Title

Rebuilding More Humane Schools Post-COVID-19: Prioritizing Student Engagement, Social-Emotional Learning and Well-Being

Author

Santibanez, Lucrecia

Publication Date

2024-01-24

Peer reviewed

REBUILDING MORE HUMANE SCHOOLS POST-COVID-19:

Prioritizing Student Engagement, Social-Emotional Learning and Well-Being

Lucrecia Santibañez, Ph.D.

UCLA School of Education & Information Studies
Center for the Transformation of Schools

In March 2020, all schools in California transitioned to distance learning due to the state's shelter-in-place order. The impact of the COVID-19 pandemic on student social-emotional learning (SEL) and mental health was a top concern of California voters polled by PACE/USC in May of 2021.

Almost a year ago, voters were already worried that student SEL would suffer owing to the disruptive effects of the COVID-19 pandemic on schools and communities. Key state officials also acknowledged early on in the pandemic that SEL and student well-being would be a great challenge for students and schools. Their concerns were warranted. Three years later, the pandemic has had staggering consequences for our nation, including the deaths of over one million people in the U.S. Countless people continue to suffer the physical, emotional, and economic effects of the virus. Even though they were spared from the worst of the virus's physical health ailments, children were severely impacted in their academic and social-emotional development.

As our state recovers from the lingering effects of the pandemic, we must focus efforts on improving student engagement, socio-emotional learning, and well-being. Student engagement includes addressing chronic absenteeism, academic motivation and other factors connected to the student experience in school. SEL is a concept that embodies non-cognitive skills that are important to students and promote academic learning and general well-being. It includes, among other things, self-management, self-efficacy, sense of belonging, and social awareness. A large body of research shows that strong SEL is related to positive academic, interpersonal, and mental health outcomes.

The national and statewide declines in enrollment and academic outcomes, including chronic absenteeism, have been well documented in the national media and amongst scholars of education. Chronic absenteeism in the 2022-23 school year was 25% statewide; it was higher for vulnerable student groups such as Black students (37%) and English Learners (28%). There is limited data to measure how California students fared, and are currently faring on other indicators of student engagement, but data from the 2021-22 California Healthy Kids Survey suggests that Academic motivation decreased during the first year after schools shut down for in-person instruction, and that the steepest declines were seen in secondary and low-income schools. Other effects are less clear.

Education is an inherently social process. Schools are complex systems, and learning is fueled

by how well (or unwell) students feel and how connected they are to their school and peers. Human relationships are the essential ingredient that promotes healthy development and learning *(Darling-Hammond & Cook-Harvey, 2018)*. Schools are a primary socialization setting for adolescents, and relationships with teachers and classrooms are key for student engagement *(McKellar & Wang, 2023)*. The abrupt transition to distance learning and the health and financial uncertainties during the pandemic put enormous stress on school systems, educators, and the students and families they serve *(Zieher et al., 2021; Kraft et al., 2020)*. Of all students, it was Black, Hispanic/Latinx, and Indigenous students from lower-income communities who experienced the largest human and financial toll from the pandemic *(Hamilton et al., 2021)*. One survey found 41% of these young people reported providing care for someone else in their household and 62% reported being financially affected by the pandemic *(Hamilton et al., 2021)*. These students also were more likely to be separated from in-person schooling for longer periods of time. In May 2021, some 14 months after the start of the pandemic, just 47% of high minority-serving school districts were operating fully in person compared to 61% of low minority-serving districts *(Hamilton et al., 2021)*. Schools and adult-child relationships can buffer the effects of chronic stress and adverse childhood experiences, and provide supportive environments where children can handle this adversity *(Darling-Hammond & Cook-Harvey, 2018)*. The roles of teachers, counselors, psychologists, and social workers to help children and adults cope with the stressors of traumatic events like COVID-19 is particularly key.

The full extent of the effects of stressors related to the pandemic on social and emotional (SEL), school climate, and student well-being is still emerging, but there are indicators that children's well-being suffered greatly during the pandemic *(Courtney et al., 2020; Engzell et al., 2021; Kuhfeld et al., 2020; Marques de Miranda et al., 2020)*. Research shows widespread impact of the pandemic on students' mental health, including a negative impact on mental health or socio-emotional health (impacting 30-40% of students on a nationwide survey) and increasing rates of anxiety and attempted suicides *(Hamilton et al., 2021)*. In part, lack of data immediately prior, during, and after the pandemic years on these three factors limited our ability to gauge the consequences and diagnose any differential effects on schools and students. However, there is early indication that self-efficacy—a key SEL metric—worsened in elementary schools and was particularly lower for students in low-income schools. Given the existing gaps in SEL before the pandemic by race/ethnicity and how the pandemic disproportionately affected low-income and students of color, it is highly likely that inequities persist or even broadened.

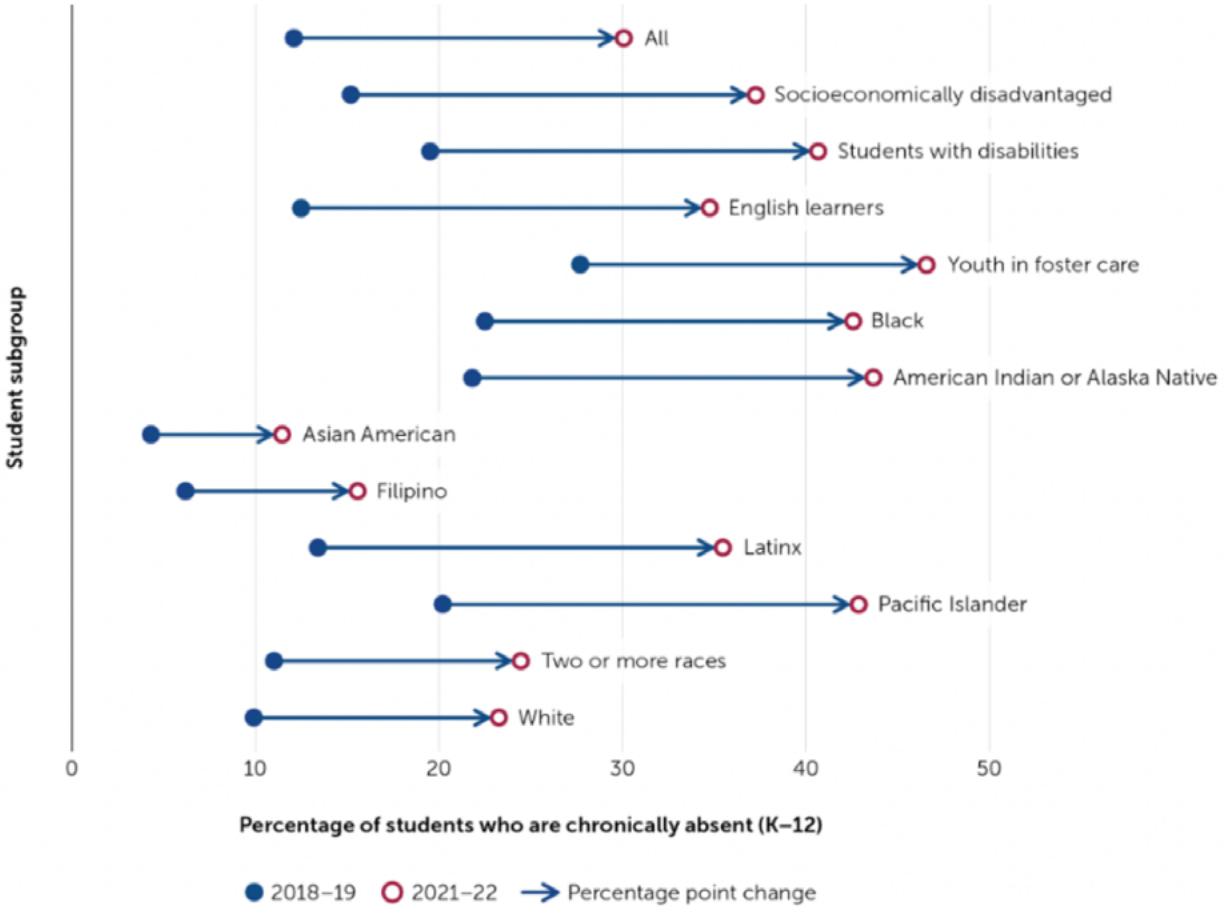
KEY FINDINGS

STUDENT ENGAGEMENT: CHRONIC ABSENTEEISM

Some of these indicators were troubling before the pandemic reached California, but others, such as chronic absenteeism and student motivation, have seen drastic changes after the "pandemic years" (2019-20 and 2020-21). These changes have disproportionately impacted vulnerable groups in our education system and those whose communities were the most impacted by the pandemic: low-income, English Learners, and racial/ethnic minorities, particularly Brown and Black students.

As reported by Gee et al. *(2023)*, the high chronic absenteeism rates in 2021-22 are particularly alarming for certain subgroups of students, including youth in foster care (approximately 45%), Black students (approximately 40%) and students with disabilities (approximately 40%). Although some of these numbers are improving (the latest statewide chronic absenteeism rate is 25%), the steep increases for some groups are troubling. English Learners (ELs), for example, historically have close-to-average levels of absenteeism than other vulnerable students. However, since the pandemic began, this group's rates of chronic absenteeism have nearly tripled. Absenteeism can be particularly harmful for ELs, many of whom receive English language development and other services at school. Moreover, EL students' achievement tends to be more negatively impacted from missing school than non-EL students *(Gershenson et al., 2017; Gottfried et al., 2017)*. There are reports that the worst negative impacts of the pandemic are concentrated among Long-Term English Learners (LTELs) in secondary schools *(Santibañez, Gottfried & Freeman, forthcoming)*.

Figure 1. Change in Chronic Absenteeism From 2018-19 to 2021-22 by Student Subgroup



Source: Gee, Hough and Chavez (2023) using California Department of Education data.

The existing literature establishes a clear link between absenteeism and student performance *(Gottfried, 2009; 2011, 2014; Aucejo & Romano, 2016; Gershenson et al., 2017; Liu et al, 2021, Gottfried, 2021)*. A recent blog post by researchers at the Public Policy Institute of California found that schools with greater increases in chronic absenteeism saw steeper drops in student learning outcomes as evidenced by student performance on the SBAC English and math tests *(Hill & Prunty, 2023)*. In addition, high levels of absenteeism may contribute to lower levels of SEL. Using a large sample of close to 600,000 K-12 public school students in six California districts, Santibañez and Guarino *(2021)* found higher absenteeism rates can translate into lower SEL outcomes, particularly in the areas of self-efficacy and social awareness. The lingering effects of the pandemic on chronic absenteeism may have multiple causes, and not all of these may be related to schools: a recent report on student absenteeism found that transportation challenges, mental health issues, personal stress, and chronic health conditions were all key reasons behind chronic absenteeism *(Gottfried, Page & Edwards, 2022)*. Low-income students may have experienced a much more disrupted pandemic school year that led to lower levels of engagement, which in turn led to lower academic performance and a need for learning acceleration. This could feed a negative cycle of continued absenteeism.

Other reasons for absenteeism are rooted in school actions and climate. Research has demonstrated that children who enjoy school are less likely to be chronically absent. Similarly, when parents are more engaged with school, their children miss fewer days *(Gottfried, Page & Edwards, 2022)*. During the pandemic, teachers reported disengagement at higher rates when they had more students from low-income backgrounds. One survey found that almost 50% of teachers in a classroom with two-thirds or more low-income students said their students were engaged less than 50% of the time. Close to 40% reported that their students were doing "much worse than before (the pandemic)" in terms of completing homework and assignments (Educators for Excellence, 2020[1]). A 2020-2021 study by Wang and colleagues surveyed students from a range of California districts, including one survey question referring to overall satisfaction with school. Students surveyed were asked, "in general, would you say that you like school?" Students at every grade (except 4th grade), but particularly those in grades 7-12 had significantly worse scores on this variable *(Wang et al., 2021)*.

Higher chronic absenteeism could also be related to lower levels of parental engagement *(Gottfried & Gee, 2017)*. There is research to suggest that parents reported higher levels of stress in the years following the pandemic's onset, with negative consequences on parental practices and burnout *(Griffith et al., 2022; Garve et al. 2020)*. Additionally, school-level factors such as teacher–pupil relations, availability of health personnel, and program interventions are also highlighted as critical. Teachers experiencing high degrees of burnout during the pandemic potentially contributed to higher levels of student absenteeism and disengagement.

1 https://e4e.org/sites/default/files/voices_from_the_virtual_classroom_2020.pdf

STUDENT ENGAGEMENT: ACADEMIC MOTIVATION

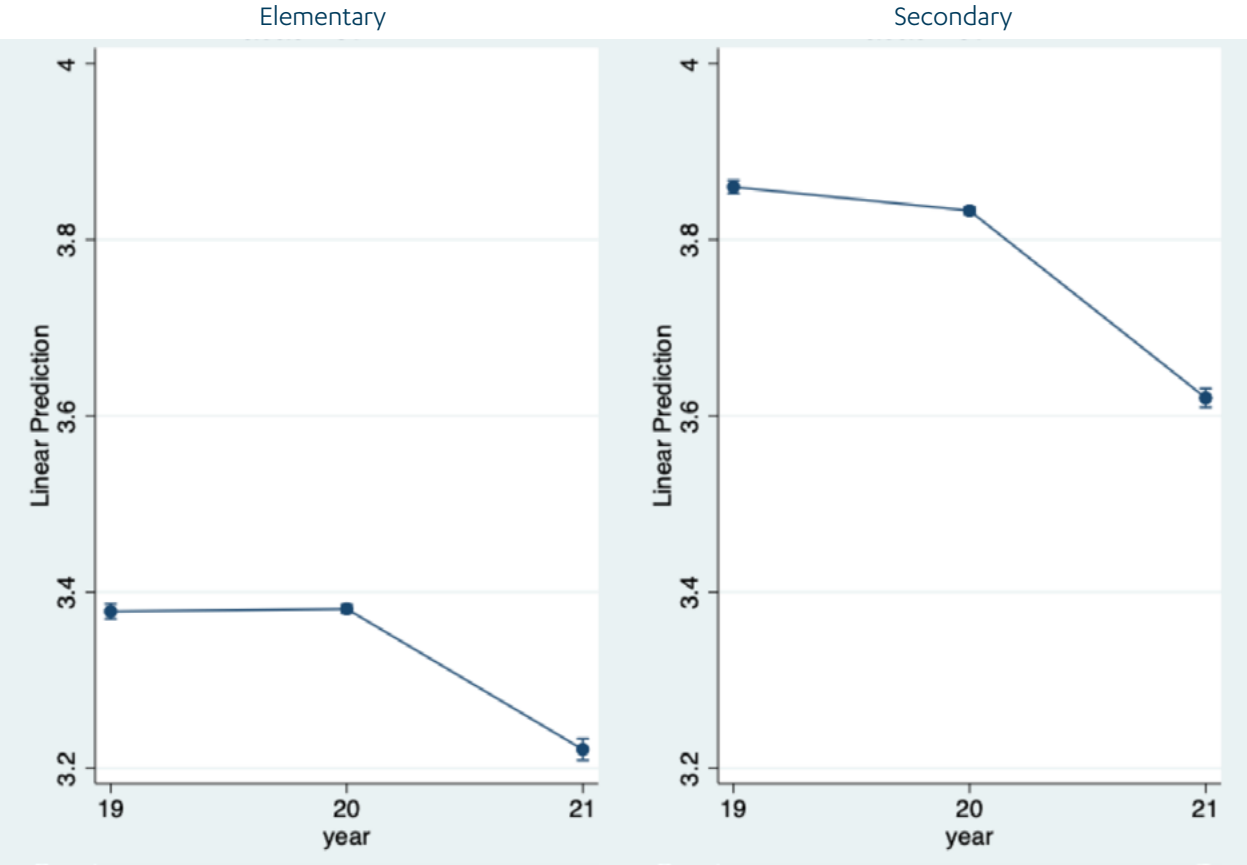
Academic success is strongly influenced by individual differences in motivation and achievement *(Komarraju et al., 2009)*. The cognitions of individuals regarding academic work (e.g., beliefs about their academic ability, expectations about the outcomes of engaging in the task, goals for the task) will depend on the relationship between an individual and the social context *(Urdan et al., 2006)*.

Academic motivation saw a significant decrease in the 2020-21 school year in both elementary and secondary schools, but the drop was highest in secondary schools (40% of a significant drop, vs. 26% of a significant drop in elementary schools) (see Figure 2).

Secondary schools began to experience a significant drop as early as 2019-20, but the drop accelerated in the following academic year.

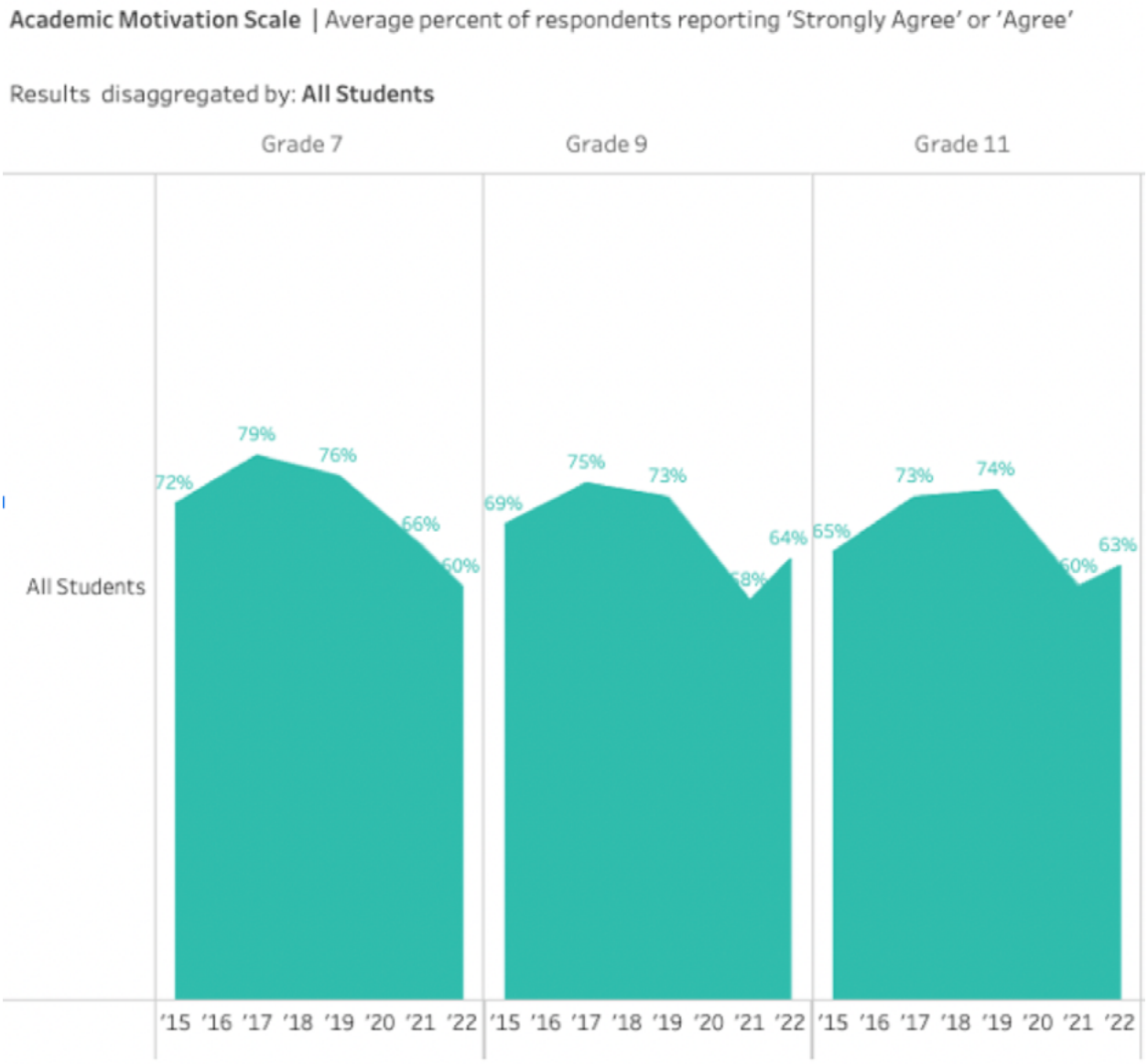
At the time of writing this report, there were no state-level results available on the California Healthy Kids Survey's (CHKS) website, but a report for Los Angeles Unified School District (LAUSD) provides academic motivation scores for a sample of secondary school students. **Figure 3** shows the drop in academic motivation in the 2019-20 school year, when most secondary schools remained in remote or hybrid learning and the effects of the pandemic were still rampant across California. Between 2020-21 and 2021-22, secondary students' academic motivation scores recovered slightly in some grades, but not in others. And overall, they remain lower than what had been observed before 2019-20 in the district.

Figure 2. Change in Academic Motivation, from 2018-19 to 2020-21 School Years



Note: Own elaboration with data from the CHKS Survey (2018-19 & 2020-21), COVID-19 Hub Data and the California Department of Education (CALPADS). Y-axis has survey scores on the variable under consideration. X-axis has the years. Points on the graph represent predicted scores on the variable under consideration based on a regression model of the variable on various student- and school-level demographic characteristics. Lines over and under each point represent 95% confidence intervals. All models control for district fixed effects and are estimated using robust standard errors.

Figure 3. Academic Motivation Trends as reported by LAUSD Secondary Students, 2015-22



Academic Motivation Scale

How strongly do you agree or disagree with the following statements?
- I try hard to make sure that I am good at my schoolwork.
- I try hard at school because I am interested in my work.
- I work hard to try to understand new things at school.
- I am always trying to do better in my schoolwork.

Answer choices:

Strongly disagree, Disagree, Neither disagree nor agree, Agree, Strongly agree

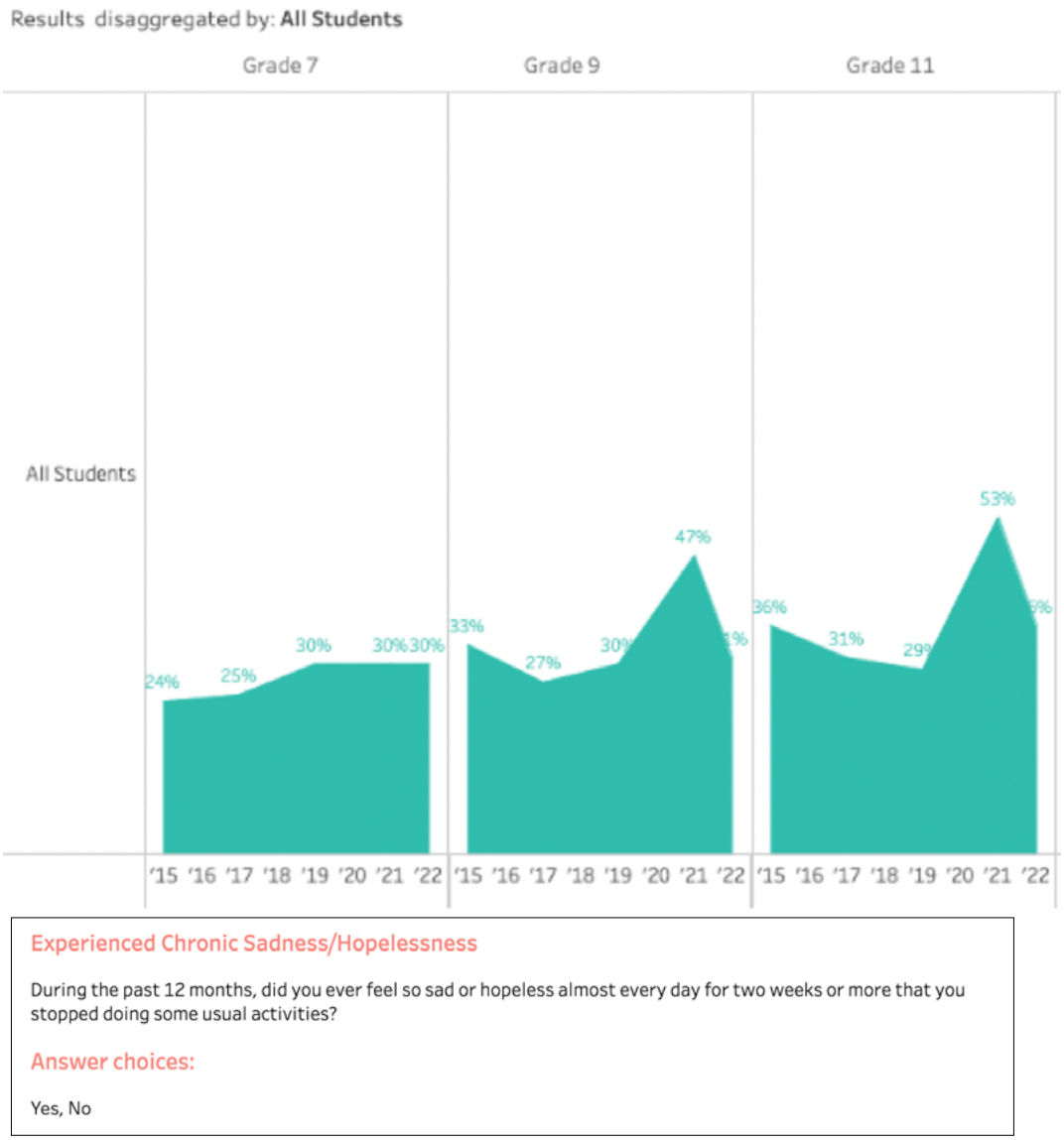
Source: CalSCHLS Public dashboard. Available at: https://calschls.org/reports-data/public-dashboards/f882f1e2-dfc0-4448-b90b-f49cef6e6d3f/

STUDENT SOCIO-EMOTIONAL LEARNING AND WELL-BEING

The most recent release of the California Healthy Kids Survey shows that a significant proportion of secondary school students reported feeling chronically sad or hopeless in the past 12 months. Before the onset of the pandemic, the overall proportion of secondary students reporting chronic sadness or hopelessness in California was between 30-37% for students in grades 7-11 and 32% for students in continuation schools[2].

At the time of writing this report, there are no published state-level figures, but responses available from LAUSD students show that a significantly higher proportion of students experienced these feelings during 2020-21, and a higher proportion than normal continue to experience them particularly in grade 11. Figure 4 also shows the trauma that students went through during the height of the pandemic in 2020-21. Evidence on the impact of the pandemic on SEL is still emerging *(Hamilton et al., 2021)*. What little we know is drawn from recent nationwide surveys, like one

Figure 4. Chronic Sadness/Hopelessness Trends as reported by LAUSD Secondary Students, 2015-22



2 CalSCHLS Public dashboard. Available at: https://calschls.org/my-surveys/f882f1e2-dfc0-4448-b90b-f49cef6e6d3f/

conducted by Educators for Excellence early in the pandemic. This May 2020 survey found that 33% of teachers reported being concerned about students' social-emotional health, placing this worry second only to academic decline. Some 46% said they were spending "somewhat" or "much more" time giving students social-emotional support, and more than 60% had heard students express social-emotional concerns because of the pandemic *(Educators for Excellence, 2020)*.

A May 2022 survey of a representative sample of schools nationwide conducted by The National Center for Education Statistics (NCES), part of the U.S. Department of Education, found that 87% of public schools reported that the pandemic had negatively impacted student socio-emotional development during the 2021–22 school year. Similarly, 84% of public schools agreed or strongly agreed that students' behavioral development has also been negatively impacted. Respondents attributed increased incidents of classroom disruptions from student misconduct (56%), rowdiness outside of the classroom (49%), acts of disrespect towards teachers and staff (48%), and prohibited use of electronic devices (42%) to the pandemic and its lingering effects.

We know that before the pandemic, California students had significant gaps in SEL by race/ethnicity *(West et al., 2018)*. Higher-income students (those not eligible for free and reduced-price lunch) exhibit higher SEL scores on all constructs every grade beginning with 4th grade, although these gaps narrow after 10th grade *(West et al., 2018)*. There are no published reports that measure the impact of the pandemic on SEL in California. A key reason for this is lack of data. Although before the pandemic, California had one of the most robust SEL and school climate monitoring systems used by researchers across the nation *(Blad, 2015; Bornstein, 2015; Zernike, 2016 cited in Hough, Kalogrides & Loeb, 2017)*, after the pandemic began, many districts did not administer SEL. In some cases, they had already decided to stop collecting these data before the pandemic began (i.e., in the case of LAUSD).

To estimate the impact on SEL, publicly available data from the California Healthy Kids Survey (CHKS) and statistical regression models were used to estimate the changes in SEL and school climate, while controlling for remote learning and other factors. Findings are presented in graphical form, but regression tables are available upon request (see Appendix for a more detailed description of methods used here). This section examines potential impacts on self-efficacy, which is the only social-emotional development construct measured by the CHKS. Self-efficacy theories of achievement motivation emphasize the importance of individual judgments of capability for student achievement *(Bandura, 1986; Schunk, 1991)*. Self-efficacy was one of the areas in which California elementary students experienced declines pre- and post-pandemic (results for secondary schools aren't available because of comparability issues). Although the results are only significant at the 90% confidence level, they suggest a significant decline (about 16% of a standard deviation in this construct) in self-efficacy for students in elementary school (grades 3-6).

SCHOOL SUPPORT STAFF

Besides teachers, the school staff that are most directly responsible for attending to students' overall well-being, emotional, and social needs are school counselors, school psychologists, nurses, and social workers. Staff in these roles serve as a "first line of defense" because, unlike teachers, they have unique training to identify and address student social & emotional needs within schools *(ASCA, 2017; VanVelsor, 2009; NASP)*.[3] In addition, public schools are a desirable location for efficient and widespread distribution of physical and mental health services to children *(Reback, 2018)*.

For years, schools and Local Education Agencies (LEAs) in California have seen shortfalls in the numbers of these school staff to support students. Schools enrolling higher shares of high-needs students have had greater deficits. Despite the importance of student wellbeing for success, California was one of the lowest-ranked states in the nation in terms of school supports for student well-being and mental health. In his 2018 report for the Getting Down to Facts II project (a statewide initiative to produce policy relevant research for California's education policy makers and authorities), Reback found that more than 40% of 1st grade students had no access to school-site counseling or mental health services. This figure is close to 20% for 8th graders and about 7% of 12th graders.[4] Figure 24 shows how the number of students per school support staff has changed in the past 5 years. There are no public, available data beyond 2018-19.

The American School Counselor Association recommends a ratio of 250 students per school counselor. It should be noted that California does not have a minimum requirement, nor did it provide any subsidies (as of 2018) for nurses or school counselors *(Reback, 2018)*. In its most recent report (released 2022), ASCA reported California had a ratio of 572 students per school counselor, an improvement over previous years, but still very short of the goal *(ASCA, 2022)*.[5] Further, California's ratio is well above the

national average of 415 and above other large states like Texas (392), New York (350) and Florida (434). During the pandemic years, these schools, already maxed out in terms of school support staff and capacity, had to undertake new, sometimes monumental efforts to help families and students navigate online learning and school in a world where, for months, nothing was what it used to be. Consequently, services suffered, learning suffered, and student well-being suffered. A significant barrier to effective counseling is untenable student-to-counselor ratios *(Nicola, 2023)*. High caseloads restrict counselor efficacy by generating constraints on counselors' time and limit counselors' ability to implement high-quality counseling programs *(McCarthy et al., 2010)*. A growing body of observational evidence also suggests that high caseloads may contribute to burnout, which prevents counselors from effectively serving students *(Nicola, 2023)*.

California's decentralized school system left many decisions to LEAs. While nobody could have projected the extent of the pandemic impact on students and schools, this approach seems to have been insufficient to help LEAs address their needs: data collection was minimal to non-existent, monitoring of the learning and continuity plans was superficial at best, etc. The education literature shows that schools with strong support systems and teachers that promote SEL, and student wellbeing are able to buffer the effects of chronic stress and adversity better than schools without these strong support systems.

3 https://schoolcounselor.org/Standards-Positions/Position-Statements/ASCA-Position-Statements/The-School-Counselor-and-Social-Emotional-Developm
4 In his report, Reback acknowledged that the high school figures are overstated because they do not distinguish between counselors who are trained and can support student mental and emotional health, from counselors who primarily provide academic guidance *(Reback, 2018)*.
5 Available at: https://www.schoolcounselor.org/getmedia/b9d453e7-7c45-4ef7-bf90-16f1f3cbab94/Ratios-21-22-Alpha.pdf

CONCLUSION

Although support staff per student ratios have improved over time, they are far from what is needed to tackle the challenge that schools currently face. In addition, the literature on chronic absenteeism suggests that engaging families and communities in a positive, proactive, and culturally relevant way is key in addressing this complex problem. Many absences are caused by health issues that can be prevented if families are able to access services available to them. Parental involvement in school is key, but we know that reaching some families, particularly immigrant families and families of English Learners, is often a struggle for schools because they lack the staff who can engage with them in a culturally and linguistically appropriate way.

Moving forward, the state should take a strong leadership and coordination role to ensure LEAs know how to best utilize pandemic relief funding as well as Local Control Funding Formula (LCFF) funds in ways that can help address the challenge of widening achievement, SEL, and school support staffing gaps. This includes not only leading and coordinating efforts, but also ensuring adequate monitoring and accountability so that LEAs use the funds in the most effective way possible.

Efforts could include:

1. **Addressing chronic absenteeism as an urgent priority** through data-based, real-time monitoring and family engagement in a culturally relevant way, particularly among vulnerable student subgroups and in some high-needs districts.

2. **Increasing school support staff to student ratios by hiring more school psychologists, social workers, school counselors, and nurses.** Use State incentive and subsidy programs to enlarge the pipeline of these staff as well as solve more immediate challenges.

3. **Collecting better data for monitoring and accountability.** Data and research can help educators and policy makers understand the consequences of their decisions and learn from them – this includes better monitoring and accountability efforts around school funding.

California has a historic opportunity to use pandemic relief funds and a renewed public commitment to addressing learning gaps and student well-being to improve our school system so it can become stronger and better than it was before the pandemic—it should take full advantage of it.

APPENDIX: METHODS

For this study, publicly available data was collected from three sources:

1. **California School Climate, Health, and Learning Survey** (CalSCHLS), specifically the **CA Healthy Kids Survey** (CHKS) – Core and School Climate modules
2. **CALPADS:** Information on K-12 student demographics and enrollment from the California Department of Education.
3. **COVID-19 School Data Hub** (for California) (https://www.covidschooldatahub.com/)

The CHKS is available for elementary and secondary education—although not all variables are comparable between levels. We have student-level information from 2018-19 to 2020-21 for the following key construct categories:

1. **School Climate** (School connectedness, Student-staff caring relationships, High expectations, Opportunities for meaningful participation, Perceived school safety, Harassment and bullying, Physical violence, Discipline and order, Respect for diversity, Support for learning, School response to bullying, Student peer relationships, Staff collegiality and relational supports, College and career readiness).
2. **Pupil Engagement** (Academic motivation & mindset, Frequency of truancy, School absenteeism and reasons)
3. **Parent involvement** (Efforts to involve parents in school)
4. **Facilities** (Quality of physical environment).

The CHKS does not contain individual-level data on race/ethnicity or low-income (free and reduced-price lunch) status, or English-learner status. However, we were able to obtain this information at the school level from CALPADS. With this information we created school-level percentages for enrollment by race/ethnicity, free and reduced-price lunch status, and English Learner status. These data were then merged with the COVID-19 School data hub. These data use school self-reports to identify a school's learning mode by month, from March 2020 until June 2021. Learning modes include in-person, hybrid or virtual (fully online). It includes traditional school districts, charter agencies, and state-operated agencies. More than 1,000 districts and roughly 9,000 schools are included in this data. Information can be merged with state data using NCES district and CDS Code school identifiers. After all data were appended to obtain a three-year dataset with 1.2 million students (all unique), in 7,300 schools (74% of these schools are found in only one wave, and 26% in two or more waves). The vast majority (over 90%) of these schools had available COVID-19 school closure information for 2020-21. Regression analyses and various descriptive statistical techniques were used to analyze all data. Most models are estimated separately by elementary and secondary schools, because some of the variables are not directly comparable between the two surveys.

REFERENCES

Association of Business Officials International (ABO), May 2022.

Bandura, A. (1986). The explanatory and predictive scope of self-efficacy theory. *Journal of social and clinical psychology,* 4(3), 359-373

Blad, E. (2015, December 10). CORE Districts to Share Social-Emotional Measures to Inform Accountability Plans. *Education Week*. Retrieved from https://www.edweek.org/policy-politics/core-districts-to-share-social-emotional-measures-to-inform-accountability-plans/2015/12

Bornstein, D. (2015). Teaching social skills to improve grades and lives. Retrieved from http://opinionator.blogs.nytimes.com/2015/07/24/building-social-skills-to-do-well-in-math/?_r=0.

California School Boards Association. (2022). Unprecedented Times, Unprecedented Responses: An Analysis of Federal Covid-19 Relief Fund Spending in California Public Schools. Available at https://www.csba.org/Newsroom/PressReleases/2022/-/media/9675A2CC9929462D914856D331BD840D.ashx

Crawley, E., Loades, M., Feder, G., Logan, S., Redwood, S., and Macleod, J. (2020). Wider Collateral Damage to Children in the UK Because of the Social Distancing Measures Designed to Reduce the Impact of COVID-19 in Adults. *BMJ Pediatr. Open 4*(1), e000701. doi:10.1136/bmjpo-2020-000701

Darling-Hammond, L., & Cook-Harvey, C. M. (2018). Educating the Whole Child: Improving School Climate to Support Student Success. *Learning Policy Institute*.

Education Week Research Center. (2020, April 28). Survey tracker: Monitoring how K-12 educators are responding to coronavirus. *Education Week*. https://www.edweek.org/teaching-learning/survey-tracker-monitoring-how-k-12-educators-are-responding-to-coronavirus/2020/04

Gee, K., Hough, H. J., & Chavez, B. (2023, March). Chronic absenteeism post-pandemic: Let's not make this our "new normal" [Commentary]. *Policy Analysis for California Education*. https://edpolicyinca.org/newsroom/chronic-absenteeism-post-pandemic

Gottfried, M. A., & Gee, K. A. (2017). Identifying the determinants of chronic absenteeism: A bioecological systems approach. *Teachers College Record, 119*(7), 1-34.

Gottfried, M. A. (2014). Chronic absenteeism and its effects on stu- dents' academic and socioemotional outcomes. *Journal of Education for Students Placed at Risk, 19*(2), 53–75. https://doi.org/10.1080/10824669.2014.962696

Green, J., Liem, G. A. D., Martin, A. J., Colmar, S., Marsh, H. W., & McInerney, D. (2012). Academic motivation, self-concept, engagement, and performance in high school: Key processes from a longitudinal perspective. *Journal of adolescence, 35*(5), 1111-1122.

Griffith, A. K., Bedard, K. E., Eaton, A., Ackerlund Brandt, J. A., & Jha, P. (2022). Effects of the COVID-19 pandemic on parental burnout and parenting practices: Analyses using a retrospective pretest. *Chronic Stress*. 2022;6. doi:10.1177/24705470221114059.

Hamilton, L. S., Grant, D., Kaufman, J. H., Diliberti, M., Schwartz, H. L., Hunter, G. P., Setodji, C. M., & Young, C. J. (2020). *COVID-19 and the State of K–12 schools: Results and technical documentation from the Spring 2020 American Educator Panels COVID- 19 Surveys*. https://doi.org/10.7249/RRA168-1

Hough, H., Kalogrides, D., & Loeb, S. (2017). Using Surveys of Students' Social-Emotional Learning and School Climate for Accountability and Continuous Improvement. March 8, 2017. *Policy Analysis for California Education*. Available at: https://edpolicyinca.org/sites/default/files/SEL-CC_brief.pdf.

Jiao, W. Y., Wang, L. N., Liu, J., Fang, S. F., Jiao, F. Y., and Pettoello-Mantovani, M. (2020). Behavioral and Emotional Disorders in Children during the COVID-19 Epidemic. *J. Pediatr.* 221, 264–266.e1. doi:10.1016/j.jpeds.2020.03.013

Komarraju, M., Karau, S. J., & Schmeck, R. R. (2009). Role of the Big Five personality traits in predicting college students' academic motivation and achievement. *Learning and individual differences, 19*(1), 47-52.

Kraft, M. A., & Simon, N. S. (2020). Teachers' experiences working from home during the COVID-19 pandemic. *Upbeat*. Downloaded July 7, 2020.

Kurtz, H. (2020, September 1). Teacher morale and student enrollment declining under COVID-19, survey shows. *Education Week*. https://www.edweek.org/leadership/teacher-morale-and-student-enrollment-declining-under-covid-19-survey-shows/2020/09

Li, L., Flynn, K.S., DeRosier, M.E., Weiser, G. and Austin-King, K. (2021), Social Emotional Learning Amidst COVID-19 School Closures: Positive Findings from an Efficacy Study of Adventures Aboard the S.S. GRIN Program. *Front. Educ.* 6:683142. doi:10.3389/feduc.2021.683142

Marsh et al., (2018). Enacting Social-Emotional Learning: Practices and Supports Employed in CORE Districts and Schools. *Policy Analysis for California Education*. April, 2018. Available at https://edpolicyinca.org/sites/default/files/Report_SEL%20Practices.pdf

McKellar, S. E., & Wang, M. T. (2023). Adolescents' daily sense of school connectedness and academic engagement: Intensive longitudinal mediation study of student differences by remote, hybrid, and in-person learning modality. *Learning and Instruction,* 83, 101659.

National Center for Education Statistics (2022). More than 80 Percent of U.S. Public Schools Report Pandemic Has Negatively Impacted Student Behavior and Socio-Emotional Development. July 6, 2022. Available at: https://nces.ed.gov/whatsnew/press_releases/07_06_2022.asp

National Education Association (NEA) (2012). A National Look at the School Nurse Shortage. Retrieved from http://www.nea.org/home/35691.htm.

National Research Council (2012) Education for Life and work: Developing Transferable knowledge and skills for the 21st Century. Washington, DC: *The National Academies Press*.

Pajares, F. (1996). Self-efficacy beliefs in achievement settings. *Review of Educational Research,* 66, 543-578.

Rebeck, R. (2018). Investments in Students' Physical and Mental Health in California's Public Schools. Getting Down to Facts II. Research Brief. September 2018. Available at: https://gettingdowntofacts.com/sites/default/files/2018-09/GDTFII_Brief_HealthServices.pdf

Santibañez, L., & Guarino, C. M. (2021). The effects of absenteeism on academic and social-emotional outcomes: Lessons for COVID-19. *Educational Researcher, 50*(6), 392-400.

Santibañez, L., & Gándara, P. (2018). Teachers of English Language Learners in Secondary Schools: Gaps in Preparation and Support. *Civil Rights Project/Proyecto Derechos Civiles,* School of Education & Information Studies, University of California, Los Angeles.

Schunk, D. H. (1984). Enhancing self-efficacy and achievement through rewards and goals: Motivational and informational effects. *Journal of Educational Research,* 78, 29-34.

Skinner, E. A., Kindermann, T. A., & Furrer, C. J. (2009). A Motivational Perspective on Engagement and Disaffection: Conceptualization and Assessment of Children's Behavioral and Emotional Participation in Academic Activities in the Classroom. *Educational and Psychological Measurement, 69*(3), 493-525. https://doi.org/10.1177/0013164408323233

Skinner, E. A., Furrer, C., Marchand, G., & Kinderman, T. (2008). Engagement and disaffection in the classroom: Part of a larger motivational dynamic? *Journal of Educational Psychology,* 100, 765-781.

Skinner, E. A., Kindermann, T. A., Connell, J. P., & Wellborn, J. G. (2009). Engagement as an organizational construct in the dynamics of motivational development. In K. Wentzel, & A. Wigfield (Eds.), Handbook of motivation in school (pp. 223–245). Mahwah, NJ: *Lawrence Erlbaum Associates Inc*.

Urdan, T., & Schoenfelder, E. (2006). Classroom effects on student motivation: Goal structures, social relationships, and competence beliefs. *Journal of school psychology, 44*(5), 331-349.

Varghese, A. M., & Natsuaki, M. N. (2021). Coping With the Pandemic: Implementing Social and Emotional Learning in the California K-12 School System. *Policy Insights from the Behavioral and Brain Sciences, 8*(2), 136-142.

Wang, C., Pier, L., Meyer, R. H., & Webster, N. (2021, June). Student well-being and learning conditions during the pandemic: Evidence from the CORE districts [Report]. *Policy Analysis for California Education*. https://edpolicyinca.org/publications/student-well-being-and-learning-conditions-pandemic

Wang, M-T., & Degol, J. L. (2016). School climate: A review of the construct, measurement, and impact on student outcomes. *Educational Psychology Review, 28*(2), 315-352.

West, M. R., Pier, L., Fricke, H., Loeb, S., Meyer, R. H., & Rice, A. B. (2018). Trends in student social-emotional learning: Evidence from the core districts (Working paper). *Policy Analysis for California Education*. https://files.eric.ed.gov/fulltext/ED591084.pdf

Zernike, K. (2016, February 29). Testing for joy and grit: Schools nationwide push to measure students' emotional skills. *The New York Times*. Retrieved from https://www.nytimes.com/2016/03/01/us/testing-for-joy-and-grit-schools-nationwide-push-to-measure-students-emotional-skills.html

Zieher, A. K., Cipriano, C., Meyer, J. L., & Strambler, M. J. (2021). Educators' implementation and use of social and emotional learning early in the COVID-19 pandemic. *School Psychology, 36*(5), 388.