



# Safe and Supportive Education

*Shaping School Climate through Social Emotional Learning & Trauma-Informed Approaches in Newark Public Schools*

Veronica M. Kapnick, Ph.D.  
Stephanie Parry  
Ronald Chaluísán

**May 2018**



[newarktrust.org](http://newarktrust.org)



[/newarktrust](https://www.facebook.com/newarktrust)



[@NewarkTrust](https://twitter.com/NewarkTrust)

© 2018 Newark Trust for Education

# Table of Contents

Introduction .....	3
What are Safe and Supportive Schools and Why Do We Need Them? .....	4
Defining Safe and Supportive Schools .....	4
Why This Strategy? .....	4
Promoting Safe and Supportive School Models .....	4
The Challenge .....	5
National Conversation: Towards Developing a Language .....	6
What Are We Talking About? Disentangling SEL, Trauma, ACEs and School Climate .....	6
Avenues for Support .....	6
School Climate and the Intersection between SEL & TIA .....	7
A Roadmap for Success .....	7
Historical Context: Developing Safe and Supportive Schools in Newark .....	8
The District .....	8
The Funding Community .....	9
Nurturing School Climate and Culture and Targeted Students Supports .....	10
The Safe and Supportive Schools Initiative .....	10
Evidence of Impact .....	11
Professional Development & Capacity Building .....	11
School Climate – Halls that Inspire and Therapeutic Spaces .....	11
Mental Health Counseling .....	12
School and Student-Tailored Youth Programming and Student Supports .....	13
Learning from What Works .....	14
Best Practices from the Field .....	15
Recommendations .....	16
Conclusion: The Future of School Climate Reform in Newark .....	18
References .....	19
Appendix I: Methodology .....	20
Appendix II: List of Schools Trained on Establishing Student Support Teams .....	20
Appendix III: Summary of Recent State Bills .....	21
Appendix IV: List of Trust-Funded Projects .....	22
Appendix V: List of Impacts for Youth Programming & Student Supports .....	24

# Introduction

At a recent full-day symposium in Newark called Showing Up Matters: NPS Strategies to Address Chronic Absenteeism, a panel of young women and men sat in front of over 200 audience members to talk about how to get students engaged in school.

Each student shared varying versions of the same story. They struggled to feel connected to their schools, felt unwanted at times, and yearned for a support system at school that could help them overcome their challenges. They wanted to be engaged in learning but found it difficult. When asked what schools could do to address these issues, one student said that when you walk into a school you should feel “grandma’s love.” While this may be a difficult standard for any school to reach, the message from these young people is clear: Schools have the potential to provide the protective factors young people require to thrive.

The needs of these high school students are not unique. The fact is all young people need frequent opportunities to make positive contributions and gain appreciation, and to feel connected to support systems. Outside of family and community, schools are the most prominent avenues for this type of support.

The importance of creating safe and supportive school environments is a topic of conversation across the nation, and in the state and district -- from addressing student attendance and discipline, to building college and career readiness. It is evident that developing students’ social and emotional skills, acknowledging and addressing trauma, and building school culture that fosters trusting and nurturing relationships must occur in order to create optimal conditions for learning. Each of these strategies influences whether a student shows up to school and remains engaged once in the building.

Over the past decade, Newark has made tremendous strides towards promoting safe and supportive schools. The school district, funders, non-profit organizations, and the academic community have invested in training, support, information, and tools for school leaders to create positive experiences for students that cultivate personal strengths and support holistic development. However, more work needs to be done to ensure that schools adopt best practices; that school leaders, the district, funders and service providers are aligning their initiatives; and that everyone is utilizing rigorous approaches to evaluate the impact of this work.

This paper identifies several key recommendations to bring the work to the next level:

1. More long-term planning and tracking of initiatives to accommodate school leadership and district turnover;
2. Better coordination and communication between the funding community and the district to support existing initiatives or co-identify gaps in training, support or services;
3. Requirements for schools to develop whole-school plans that integrate school climate, Social Emotional Learning (SEL), and trauma-based initiatives, along with capacity-building support to implement these plans;
4. Large-scale and multi-year evaluation projects to measure the academic benefits of selected SEL and school climate strategies; and
5. Increased cross-fertilization of ideas, information and resources between local schools via “network improvement communities” and the use of district- and state-wide collaborations and learning opportunities.

These and other findings are highlighted in the following report, issued by the Newark Trust for Education (i.e. The Trust).

This report examines the role of programs and interventions aimed at creating safe and supportive schools across Newark Public Schools (NPS), and within the larger local and national context. It outlines the history of district involvement in large-scale efforts to increase social emotional learning, improve climate and culture and strengthen student support services. It looks at where and how The Trust’s funding has been used in NPS to support these types of interventions, and surfaces any impact. Finally, best practices from the field, both across Trust-funded projects and nationally, are identified, and recommendations towards creating safe and supportive schools are made for policy-makers and legislators, school administrators and educators, and funders, with a look ahead at the future of SEL and trauma-informed interventions.

# What are Safe and Supportive Schools and Why do We Need Them?

## **Defining Safe and Supportive Schools**

The concept of safe and supportive schools is based on the knowledge that, to realize their full potential, all children need to experience safe, nurturing, and well-managed environments where they feel valued and respected, and are afforded opportunities to successfully apply their abilities and recognition in doing so (Elias, 2010).

A truly Safe and Supportive School has three core elements (Safe and Supportive Schools Commission, 2017):

1. It fosters a safe, positive, healthy and inclusive whole school learning environment;
2. It supports students holistically in key areas of development; and
3. It provides integrated services and aligns the many student supportive initiatives that aim to address particular areas of need in schools.

In other words, it has a school climate that promotes a sense of safety and belonging, nourishes relationships, and fosters students' ability to regulate emotions and behaviors, while providing opportunities for all students to receive academic and non-academic instruction that will promote success, and proactively recognizes and adequately addresses the students that are in need of individualized support.

Looking at it from the typical three-tiered model of school supports, a school might use universal social emotional learning and character development opportunities to foster the emotional well-being of all students (tier 1), tailored and integrated student supports for struggling or at-risk students to preventatively address barriers to success (tier 2), and intensive and coordinated services for students demonstrating significant need (tier 3). What's more, all of these strategies should be mutually supportive.

## **Why This Strategy?**

### **Promoting Safe and Supportive School Models**

There are three main reasons why safe and supportive school models are viable options for school improvement compared to other school climate reform models.

#### **1. The impact of safe and supportive school strategies are supported by more than a decade of research.**

There is ample evidence that academic success depends on the culture and climate of the school, and that students' success in school and life depends a great deal on their social-emotional development (Elias, 2010).

In a review of 317 studies that involved over 300,000 participants in elementary and middle school, SEL programming improved students' academic performance by 11 to 17 percentile points indicating that SEL programs offer students a practical educational benefit (CASEL, 2008). This impact is as large, or larger than, other interventions such as small class size and academic tutoring (Elias, 2010), and includes both programs

for the general student body without any identified behavioral or emotional problems or difficulties, and those that identify and work with students who demonstrate early signs of behavioral or emotional problems.

But learning does not happen in a vacuum. Neuroscience and developmental science affirm that school environments can influence child development, including social-emotional and academic learning. What's more, research shows that a psychological connection to school is among the factors most associated with academic success.

#### **2. School and district leaders recognize the importance of safe and supportive school strategies.**

The sentiment above page 5 from East Side High School's principal was echoed throughout interviews The Trust had with education leaders in the field. For instance, one Newark school leader stated, "As a school you need to be super supportive and kids need to know that at the end of the day, you got me. Once you have a safe and supportive school, you [students] don't need to act out, the youth feel like 'I can be me.'"





*“I think all schools should look at their data and think about their kids and ask, ‘what are you doing to give purpose and passion to your students?’*

*- Principal at East Side High School*



### **3. Students are demanding that schools be safe and supportive.**

The most frequent reason students drop out of school or fail to attend regularly is disengagement. This process often begins in middle school, but the seeds are planted as early as elementary school. As young people enter high school, large percentages of them lack social-emotional competence, believe their teachers do not care about them, and disrupt the educational experiences of classmates (CASEL2008). As noted by a representative from YaleRULER, “The core issue is that adults don’t have the social-emotional skills – you can see it in the news – adolescents are protesting in the streets asking adults to lead the way, saying ‘you want us to be one way and yet you don’t have these skills – show us the way and we’ll follow it, but you can’t tell us not to do things and turn around and do it yourself.’”

Newark’s chronic absenteeism rates, especially in high school, are alarmingly high. As reported by ACNJ (Chen & Rice, 2017), the main reasons students reported being disengaged, are due to social and emotional health, and school culture.

### **The Challenge**

With all of the research, knowledge and best practices out there, where are we in reaching safe and supportive school goals?

What we know is that in many districts and states, current programs that address safe and supportive school strategies are fragmented. At this point in time schools are using many different disconnected approaches to improve students’ SEL and school climate and culture, not appreciating the need for coordinated, continuous, systematic, evidence-based approaches for ultimate success. For example, although support among principals for embedding SEL in the culture and classrooms of schools is high, implementation varies widely across schools throughout the nation with one in three principals implementing SEL school-wide, and only one in four meeting benchmarks for high-quality implementation (CASEL, n.d. -c).

To complicate matters, there has been a proliferation of programs, frameworks, language and curricula that aim to add value to the conversation. The most commonly used are: Social Emotional Learning (SEL), school climate and culture, Trauma-informed care (TIC)/Trauma-informed approach (TIA), positive behavioral interventions and supports (PBIS) and Adverse Childhood Experiences (ACEs). As a first step, it is crucial districts, educators, school leaders and other service professionals have a common understanding of how these concepts and practices fit together and what strategies are most promising.

# National Conversation: Towards Developing a Common Language

## **What are We Talking About? Disentangling SEL, Trauma, ACEs and School Climate**

According to the Collaborative for Academic, Social, and Emotional Learning (CASEL), SEL is the “process through which children and adults acquire and effectively apply the knowledge, attitudes, and skills necessary to understand and manage emotions, set and achieve positive goals, feel and show empathy for others, establish and maintain positive relationships, and make responsible decisions” (CASEL, n.d. -a). SEL is predicated on five core-competencies that everyone – children and adults – must possess in order to live a healthful and fulfilling life.

These 5 Core Competencies include:

- Self-Awareness
- Self-Management
- Social Awareness
- Relationship Skills
- Responsible Decision Making

What we know, however, is that not every young person has the same experiences and support systems to effectively acquire these core-competencies. Characterized as Adverse Childhood Experiences (ACEs) -- “stressful or traumatic events, including abuse and neglect” (Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration, n.d) -- family and environmental characteristics can be risk factors that impact children’s social-emotional health and development, making them more vulnerable to social, emotional and behavioral problems (Cooper, Masi, Vick, 2009; Cooper, Masi, Vick, 2009):

Research on ACEs have surfaced three major findings: (1) childhood adversity is a common occurrence, (2) individuals who experience one type of adversity typically experience more than one, and (3) multiple compared to singular risk exposures are relatively more damaging from a developmental perspective (Menard, Bandeen-Roche, & Chilcoat, 2004).

The impact of ACEs that go unaddressed has been shown to have several consequences on later-life trajectories, including drug use, incarceration, violence and greater risk for poor educational and employment outcomes (Bellis, Lowey, Leckenby, Hughes, & Harrison, 2014). For children who are already historically

disadvantaged, ACEs could have dire and multiplying consequences. But not all is lost. As Sampson and Laub (1990, p. 610) theorized, “transitions or turning points can modify life trajectories – they can “redirect paths”, and bring forth the social-emotional learning necessary for increased health and wellbeing and improved life-circumstances.

## **Avenues for Support**

There are three main avenues where young people can get the emotional and physical support they need for optimal socio-emotional development, particularly in the face of ACEs. Considered “protective factors” these are – the home, the community, and the school – all of which include a variety of social supports from parents, siblings and extended-kin, to friends, clergy, therapeutic providers, and mentors, and finally, teachers and other educational leaders. Viewed in this way, childhood education, from elementary to high school, can protect students from a variety of familial and environmental risk factors, and act as a transitional point that intercepts the diminishing effects of ACEs in young people.

Several organizations and institutions<sup>1</sup> are leading efforts under the auspices of “school climate” reform, to integrate SEL and other similar educational frameworks into their schools (Cohen, 2017, National School Climate Council, 2015) – all of which are intended to provide the social-emotional skills, knowledge, and dispositions that provide the foundation for positive health and well-being, and increased quality of life (Cohen, 2006). In this view, a school’s climate is one of the “filters” through which a child receives the emotional, physical and educational care that disrupts the negative consequences of adverse childhood experiences.

The National School Climate Center (NSCC) defines school climate as, “the quality and character of school life” and reflects the school’s norms, goals, values, interpersonal relationships, teaching and learning practices and organizational structures (National School Climate Center, n.d). Education experts acknowledge that fostering a positive school climate relies on several core tenets, which include (National School Climate Council, 2015):

1. Prosocial instruction, governance and infrastructure must be provided, and barriers to learning and teaching must be addressed along with re-engagement of disconnected

<sup>1</sup> These include: National School Climate Council, Association for Supervision and Curriculum Development, Character Education Partnership, Coalition for Community Schools, and the Center for Mental Health in Schools.

students;

2. Improvement efforts are continuous, collaborative, and must be focused on universal, comprehensive, proactive strategies, rather than reactive interventions.
3. School wide goals should promote physically, emotionally, and intellectually safe, supportive and engaging environments;
4. Instructional efforts should be culturally responsive and designed to impeded social, emotional, and civic learning into instruction; and,
5. Processes must promote meaningful relationships among students, faculty and staff.

Positive school climate, therefore, is developed through effective and sustainable improvement processes that are intentional, strategic, data-driven, and fundamentally collaborative (Cohen, 2017). Included in these processes are initiatives geared towards social emotional learning, which are oftentimes implemented via trauma informed approaches (TIA).

## **School Climate and the Intersection Between SEL and TIA**

As noted, SEL is a process of development whereby children learn the non-cognitive skills of self-management, self –awareness, social awareness, relationship building and management, and responsible decision-making – skills that increase a student’s ability to engage, concentrate and participate in school (Collaborative for Academic, Social, and Emotional Learning, n.d. –b). TIA, on the other hand, are organizational structures and treatment framework that involve understanding, recognizing, and responding to the effects of all types of trauma (The Trauma Informed Care Project, n.d. –a).

Practitioners and service providers of all types use TIA as a way to recognize that people, including children and young adults, have sustained different types of trauma in their lives, and as such, need support and understanding. As a framework it emphasizes physical, psychological and emotional safety for both consumers and providers, and helps individuals rebuild a sense of control and empowerment (The Trauma Informed Care Project, n.d. –a). Providers are trained to provide services that are “trauma-sensitive”, and includes providing a safe and comforting environment, being empathetic, avoiding blame or shame, focusing

on partnership, not control or authority, and focusing on a person’s strengths (Collaborative for Academic, Social, and Emotional Learning, n.d. –b).

Together, a trauma-sensitive approach is the lens through which social-emotional learning can be cultivated. When social-emotional learning is nurtured vis-à-vis a trauma-sensitive approach, both learning and healing occur. In this way, a trauma-sensitive approach does not treat the trauma symptoms themselves, but creates an environment in which a young person is approached with empathy and understanding, given validation that his/her behavior is a “normal” response to abnormal life experiences, and is empowered and viewed as a strong and resilient individual with strength so share – all of which enable positive behavioral development and allow students to focus

on learning (Collaborative for Academic, Social, and Emotional Learning. (n.d.-b).

The impacts of social-emotional learning on young people have been demonstrated widely, and include the cultivation of a variety of soft-skills and measures of positive well-being and academic success. These include increases self-awareness, abilities to build and nurture positive relationships, and make

appropriate decisions (James et al., 2017), as well as improved cognitive regulation, emotional processes, social and interpersonal skills, and behavior (Jones, Barnes, Bailey, & Doolittle, 2017). Social-emotional learning has also shown to decrease emotional distress (Durlak, Weissberg, Dymnicki, Taylor & Schellinger, 2011), absenteeism, and disciplinary measures (James et al., 2017), and increase test scores and graduation rates (Greenberg, Domitrovich, Weissburg, & Durlak, 2017; Taylor, Oberle, Durlak, & Weissbeg, 2017).

Given these impacts, a call-to-action has been made to help Newark’s young people learn and nurture a robust set of skills that will help them deal with all of life’s challenges – both those of today and of tomorrow.

## **A Roadmap for Success**

The Newark Trust for Education is dedicated supporting Newark schools, and believes that in partnership-and with direction from educational leaders, parents, community members, and other philanthropic and community-based organizations, Newark can continue to build the safe and supportive schools necessary to give Newark’s young people a “hand-up” towards a life of safety, stability, social-mobility and overall positive health and well-being.

*Young children with family risk factors have been found to be two to three times more likely than children without these family risk factors to experience problems with aggression (19% vs. 7%) anxiety and depression (27% vs. 9%) and hyperactivity (19% vs. 7%).*

(Cooper, Masi, Vick, 2009)





*It is the Trust's philosophy that all Newark schools can become Safe and Supportive Schools by incorporating SEL programming and curriculum, and trauma-informed approaches to education and discipline throughout their schools. By doing this schools will create the conditions that not only foster the skills necessary to overcome life's many challenges, but ultimately lead to improved academic outcomes and student success.*

# Historical Context: Developing Safe and Supportive Schools in Newark

## **Shifting the Conversation from Student Deficit to Culture and Systems**

### **The District**

For over a decade, and under several administrations, NPS has been involved in conversations around safe and supportive schools, and more specifically around school climate, SEL and students supports. Below is a snapshot of the most recent documented initiatives.

From around 2008-2009, under Dr. Clifford Janey, NPS participated in a pilot called Developing Safe and Civil Schools. The pilot was led by the New Jersey Department of Education in collaboration with Rutgers University Social Emotional Learning Lab and with the assistance of the Collaborative for Academic and Social Emotional Learning (CASEL). Under this pilot, about five schools received assistance in selecting, developing and implementing projects designed to have a measurable impact on at-risk student behaviors, school climate, and student academic performance with the ultimate goal of developing and implementing a school-wide SEL model.

From 2012 - 2015, NPS made significant and large-scale investments in bringing information and tools to school leaders to build capacity around SEL, school climate and culture and student support service teams. This effort was developed and implemented by the Office of College and Career Readiness (OCCR), led by Robert Clark. Behind the push for more whole-child and whole-school development was the understanding that Newark Public Schools needed to be more proactive in building schools that foster bonds between students and their teachers and peers, increase student engagement, and give students the skills they need to effectively participate in the relationship-based learning environment of the classroom (OCCR, n.d. -a).

This strategy was an attempt to shift the focus from a deficit-

based lens to a culture and systems model, and school leaders were encouraged to examine how school environments that promote social emotional development and build effective support systems can help young people overcome their challenges and foster personal strengths.

Although the term safe and supportive schools was not used at the time, the OCCR strategy combined the following priorities, all inherent in safe and supportive school models:

- Establish integrated student support services system [IS4] to strengthen proactive school-based supports and interventions for all students
- Foster emotional intelligence and character development through the integration of SEL into the academic curriculum.
- Promote student attachment to school

In order to reach the above OCCR goals, the district launched two major initiatives during the 2014-2015 school year.

1. Ramapo for Children trained 34 schools on how to establish high-functioning Student Support Teams (SST) to proactively support students.<sup>2</sup>
2. The International Institute for Restorative Practices provided training on restorative circles to school-based teams at all district schools in order to address school climate issues stemming from harsh discipline policies.<sup>3</sup>

In addition, topics around school climate and SEL were incorporated into regular district-wide professional development days.

Building on the momentum from the OCCR work, the Opportunity Youth Network, also led by Robert Clark, was successful in working with NPS to craft two new student discipline policies that reflected the shifting mindset of the district.

<sup>2</sup>For a full list of schools see Appendix II. A subset of schools also received intensive follow-up coaching by Ramapo through this initiative.

<sup>3</sup>A selected cohort received more intensive 4-day training.



Officially adopted in 2017, these new policies highlight the importance of “proactive strategies to support positive behavior in all students” including “instruction of social and emotional skills; and use of restorative practices.” The policy also states that schools should build climates where “expectations for adult behaviors within the school building...reflect and reinforce positive school climate” (OCCR, n.d. –a).

## ***The Funding Community***

On the tail end of this pioneering work, the funding community became more involved in supporting the shift to a whole-school and whole-child lens. The topics of trauma and ACEs also became important elements in the conversation about students and school environments.

During the 2012-2015 timeframe, there was limited involvement from the funding community around comprehensive SEL, trauma and school climate initiatives (aka safe and supportive schools). In a report written by the Chad Foundation called “An Examination of Newark Education Philanthropy: 2012 - 2015”, investments in “Social Emotional Supports” were placed under the health category and were mostly defined as school-based counseling programs. It’s worth noting that there was a significant and sustained interest from select funders around mental health supports in schools at the time, although grants were not often integrated with other school-based initiatives. Also mental health

providers report that the demand from schools for their services increased significantly during this time (S. Margeotes, personal communication, April, 2018).

In 2014-2015, the Funders’ Collaborative, a pooled fund housed within the Newark Trust for Education (The Trust), decided to target renew schools in need of additional resources, and listed school climate and social support as two of five priority areas. The Trust received several applications for climate and SEL-related work including a Therapeutic Learning Center (TLC), training on the SEL curriculum Responsive Classroom, and support for creating emotionally supportive classrooms and school environments. Schools under the Funders’ Collaborative continued to express the need for more resources and program supports that address the social and emotional needs of their students.

Since the topics both aligned with work happening at the district and surfaced as key issues in the Trusts’ annual needs assessment, SEL and trauma-informed initiatives became the focus of the Funders’ Collaborative grants program starting in 2015-2016. In 2017-2018, The Trust renamed this work the Safe and Supportive School Initiative to reflect the shift in priority to integrated whole-school approaches.

To date, the Collaborative has funded 60 projects in 20 schools under this fund. What follows is a summary of the work that has been funded including best practices, challenges and lessons learned.



# Nurturing School Climate and Culture and Targeted Students Supports

## The Safe and Supportive Schools Initiative

Since 2015, the Newark Trust for Education has invested approximately \$1,061,531 in Safe and Supportive school-related resources and programming across 20 public schools throughout Newark's four wards. Primarily, the 60 projects that were funded during this time were labeled as either "SEL" or "TIA" but ran the spectrum of universal SEL curriculum, school climate and culture initiatives, professional development and capacity building, and targeted student interventions.

- Schools most often sought funding to increase social-emotional development in their students via youth programming and targeted student supports (Tier 2 & 3), as well as through increased teacher and staff capacity to work with students in trauma-sensitive ways with improved social-emotional acuity. A full list of the interventions and programs funded by The Trust is listed in Appendix IV.
- The programs and resources most consistently utilized by funded schools include: Ramapo for Children (for teacher professional development and student support), Rutgers University Behavioral Health, in-house mental health services (e.g. Main Street Counseling, Greater Mental Health Association of Essex County, South Street Counseling, etc.), therapeutic spaces and learning rooms, and school-specific, student-tailored youth programming.

SEL-and TIA-related professional development and capacity building has been a consistently identified need across Trust funded schools. This is particularly the case in schools that cited a high staff turnover or who have had a significant change in their student population and environment (i.e. were a Renew school, relocated, or merged schools).

- 13 of the 20 schools funded across the past three years utilized professional development and capacity building resources and programming in some way, and in several cases, in complementary ways. Schools often requested SEL and TIA professional development via external experts such as Ramapo for Children and Yale RULER in one year, and then professional development materials or follow-up professional development and capacity building in the following year to act as a "refresher" or to scale the professional development across the school's staff.

**Table 1: Schools Funded by Newark Trust**

	2015-16	2016-17	2017-18
13th Avenue School			✓
Bard High School Early College	✓	✓	✓
BRICK (AVON and Peshine)	✓	✓	
Camden Street School			✓
Chancellor Avenue School	✓	✓	✓
Dr. Horton School of Arts & Technology			✓
Eagle Academy Newark	✓	✓	✓
East Side High School			✓
First Avenue School			✓
Girls Academy	✓		
Hawkins Street School			✓
Louise A. Spencer	✓	✓	
Luis Muñoz Marin	✓	✓	✓
Quitman Street School	✓		
Rafael Hernandez School	✓	✓	✓
Science Park High School			✓
South Street School			✓
Speedway Academy	✓	✓	
West Side High School	✓	✓	
Youthbuild (NLA and FTSA)	✓		
<b>Total number of schools awarded</b>	<b>12</b>	<b>9</b>	<b>13</b>
<b>Total amount awarded</b>	<b>\$492,298</b>	<b>\$290,050</b>	<b>\$279,184</b>

School Climate and Community Supports were requested by schools as a means to create a “whole school” feel that gives students (and teachers) access to vibrant and expressive environments, calming and therapeutic spaces, and increased parental and community involvement.

- Eight of the 20 schools funded by the Trust over the past three years requested funds to create or enhance “therapeutic spaces” at their schools, including both indoor and outdoor spaces.

Schools funded by The Trust recognized the need for school-specific youth programming and student supports that were specifically tailored to their student population. As shown in the table below, schools utilized a wide-variety of programming and services across the past three years, most of which aimed at developing social-emotional skills in their students (for a full list of the student support programs and interventions funded by the Trust, see Appendix IV).

## Evidence of Impact

As part of the Trust’s funding, schools were asked to report on any evidence of impact relative to their funded project mid-way and at the end of each grant year.

Several overarching patterns related to impact were surfaced:

1. Initiatives aimed at increasing the proficiency and competency of teachers and administrators towards trauma-informed approaches to teaching and discipline, and in support of social emotional learning have the greatest potential to impact the entire school – they are efficient and cost-effective ways to “get everyone on the same page”. **The Challenge: Turnover.**
2. Therapeutic spaces such as Therapeutic Learning Centers, Therapeutic Engagement Rooms, Senior Spaces, Maker Room, and the like, demonstrate effective ways to integrate trauma-informed sensitivity into schools and raise SEL in both student and teacher populations. These spaces provide much needed outlets for “safe spaces” for both students and teachers. **The Challenge: Shifting school population/building usage.**
3. Integrating “blanket” yoga, meditation and mindfulness practices across the whole-school fosters a school culture that values “self-care” and is a cost-effective way to bring SEL practices into schools in ways that can benefit all students and teachers. **The Challenge: Not appropriate/attractive for all age groups.**

## Professional Development and Capacity Building

Yale RULER, iOPening, Ramapo for Children – these are just a few of the professional development and capacity building programs accessed by Trust funded schools throughout the Safe and Supportive Schools Initiative. And while curriculum varies across the many professional development and capacity building programs, they are all predicate on the same notion, that SEL and TIA must be integrated throughout the entire school, across the entire day, in order for young people to develop social emotional skills that effectively translate to improved academic success, and healthy, positive life-outcomes.

As shown in Table 2, efforts to increase the SEL-and TIA of school administrators, educators, paraprofessionals, and parents, have an impact on the school that far exceeds their direct impact on staff -- for every adult trained via professional development and capacity building, between 17 and 30 young people are impacted.

**Table 2: Impact of SEL & TIA**

	Total universe of students impacted	Total number of teachers & staff trained	Total number of parents & community members engaged
2014-15	4,620	263	75
2015-16	3,463	108	0
2016-17	3,608	211	4

## School Climate and Physical Spaces – Halls that Inspire and Therapeutic Spaces

According to mental health professionals we spoke to who work in the field of SEL and youth development -- the way a school looks and feels sets the tone for how students and teachers interact – a school should appear warm and welcoming in order for students to assimilate feelings of safety and security.

As demonstrated by the space-and-environment specific projects funded by The Trust, along with bringing vibrant visuals, programs like Halls that Inspire can create a feeling of cohesiveness throughout the school and increase school and community pride. Programs like these can be particularly helpful for renew schools or schools experiencing significant changes in setting and environment. Therapeutic Spaces, on the other hand, offer students (and teachers) “safe-spaces” where they can decompress, take time to be “check-in” with themselves, and

Speak candidly with a peer or teacher, both individually or in a group setting.

## Mental Health Counseling

Schools used mental Health Counseling, both in terms of one-on-one and group counseling, specifically for students presenting high-levels of trauma and adverse childhood experiences, and/or students in need of additional supportive services. For this reason, the number of students impacted across schools is smaller compared to the other kinds of youth-specific programs funded by the Trust.

- Over the past three years, the Newark Trust for Education has funded 11 separate youth and family counseling initiatives, most of which provide a combination of one-on-one and group counseling, and

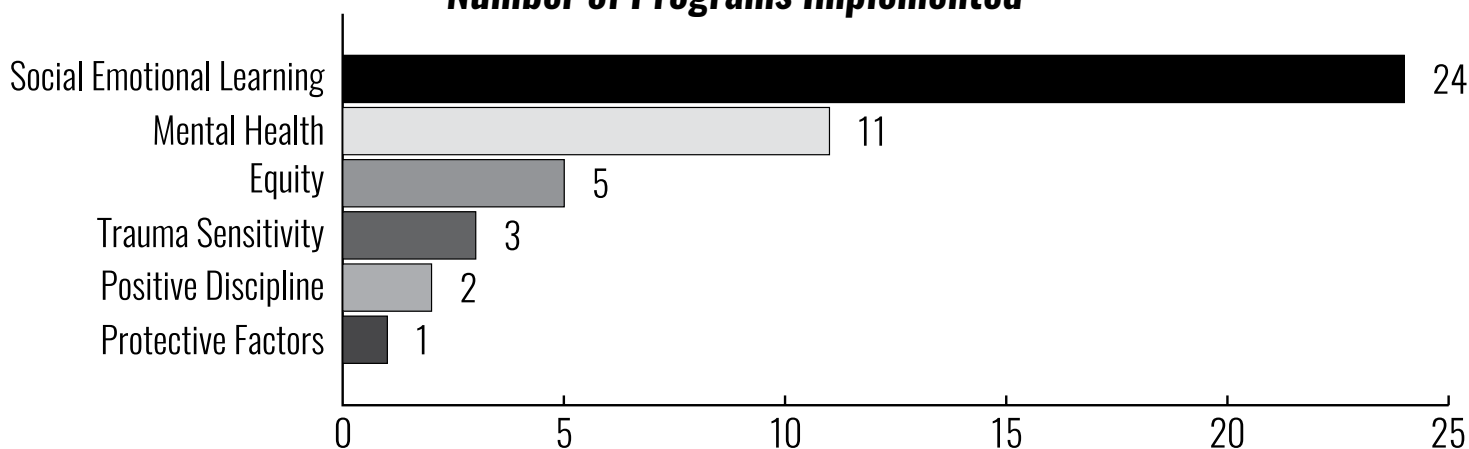
**Table 3: Students Served by Mental Health Counseling (1:1 and Group)**

	Total universe of students impacted
2015-16	219
2016-17	66
2017-18	148

much of which is conducted in-house (as opposed to referring students to outside providers).

- Many schools consider “in-house” counseling more effective for students and families compared to referring students to outside counseling -- in-house services remove barriers to accessing counseling, which include trust and comfort in seeing external service providers, and issues related to scheduling and transportation.
- Schools who used mental-health counseling services reported improved behavior in students utilizing counseling services, as well as improved self-expression, self-awareness, and self-regulation in these students.

## Number of Programs Implemented





# Nurturing School Climate and Culture and Targeted Students Supports

## ***School and Student-Tailored Youth Programming and Student Supports***

Schools cited many impacts resulting from the various programs and interventions funded by The Trust over the past years. For example, programming from the Hetrick Martin Institute for students facing issues around identity, particularly LGBTQ students, increased students' feelings of safety and support within the school. Clearpool Green Chimneys Recreation Center offered team-building opportunities for students, which in the end helped participating students make trusting relationships their peers and teachers (see Appendix V).

To demonstrate the innovative ways schools have sought to address the need for improved school climate and increased level of SEL, below are some “notable interventions” funded across the past three years that demonstrate the ways schools have sought to meet the distinct needs of their students within each schools' particular environment.



### ***Eagle Academy***

Over the past three years, Eagle Academy has been utilizing Changing Perceptions Theater (CPT), a drama-based intervention, as a way to “create space for young men to learn in their own ways”. CPT champions Common Core standards and utilizes its own culturally responsive curriculum to promote literacy skills and concepts, inspire social and emotional learning, and develop leadership competencies required for college and career readiness. As noted by Eagle Academy, CPT gives the young men the support they need in a way that is new and different from anything they have known, and challenges them to get out of their comfort zone and stay committed in the face of challenging work. As noted by one student, “I learned that changing perceptions is about how other people see me -- teachers thought I couldn't focus and they were surprised I was part of drama, but they saw me do the play and I can tell they have a different perception of me.”



### ***First Avenue School***

The Karate Program at First Avenue rests on the fundamental teachings of Karate – the inward pursuit of personal values and excellence -- and was created in order to teach students focus, patience, respect for others, and above all else, that behaviors have consequences. Initially the program was designated for students who were identified as needing extra support for behavioral issues or introversion. But with the success of the program word spread, and the program has since opened its doors to other interested students. As one participant noted, “Karate helps us do well in class because it teaches us to listen and self-control”. Another stated, “I learned that violence is not the answer - talk first”. For these students, karate has given them additional resources to learn self-regulation and control. School administrators also noted that this program was crafted using very little resources, and the talents of one of their math teachers. As noted by the principal, “you have to get creative given limited resources.”



### ***East Side High School***

Talent Development Academy (TDA) and the Early College Pilot at East Side High School are innovative approaches to working with “at-risk” students in the school to assist them in meeting their academic and personal goals. TDA offers students with low-grades, behavioral issues, and chronic absenteeism, who are often under-credited, the opportunity learn within a distinct and supportive setting that fosters both academic achievement and personal development. Coupled with TDA's Early College Pilot and Internship Program, TDA students have the opportunity to take college classes through Rutgers and obtain internships across a variety of fields (graphic design, nursing, etc.) as part of their academic experience, all of which has demonstrated major impacts on TDA students, many of whom end up on the honor roll after a year in participation. TDA students stated, “It's just really positive, the college connect has been life-changing -- we're changing the way people see us” and “TDA helps build yourself. I never thought I could go to college...and succeed at it!”

# Learning from What Works

Projects funded by The Trust have surfaced many insights into the kinds of SEL and trauma-informed programs and projects that work well within Newark school settings, as well as how best to implement these within schools. Below we offer several lessons related to the implementation of SEL and trauma-informed programs and interventions.

- Top-and-trickle down approaches to integrating SEL development throughout schools is an effective approach – a leader who champions for the integration of SEL and trauma-informed approaches to education and discipline and acts as a primary example for these, has quicker buy-in from the rest of the staff.
- Despite best practices, there is no one-size-fits-all model for developing SEL and utilizing TIA in schools. Each school and its environment is unique with its own set of strengths and challenges. Best practice models should be tailored to the specific needs, population and character of the school. Several principals recommended that schools interested in developing SEL in their students and staff and trauma-informed approaches to education and discipline: 1) Look at their data routinely to understand the challenges faced by their students and staff, 2) Reflect back on their specific school environment and community to gain a bigger picture of their students and where strengths, both within the school and community, can be leveraged, 3) Adopt an existing best-practice and/or evidence based model and adapt it to the unique characteristics of the school, and finally 4) Pilot small and scale-up gradually, tweaking along the way based on data and evaluation.
- Several schools demonstrating great success in developing SEL and TIA throughout their schools noted the use of an iterative approach. That is, after assessing the SEL and ACEs of their school, they began to incorporate SEL and TIA in a systematic way, building-out-and-off each intervention in subsequent years. For example, one school noted that in Year 1 they were focused on “putting things in place” and equipping the school with appropriate SEL and trauma informed programs and spaces, including a therapeutic learning room. In Year 2, they focused on building the staff’s capacity relative to SEL so that the staff shared a common language around SEL and TIA. In Year 3, they sought to change the culture of the whole school by extending SEL and TIA related professional development to all teachers, including paraprofessionals, parents and other community liaisons. This iterative approach proved helpful in aligning their efforts across the years and provided intentionality to their projects.
- Getting everyone on the same page is key, particularly around identifying “good behavior” for students with different levels of SEL or who demonstrate high-levels of ACEs, and in light of the kind of disciplinary measures different school staff use. According to youth development professionals, good behavior will look different for students with different levels of SEL and ACEs, therefore disciplinary measures must also be different. As some schools funded by The Trust has shown, point based system of rewards can be used to facilitate a shared language and culture around SEL by making school staff more aware of what they consider “good behavior” depending on the context of the student. Providing professional development to school staff offers opportunities to foster this shared language around SEL and positive discipline.

---

***"There is no one-size-fits-all model for developing SEL and utilizing TIA in schools - each school and its environment is unique with its own set of strengths and challenges."***

---

# Best Practices from the Field

In light of lessons learned and understanding what works, both across Trust funded schools in Newark and from the SEL and TIA field at-large, several best practices have emerged.

## ***Understanding SEL and TIA development in schools is a “whole school” effort***

According to the Safe and Supportive Schools Commission integrating SEL and TIA into schools requires a shift in thinking and a “whole school” mindset. Informants from organizations that provide SEL and TIA related professional development and capacity building like YaleRULER, iOpening, Ramapo for Children, and Social Decision Making, noted that to truly integrate SEL and TIA into schools an intentional and dedicated effort is needed, if not by a designated “SEL worker”, then by an “SEL team” whose job it is ensure that SEL and TIC practices are encouraged and standards held.

As noted by one informant, “there still is a big disconnect in schools between what administrators want to do, and what teachers can actually do in their classrooms;” asentiment heard often from Trust funded schools during site visits with administrators and teachers, many of whom observed that, “we already have so much to do, and there’s a lot of emphasis on making sure kids make their grades and do well on assessments.” Professional development and capacity building efforts can bridge this divide, and not only give teachers practical strategies to identify students who need additional support and engage with them in positive and beneficial ways, but to also address any stress and secondary-trauma that teachers might feel throughout the school year.

## ***Routine monitoring and evaluation is key***

Almost every school funded by the Trust under the Safe and Supportive Schools Initiative discussed conducting routine monitoring of student behavior and academic success, and evaluation of school-based programs and interventions, citing that these are the cornerstone to any decision-making and strategizing around SEL and TIC integration.

Several best-practices emerged, including: reviewing Kickboard data to understand behavior issues and infractions across the student population, contextualizing student grades and PARCC scores within the broader context of

the school and it’s community (for example, some neighborhoods in Newark have a natural propensity for high mobility rates and transience which has been shown to affect student success), and weekly Student Support Team meetings that examine student success holistically from a behavioral and academic standpoint.

## ***Working with evidence-based programs that can easily be replicated and tweaked***

Many of the schools attribute the success and impact of their programs and interventions to the fact that they are modeled off of evidence-based practices, if not evidence-based practices themselves. YaleRULER and Ramapo for Children, for instance, are nationally recognized professional development and capacity building curriculums backed by extensive research and impact assessment. National Cares Mentoring and the Peacemakers program, on the other hand, have been shown via robust evaluations to be effective in supporting SEL and TIA across schools. All of these programs and curriculum that have been tailored to the schools’ distinct climate and population. Many other evidence-based programs and curriculum exist, such as Tools of the Mind and PATHS, and many more can be found through resources online, such as those supplied by CASEL.

---

***“There is still a big disconnect in schools between what administrators want to do, and what teachers can actually do in their classrooms.”***

---



# Recommendations



Given the information supplied above, the question begs, how should we move forward as schools, funders, and as a city to align our efforts towards increased SEL and TIC in our schools? What follows are a set of recommendations to legislators and education-leaders, schools and funders.

## ***At the District and Policy-Level***

Check out these self-assessments resources:

1. As discussed, little is known across Newark schools about the SEL and TIA related work that is happening throughout the district – both at the school-level and at the district-level. It is imperative that the district seek to create transparency across all schools within the districts regarding any district-wide school climate initiatives. In this way, schools can find natural alignment with other schools and work to share resources, information, and tacit knowledge surrounding any existing or new programs and interventions.
2. SEL and TIA related initiatives occurring in other states show efforts to cross-fertilize ideas and share information and resources, and collaborate between schools and their SEL/TIC providers throughout the state. It is recommended that the district offer district-and state-wide collaborations and learning opportunities, and even create a “State-wide Task Force” in order to “supercharge” SEL and TIC integration throughout New Jersey schools.

## ***School SEL Self-Assessments: Do You Make the Grade?***

Check out these self-assessments resources:

- Center for Youth Program Quality
- CASEL’s Assessment Guide

## ***At the School Level***

1. Many Schools stated that routine monitoring and evaluation is critical to the success of their program implementation. For this reason, it is recommended that schools get into the habit of routine self-assessments to assess levels of SEL and TIC across staff, students and parents, as well as general school climate and culture. These evaluation efforts will highlight which interventions are working and for what reasons, as well as uncover any needs and challenges that should be addressed, including gaps in programs and interventions.
2. Dr. Pickens, the CEO of iOPening, put it succinctly when he said, “teachers matter”. Like all individuals, educators come with their own “backpacks” full of experiences and differing levels of SEL. So it is important to address SEL development in teachers as much as with students, particularly in light of stressful school environments and in communities where secondary-trauma (i.e. witnessing grief, loss, and trauma in their students, and their accompanying feelings of hopelessness) is experienced. This along with the demands of having to juggle multiple roles in school and at home, as well as the pressures of achieving academic success in their classrooms, increases stress and has negative consequences on the overall health and well-being of many educators. Measures to support educators in stress reduction and health management



# Recommendations

should be incorporated and can prove helpful.

3. Several school administrators noted that the school environment is unpredictable due to rapid changes in funding, staffing, and student populations (both in terms of mobility and youth development). Administrators should expect new initiatives to fail and should use those opportunities to learn and iterate again. A key recommendation for schools implementing any new initiative is to pilot small and then scale up in light of any learnings and impact.

## For Funders

1. Because schools have shown to have many diffuse priorities occurring at one time, funders should try to understand, and help schools articulate, the full picture of their needs in order to ensure they are funding comprehensive and complementary programming that together creates the biggest impact in the most cost-effective way. To do this, funders should create grant proposals that offer school-leaders the opportunity to think-through their program strategies and see how these strategies come together to create the school-climate they envision. This should include an articulation of the outcomes a school seek to achieve via the funding opportunity, and how the funding will address school needs in light of other (often) complementary programming SEL/ TIC programming and interventions
2. Since monitoring and evaluation has been cited as a critical element to fostering SEL and TIC within schools,

funders are in a unique position to support these efforts vis-à-vis funding opportunities. For instance, funders should support evaluative efforts by aligning grant cycles with school calendars as a way to support the implementation of any needs assessments and learning opportunities within schools. In this way schools can conduct a needs assessment in the second half of the school year in preparation to request funding for program implementation in the coming school year. Additionally, funders should seek to include funding for monitoring and evaluation professional development and capacity building, particularly around data collection and analysis and how to use this data for improved program implementation using “Turn the Curve Thinking” and similar performance management approaches. Finally, funders can help schools formalize evaluation efforts through a funded project by offering natural reflection points as part of the initiative. For example, the grant proposal can be viewed as a way for schools to develop strategies around needs and challenges, and articulate these needs to funders. An interim site visit will allow funders to gain a sense of how program implementation is going and what a schools’ universe of SEL programming looks like, while also helping school staff uncover any preliminary challenges in implementation and early impacts and success. And a final Report will not only help the funders collect data on how many individuals are impacted and in what ways, but will also give the school the opportunity to reflect back on the funded intervention with an eye towards sustainability and scalability.

# Conclusion

## ***The Future of School Climate Reform in Newark***

Newark Public Schools continues to make strides towards promoting safe and supportive schools. Under the current Office of Student Support Services, led by Dr. Sunne-Ryse Smith, NPS has expanded on previous partnerships with Ramapo for Children, International Institute for Restorative Practices and Concentric Educational Solutions, and also added a trauma-focused initiative through a new partnership with Child Mind Institute.

In addition to this, NPS and the City of Newark are also piloting a Community Schools model in five schools in the South Ward. The core elements of Community Schools include: student supports, mental health, engaged and supportive adults. To promote these elements, the five schools have adopted Positive Action, an evidence-based Social Emotional Learning curriculum, and launched Success Mentors that connect young people in school to a caring adult.

Outside of the district initiative, schools are also independently partnering with funders to bring programs and resources to their schools such as Playworks, Nifty Business Entrepreneurial

Program, and Jumpstart to name a few.

Professionals outside of schools have also identified the need for increased support for students. For instance, in late 2016, the ACEs Impact Team was established under the Greater Newark Healthcare Coalition with the objective to bring together key partners who are providing trauma-related programs and services in Newark and begin exploring a vision and plan of action for deepening the work. In 2017, Rutgers' Center on Crime Law Inequality and Metropolitan Equity (Clime) held the Trauma, Schools and Poverty conference highlighting how traumatic experiences can impact learning, behavior and relationships at school and provided a framework for how schools can become safe, supportive environments where students make positive connections with adults, remain calm under duress, and feel confident enough to advance their learning.

As we near this critical time, with so many of America's young people demanding safe and supportive schools, it is The Trust's hope that political and educational leaders, health providers and student support specialists, and our communities and families make positive changes in the lives of Newark's young people together.



# References

- AAP News. (2017). Children's hospital admissions for suicidal thoughts, actions double during past decade. Retrieved from <http://www.aapublications.org/news/2017/05/04/PASSuicide050417>
- Barboza, G.E. (2017). Latent and cumulative impacts of adverse childhood experiences. *Child Maltreatment*, 1-15.
- Barboza, G. E., Schiamberg, L. B., Oehmke, J., Korzeniewski, S. J., Post, L. A., & Heraux, C. G. (2009). Individual characteristics and the multiple contexts of adolescent bullying: An ecological perspective. *Journal of Youth and Adolescence*, 38, 101-121.
- Bellis, M. A., Lowey, H., Leckenby, N., Hughes, K., Harrison, D. (2014). Adverse childhood experiences: Retrospective study to determine their impact on adult health behaviors and health outcomes in a UK population. *Journal of Public Health*, 36, 81-91.
- Bierman, K. L., Greenberg, M. T., & Abenavoli, R. (2016). Promoting social and emotional learning in preschool: Programs and practices that work. University Park, PA: Edna Benet Pierce Prevention Research Center, Pennsylvania State University.
- Chen, P. & Rice, C. (2017). Showing up matters: A look at absenteeism inside Newark's High Schools. Newark, NJ: Advocates for Children of New Jersey.
- Collaborative for Academic, Social, and Emotional Learning (CASEL). (2008). The positive impact of social and emotional learning for kindergarten to Eight-Grade Students. Chicago, Ill. Payton, J., Weissberg, R.P., Durlak, J.A., Dymnicki, A.B., Taylor, R.D., Schellinger, K.B., & Pachan, M.
- Collaborative for Academic, Social, and Emotional Learning (CASEL). (n.d.-a). What is SEL? Retrieved from <http://www.casel.org/what-is-sel/>
- Collaborative for Academic, Social, and Emotional Learning (CASEL). (n.d.-b). The intersection of social-emotional learning and trauma-informed care in relation to students in temporary housing. Retrieved from [http://www.nysteachs.org/media/InfoBrief.SEL.TIC\\_final.pdf](http://www.nysteachs.org/media/InfoBrief.SEL.TIC_final.pdf)
- Collaborative for Academic, Social, and Emotional Learning (CASEL). (n.d.-c). Ready to lead: A national Principal survey on how social and emotional learning can prepare children and transform schools. Retrieved from [http://www.casel.org/wp-content/uploads/2017/11/ReadyToLead\\_FINAL.pdf](http://www.casel.org/wp-content/uploads/2017/11/ReadyToLead_FINAL.pdf)
- Collaborative for Academic, Social, and Emotional Learning (CASEL). (n.d.-d). The missing piece: A national Teacher Survey on how social and emotional learning can empower children to transform schools. Retrieved from <https://www.casel.org/wp-content/uploads/2016/01/the-missing-piece.pdf>
- Cohen, J. (2006). Social, emotional, ethical, and academic education: Creating a climate for learning, participation in democracy, and well-being. *Harvard Educational Review*, 76(2), 201-237.
- Cohen, J. (2017). School climate, social emotional learning, and other prosocial "camps": Similarities and a difference. *Teachers College Record: The Voice of Scholarship in Education*.
- Cooper, J.L., Masi, R. & Vick, J. (2009). Social-emotional development in early childhood: What every policymaker should know. National Center for Children in Poverty.
- Durlak, J. A., Weissberg, R. P., Dymnicki, A. B., Taylor, R. D., & Schellinger, K. B. (2011). The impact of enhancing students' social and emotional learning: A meta-analysis of school-based universal interventions. *Child Development*, 82(1), 405-432.
- Dusenbury, L., & Weissberg, R. P. (2016). Developmental and implementation of standards for social and emotional learning in the 50 states: A brief on findings from CASEL's experience. Chicago, IL: The Collaborative for Social and Emotional Learning.
- Elias, M. J. (2010, May 7). Reauthorization of ESEA and the need to focus on School culture and climate and social-emotional and character development as part of pursuing academic excellence for all students [Letter to Senator Tom Harkin, Chairman, Senate Health, Education, Labor and Pension (HELP) Committee]. Newark, New Jersey.
- Evans, G. W., Li, D., & Whipple, S. S. (2013). Cumulative risk and child development. *Psychological Bulletin*, 139, 1342.
- Felitti, V. J., Anda, R. F., Nordenberg, D., Williamson, D. F., Spitz, A. M., Edwards, V.... Marks, J. S. (1998). Relationship of childhood abuse and dysfunction to many of the leading causes of death in adults: The Adverse Childhood Experiences (ACE) study. *American Journal of Preventive Medicine*, 14, 245-258.
- Greenberg, M. T., Domitrovich, C. E., Weissburg, R. P., & Durlak, J. A. (2017). Social and emotional learning as a public health approach to education. *The Future of Children*, 27(1), 13-32.
- James, K., Deshmukh Towery, I., Anderson, J., Medina, R., Lewis, D., & Waters, J. (2017). Social and emotional learning: Looking back, aiming forward: A landscape scan. Seattle, WA: Education First.
- Jones, S. M., Barnes, S. F., Bailey, R., & Doolittle, E. J. (2017). Promoting social and emotional competencies in elementary school. *The Future of Children*, 27(1), 49-72.
- Menard, C., Bandeen-Roche, K. J., Chilcoat, H. D. (2004). Epidemiology of multiple childhood traumatic events: Child abuse, parental psychopathology, and other family-level stressors. *Social Psychiatry and Psychiatric Epidemiology*, 39, 857-865.
- National School Climate Council. (2015). School climate and pro-social educational improvement: Essential goals and processes that support student success for all.
- National School Climate Council. (n.d.). What is school climate? Retrieved from <https://www.schoolclimate.org/about/our-approach>
- New Jersey Department of Education. (2017a). Commissioner's Annual Report to the Education Committees of the Senate and General Assembly on violence, vandalism and substance abuse in New Jersey Public Schools. Retrieved from <http://www.state.nj.us/education/schools/vandv/1516/vandv.pdf>
- New Jersey Department of Education. (2017b). 2016-2017 School Performance Reports. Retrieved from [https://rc.doe.state.nj.us/report.aspx?type=state&lang=english&SY=1617&schoolyear=2016-2017#Pf76ba3ca06f64f1f9b08afa8d5c-8c095\\_7\\_11IS1](https://rc.doe.state.nj.us/report.aspx?type=state&lang=english&SY=1617&schoolyear=2016-2017#Pf76ba3ca06f64f1f9b08afa8d5c-8c095_7_11IS1)
- New Jersey Department of Education. (n.d.). Dr. Lamont Repollet. Retrieved from <http://www.nj.gov/education/genfo/overview/bio.htm> Office of College and Career Readiness (OCCR). (n.d. -a). Social Emotional Learning (SEL).
- Safe and Supportive Schools Commission. (2017). Safe and Supportive Schools Commission: Principles of Effective Practice for Integrating Student Supports. Retrieved from [https://traumasensitiveschools.org/wp-content/uploads/2018/03/Integrating\\_Services.pdf](https://traumasensitiveschools.org/wp-content/uploads/2018/03/Integrating_Services.pdf)
- Sampson, R. J., Laub, J. H. (1990). Crime and deviance over the life course: The salience of adult social bonds. *American Sociological Review*, 55, 609-627.
- Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration. (n.d.). Adverse childhood experiences. Retrieved from <https://www.samhsa.gov/capt/practicing-effective-prevention/prevention-behavioral-health/adverse-childhood-experiences>
- Taylor, R., Oberle, E., Durlak, J. A., & Weissberg, R. P. (2017). Promoting positive youth development through school-based social and emotional learning interventions: A meta-analysis of follow-up effects. *Child Development*, 88(4), 1156-1171.
- The Trauma Informed Care Project. (n.d. -a). What is TIC? Retrieved from <http://www.traumainformedcareproject.org/>

# Appendix I

## **Methodology**

The information supplied in this paper was obtained using a mixed-method approach that utilizes:

- Desk Review: Of all Trust grantee proposal submissions, and interim-and-final-reports from the 2014-2015, 2016-2017, and 2017-2018 grant cycles;
- Site Visits: To all 2017-2018 funded schools, including interviews with school administrators and educators, students and SEL/TIC service providers, as well as observations of SEL/TIC projects in implementation; and,
- Interviews: With SEL/TIA experts and stakeholders both locally in Newark and New Jersey, and at the national-level.

Both data and content analysis of proposals and reports, site visit notes, and interviews were conducted to synthesize the information obtained and to surface any insights around evidence of impact, lessons learned, best practices, and recommendations.

# Appendix II

## ***List of Schools Trained on Establishing Student Support Teams, 2014-15***

Abington Avenue Elementary School  
Alexander Street School  
American History High School  
Bard High School Early College  
Barringer Academy of S.T.E.A.M.  
Belmont Runyon Elementary School  
Benjamin Franklin School  
BRICK Avon Academy  
BRICK Peshine Academy  
Camden Street Elementary School  
Dr. E. Alma Flagg School

East Side High School  
Elliot Street Elementary School  
Harriet Tubman Elementary School  
Hawkins Street School  
Ivy Hill Elementary School  
Lincoln School  
Luis Muñoz Marin School for Social Justice  
Malcolm X Shabazz High School  
McKinley School  
Newark Bridges High School  
Park Elementary School

Quitman Street Community School  
Rafael Hernandez Elementary School  
Science Park High School  
South 17th Street Elementary School  
Speedway Academies  
Spencer Miller Community School  
Sussex of Renew School  
University High School  
UPLIFT Academy (Formerly Fast Track Success Academy)  
Weequahic High School  
Dr. William H. Horton Elementary School



# Appendix III

<b>Bill</b>	<b>Summary</b>
<b>Colorado Senate Bill 114</b>	Encourages schools to develop suicide prevention programs that focus on social and emotional learning, life skills, and resiliency training.
<b>Hawaii House Bill 579 &amp; Hawaii Senate Bill 496</b>	Requires the Department of Education to provide training on social and emotional learning to all youth-serving educators, health care professionals and counselors, and agencies and programs, as well as parents of students enrolled in public schools or public charter schools; appropriates funds to the Department of Education to conduct training on social and emotional learning.
<b>Illinois Senate Joint Resolution 10</b>	ADOPTED – Establishes the Statewide Task force on Developing Opportunities for Youth and Young Adults Who Are Jobless and Out-of-School; requires the task force to examine policies, programs and other issues related to developing a variety of successful approaches using best program practices for out-of-school and jobless youth students, with the goal of improving their education, work-related and social development skills.
<b>Illinois House Bill 4442</b>	Establishes a parenting instruction pilot program that includes social and emotional learning competencies.
<b>Kansas House Bill 2445</b>	Requires the state Board of Education to establish social and emotional learning accountability measures.
<b>Maine House Bill 450</b>	Creates a pilot program to recruit early childhood consultants to train teachers in social emotional health.
<b>Maryland House Bill 920</b>	Requires the State Board of Education to require, beginning on or before July 1, 2018, specified school personnel to complete training, by a method determined by each county board of education, in specified knowledge and skills required to understand and respond to the social, emotional and personal development of students.
<b>Michigan House Bill 5605 &amp; House Bill 5598</b>	Requires teacher preparation programs to include instruction on social and emotional learning.
<b>Minnesota House File 836 &amp; Minnesota Senate File 736</b>	Modifies character development education responsibilities, making character education the shared responsibility of parents, teachers and members of the community.
<b>New York Assembly Bill 7063 &amp; New York Senate Bill 5563</b>	Creates a statewide pilot program to improve social and emotional learning in schools supported by community-based organizations and provides funding.
<b>Oklahoma Senate Bill 404</b>	Creates the Character Education Revolving Fund. Specifies that the money in the fund may be expended by the state board of education for the purpose of implementing character education programs.
<b>Tennessee House Bill 357 &amp; Tennessee Senate Bill 4</b>	Prohibits the state board of education from adopting standards or competencies for social and emotional learning. Prohibits the department of education from providing instruction or competencies in social and emotional learning to fulfill the requirements for character education.
<b>Washington Senate Bill 5883</b>	ENACTED - Appropriates money from the general fund for a social and emotional learning work group.

# Appendix IV

## Professional Development and Capacity Building

<b>Funded Projects</b>	<b>Total</b>	<b>2015-2016</b>	<b>2016-2017</b>	<b>2017-2018</b>
<b>Management</b>				
On-Course (School management Software)	1	1		
Equipment and Technology for Therapeutic Room	1		1	
Service Learning Materials	1	1		
<b>Equity</b>				
Landmark Special Ed for Staff	1		1	
<b>Social-Emotional Learning</b>				
Mental Health Association of Essex County	1		1	
Paths Curriculum	1	1		
Ramapo for Children - integrating SEL	3	2		1
Rutgers University Behavioral Health Teacher Training	5	2	1	2
SEL Relates Workshops	1		1	
Yale RULER	3	2	1	
<b>Positive Discipline</b>				
Positive Behavioral Interventions & Supports (PBIS)	2	1	1	
<b>Trauma Sensitivity</b>				
iOpening	1			1
Ramapo for Children – using TIC approaches	1	1		
Rutgers Behavioral Health Professional Development (and restorative practices)	1	1		
<b>Total</b>	<b>23</b>	<b>12</b>	<b>7</b>	<b>4</b>

# Appendix IV

## School Climate & Community Supports

<b>Funded Projects</b>	<b>Total</b>	<b>2015-2016</b>	<b>2016-2017</b>	<b>2017-2018</b>
------------------------	--------------	------------------	------------------	------------------

### **Positive Discipline**

Halls that Inspire	2		1	1
Incentives-based Programing for Students (points for good grades, attendance, behavior, VIP Lunch Club)	3	3		
Peace Makers Program	1	1		

### **Trauma Sensitivity**

Therapeutic Spaces (rooms, centers, etc.) - Indoor	8	5	2	1
Therapeutic Spaces - Outdoor	1	1		
Social Emotional Learning				
Lego Build to Express Kits	2	1	1	
Staff Cardio Barre	1			1

### **Protective Factors**

Community BBQ	1		1	
In-School Family Room	1		1	
Strengthening Families Program	1	1		
<b>Total</b>	<b>21</b>	<b>12</b>	<b>6</b>	<b>3</b>

# Appendix IV

## Youth Programming & Student Supports

<b>Funded Projects</b>	<b>2015- 2016</b>	<b>2016- 2017</b>	<b>2017- 2018</b>
<b>Equity</b>			
The Brotherhood Male Mentorship			☐
Female Empowerment Programming	☐		
Hetrick Martin Institute – LGBTQ, Man-Up	☐	☐	☐
<b>Social Emotional Learning</b>			
12 Comics	☐		
Bettering our Generation (school-based mentoring)	☐		
Clearpool Green Chimneys Recreation Center		☐	☐
Changing Perceptions Theater	☐		☐
Emotional Learning Services	☐		
Epiphany BLUE Meditation and Yoga		☐	
Fashion	☐		
From Playgrounds to Purpose			☐
Higher Etiquette & Mentoring	☐		
HopeFinders	☐		
Karate			☐
Newark Yoga Movement		☐	
NJPAC Theater Residency		☐	
National CARES Mentoring			☐
Maker Space		☐	
Project USE		☐	
Reading Tutors		☐	



# Appendix IV

SEL Living & Nurturing Lab	☐		
Student Empowerment Workshops		☐	
Talent Development Academy – Early College Pilot			☐
XTerm Courses	☐		
Youth Development Clinic	☐		

## ***Trauma Sensitivity***

Artists in Residency/Art Therapy	☐		
Phillips, Inc.	☐		
Talent Development Academy - Credible Messengers			☐

## ***Positive Discipline***

Speedway Academies Phoenix Feathers	☐		
School Ambassador Program			☐

## ***Protective Factors***

Teen Parenting Workshop	☐		
-------------------------	---	--	--

## ***Mental Health Services***

Care Plus Therapeutic Services	☐		
Crisis Counseling and Family Programming	☐		
Greater Mental Health Association of Essex County		☐	☐
Main Street Counseling (1:1 and group counseling)	☐	☐	☐
Newark Renaissance House (counseling)	☐		
Rutgers University Behavioral Health Clinic	☐		
South Street School Counseling Program			☐
YDC Therapeutic Counseling	☐		

<b>Total</b>	<b>22</b>	<b>11</b>	<b>13</b>
--------------	-----------	-----------	-----------

# Appendix V

## Youth Programming & Student Supports, 2015-16

School	Project	Students Served	Impact
Bard High School Early College	X-Term Courses in Therapeutic Theater, Social Psychology, and Health Science	172	<p>"Through the XTerms, students learned to express themselves and tell their own personal "stories" and were exposed to socio-emotional theory and practice.</p> <p>As a result, social-emotional awareness increased throughout the school and the number of reported student disruptions went down from February to June."</p>
BRICK (AVON and Peshine)	Positive Interventions -- HopeFinders, VIP Lunch Club, Peacemakers, Group Counseling	162	<p>Overall, students utilizing BRICK's positive interventions demonstrated improved behavior, and students participating in the Peacemakers program reported utilizing conflict resolution skills.</p>
Chancellor Avenue School	SEL Living & Nurturing Lab	536	<p>"According to school administration, the SEL Living and Nurturing Lab helped foster a common language around social emotional learning within the classroom, and which played a role in decreasing "Out of Bound Behaviors" in grades 1 – 5.</p>
Girls Academy	Fashion, Artists in Residency/Art Therapy, Female Empowerment Programming, Sports & Athletics	386	<p>"Overall, girls participating in SEL programming reported increased focus, collaboration, and abilities to express themselves.</p> <p>Art Therapy increased levels of mindfulness, self-esteem, and confidence, and was reported to teach the girls how to "take calculated risks" and "trust their process". As a result, school suspensions went down for girls participating in this program.</p> <p>Basketball offered the girls a place to discuss life challenges and coping mechanisms and building resilience, perseverance, follow-through, and good sportsmanship.</p> <p>Female Empowerment showed decreases in Level III behavior offenses throughout the year."</p>
Quitman Street School	Higher Etiquette & Mentoring, Bettering our Generation, Youth Development Clinic	120	<p>"Surveys showed that 2/3 of all HEMI, BOG and YDC participating students believe they learned new skills as a result of participation in the program. In addition, students in these programs also demonstrated improved behavior and as a result, decreases in conduct referrals.</p> <p>BOG participants also stated improved relationships with teachers."</p>
Rafael Hernandez School	Newark Yoga Movement	737	<p>Students participating in yoga reported increased self-regulation skills, including stress reduction and increased focus.</p>
Speedway Academy	12 Comics and Speedway Academies Phoenix Feathers (mentoring)	230	<p>"Students participating in the 12 Comics' program showed increased levels of self-awareness and positive image, and reported having deeper conversations and honest dialogues with their peers.</p> <p>Speedway mentoring increased students' ability to relate with each other in positive ways and improved regulation skills related to risky behaviors such as gang involvement, bullying, social media issues, personal image and drug use. As a result, suspensions decreased from February through June."</p>
West Side High School	Emotional Learning Services, Phillips Inc. and Hetrick Martin Institute	311	<p>"ELS program was reported to show increases in coping strategies and overall self-awareness, and as a result, a reduction in risky behaviors for participating students.</p> <p>Increased feelings of safety and support for young people dealing with LGBTQ issues and concerns were noted for students participating in the HMI."</p> <p>Phillips Inc. was noted to help students who are "gang-related" to achieve "healthier lifestyle skills."</p>

**Total Students: 2,654**

# Appendix V

## Youth Programming & Student Supports, 2016-17

School	Project	Students Served	Impact
Bard High School Early College	X-Term Theater Course, Student Empowerment Workshops	239	"Young men attending the Student Empowerment Workshops demonstrated an increase in overall school attendance across the school year, resulting in an increase in graduation rates compared to the previous year.  Students participating in the Theater course demonstrated a deeper sense of understanding about themselves."
Eagle Academy Newark	Epiphany BLUE (Meditation and Yoga), Project USE, NJPAC Theater Residency	400	As a result of the meditation and yoga instruction, school administration reported improvements in anger management and decreased impulsive behavior, as well as increased concentration skills, particularly in class and during PARCC testing. Students participating in the theater program demonstrated overall increased SEL and leadership skills, and demonstrated resilience throughout the course of the program (by sticking it out, even after quitting).
Louise A. Spencer Elementary School	Avengers Student Support Coordinators	110	With the inclusion of the Avengers program this year, the school saw a 45% decrease in overall chronic absenteeism from the previous school year.
Luis Muñoz Marin School	Clearpool Green Chimneys Recreation Center	30	Students who participated in the Clearpool activity showed an increase in social skills and improved peer relationships, as well as the ability to make trusting relationships with teachers.
Rafael Hernandez School	Newark Yoga Movement	184	51% of teachers noted that students were more relaxed and focused after yoga.
Speedway Academy	Maker Space	260	Students participating in the Maker Space demonstrated increased impulse control, resulting in an 18% decrease in behavior incidents in these students as well as an increase in parent engagement for all Maker Space participants.
West Side High School	Hetrick Martin Institute (Man-Up)	60	Students engaged with HMI improved self-esteem as a result.

**Total Students: 1,283**

# Appendix V

## Youth Programming & Student Supports, 2017-18

<b>School</b>	<b>Project</b>	<b>Students Served</b>	<b>Impact</b>
Chancellor Avenue School	From Playgrounds to Purpose, School Ambassador Program	70	Playgrounds for Purpose has shown increases in self awareness and academic achievement for participating students.
Eagle Academy Newark	National CARES Mentoring, Changing Perceptions Theater	40	Students who participated in Changing Perceptions Theater noted an increased empathy for their peers and improved sense of self, including the importance of "following-through" on commitments and not judging their peers before understanding their situation first, all of which resulted in better relationship with peers and increased understanding of how to better support one another.
East Side High School	Talent Development Academy - Credible Messengers, NJ Step, Early College Pilot	60	TDA students reported an increased level of empathy and social awareness, and demonstrate new skills like the ability to ask critical questions, make trusting relationships and manage conflict. All of which has resulted in a decrease in behavioral issues and increase in academic success.  In addition, the Early College Pilot has given students a better understanding of themselves compared to their peers, and has increased their confidence to get good grades and go to college.
First Avenue	Karate Program	25	Students in Karate reported having a new understanding that violence isn't the way, to talk first and have demonstrated improved behavior and focus in the classroom.


**Total Students: 195**





# Notes

This image shows a single sheet of white paper with horizontal ruling lines. The lines are evenly spaced and run across the width of the page. There are no margins, text, or other markings on the paper.



# Notes

This image shows a single sheet of white paper with horizontal ruling lines. The lines are evenly spaced and run across the width of the page. There are no margins, text, or other markings on the paper.



# Notes

This image shows a single sheet of white paper with horizontal ruling lines. The lines are evenly spaced and run across the width of the page. There are no margins, text, or other markings on the paper.



# NEWARK TRUST FOR EDUCATION

494 Broad Street, Suite LL30  
Newark, NJ 07102



(973) 648-0300



(973) 648-0304



[info@newarktrust.org](mailto:info@newarktrust.org)

This publication is made possible by the following supporters of the Funders' Collaborative:  
**Healthcare Foundation of New Jersey · Panasonic Foundation · Prudential Foundation**  
**· The Geraldine R. Dodge Foundation · Schumann Fund for New Jersey · Victoria**  
**Foundation · The Henry S. and Agnes M. Truzack Foundation · The Turrell Fund**



[newarktrust.org](http://newarktrust.org)



[/newarktrust](https://www.facebook.com/newarktrust)



[@NewarkTrust](https://twitter.com/NewarkTrust)

© 2018 Newark Trust for Education