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Institute of Education Sciences National Center for Education Research Awards Education Analytics' Researchers Grant to Study 4th-12th grade Students' Social-Emotional Learning During COVID-19

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

[**MADISON**, June 29, 2023] – The Institute of Education Sciences' (IES) National Center for Education Research (NCER) awarded Education Analytics (EA) a nearly \$2 million grant to refine and validate an open-source social emotional learning (SEL) survey instrument. EA will partner for four years with [California's CORE Districts](#)—a consortium of more than 100 school districts in California, including eight of the largest school districts (Fresno, Garden Grove, Long Beach, Los Angeles, Oakland, Sacramento, San Francisco, and Santa Ana)—to improve the measurement of student social emotional competencies, with a particular focus on underserved student groups who were disproportionately affected by the COVID-19 pandemic. This research aims to advance the understanding of social emotional learning and its role in supporting student success. By focusing on underrepresented student groups impacted by the COVID-19 pandemic, researchers and practitioners can work together to ensure equitable access to quality education.

Leading the research is [Robert Meyer](#), EA's Chief Research Officer, and [Caroline Wang](#), an EA Research Scientist II. The project will begin in July 2023 and continue through June 2027. Students from the CORE Districts represent more than 1.5 million students—about 20 percent of California's student population. The research sample will include all students who have participated in CORE's SEL survey in grades 4 to 12 from school years 2014–15 through 2025–26. To provide a sense of the research sample, the 2014–15 school year sample includes more than 425,000 students from more than 1,100 schools; 67% of these students were Latinx, 35% English learners, and 78% from economically disadvantaged backgrounds.

The project encompasses three primary goals. First, researchers will refine the existing SEL survey to more fully address the unique challenges faced by the students in the CORE districts.

The project aims to ensure the validity and reliability of the CORE SEL measures across diverse student populations.

Second, researchers will collect evidence to validate the updated SEL measures to support the various uses and interpretations of SEL scores at both the student and school levels.

Finally, the project will develop a suite of resources to facilitate research and timely, data-driven applications of SEL outcomes. These resources include an open-source, validated student SEL survey instrument, a de-identified longitudinal dataset of SEL measures for nationwide use by researchers, technical documentation for researchers using the SEL measures, benchmark data and interpretation guidebooks for CORE practitioners, nationally normed SEL benchmarks for practitioners nationwide, and a set of tools to support the use of the CORE SEL survey instrument.

“We are thrilled to advance our research with the incredible support of the Institute for Education Sciences,” says Meyer. “By producing an open-source, validated SEL survey instrument, the CORE Districts will meet the overwhelming demand for an effective measurement tool to assess students’ social emotional skills.”

CORE Chief Executive Officer, Rick Miller, added, “Practitioners nationwide will benefit from nationally normed SEL benchmarks, guidebooks, infographics, and best practices for measuring and supporting students’ SEL during this critical time. We look forward to sharing this data.”

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“In the wake of the pandemic, the impact on students’ educational experiences has been profound,” says [Heather J. Hough](#), Executive Director, [Policy Analysis for California Education](#), Stanford University. “The funding from this grant will provide the data and solutions for educators to support students in a more equitable and comprehensive way, so that they can thrive academically, emotionally, and socially,” says Hough.

About Education Analytics

Since its founding as a non-profit in 2013, Education Analytics has partnered with more than 300 districts and more than 25 states to conduct research and develop rigorous analytics that support actionable solutions and drive continuous improvement in American education. Education Analytics works with the largest education systems in the country, small districts brought together by regional offices of education and collaboratives, state departments of education, leading research institutions and universities, charter management organizations, and fellow non-profit organizations.