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Accountability Assessment Alternative Indicators

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October 2008

School Climate and Connectedness

- Longitudinal evaluation of a positive youth development initiative in 11 Alaska school districts revealed that not only are several aspects of school climate and connectedness related to student achievement, but *positive change* in school climate and school connectedness is related to significant gains in student scores on statewide achievement tests.

Measures: School Climate and Connectedness Survey (high expectations, respectful climate, school safety, school leadership and involvement, peer climate, caring adults, community involvement, social and emotional learning, student delinquent behaviors, student drug and alcohol use) (Spier, Cai, & Osher, 2007; Spier, Cai, Osher, & Kendziora, 2007).

- School environments promote learning to the extent that they offer safety, connection and support, challenge and engagement, and conditions conducive to students managing their own emotions and relationships.

Measures: Conditions for Learning Survey (student connection and conditions for learning) (Osher, Poirier, Dwyer, Hicks et al., 2008).

Positive Behavior Support

- Whole-school interventions using positive behavior support have been shown to decrease behavior problems while improving academic performance, as measured by standardized tests in reading and mathematics.

Measures: Office discipline referrals; suspensions; "Caught in the Act" slips, token reinforcements given when students meet positive behavior expectations added to the school policy handbook (Luiselli, Putnam, Handler, & Feinberg, 2005).

- Research has demonstrated the effectiveness of positive behavior support in reducing problem behaviors and improving academic performance.

Measures: Behavioral and Emotional Rating Scale (social competence); Student Safety Survey, administrative disciplinary actions (school climate) (Nelson, Martella, & Marchand-Martella, 2002).

- Higher levels of development supports in schools are associated with higher academic achievement by students, both in low- and high-performing schools.

Measure: California Healthy Kids Survey (school environment, 22 student health risk behaviors and resilience assets) (Hanson, Austin, & Lee-Bayha, 2004).

Extracurricular Activities

- Research with more than 4,000 eighth and tenth grade female students has shown their participation in extracurricular activities to be positively correlated with mathematics achievement.

Measure: National Educational Longitudinal Study of the U.S. Department of Education (Chambers & Schreiber, 2004).

- Research with elementary school students revealed that the number of extracurricular activities that students participate in during kindergarten and first grade positively impacts their gains in reading achievement between first and third grade. Children from lower socioeconomic conditions were found to benefit more from participation in extracurricular activities than those from higher socioeconomic conditions.

Measure: Early Childhood Longitudinal Study of the U.S. Department of Education (Dumais, 2006).

School-Based Health Services

- Scientifically rigorous evaluations provide evidence for positive effects on some academic outcomes of the presence of school-based health services.

Measures: Registration and use of school-based health clinics (McCord, Klein, Foy, & Fothergill, 1993; Murray, Low, Hollis, Cross, & Davis, 2007).

School-Based Mental Health Centers

- Scientifically rigorous evaluations provide evidence for positive effects on some academic outcomes of the presence of school-based mental health centers.

Measures: Receipt of services at a school-based mental health center (Jennings, Pearson, & Harris, 2000); referral for mental health services at a school-based health center (Gall, Pagano, Desmond, Perrin, & Murphy, 2000).

School Engagement

- Measures of school engagement among high school students are significant predictors of their math achievement scores.

Measure: Educational Longitudinal Study of the U.S. Department of Education (behavioral engagement: frequency of lateness, cutting classes, absences, disruptive versus attentive behaviors, disciplinary actions, and time dedicated to extracurricular activities; cognitive engagement: students' commitment to learning, importance of good grades, perseverance in the face of difficulty, homework completion, and

amount of hours per week spent on homework; emotional engagement: quality of student-teacher relationships, school safety, relationships with peers, and harmony among different racial groups) (Sciarra & Seirup, 2008).

“Academic Enablers”

- Assessing interpersonal skills, study skills, motivation, and engagement are each viable alternatives to directly assessing academic skills.

Measures: Social Skills Rating System and School Social Behavior Scales–2nd edition (social skills); Motivated Strategies for Learning Questionnaire (motivations). Learning and Study Strategies Inventory (study skills); Academic Competence Evaluation Scales (interpersonal skills, study skills, motivation, and engagement) (Diperna, 2006).

Social Behavior

- A longitudinal study of 400 low-income children revealed consistent associations between social skills (aggression and prosocial behavior) and literacy achievement in the first, third, and fifth grades.

Measure: Child Behavior Scales (Miles & Stipek, 2006).

- A longitudinal study of elementary school students revealed prosocial behavior among third graders to be strongly predictive of academic achievement in the eighth grade.

Measure: Self, peer, and teacher ratings (Caprara, Barbaranelli, Pastorelli, Bandara, & Zimbardo, 2000).

Social and Emotional Learning

- Academic achievement, both in the form of higher standardized test scores and better grades, is higher among students with stronger social, emotional, and decision-making skills (Collaborative for Academic, Social, and Emotional Learning, 2007; Durlak, Weissberg, Dymnicki, Taylor, & Schellinger, 2008; Fleming, Haggerty, Brown, Catalano et al., 2005).

Measures: Walker-McConnell Scale of Social Competency & School Adjustment (social and emotional skills); Child Coping Strategies Checklist (decision-making skills) (Fleming, Haggerty, Brown, Catalano et al., 2005). Additional measures can be located through the website of the Collaborative for Academic, Social, and Emotional Learning: <http://www.casel.org/assessment/tools.php>.

- Students' social skills and self-concept affect academic achievement through their effects on academic competence.

Measures: Child and Adolescent Social Support Scale; (students' perceived support from parents, teachers, classmates, close friends, and the school); Student Self-Concept Scale (self-perceptions, including self-confidence); Social Skills Rating System–Teacher Form (Ray & Elliott, 2006).

- Data collected from 137,000 Chicago students in 605 schools revealed social and emotional skills (SEL) to be associated with persistence in school, as measured by graduation rates. One of the SEL conditions for learning, that students be challenged, was found to be strongly related to grade point average.

Measure: Conditions for Learning Survey (Osher, Kendziora, & Chinen, 2008).

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