

Appendix B. Teacher Social and Emotional Competencies

1. Self-Awareness

Self-awareness refers to the ability to assess one's feelings, interests, values, and strengths accurately, and to maintain a well-grounded sense of self-efficacy (Payton et al., 2008). In the classroom context, teachers are not only required to understand one's own attitudes and opinions, but also are expected to recognize the limitations of self and how different self-aspects influence their teaching. Socially and emotionally competent teachers understand that their behaviors are influenced by multiple personal factors, such as their background experiences, personality, emotions, knowledge base, opinions, and attitudes. They also are aware that their students' behaviors are influenced by equally distinct personal factors and that teachers must bridge differences with their students to build strong interpersonal relations and engage students in learning.

2. Self-Management/Emotion Regulation

Emotion regulation is often defined as the ability to manage emotional arousal successfully and possessing the skill to change emotions, including the valence, intensity, or time course of the emotions (Gross, 1998). Although the expressions of positive and negative emotion are both regulated, the need for managing emotion is the greatest when negatively valenced emotions occur (Barrett, Gross, Christensen, & Benvenuto, 2001). Teachers, like other adults, do not experience the same emotion under the same social situation and vary in their ability to regulate such emotion. For example, one teacher may be furious and show anger when a child does not do the work, while another teacher may feel sad but does not display it. They also may use different strategies when regulating their emotions. Because teachers are expected to regulate their own emotions and emotional displays as well as the emotions of their students constantly, teachers with higher emotional regulation capacity may be better equipped to handle the emotion-provoking demands of teaching than teachers with a lower capacity for doing so.

Socially and emotionally competent teachers can identify their own positive and negative emotions in interactions with students, parents, and colleagues, and manage their emotions as necessary to promote classroom differences. In particular, socially and emotionally competent teachers recognize that perspectives differ according to age, gender, and social, ethnic, educational, and economic backgrounds. They recognize and appreciate the commonalities and uniqueness that exist among their students and colleagues. They manage students' prosocial behaviors and focus on learning. They model behaviors to help students regulate their own emotions, establishing guidelines and setting boundaries for students to enable them to do this.

3. Social-Awareness

Social awareness refers to the awareness of others, including social perspective taking (see also Zins & Elias, 2006). This construct involves viewing the world from another's perspective (Selman, 1971) and making inferences about other people, including their capacities, attitudes, expectations, feelings, and potential reactions. Social awareness refers to one's ability to take the perspective of and emphasize with others and to recognize and appreciate individual and group similarities and differences. In particular, socially and emotionally competent teachers recognize

that perspectives differ according to age, gender, and social/ethnic/educational/economic backgrounds. They recognize and appreciate the commonalities and uniqueness that exist among their students and colleagues.

4. Relationship/Social Skills

Interpersonal skills are another important dimension of SEL. Positive social interactions flow from strong interpersonal skills. Social skills are a specific class of behaviors that an individual exhibits to complete a social task successfully (Gresham & Elliott, 2008). They are often manifested in prosocial behaviors, cooperation, empathic responses, social engagement, respect for others, as well as the absence of problematic interactions (Cooper & Farran, 1991; Eisenberg & Fabes, 1998). Socially and emotionally competent teachers establish and maintain healthy and rewarding relationships with students, parents, and colleagues. They are able to prevent, manage, and resolve interpersonal conflict between themselves and students, parents, and colleagues, and deal with conflict among students, through exhibiting prosocial, cooperative behaviors and respecting and being empathic to others.

5. Responsible Decision Making

Decision making is a process in which an individual scans an array of options and tries to decide which option is the best way to produce some desired outcome. Teachers must often make split-second, in-the-moment decisions that govern their interactions with students and reactions to other factors inside and outside of the classroom. Decision making is a multistep process, which in classrooms is often enacted in the moment as teachers consider and process clues, draw information from long-term memory, and make a “decision” that is “enacted” through words and behavior. One influence of teachers’ decision-making process is their ability to “attend to the needs and behaviors of an entire classroom while also trying to remember and implement a lesson plan” (Feldon, 2007, p.123). Feldon’s analysis of several studies of veteran and novice teachers suggests that veteran teachers retain the capacity to filter out extraneous stimuli and focus on pertinent social cues (Swanson, O’Connor, & Cooney, 1990). Socially and emotionally competent teachers use multiple forms of evidence to make decisions about instruction, classroom management, and interactions with students, students’ parents, and colleagues. They objectively consider the well-being, needs, and academic goals of individual students and of their class(es) as a whole, and they balance awareness of students’ emotional and academic needs when making both long-term plans and in-the-moment decisions.