indicate their district or school has made substantial progress or has fully carried out this activity, whereas about 27% indicate that they have not started or were only starting to plan social-emotional development and learning SEDL policies. (In Illinois, those percentages were 57% and 21%, respectively). In other areas of Planning e.g., Item #3 “organizing a committee of stakeholders to oversee SEDL planning and implementation,” 25% of NYS respondents report at least substantial progress (mean 2.4), exceeding Illinois’ 21% (mean 2.3). New York State has long supported through regulation inclusive school-based planning.

Considering Illinois’ substantial policy direction to school districts preceding its survey, New York’s progress is noteworthy. However, progress of New York’s planning, programming, partnering and professional development practices for the social and emotional development of its students is uniformly limited to the start-up / beginner phase.

Programming (Item 5-11)

Respondents were asked to concentrate on a broad range of SEDL program strategies that serve all children. The overall mean response of 2.7 is consistent with

Planning; however, when you remove “safe, supportive school climate” (which we discussed above) the overall mean for “Programming” drops to 2.5. When we isolate items pertaining to professional development, working with parents and families, and collaborating with community partners (which we discuss next) we are left with a mean value of 2.3 for Items #6, #8 and #11. These three items have to do with teaching SEDL skills (2.7), assessing student SEDL skills (2.0), and evaluating SEDL programming (2.3).

Nearly a third (32%) of respondents to item #6 indicate that they have made substantial progress or better in providing research-based classroom instruction in social and emotional skills. Only 20% of respondents report that their schools and districts are making substantial progress or better in evaluating how well they carry out their SEDL Programming: 56% have either not started this activity or have only begun to plan it. These outcomes closely parallel the Illinois experience.

The low progress of classroom assessment of SEDL skills (54% have not started it and barely 5% fully carry out the activity) may be attributable to little knowledge of such assessments and the fact that few such measures of good quality exist. Many schools survey students and staff anonymously on various aspects of school environment and our SEDL Survey respondents may be unfamiliar with or even skeptical of assessing individual student social and emotional skills. In the last section of this analysis, we report on the 660 text responses to our request for identification of evidenced-based programs respondent districts use to promote children's social and emotional learning. Few are known to assess student SEDL skills.

Finally, only 20% of respondents to item #11 report that their schools and districts are making substantial progress or better in evaluating how well they carry out their SEDL programming: 56% have either not started this activity or have only begun to plan it. These outcomes closely parallel the Illinois experience.

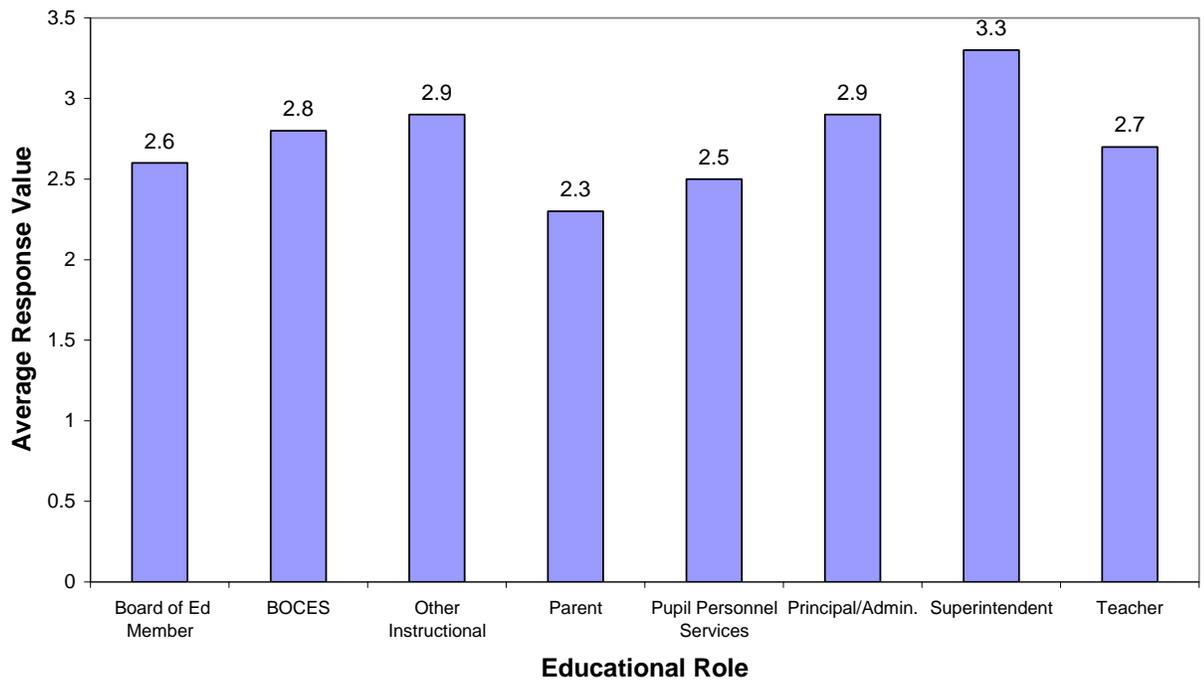
Professional Development (Items 7 and 13)

To examine the professional development of staff in social and emotional assessment, instruction, and support we combined Item #7 “professional development to implement programming that includes initial training and support” and Item #13 “professional development on procedures for responding to all students with social, emotional, and mental health problems.” Their mean values are respectively 2.6 and 2.8 signifying they have barely begun this activity; however, there are slight but important differences: 34% of respondents to #7 say they have not started professional development “to implement programming,” while 33% say they have made substantial progress or better in developing professional staff on how “to respond to students with problems,” indicating greater preparedness for treatment of problems over preventative services to all.

School, and more so district leaders, report the greatest amount of “professional development” progress made. The mean values of principals and superintendents on the “professional development dimension” (2.9 and 3.3 respectively) equate to a score that says professional development tasks “have begun.” Pupil personnel service staff place themselves (2.5) between planning and beginning professional development. See **Figure 7**, below.

The weak, or at best mixed, data on the Professional Development dimension has implications for SEDL Planning and Programming, specifically strategies to teach and assess children’s social and emotional skills and evaluate program quality and impact.

Figure 7. Average Response Value for Professional Development by Role



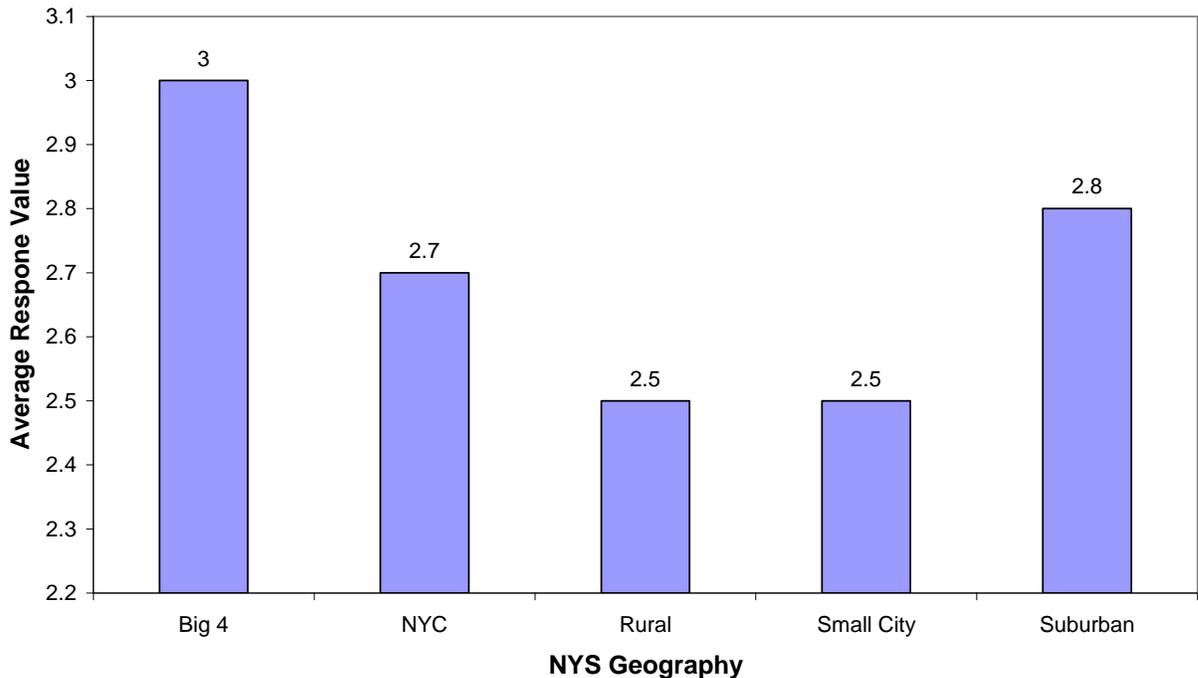
We conclude, as did Illinois, that “because integrating SEDL programming into school improvement planning, and basing implementation decisions on needs and available resources are essential to providing a firm foundation for school-wide SEDL programming, these ratings indicate a strong need for professional development and technical assistance tools.”

Partnering with Parents and Families and with Community Agencies (Items 9, 10)

Partnering with Parents and Families with an overall mean value of 2.7 ranks closely to item #10 Partnering with Community Agencies with a mean value of 2.8 (see **Figure 4**). Their mean values say “we have started planning and we are beginning this activity.” We combine them here to take a closer look.

Survey respondents in the Big 4 Cities of Syracuse, Rochester, Yonkers and Buffalo see more progress in “partnering with parents and families to promote children’s SEDL skill” than other geographical areas of the state (**Figure 8**) with a mean value of 3.0 indicating their schools and districts have begun this activity. Suburban districts have the next highest scores (2.8), followed by New York City. Parental involvement is viewed as having made the least progress by Rural and Small City district respondents.

Figure 8. Average Response Value of Parental Involvement by Geography



Overall, more respondents report making substantial progress or better in partnering with parents (29%) than partnering with communities (22%); however those reporting “we have not started this activity” is higher for parent partnerships (28%) than community agency partnerships (24%). These results are much weaker than what Illinois reported in 2005 where 47% and 42% of respondents reported at least substantial progress in partnering, respectively, with parents and communities. We see in New York’s results commitment to collaboration and room for improvement.

Illinois found that meaningful partnerships between schools and families and between schools and communities require the involvement of the school staff that have the most contact with students, i.e., teachers and student support services.

District / School Programs

Survey participants were given the option to respond to a final item that asked them to list the research-based programs their districts or schools currently use to promote children's SEDL. PBIS was the most frequently cited program, followed by Second Step. After school programs, school-based guidance programs and assets development, social and emotional learning, character education, school violence reduction and bullying prevention were categories of program most often cited.

Conclusions and Implications

We observe in the data a divide in New York State's readiness to address the social and emotional wellness of students whose needs demand attention, and readiness to support the social and emotional development of all students.

- There is slightly more progress in planning social emotional development and learning (SEDL) than in program implementation. The latter depends upon the former but neither effort is far reaching.
 - A shared understanding of the purpose of social and emotional development and learning and how it can influence student attitudes, motivation, behavior, study habits and subject mastery must become a shared understanding throughout the stakeholder community.
 - Stakeholder planning teams need current, research-based information about good practice.
 - Teams also need guidance on how to choose programs that will be a good fit with the needs of their school community.
- Planning processes benefit from reliable data, particularly trend data.
 - Use of school surveys administered anonymously to staff, students, parents and community partners provide valuable information, and direction, and build stakeholder engagement and ownership.
 - Safe, supportive and respectful environments can not be left to perceptions or measured only by suspension rates or incident reports.

- Creating a respectful and supportive environment requires deliberation and strategizing equal to current efforts of many schools teams to ensure school safety.
- “Being problem-free is not the same as being well developed.”
- Small cities, rural districts, and New York City report gaps in resources.
 - Pupil personnel counseling, nursing, social work, and psychological services need to match the identified needs of students to promote healthy development, prevent problems address problems as soon after onset as is feasible *as well as* assist those with chronic and severe problems.
- Schools appear to overlook the role of teacher in social and emotional skill acquisition and the classroom as a venue for social emotional programming and development.
 - Partnering between teachers and pupil personnel services within schools offer untapped potential for teaching socially responsible behavior
- Other data indicate that schools on their own cannot meet the social and emotional needs of all students
 - Links to services provided by outside agencies must be actively pursued and maintained.
 - Policy guidance and professional development are indispensable.
- State guidance can help schools embrace social and emotional development and learning as an effective “school environment and student skill development” strategy as well as a "problem prevention" strategy.