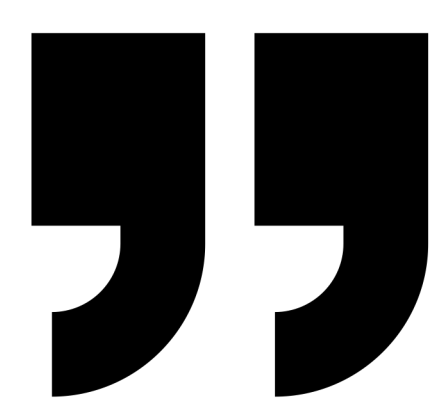


WHAT'S NEXT? ACTION RESEARCH FOR CONTINUOUS PROGRAM IMPROVEMENT AND POSITIVE SOCIAL EMOTIONAL OUTCOMES

BACKGROUND & AIM

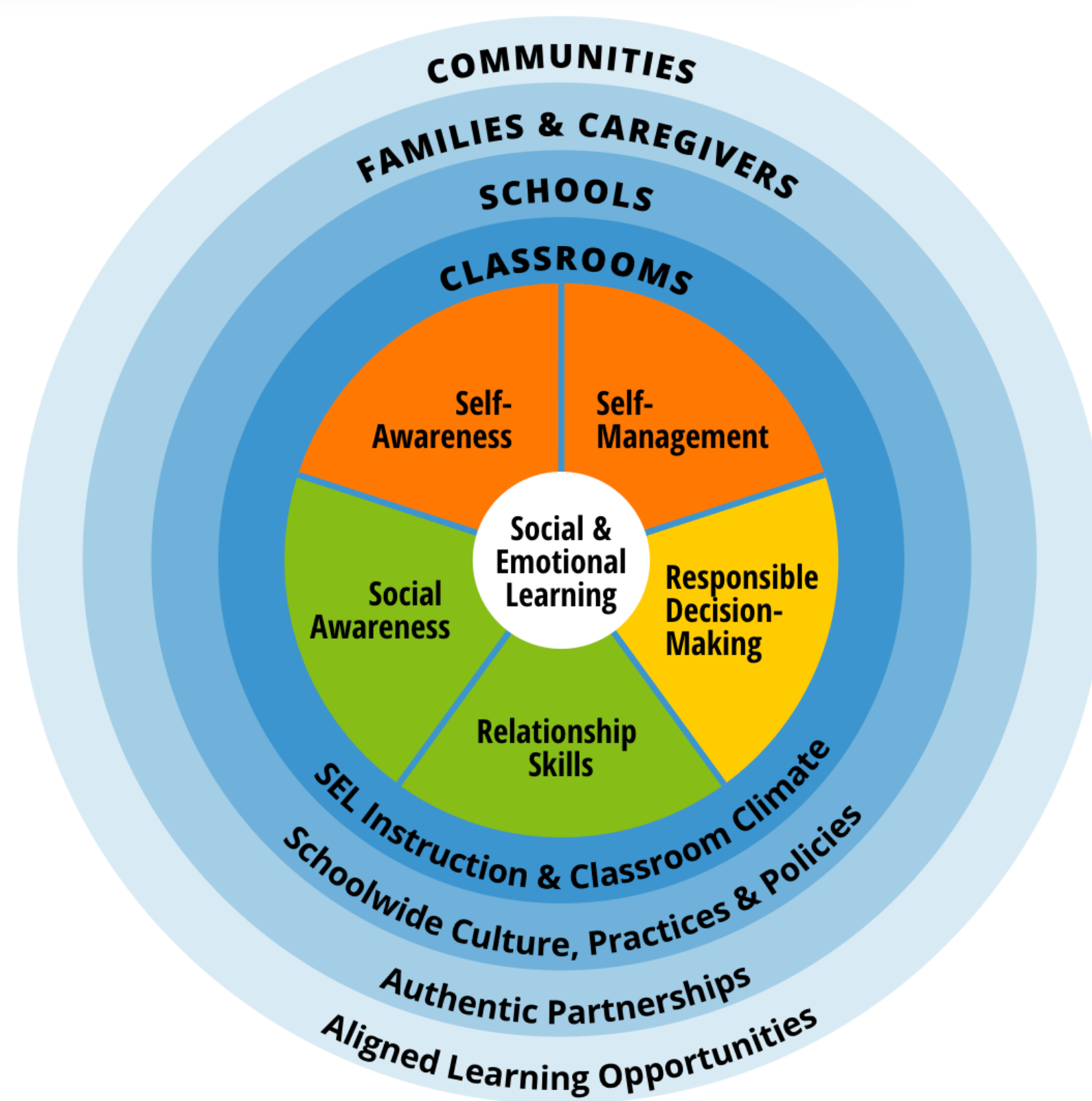
1 in 4 children experience mental health challenges. Social Emotional Learning programs mitigate against negative outcomes and promote wellness through intentional skill development.

The purpose of this study was to determine the **effectiveness** and **actions** required for **continuous improvement** of a non-profit Social Emotional Learning (SEL) program for elementary students. Based on the SEL competencies highlighted by the Collaborative for Academic and Social Emotional Learning (CASEL) and the recommended Sequenced Active Focused and Explicit (SAFE) program features, this study focused on development of self-awareness, social awareness, self-management, relationship skills, and responsible decision-making.



I learned how to interact when something is happening...I can get calm. I'm usually not calm.

~ 3rd grade focus group respondent



Conclusion

This formal 9th iteration of the action research cycle highlighted the effectiveness of teaching SEL skills through a sequenced, active, focused, and explicit program—specifically for growth in self-management skills. Recommendations for future iterations and continuous program improvement include:

- Integration of all 5 SEL skills for greater harmonization of emotion and thought.
- Universal SEL through school, family, and community partnerships.

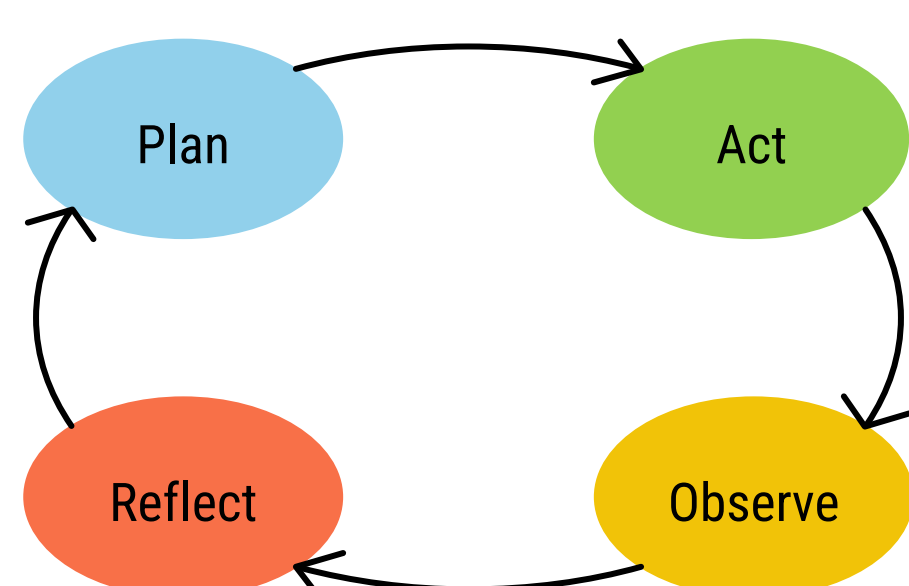


WHAT'S NEXT?

The program's educational design team prepares for its 13th action research cycle focused on integrating all 5 **Transformative SEL (TSEL)** skills outlined in the 2020 CASEL framework. This equity-centered work relies on authentic partnerships with schools, families, and community groups committed to action for **social justice**.

DESIGN AND METHODS

Action Research: The Plan, Act, Observe, Reflect Cycle

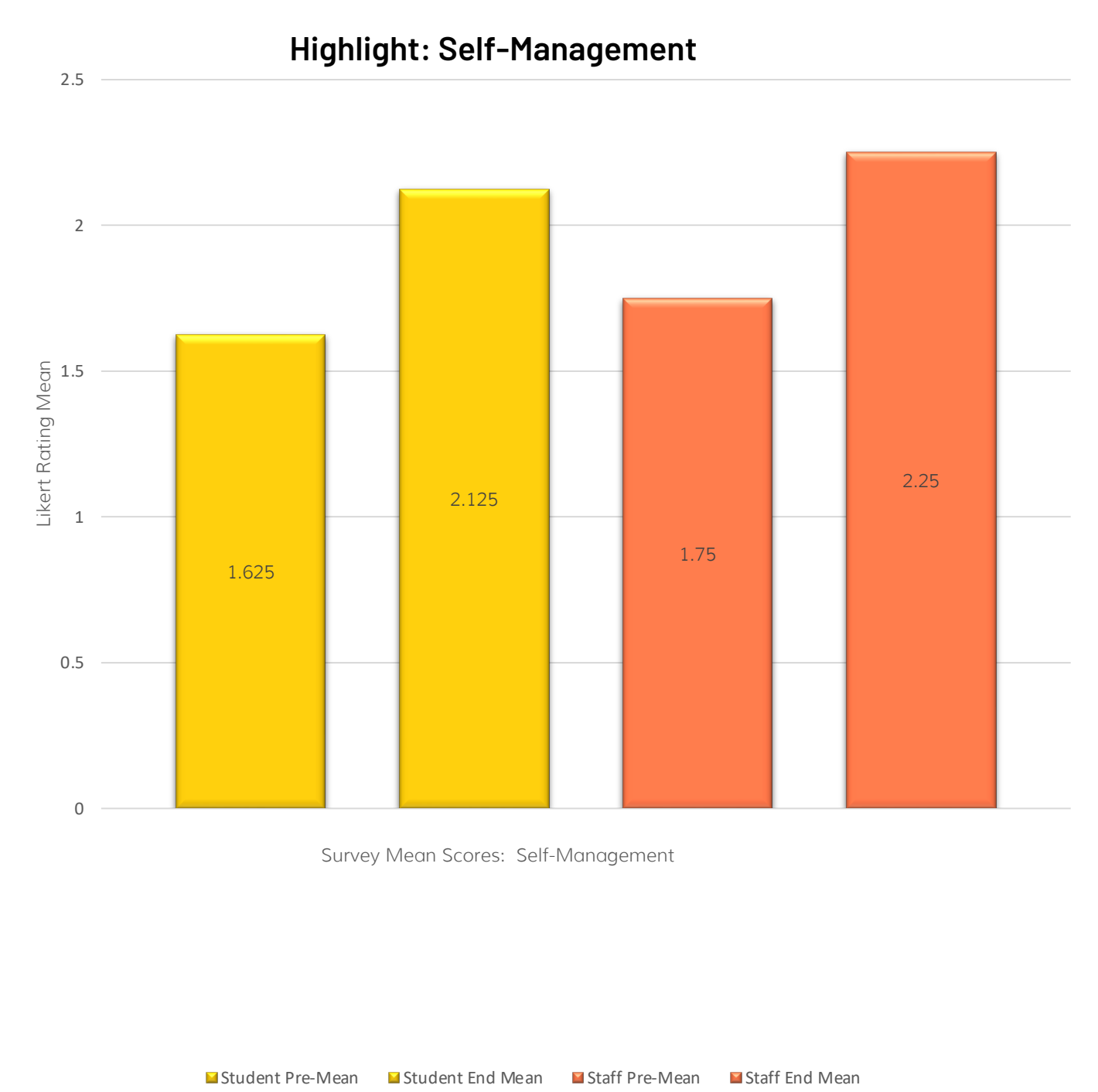


Qualitative methods included pre and post program focus groups and reflexive journal notes. Quantitative methods included pre and post program survey results. Elementary students, staff, families, and community members engaged as study participants, critical friends, and research associates.

RESULTS

Data Highlight: Self-Management Skills

Data analysis highlighted strengths and growth opportunities for the next iteration of the after-school SEL program. Both students and staff reported perceived growth in student self-management and a perceived minimal decline in student responsible decision-making skills. Adult focus group themes highlighted the desire for universal SEL through intentional partnerships between schools, families, and the community.

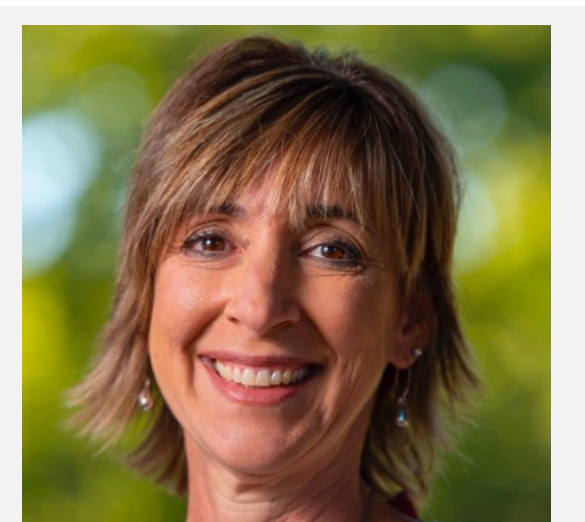


Pre and post survey data shows perceived growth in self-management skills.

What's Next?
Improving an Out-of-School-Time Social Emotional Learning Program for Elementary Students
Sarafian, K. (2020)

LET'S CONNECT!

I look forward to working with you to build transformative social emotional learning opportunities and support for more positive youth outcomes!
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