THE PERCEIVED EFFECTIVENESS OF THE 7 MINDSETS SOCIAL-EMOTIONAL LEARNING CURRICULUM FOR ELEMENTARY STUDENTS

by

Megan Cochran

A thesis submitted to the faculty of
Wittenberg University
in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of

MASTER OF ARTS

Education Department

Wittenberg University

April 2023

Abstract

     I conducted this study due to an increase in perceived problematic behaviors at Big River Intermediate School. I utilized an explanatory sequential research method to complete this study. I began my research by administering a survey to both students and staff from the school that returned permission slips to participate in my study. After analyzing the data from this collection method, I then invited certain students and staff to participate in interviews with me based on their responses. Overall, I found that the majority of students and staff members that participated in the study did not find the *7 Mindsets* social-emotional learning curriculum to be effective, specifically in improving student behavior at Big River Intermediate School at this point in time. Due to this perceived ineffectiveness, my school and district could take these findings into consideration for the future of their social-emotional learning endeavors.

Table of Contents

Tables

Chapter 1

Introduction

Throughout my experiences as an educator, I developed the opinion that my students did not develop the necessary skills required to function effectively in their society, both in and out of the classroom. Many of my students struggled to regulate their emotions despite teachers putting forth effort to create important and valuable relationships aimed to help student development. It is known that students tend to do better socially, emotionally, and academically when they have positive relationships with their teachers (Alzahrani et al., 2019; Jeffery et al., 2013), but is a good teacher/student relationship enough to create the students we are wanting to see in our schools? Educators developed worries of a mental health crisis that has contributed to a potential generation of children that are not receiving the support they need to succeed (Scottish child mental health referrals increase by more than 25%, 2022).

This led me to conduct action research on the benefits of social-emotional learning in an underperforming school district in a post-pandemic society. I want to know if the efforts my school district has put forth are worthwhile in helping our students become emotionally competent and socially developed, as these are skills needed for students to be able to move towards academic success.

Background

I conducted the current study at an intermediate school that I will refer to as Big River Intermediate School. This school is located south of Dayton, Ohio, which means it is considered an urban setting. At the time of the study, Big River Intermediate housed grades 5-6 which consisted of approximately 500 students. It employed approximately 25 teachers and two administrators.

According to the Public School Review (2022), the population was roughly 64% White, 18% Black, 8% Hispanic, and 8% that identify with two or more racial groups. The spending per student was roughly equivalent to the state average, which was between $13,000 and $13,500 per year, however, this school was still rated in the bottom 50% of Ohio school districts (Public School Review, 2022).

I conducted my research at Big River Intermediate school because I am a 6th grade mathematics teacher in my fourth year of teaching there. I grew up in a middle class, white household with divorced parents. The school district I attended did not have a lot of behavior issues, in my opinion. I would say this impacts my view of my current district, which does seem to have far more behavior issues than in my own schooling experience. I went to a majority-white, large, suburban school in a small town in Ohio. I believe it was a part of my expectations of students to behave similarly to how I and my classmates did. Even in my years during my undergraduate degree, I was not exposed to an overwhelming amount of diversity. The world of education at my university was mostly middle-class white women. My place of work during the time of this study, Big River Intermediate, only employed one person of color, who happened to be our principal.

I chose to do my research on the *7 Mindsets* social-emotional learning curriculum because of its recent implementation in our district. It was important to me to determine if the people that were impacted in their day to day activities at school found this program to be effective. Therefore, I decided to ask the students and the teachers about their experiences and opinions. I created student and staff surveys as well as student and staff interview protocols to allow me to determine the perceived effectiveness. I used an explanatory sequential research

design for this study. This involved analyzing student and staff surveys that were collected to determine which students and staff to interview to gain further understanding.

Importance of the Study

The purpose of this study was to examine the *7 Mindsets* curriculum and the perceived impact of its implementation on students' behavior. This is a social-emotional learning based curriculum for elementary age students to better manage student behavior with the intention of better supporting students' academics.

Big River is an underperforming district. This means that students are not achieving at the required state levels. This study could help determine if utilizing the *7 Mindsets* social-emotional learning curriculum improved student behavior and supported achievement in an underperforming district. Due to this program being a requirement at Big River Intermediate School, I believed it would be beneficial to ask those students and teachers who practiced it and saw its impact about their perceptions.

I expected that the students would participate in the *7 Mindsets* conversations and claim that they enjoyed it. Also, I anticipated that the staff would claim that they did not think the program had much of an impact on students' behavior, therefore deeming it ineffective by their standards.

Research Question

There was one research question that guided this action research study. It was as follows: What is the perceived effectiveness of the *7 Mindsets* Social-Emotional Learning curriculum for elementary school students at Big River Intermediate School?

The purpose of this research question is to gain greater understanding of how those utilizing the *7 Mindsets* Social-Emotional Learning curriculum on a regular basis feel about the

program. I believe this is a beneficial way to evaluate a program because its users will be the most familiar if it had an impact on them or not.

Definition of Terms

I used the following terms consistently throughout this study:

- At-Risk Students: "...refers to students who, for whatever reason, are at risk of not achieving the goals of education--of not meeting local and state standards for high school graduation, of not acquiring the knowledge, skills, or dispositions to become productive members of American society. … students who exhibit behaviors that educators see as interfering with the educational process… students whose family or community background may place them at risk" (McCann & Austin, 1988, p. 4-5).

- Best Practices: "...the wide range of individual activities, policies, and programmatic approaches to achieve positive changes in student attitudes or academic behaviors" (Arendale, 2022, p. 1).

- Restorative Practices: "...a social science that studies how to build social capital and achieve social discipline through participatory learning and decision-making" (Wachtel, 2013, p. 1).

- Social Emotional Learning: "...the process through which individuals learn and apply a set of social, emotional, behavioral, and character skills required to succeed in schooling, the workplace, relationships, and citizenship" (Jones et al., 2019, p. 19).

- Social-Emotional Competence: Showing proficiency in "self-awareness, self-management, responsible decision making, social awareness, and relationship skills" (CASEL, 2020, p. 1).

- 21st Century Skills: "Skills that increasingly demand creativity, perseverance, and problem solving combined with performing well as part of a team" (Duncan, 2009, p. 1).

Summary

Educators aim to create students that are able to be successful in their communities. The world needs socially and emotionally competent individuals who possess the 21st Century Skills that employers want to see in their employees. This study determined if the *7 Mindsets* curriculum was considered to be effective with its goals in Big River Intermediate School, specifically. Before the discussion of the action research I completed, I will examine the research that already existed regarding best practices in elementary education, components of successful social-emotional learning programs, and the benefits of social-emotional learning programs.

Chapter 2

Literature Review

It is one of my personal goals to create students who will one day be able to function appropriately in their society and communities. In order to better address and achieve my goals, I examined some of the key elements related to the topic. The developmental level of elementary school age students and how they learn and function was a key area of interest. I specifically analyzed social-emotional learning in elementary schools to note the typical implementations of these programs. Also, I evaluated student growth from social-emotional learning curriculums to determine various program successes and failures.

Best Practices in Elementary Education

In order to attempt to help elementary school students with essential skill development, an important consideration is best practices. Best practices are the things educators do in order to best help students academically, which are typically centered around being developmentally appropriate for the age in which the education is happening (Arendale, 2022). This is something I analyzed in order to aid in the evaluation of the *7 Mindsets* curriculum.

One best practice considered for elementary age children is the idea of student choice (Burriss & Burriss, 2011; Kreamer et al., 2020; Wabiser et al., 2022). The utilization of this practice in the educational setting takes many forms. For example, teachers can allow students to choose their methods of assessment, their choice of activity during station rotations, or their choice of book for silent reading (Kreamer et al., 2020). In a study completed by Kreamer at al. (2020), the researchers worked with a teacher on elevating her typical classroom instructional tools to improve literacy instruction. This involved utilizing the best practice previously listed. Student work was analyzed by the teacher and the researchers to show a clear increase in

motivation. These all allow students to be decision makers in their own learning. These activities all give way to student choice but are still semi-structured and encourage student agency and ownership (Kreamer et al., 2020). Students taking responsibility for their actions and work creation is an example of this, and it can lead to student buy-in.

An additional way discussed by researchers for educators to give students choice was unstructured, outdoor play (Burriss & Burriss, 2011). This allowed elementary students to develop socially, cognitively, and emotionally by being creative and developing their interpersonal skills while playing and interacting with other students. These situations allowed students to have realistic moments with peers that required problem solving skills and communication. When students took a break from the highly structured school day, it prevented learning interference during class time. During the study conducted by Burriss and Burriss (2011), researchers conducted an eight question Likert scale survey amongst 173 school districts. After analyzing their quantitative data in a frequency table and determining the percentages of the districts' outdoor play and learning policies, they determined that outdoor play and learning was on the decline in the majority of these districts, despite the stated social-emotional benefits.

Additionally, a critical best practice is the support of peer interactions (Burriss & Burriss, 2011; Kreamer et al., 2020). The use of this practice increases students' internal motivation to learn and do well (Wabiser et al., 2022). In a study completed by Wabiser at al. (2022), researchers studied learning motivation in elementary students from Indonesia. They collected qualitative data based on interviews, observations, and documents from students, parents, and the school staff. Through their analysis of the interviews, one of the activities listed that increased student motivation was having students respond to other students' questions rather than teacher stated questions.

With elementary students, it is necessary to be explicit with the actions that are desired from them. An effective method for teaching skills and behaviors is modeling (Naylor et al., 2019). Two elementary schools in Australia completed a study on how to use Video Self-Modeling, which is a practice where teachers take footage of students and their interactions and edit it to show the desired behaviors. This video footage allowed for easy repetition as desired and for a controlled message to the students. When both schools had targeted specific unwanted behaviors (inappropriate recess behaviors and entering a classroom disruptively) and utilized this specialized modeling technique, they both reported an increase in the desired behaviors as well as a decrease in the unwanted behaviors.

Best practices are referred to as best practices for a reason. When working with elementary school students, it is necessary to use practices that are developmentally appropriate. According to the studies listed above, these researchers determined the best practices for elementary students are to allow for student choice, encourage peer interactions, and model desired actions and behaviors. In order for them to understand the goal and the message, there are many effective strategies to utilize. This is true for both academic material as well as social emotional learning material.

Components of Successful Social-Emotional Learning Programs in Elementary School

In addition to understanding best practices for elementary students, I also analyzed research on the effects of social-emotional learning in elementary school settings. Social-emotional learning is "...the process through which individuals learn and apply a set of social, emotional, behavioral, and character skills required to succeed in schooling, the workplace, relationships, and citizenship" (Jones et al., 2019, p. 19). I wanted to know what previous

researchers deemed successful in order to compare it to the curriculum my school district chose to implement.

A group of researchers that investigated the effects of the Incredible Years Children's Small Group Training series emphasized how essential it is for educators implementing the program to fully understand the needs of that school and what their intended purpose is with the curriculum (Green, et al., 2019). The Sutter-Eyeberg Student Behavior Inventory-Revised Teacher Rating was used to measure student behaviors. After their implementation, the intensity of behaviors decreased as well as the number of behaviors. The researchers found that early intervention and positive reinforcement was effective with the 137 kindergarten and first-grade students in the study, and this school's teachers recommended this program to others (Green et al., 2019).

Another study completed at a school for at-risk kindergarten through fifth grade students emphasized success with implementation strategies such as circle time, restorative conversations, and behavior modeling (Dyson et al., 2021). Dyson at al. (2021) collected and analyzed data through coding from staff interviews, a focus group, and researcher field notes. After the implementation of these previously mentioned practices, staff noted improved teacher-student relationships and fewer behavior problems. These practices allow for the mending of relationships that are broken when students make inappropriate decisions (Dyson et al., 2020; Haymovitz et al., 2018).

Haymovitz et al. (2018) conducted a study in a kindergarten through eighth grade building that utilized a social-emotional learning program called Social Harmony that emphasized restorative justice and nonviolent communication. They employed a research design where they encouraged the participants to create a concept map of themes when given 80

9

statements. These statements were organized into common themes such as parent relations, student relationships, and school climate. Through their analysis of the concept maps, they were encouraged that restorative practices can improve behaviors in schools. Kopelman-Rubin et al. (2021) conducted a study where benefit in role playing social-emotional scenarios, similar to behavior modeling, and personal goal setting with social-emotional competencies was discovered through their chosen social-emotional learning curriculum. This study was conducted with 419 fourth-grade students in Israel over two years. After this intervention, quantitative Likert scale surveys were statistically analyzed to show an increase in assertiveness in the intervention group compared to a control group as well as a decrease in internalizing symptoms, verbal bullying victimization, and physical bullying.

One note from Abali and Yazici (2020) was the importance of the development of listening skills as a key for success for elementary age students. The study, done in Turkey on 581 sixth-grade students, showed that a student's listening skills had a positive relation to their interpersonal skills (24%), problem solving (37%), stress coping (21%), and the building of self-worth (18%) (Abali & Yazici, 2020). These percentages were determined by researchers based on students' quantitative responses to the Listening Skills Awareness Scale and the Social-Emotional Learning Skills Scale. These all relate back to an overarching goal of social-emotional competence in students.

Social-emotional learning is not a one-size-fits-all experience (Durlak et al., 2021). It is necessary to continue to consider the best practices for elementary school students for implementation of a social-emotional learning curriculum and remember what the ultimate goal is. The goal is social emotional competence and the development of 21st Century Skills. This goal can be achieved in a vast variety of ways. The studies in this section emphasize the

importance of understanding the needs of your specific school, utilizing restorative practices, and stressing the development of listening skills. Educators need to have a strong grasp of their students' needs in order to implement a curriculum in the best way to serve them.

Benefits of Successful Social-Emotional Learning Programs

The benefits of social-emotional learning are extensive. Social-emotional learning in tandem with academic education educates the whole child, including benefits that reach far beyond the classroom and state tests. The goal of this type of curriculum is social-emotional competence, and increased academic achievement happens to be an additional benefit (Durlak et al., 2021; Taylor et al., 2017). It was noted by the researchers Durlak et al. (2021) for the Collaborative for Academic, Social, and Emotional Learning (CASEL) during their meta-analysis of 213 studies that overall academic achievement in student grades increased on average 11 percentile points for those that completed a social-emotional learning curriculum compared to those that did not. This meta-analysis involved schools that were 56% elementary schools, 31% middle schools, and 13% high schools.

Social-emotional learning caused more than just academic growth, and some was also noted to be long lasting growth like 21st Century Skills (Taylor et al., 2017). These are "skills that increasingly demand creativity, perseverance, and problem solving combined with performing well as part of a team" (Duncan, 2009, p. 1). In a meta-analysis conducted by Taylor et al. (2017) in which researchers analyzed quantitative data regarding students' emotional skills from 82 schools utilizing a social-emotional learning program ranging grades kindergarten through grade 12, interpersonal relationship skills had been recorded in individuals who had received social-emotional learning up to 18 years later.

Another benefit that aided in an improved school climate and learning was improvement of communication and building positive relationships with both peers and adults (Haymovitz et al., 2018; Taylor et al., 2017). The Haymovitz et al. (2018) researchers claimed students that had these positive relationships were considered to be more empathetic and compassionate with their peers, and they were less likely to seek retribution when they felt they had been wronged. Jeffery et al. (2013) conducted a qualitative study in which researchers used a focus group to collect data from a sample of 17 fourth-grade students. After the focus group transcripts had been coded, researchers discovered that students are more likely to work hard for teachers that are perceived to care about them. These positive student-teacher relationships are a strong basis for student achievement (Alzahrani et al., 2019; Jeffery et al., 2013).

After their social-emotional learning lessons, students in the Hamovitz et al. (2018) study were able to think about an issue from multiple points of view. This critical thinking process contributed to less problematic behaviors (Haymovitz et al., 2018; Taylor et al., 2017). This included less disruptive classroom behaviors as well as fewer arrests, less substance abuse, and safer sex practices in high school age students (Taylor, et al., 2017). According to Taylor et al. (2017) there was no noticeable difference in positive outcomes for diverse populations in comparison with white students.

Social-emotional learning leads students to social-emotional competence. These various programs allow students to develop their core competencies of "self-awareness, self-management, responsible decision making, social awareness, and relationship skills" (CASEL, 2020, p. 1). As the studies mentioned show, other benefits include academic achievement, improved school climate, improved communication and relationships, and less problematic

behaviors. These competencies lend themselves well to the 21st Century Skills that are desired in students to be successful in their future endeavors.

Summary

The research indicated that there are certain practices that should be present in order to best reach elementary students, and this can apply to social-emotional learning programs as well. Programs that encompassed student choice and genuine peer interactions combined with restorative practices benefit students. Research showed that these benefits are potentially numerous. Included benefits could be increased academic success and decreased problematic behaviors.

In order to complete this study, I examined best practices of elementary education, the components of successful social-emotional learning programs in elementary schools, and the benefits of successful social-emotional learning curriculums. I learned from my research that in order for a social-emotional learning program to be successful, there are various things it needs to have. It needs to be developmentally appropriate for its target audience. This impacted some of the questions I asked the staff implementing the *7 Mindsets* curriculum at Big River Intermediate. It should also have an element of student choice in order to engage the students in an impactful way. Since I also learned from the research about the benefits that should theoretically occur in my students from a successful social-emotional learning curriculum, I decided to ask both students and staff if they think the *7 Mindsets* curriculum is achieving those goals. In the following chapter I will describe how I utilized action research to determine whether or not the *7 Mindsets* social-emotional learning curriculum is perceived to be effective at creating positive developments and behaviors that are necessary for student success at Big River Intermediate School.

Chapter 3

Methodology

The purpose of this study was to examine the perceived effectiveness of the 7 Mindsets social-emotional learning curriculum in elementary age students. The research question that was answered was, "What is the perceived effectiveness of the *7 Mindsets* Social-Emotional Learning curriculum at Big River Intermediate School (pseudonym)?" I chose an explanatory sequential mixed methods design for this action research study because I began my study with a quantitative Likert Scale-style survey followed by a more in depth qualitative interview (Creswell, 2014). Since the survey informed me of who to interview, I determined this was the appropriate type of research design. The independent variable for this action research is the *7 Mindsets* curriculum while the dependent variable would be the behaviors, outcomes, and perceptions of the program.

Participants

The individuals that were included in my action research study were due to convenience sampling (Creswell, 2014). All of the students that I invited to participate were students in one of my six, sixth-grade math classes. After giving out the parental consent form and assent form to all of my students, I received 37 forms in return (See Appendix B for parental consent/assent form). Out of these 37 that returned the forms, 29 of them completed the student survey (See Appendix D for the student survey questions). Out of the 29 students that took the survey, 18 were White, and 10 were a person of color. The race of one respondent was unknown. One of these students had a 504 Plan and two of them had an IEP (Individualized Education Plan). One of those IEPs included only speech therapy related goals. One additional student is in the process of being evaluated for an IEP. The adult staff members that I invited to participate were chosen

because they are sixth-grade teachers that taught an advisory class, which is the 20 minute class period during which the *7 Mindsets* curriculum was taught. I received 10 consent forms and eight survey responses from staff (See Appendix C for staff consent form). Some of these teachers had class periods of up to 27 students, which is important to note for understanding the environment during the administration of the *7 Mindsets* curriculum.

Setting

This action research study took place in a community near Dayton, Ohio. Since this community borders a city, it is also an urban-type setting. This community contains one public school district, which is the district I conducted my research in. This district did accept students through open enrollment procedures, so it is possible that some students in the study live outside of the community. The school my research was done in was Big River Intermediate School (pseudonym). At the time of the study, Big River Intermediate housed grades 5-6 which consisted of approximately 500 students. It employed approximately 25 teachers and two administrators. Big River is an underperforming district. This means that students are not achieving at the required state levels.

All student research was conducted in my personal mathematics classroom. It was on the second floor of the building, which housed all of the 6th grade classrooms. The staff implemented the *7 Mindsets* social-emotional learning curriculum starting in September of 2022. It continued through the end of the 2022-2023 school year. In this class, the student desks were arranged in pairs facing the front of the classroom. Most students sat next to a partner with the exception of a few per class period. My smallest class period contained 16 students while my largest contained 24 students. The student survey was completed on November 16, 2022. When the students completed the survey, they were in my classroom in their assigned seats. Student

interviews began on December 2, 2022 and ended on December 12, 2022. When I interviewed students they sat with me at my round table rather than at student desks.

When staff members completed their surveys, they were in a location of their own choice. These took place between November 15, 2022 and November 18, 2022. During staff interviews, I offered to let them choose the location they wanted. For example, some teachers were interviewed in my classroom while others preferred that I came to their classroom. I conducted interviews in a private setting so that staff members felt they could speak honestly. These interviews took place between December 19, 2022 and December 22, 2022.

Data Collection

I chose four forms of data collection instruments. Two of these instruments were meant to measure student perceptions of the *7 Mindsets* curriculum while the other two were intended to measure staff perceptions. Both groups of participants received a survey which gathered quantitative data on the perceived effectiveness of the *7 Mindsets* curriculum lessons. Following the survey, I chose certain individuals to interview from both groups of participants based on their survey responses. I intended to choose people that fell on both ends of the spectrum with their feelings regarding the program.

Student Survey

The student survey I created on Google Forms followed a Likert scale format. I posted this survey on my Google Classroom for the students to complete during class time on November 16, 2022. I intended for this survey to quantitatively measure the way the students behaved during and after the *7 Mindsets* lessons as well as their opinions on the lessons (see Appendix D for the student survey items). I worded these questions in developmentally appropriate language in an effort to improve validity and reliability. After I created an initial

survey, I received feedback from others in the educational field and took into consideration their recommendations. Due to the emphasis placed on student-teacher relationships that I learned from my research, I made sure to ask a question about how the students' felt about their teacher's participation in the program. I also asked a question about peer interaction because of the importance placed on peer interactions. I gave a consent form for research participation to each student in my classes. I got 37 parental permission slips returned (see Appendix B for the parental and informed consent document), and 29 survey responses. This could contribute to response bias as this was only about 24% of my total number of students. I do believe that there is an element of bias within the students, as they may have felt inclined to answer questions in favor of the program because they wanted to please me, their teacher, despite being told they should be honest.

Student Interview

Upon completion of the student survey, I read the responses of each to determine who to interview (see Appendix F for student interview questions). In an attempt to avoid my own bias and a selection threat to validity and reliability (Creswell, 2014), I ensured to ask students that held each perspective on the *7 Mindsets* curriculum. The data collected from these interviews was qualitative in nature. The purpose of this interview was to inquire students to see if they believe that the *7 Mindsets* curriculum could be responsible for any changes in their behavior, if they believed there were any changes. During this interview, I chose to have the students be self-evaluative. Since social-emotional learning is supposed to improve students' behavior, this is the route that I took with my questioning. I had the students attempt to think critically about their own listening skills and behavior during and after the *7 Mindsets* curriculum. This interview was trustworthy because the questions allowed for great elaboration of the interviewee. There were

17

multiple follow up questions that encouraged students to speak more about their answer and clear up any possible questions I had. If any of their answers were unclear, I was sure to ask them questions to gain greater insight. For example, some of the students' survey answers contradicted each other, so I verbally asked them the question again during some interviews. Some students answered not in favor of the program during their survey, but when discussing the program with me, face to face, I believe they were less likely to reveal negative feelings. I also received feedback from others in the educational field regarding my questioning during this interview.

Staff Survey

The staff survey I created also followed a Likert-style scale on the Google Form platform. I sent this survey via email to all of the sixth grade teachers that taught an advisory class on November 15, 2022. I asked them to complete it within five days. I intended for this survey to quantitatively measure the way staff participated in and perceived student behavior during and after the *7 Mindsets* lessons as well as their opinions on the lessons (see Appendix E for the staff survey questions). Out of the 10 staff members I invited to participate, all 10 returned the signed consent form (see Appendix C for the staff consent form), but eight completed the survey. This could contribute to some response bias. In addition, I cannot rule out that some of their responses could be biased due to this being a required school program.

Staff Interview

Upon completion of the staff survey, I read the responses of each to determine which teachers to interview (see Appendix G for staff interview questions). In an attempt to avoid my own bias and a selection threat to validity and reliability (Creswell, 2014), I ensured to ask staff that held different perspectives on the *7 Mindsets* curriculum. The data collected from these interviews was qualitative in nature. The purpose of this interview was to gather data to see if

teachers believe that the *7 Mindsets* curriculum could be responsible for any changes in their students' behavior, if they believed there were any changes. I tried to create questions that would lend themselves to the teacher being reflective of both the student-teacher relationships they experienced as well as if the students were developing the desired 21st Century Skills that social-emotional learning curriculums have been known to create. This interview was trustworthy because the questions allowed for great elaboration of the interviewee. There were multiple follow up questions that encouraged participants to speak more about their answer and clear up any possible questions I had. If any of their answers were unclear, I was sure to ask them questions to gain greater insight. I also received feedback on these questions from others in the educational field.

Data Analysis

For the quantitative data, I chose to use basic descriptive statistics to analyze the information obtained. I found important measurements such as mean, median, mode, percentages, and totals. My qualitative data was analyzed through coding procedures to discover patterns for synthesizing the information (Creswell, 2014). I did this using conceptual memos that were updated weekly.

Due to the similarities in the student survey and the staff survey, I completed their analysis in the same manner. This is also true for the interview coding, as the staff interviews and student interviews were analyzed with the same procedures. Due to these similarities, the student survey and staff survey analysis procedures were described together, as were the student interviews and staff interviews.

Student Surveys and Staff Surveys

After I read the responses for the student survey and staff survey, I placed the data for each question into an excel spreadsheet. I gave each response of "strongly agree", "somewhat agree", "somewhat disagree", and "strongly disagree" a numerical value. For questions that were the same in nature as another but worded in a negative manner, I rearranged the data to ensure that the responses matched what was being measured (Creswell, 2014). For example, two items on the student survey were, "I enjoy the *7 Mindsets* lessons" and "I do not like the *7 Mindsets* lessons." When I sorted through the data, I had to award the responses on the negatively worded statement the opposite numerical value (i.e. 1=4, 2=3) so that it would match the initial statement. Once all of the data responses matched, I used descriptive statistics to find the relevant data measures. The action research question these measurement instruments intended to answer is, "What is the perceived effectiveness of the *7 Mindsets* Social-Emotional Learning curriculum?" Descriptive statistics helped to answer this question because it allowed for me to analyze how impactful the students felt the program was on average with the mean value.

Student Interviews and Staff Interviews

After conducting a student or staff interview, I created audio indices to assist me in the organization of interview topics (Creswell, 2014). I utilized a spreadsheet to organize the topics of conversation (see Appendix I for the audio indices). Once a week, I kept a running list of conceptual memos to search for patterns, create codes, and synthesize information (Creswell, 2014). After having this list for several weeks and completing many interviews, I used the codes to analyze the data and make a conclusion about the perceived effectiveness of the *7 Mindsets* curriculum, the research question I wanted to answer.

Procedures

At the beginning of the school year, I began the *7 Mindsets* curriculum lessons (See Appendix A for a sample layout of a lesson and the topics included in the lessons). I completed these lessons by following the intended lesson plans during my advisory period. Advisory was a class period that was either the 20 minutes prior to the students' lunch or the 20 minutes following the students' lunch, depending on the teacher that they had. On Tuesdays I completed the intended instruction for the lesson and on Wednesdays the students completed their reflection activity, which was usually a writing prompt. These were completed weekly.

Upon approval from the Institutional Review Board, I took 10 minutes during each class period on Monday, November 7, 2022 to go over the parental permission and assent form (See Appendix B for the parental permission and assent form). I gave an overview of each section and allowed the students to ask any questions that they had. Any students that were absent that day received the form on the next day they were in class. I asked the students to return the slip by Thursday, November 10, 2022, but continued to accept them until the following Tuesday. The students returned the form to our class turn in tray throughout the week. To obtain consent from the adult participants, I personally visited each one of them to ask. I described the consent form to them, gave it to them, and told them to please return it to me by Friday, November 11, 2022 (See Appendix C for the staff consent form). They either returned it to me in person or put it in my staff mailbox in the office.

Once all of the consent forms had been collected, I created a list of students to receive the student survey and a list of staff to receive the staff survey. I distributed the student survey via Google Classroom by creating an assignment and only assigning it to those who had parental permission to complete it. I allotted 10 minutes for the students to complete the survey during

my math class, Room 206 of Big River Intermediate School, on Wednesday, November 16, 2022. I distributed the staff survey via email on Tuesday, November 15, 2022 and requested that they complete it by Friday, November 18, 2022.

After Friday, November 18, 2022, I read through all of the survey responses from both staff and students. I placed all of the answers into an excel spreadsheet. I took all of the results for the survey questions that were labeled "strongly agree", "somewhat agree", "somewhat disagree", and "strongly disagree" and assigned them a numerical value. For questions that were the same in nature as another but worded in a negative manner, I rearranged the data to ensure that the responses matched what was being measured as previously described. Once all of the data responses matched, I used descriptive statistics to find the relevant data measures such as the mean, median, mode, totals, and percentages (See Appendix H).

I chose individuals to interview who fell on both ends of the spectrum in regards to their feelings about the *7 Mindsets* curriculum. This was true for both staff and students. To complete student interviews, I asked the student during class if they would be willing to eat lunch with me or stay in from recess one day to answer my interview questions (See Appendix F for student interview protocols). The students came to my classroom at the predetermined time and we sat at my circle table in Room 206 of Big River Intermediate School to discuss the questions. I asked every student if it was okay that I recorded our voices during the interviews. I completed 11 student interviews between Friday, December 2, 2022 and Thursday, December 22, 2022.

For the interview process with staff members, I did it on a case by case basis. I asked them all personally what time would work best for them to complete the interview. I asked them if they wanted to come to my classroom or if they wanted me to come to their classroom. All of these interviews took place on the second floor of Big River Intermediate School between

Friday, December 2, 2022 and Thursday, December 22, 2022. I made sure to ask all staff members if they were okay with me recording our voices on my cell phone during the interview process, and then I proceeded to ask them the interview questions (See Appendix G for staff interview protocol). I interviewed six staff members. I analyzed both sets of qualitative interview data with audio indices that I then used to find common themes and codes throughout.

Summary

In order to answer my action research question, I obtained the proper consent from my subject groups as I continued with the *7 Mindsets* Social-Emotional Learning curriculum as directed by my school district. I collected quantitative data via student and staff surveys. This gave me measures that allowed me to see general feelings about the *7 Mindsets* curriculum. I then used this information to gather qualitative data via student and staff interviews. I coded this information in order to make a conclusion. I analyzed my collected data about the perceived effectiveness of the *7 Mindsets* curriculum in Chapter Four.

Chapter 4

Findings

I completed this research to evaluate the perceived effectiveness of the *7 Mindsets* social-emotional learning curriculum utilized by Big River Intermediate School (pseudonym) during the 2022-2023 school year. My research consisted of an explanatory sequential methodology. I gave all of my participants, staff and students, a Likert scale survey which informed my decision of who to interview to gain further information. Each group of participants had a separate survey and interview protocol based on if they were a staff member or a student. This chapter presents my findings on this topic based on the opinions of the staff and students that determined this perceived effectiveness. I analyzed the survey data with descriptive statistics and utilized audio indices to summarize my interviews and reveal common themes throughout them.

Student Survey

The data I collected with the student survey showed a wide variety of feelings and perceptions from students about the *7 Mindsets* social-emotional learning curriculum. Out of the 29 student responses, I only analyzed 25 as four of the students said their advisory teacher never completed any *7 Mindsets* lessons during their advisory class. I chose to focus on four statements during my data analysis from the student survey. They are as follows (See Appendix D for the full student survey and Appendix H for the full summary of student responses):

- I enjoy the *7 Mindsets* lessons.

- The majority of my class helps answer the discussion questions.

- I feel like I have learned good lessons from *7 Mindsets.*

- I do not think *7 Mindsets* has changed the way I think, feel, or act.

I selected these questions because they give insight into the students' feelings about the program,

the participation occurring in advisory classes regarding the program, and the perceived

effectiveness of the program from the perspective of the students. I utilized the descriptive

statistics on each question to gather information on these views. Table 4.1 reveals these

descriptive statistics for the first statement from this list.

Table 4.1

Statement Two from Student Survey Descriptive Statistics

I enjoy the 7 Mindsets lessons.	
Mean	1.96
Standard Error	0.122202019
Median	2
Mode	2
Standard Deviation	0.611010093
Sample Variance	0.373333333
Kurtosis	0.012855933
Skewness	0.015248145
Range	2
Minimum	1
Maximum	3
Sum	49
Count	25

From this data, I gathered that the most popular answer among the students was

"somewhat agree", which is represented by a score of two. However, the mean is 1.96 which

indicated that more students strongly agreed with the statement than somewhat disagreed with the statement since one represented "strongly agree" and three represented "somewhat disagree." No students strongly disagreed with the statement, since the maximum score awarded was three (somewhat disagree). Overall, the data suggested that the students have a tendency to feel in favor of the *7 Mindsets* social-emotional learning curriculum.

The next statement I focused on helped me determine if the students were giving the curriculum their best effort. This information was pertinent to analyze since a lack of effort would not lead to impactful changes with a social-emotional learning curriculum. Table 4.2 reveals student perceptions on class participation.

Table 4.2

Statement Four from Student Survey Descriptive Statistics

The majority of my class helps answer the discussion questions.	
Mean	2.2
Standard Error	0.2081666
Median	2
Mode	2
Standard Deviation	1.040833
Sample Variance	1.083333333
Kurtosis	-0.762541806
Skewness	0.530190208
Range	3
Minimum	1
Maximum	4
Sum	55
Count	25

The range of this data was wider than the last statement. This data had a minimum of one (strongly agree) and a maximum of four (strongly disagree). Again, the mode was two (somewhat agree), but the mean was 2.2. This informed me that the students mostly somewhat agreed that their classmates participated in the discussion questions, but a few more leaned toward somewhat disagreeing by awarding a score of three to the statement, raising the mean.

My next focus statement was utilized to gain understanding of student perceptions of the

lessons *7 Mindsets* social-emotional learning curriculum. This statement required the students to be self-aware and determine if they felt like they had learned anything from this program. Table 4.3 summarizes these perceptions into descriptive statistics.

Table 4.3

Statement Nine from Student Survey Descriptive Statistics

I feel like I have learned good lessons from *7 Mindsets*.

Mean	1.84
Standard Error	0.149220195
Median	2
Mode	2
Standard Deviation	0.746100976
Sample Variance	0.556666667
Kurtosis	1.659925988
Skewness	0.928545007
Range	3
Minimum	1
Maximum	4
Sum	46
Count	25

This statement had the lowest mean of any of my focus statements. I gathered from this that this question had the most "strongly agree" responses, which were associated with a score of one. This indicated that students felt like the *7 Mindsets* social-emotional learning curriculum did

have valuable things to teach them, and they felt like they did learn from it.

My last focus statement for the student survey was meant to have students analyze the effectiveness of the *7 Mindsets* social-emotional learning curriculum by having the students determine if the program had improved their behaviors in any way. Table 4.4 displays the descriptive statistics for this statement. I created adjustments to this statement when I analyzed the results. Since it was a negatively worded statement, I changed the wording and altered the student responses by giving the opposite score. This meant that if a student originally gave the negatively worded statement a one, I changed the positive statement score to a four. Another example is if a student gave the negatively worded statement a score of three, I changed the positive statement score to a two. Table 4.4 reflects these changes.

Table 4.4

Statement Ten from Student Survey Descriptive Statistics

I (do not) think *7 Mindsets* has changed the way I think, feel, or act.

Mean	2.28
Standard Error	0.204287379
Median	2
Mode	2
Standard Deviation	1.021436896
Sample Variance	1.043333333
Kurtosis	-0.83258974
Skewness	0.400227151
Range	3
Minimum	1
Maximum	4
Sum	57
Count	25

This statement had a mean of 2.28, which indicated that students leaned toward somewhat agreeing with the statement. However, the mean is in between two and three, so the students felt relatively divided on whether or not the *7 Mindsets* curriculum had an effect on their behavior.

Staff Survey

Similar to the student survey, the staff survey showed a variety of feelings toward the *7*

Mindsets social-emotional learning curriculum. Once again, I chose to focus on the results from certain statements from the staff survey. They are as follows (See Appendix E for the staff survey and Appendix I for the staff survey results summary):

- The majority of my class participates in the *7 Mindsets* lessons each week.

- My students seem to enjoy the *7 Mindsets* lessons.

- My students' behavior improves when we are discussing the *7 Mindsets* lessons as opposed to their behavior during our academic class time.

- The *7 Mindsets* curriculum does nothing to improve my students' behavior at school.

- If I had the choice, I would implement the *7 Mindsets* curriculum again next school year.

I chose these statements because I believed they revealed the most about staff perceptions of student engagement and the curriculum's effectiveness. As I did with the student results, I utilized descriptive statistics from the results on each statement to analyze the staff perceptions. Table 4.5 shows the descriptive statistics for statement four from the staff survey.

Table 4.5

Statement Four from Staff Survey Descriptive Statistics

The majority of my class participates in the *7 Mindsets* lessons each week.	
Mean	2.125
Standard Error	0.398098157
Median	2
Mode	1
Standard Deviation	1.125991626
Sample Variance	1.267857143
Kurtosis	-0.98869272
Skewness	0.487832913
Range	3
Minimum	1
Maximum	4
Sum	17
Count	8

I noted that one was the mode of this question, meaning "strongly agree" was the most popular answer. The data had a mean of 2.125, which is close to two. This indicated that overall, most teachers somewhat agreed that their students participated in the *7 Mindsets* curriculum.

The second statement I focused on I found important because it is unlikely that students will learn from a program they dislike, even if they are participating. I wanted to see if the staff's

perceptions of student enjoyment of the program matched what the students said. Table 4.6

displays the descriptive statistics for this statement.

Table 4.6

Statement Six from Staff Survey Descriptive Statistics

My students seem to enjoy the *7 Mindsets* lessons.	
Mean	2.375
Standard Error	0.375
Median	2.5
Mode	3
Standard Deviation	1.060660172
Sample Variance	1.125
Kurtosis	-0.93968254
Skewness	-0.044895669
Range	3
Minimum	1
Maximum	4
Sum	19
Count	8

The mean of this data set was 2.375. This indicated to me that staff are somewhat torn on

whether the students enjoyed the program. The mean is slightly closer to the "somewhat agree"

score of two, but it is relatively close to the middle of two and three, three being the score for

"somewhat disagree." The students' mean score was 1.96 for their statement about enjoying *7 Mindsets*. This displayed a slight discrepancy between their feelings and the staff's perception of their feelings.

I analyzed statement ten from the staff survey to gain a better understanding of the staff's perceptions of the impact that *7 Mindsets* had on students. A major goal staff had for the program was improved student behavior. Table 4.7 shows how the staff felt about the student's behavior during the administration of the *7 Mindsets* curriculum.

Table 4.7

Statement Ten from Staff Survey Descriptive Statistics

My students' behavior improves when we are discussing
the *7 Mindsets* lessons as opposed to their behavior during
our academic class time.

Mean	2.75
Standard Error	0.25
Median	3
Mode	3
Standard Deviation	0.707106781
Sample Variance	0.5
Kurtosis	-0.228571429
Skewness	0.404061018
Range	2
Minimum	2
Maximum	4
Sum	22
Count	8

The mode of this data was a three, indicating that the majority of staff surveyed said they "somewhat disagreed" with that statement. The minimum score was two, therefore no staff "strongly agreed" either. The mean was 2.75, which is closest to that score of three, or "somewhat disagree."

I chose to analyze statement 13 from the staff survey in order to determine if staff feel

that *7 Mindsets* is effective when it comes to improving student behavior in general, not just

when the lessons are being administered. Table 4.8 displays the descriptive statistics on the data

for this statement.

Table 4.8

Statement 13 Staff Survey Descriptive Statistics

The *7 Mindsets* curriculum does nothing to improve my students' behavior at school.	
Mean	2.75
Standard Error	0.25
Median	3
Mode	3
Standard Deviation	0.707106781
Sample Variance	0.5
Kurtosis	-0.228571429
Skewness	0.404061018
Range	2
Minimum	2
Maximum	4
Sum	22
Count	8

This data was exactly the same as the previous statement, which indicated that staff had a

tendency to "somewhat disagree" with it. This meant that staff did not feel like students were

any better behaved when they were speaking about the lesson than after they had learned.

I analyzed the descriptive statistics on statement 14 from the staff survey next to

understand if staff feel the *7 Mindsets* program could be effective enough to continue it in the

future school years. Table 4.9 reveals the descriptive statistics on the staff's opinions.

Table 4.9

Statement 14 Staff Survey Descriptive Statistics

If I had the choice, I would implement the *7 Mindsets* curriculum again next school year.	
Mean	3.125
Standard Error	0.295048422
Median	3
Mode	4
Standard Deviation	0.83452296
Sample Variance	0.696428571
Kurtosis	-1.391715976
Skewness	-0.276528318
Range	2
Minimum	2
Maximum	4
Sum	25
Count	8

The mean of this set of data was 3.125. Overall, staff "somewhat disagreed" with this statement, and the mode of the data set was 4, which was the score for "strongly disagree." No staff member that took this survey "strongly agreed" with this statement.

Student Interviews

After I received and reviewed the student surveys, I chose certain students to interview for further information about their perceptions of the *7 Mindsets* social-emotional learning curriculum. I ensured to choose students that answered both in favor of and not in favor of the program when I made my selection. These student interviews took around five minutes each, and they all took place in my classroom (See Appendix F for the Interview Protocol for students). After completing each interview I created an audio index for each one to summarize the interview and make notes about them (See Appendix J for an example of a Student Interview Audio Index).

As I completed student interviews, I noticed patterns of things students were telling me about behaviors they see in the classroom and the impact they believe the *7 Mindsets* social-emotional learning program had. I turned these patterns into codes and calculated the frequency of which I was hearing them from students. Table 4.10 displays the frequency table of the codes.

Table 4.10

Student Interview Frequency Table of Codes

Codes	Frequency
Unkind language/behavior during advisory	5
Off task behavior during regular classes	8
Off task behavior during advisory	7
On task behavior during regular classes	6
On task behavior during advisory	4
7 Mindsets has an impact	3
7 Mindsets does not have an impact	5

Many students mentioned both positive and negative behaviors throughout their interviews, but I tallied how many each was mentioned. It seemed that the students believed off task behaviors were more prevalent than on task behaviors in both advisory and their regular classes. During their regular classes, both Student Three and Student 29 mentioned that students will get up to sharpen their pencils unnecessarily. Student 14 and Student 28 said that students jump off the desks when the teacher is not looking. Student 13 mentioned that students in their class are often trying to be funny. When students described what on task behavior occurred in their regular classes, they often described silence, as Student 11 did.

When it came to advisory, excessive talking was often mentioned, as it was by Students Six, 11, and 14. There was an additional mention of students trying to be funny to get class off track by Student 28. Students 24 and 29 revealed that many students do not listen to the lessons, but instead they are playing games on the student computers. Only four out of ten students mentioned that their classes do have some students that listen and participate in the *7 Mindsets* lessons during administration.

Out of the 10 student interviews I conducted, three said they believe the *7 Mindsets* program has an impact on their behavior, deeming it effective. Both Student 14 and Student 28 described how it made them think about how it would make someone else feel if they hurt another person's feelings. Five students said they believe the program does not have an impact on their behaviors. Student Three said, "I just don't really think about it," when asked of the program's impact, and Student 24 said, "I don't think I can change the way I am just because of some videos." Two students were unclear or undecided on the program's effectiveness.

Staff Interviews

Out of the eight staff member survey responses I received, I chose to interview three of those staff members. As I did with the students, I chose to interview teachers that had differing experiences with the program. Staff Member Three had a neutral experience with *7 Mindsets,* Staff Member Five had a positive experience, and Staff Member Seven had a negative experience with the program. After I created and reread the audio indices I made for each staff member interview, I wrote a list of codes that acknowledged some common themes and responses. Table 4.11 displays the codes and their frequency for these interviews.

Table 4.11

Staff Member Interview Frequency Table of Codes

Codes	Frequency
Lack of student participation	2
Adequate teacher participation	3
Disingenuous/inappropriate student responses	3
No change in student behavior	3

Since all of these staff members had very different experiences, I was surprised to see that there were common themes throughout these interviews. Despite these varying experiences, all three staff members noted that there was no change in student behavior from before to after the administration of the *7 Mindsets* curriculum. Both Staff Member Three and Staff Member Seven noted a lack of student participation. Staff Member Three described that the students started off strong with their participation but experienced "some fatigue after a while," and Staff Member Seven said they had a difficult time getting students to put effort into journaling. The students were only interested in if it was going to be graded, and so they gave a lot of one sentence responses.

All three staff members believed they were putting forth adequate participation in the program. Staff Member Seven admitted that they felt as though they were the only one in the classroom putting forth effort for participation. Staff Member Five said that they experienced so much participation in the classroom that sometimes there was not enough time for them to share, giving a very different account than Staff Member Seven.

Two of the staff members noted disingenuous or inappropriate student responses during administration of the *7 Mindsets* curriculum. Both Staff Member Three and Staff Member Five noted that they believe the students make statements that they think the teachers want to hear rather than being honest. The third mention in this frequency table also comes from Staff Member Seven. They said that the students are rude to each other in advisory and make fun of those that attempt to give genuine responses. This also aligned with what the students said about arguing with each other.

Summary

After I analyzed my four data collection items, I discovered many common themes throughout the data. While students acknowledged that there are some well behaved students in both their regular classes and advisory classes, they determined that there were inappropriate behaviors occurring more frequently than not. This was determined by the student interviews. This also was a theme throughout the staff interviews as well. The student survey and the student interviews informed me that students typically did not find the *7 Mindsets* program to be effective, even though they often stated that they enjoyed the lessons. The staff survey and interviews revealed the same. Most teachers felt like their students enjoyed the *7 Mindsets* lessons, but those I interviewed felt like the program did nothing to impact student behavior. In Chapter Five, I will conclude with my determination of the perceived effectiveness of the *7 Mindsets* social-emotional learning curriculum.

Chapter 5

Discussion

My study focused on the *7 Mindsets* social-emotional learning curriculum and its perceived effectiveness from the students and staff of Big River Intermediate School (pseudonym). I determined the staff and students' perceptions by first giving them a survey about their basic opinions and observations during the administration of the *7 Mindsets* social-emotional learning curriculum. Once I analyzed the data from these surveys, I selected specific staff and students that I believed would give greater insight into their perceptions through an interview. I chose people that had opinions on both ends of the spectrum regarding the program, both in favor of and against. This chapter presents my interpretation of my findings on this topic based on the opinions of the staff and students that determined the perceived effectiveness of the curriculum, my reflections on my study, and the limitations I encountered during my research.

Discussion of Findings

From the student survey data I analyzed, I gained understanding about if the students enjoyed the *7 Mindsets* program, if the students participated in the program enough to give it the chance to be effective, if they felt like they learned from the program, and if they felt like the program changed the way they think, feel, or act. The mean for the statement "I enjoy the *7 Mindsets* lessons" was 1.96, which indicated that students "somewhat agree" with that statement on average. The mean for the statement "The majority of my class helps answer the discussion questions" was 2.2, which indicated that students "somewhat agree" with that statement. The mean for the statement "I feel like I have learned good lessons from *7 Mindsets*" was 1.84, which indicated that they "somewhat agree" with that statement. The mean for the statement "I think *7 Mindsets* has changed the way I think, feel, or act" was 2.28, which indicated that students

"somewhat agree" with this statement, but more students answered "somewhat disagree" or "strongly disagree" on this statement than the others I analyzed.

The staff "somewhat agreed" that the students participate in the *7 Mindsets* social-emotional learning curriculum, which I determined after I analyzed the mean score of 2.125 on the related statement. On average, staff "somewhat agreed" that the students enjoy the *7 Mindsets* lessons, as shown by their mean score of 2.375, but some staff did not agree. I determined this because the mean is between two and three. Two reflected "somewhat agree" and three reflected "somewhat disagree", and this mean score lies near the middle of these two numbers. The staff "somewhat disagreed" with the statements "My students' behavior improves when we are discussing the *7 Mindsets* lessons as opposed to their behavior during our academic class time" and "The *7 Mindsets* curriculum does nothing to improve my students' behavior at school." I determined this after I viewed the mean scores for both of these questions which was 2.75. This score is nearer to the "somewhat disagree" score of three rather than the "somewhat agree" score of two.

During student interviews, I learned that students were more likely to mention off-task/inappropriate behaviors than on-task behaviors when asked what typical behaviors they see during both their advisory and regular classes. Throughout ten student interviews, there were 20 mentions of off-task/inappropriate behaviors to ten mentions of on-task behaviors. There were five students that mentioned *7 Mindsets* had no impact on their behavior while three students believed it did. The three staff members I interviewed all agreed that the program had no impact on student behavior.

I found it essential to look back and analyze if the *7 Mindsets* social-emotional learning curriculum addressed the best practices for elementary education that I uncovered in my

research. My research identified that effective practices for elementary students were allowing student choice (Burriss & Burriss, 2011; Kreamer et al., 2020; Wabiser et al., 2022), supporting peer interactions (Burriss & Burriss, 2011; Kreamer et al., 2020), and behavior modeling (Naylor et al., 2019). After I compared this to the *7 Mindsets* Intervention Protocol and Procedures (Appendix A), I determined that the program only somewhat encouraged one of these best practices. *7 Mindsets* did provide numerous discussion questions for each lesson which allowed for student conversation. However, the program did not allow for any student choice or behavior modeling. The activities almost always consisted of journaling, and Student 29 even acknowledged that the program could be more beneficial with more hands-on activities.

I then decided to compare the components of successful social-emotional learning curriculums that I found from my research with the *7 Mindsets* program. Impactful social-emotional learning programs emphasized the strategies of circle time, restorative conversations, behavior modeling (Dyson et al., 2021), restorative justice and nonviolent communication (Haymovitz et al., 2018). After I reviewed the *7 Mindsets* program lesson topics (Appendix A), it did not include any lessons on conflict management as these successful studies had. These types of lessons and conversations can develop the essential listening skill that Abali and Yazici (2020) identified as a key for success for elementary age students.

My research then shifted to the outcomes related to successful social-emotional learning programs. While there were many stated benefits, my study and data focused on whether *7 Mindsets* had been effective in improving student behaviors for the better. Hamovitz et al. (2018) concluded that social-emotional learning improved the critical thinking process, and Taylor, et al. (2017) determined that social-emotional learning led to less disruptive classroom behaviors. As previously stated, the students and staff at Big River Intermediate School did not conclude

that *7 Mindsets* achieved these goals of behavior improvement. Since the majority of both students and staff that participated in my study found that *7 Mindsets* did not have an impact on student behavior at Big River Intermediate School, these findings aligned with the research. Successful programs utilized these previously listed elements and *7 Mindsets* did not. This could potentially be linked to its ineffectiveness at my school.

Reflections

I believe I succeeded in determining if the students and staff I interviewed from Big River Intermediate School perceive the *7 Mindsets* social-emotional learning program to be successful in impacting student behaviors. The data collection tools I created lended themselves well to my analysis of this topic. In the future, it would be beneficial to complete a study that would determine if *7 Mindsets* accomplished any of the other claimed benefits of social-emotional learning that I found in my research, such as academic improvement.

If I were to do this study again, I would open it up to a wider group of participants. I only studied students from my team and I only analyzed responses from staff members that were sixth grade teachers. With more responses from a variety of people, it could have been easier to see more trends in the data. This would have been especially true for teachers. I was only able to obtain eight staff member surveys and three staff interviews. Codes would have been more easily recognized if there had been more interviews to analyze.

Something else I would have done differently would have been to remind students of their responses from their surveys before every interview. I began to do this midway through the interviewing process because I noticed that some students' interview responses were contradicting their survey responses. I believe this could possibly be attributed to it being hard

for them to discuss a school program negatively with a teacher, despite my reminders to them to be honest.

The implications for my school and district would be examining the need to reevaluate the use of the *7 Mindsets* social-emotional learning curriculum. It would be my opinion that the school and district should first evaluate if the staff are implementing the program with fidelity. This is because it was noted in my research that some students informed me that their advisory teachers were not completing the program at all. I think it would also be of value to examine if *7 Mindsets* is a program they feel utilizes best practices for elementary students. As I learned from my research, it appears that this program does not to the extent that it should. It may have some opportunities for peer interaction, but it does not allow for a lot of student choice.

As for education in general and further research opportunities, my findings of ineffectiveness for the *7 Mindsets* program is interesting, as most of the research I found stated the effectiveness of social-emotional learning programs. However, it also could be argued that my research agrees with the previous research, as this program does not appear to follow best practices for elementary students as previously stated. Therefore, I think further research could be done to examine the effectiveness of social-emotional learning programs that utilize best practices and compare them to those programs that do not.

Throughout this research process, I have learned it is important to go into the experience with an open mind, and it is probably best to be removed from the administration of the program to avoid any bias. Just being a teacher that was required to complete this program with my students and listening to other teachers' opinions of the program likely influenced my thoughts on how the data was going to look. However, I mostly heard the perspectives of teachers from my team and not the other. When I opened the survey materials up to other staff members, I got a

wider variety of opinions that contributed to greater variance in the data. If I had not been a part of the program, I would not have had any preconceived ideas about it during its implementation.

Limitations

Things limited me throughout the research process. I only studied students in my district, and more specifically, my school building. I decided to use a convenience sample which included students from my team only and staff members that were in close proximity to me. I only analyzed data from students and staff who returned permission slips and completed their surveys. I attempted to ask some students to interview with me, but some said no due to the interview timing being during their recess. The *7 Mindsets* social-emotional learning curriculum also limited me, as it was the one chosen by my district. I followed the layout of the lessons the program created, per the expectations of the district. The time constraint of the research limited me, as well. Due to this study having a deadline, I could only administer the program for half of the school year before the need to complete my research arose. Additional lessons continued to be taught, but they were not able to be taken into consideration due to the timing of the study.

My research did not take into account whether the school or district had put strategies in place to increase educator buy-in and fidelity of the program. The following is a list of questions that I could have added to the staff survey or interview protocol to gain more understanding of this topic:

- Were the staff given adequate professional development on *7 Mindsets,* ongoing support, and resources?

- Was any professional development provided in alignment with best practices for professional development?

- Were the administrators and curriculum coaches given the training and support needed to help the staff implement the program with fidelity?

- Was there an emphasis on implementing the program with fidelity in accordance with the manufacturer's guidelines?

- What did the district do to achieve buy in from the staff?

- Could there have been a cultural disconnect between the lessons and the students social-emotional learning needs (such as the overreliance on journaling)? If so, what alternatives could the program offer to allow for student choice but still maintaining the fidelity of the curriculum?

Summary

Throughout this study, I researched to answer the following questions: What is the perceived effectiveness of the *7 Mindsets* Social-Emotional Learning curriculum for elementary school students at Big River Intermediate School? This question arose due to an increase in perceived problematic behaviors at this school. I utilized an explanatory sequential research method to complete this study. I began my research by administering a survey to both students and staff that returned permission slips to participate in my study. After analyzing the data from this collection method, I then invited certain students and staff to participate in interviews with me based on their responses. Overall, I found that the majority of students and staff members that participated in the study did not find the *7 Mindsets* social-emotional learning curriculum to be effective, specifically in improving student behavior at Big River Intermediate School at this point in time. Due to this perceived ineffectiveness, my school and district could take these findings into consideration for the future of their social-emotional learning endeavors.

It would be my recommendation for the district to utilize further professional development and supports to ensure that *7 Mindsets* is to be implemented with fidelity in the next school year. The district needs to ensure that teachers and staff have bought into the program, so it would be beneficial to allow for some teacher voice to be heard throughout the implementation process. Any teachers that are new to the district should be well trained on how to instruct the *7 Mindsets* curriculum, and all teachers should receive a training at the beginning of the school year to refresh their memory on the expectations of both the program and the district.

There are additional research opportunities that surround the *7 Mindsets* social-emotional learning curriculum. Potential further topics of study are as follows:

- The impact of *7 Mindsets* on student academic achievement

- The comparison of *7 Mindsets* with best practices put forth by state standards, social-emotional learning organizations, and other resources for best practices.

- The comparison of *7 Mindsets's* researched results to the researched results demonstrated by other social-emotional learning programs known to meet best practice expectations set forth by state standards and social-emotional learning organizations.

References

Abali, B. Y., & Yazici, H. (2020). An evaluation on determining the relation between listening

skill and social emotional learning skill. *Eurasian Journal of Educational Research*, *89*,

71–92. Retrieved from https://eric.ed.gov/?id=EJ1269773

Alzahrani, M., Alharbi, M., & Alodwani, A. (2019). The effect of social-emotional competence

on children's academic achievement and behavioral development. *International*

Education Studies, *12*(12), 141–149. Retrieved from https://eric.ed.gov/?id=EJ1235885

Arendale, D. (2022). *What is a best practice?* EOA Best Practices Clearinghouse. Retrieved

from http://besteducationpractices.squarespace.com/what-is-a-best-

practice#:~:text=The%20EOA%20Clearinghouse%20defines%20Best,student%20attitud

es%20or%20academic%20behaviors

Burriss, K., & Burriss, L. (2011). Outdoor play and learning: policy and practice. *International*

Journal of Education Policy and Leadership, *6*(8), 1–12. Retrieved from

https://eric.ed.gov/?id=EJ963739

CASEL (2020). *Core SEL competencies*. The Allstate Foundation. Retrieved from

https://casel.org/core-competencies/

Creswell, J. W. (2014). *Research design: qualitative, quantitative, and mixed methods*

approaches. Fourth edition. Sage Publications, Inc. Retrieved from

https://www.google.com/books/edition/Research_Design/4uB76IC_pOQC?hl=en&gbpv

=1&dq=creswell+2014&printsec=frontcover.

Durlak, J., Weissberg, R., Dymnicki A., Taylor, R., & Schellinger, K. (2021). *What does the*

research say? CASEL. Retrieved from https://casel.org/fundamentals-of-sel/what-does-

the-research-say/.

Duncan, A. (2009). Statement from U.S. secretary of education Arne Duncan on results of NAEP

    arts 2008 assessment. Washington, DC: U.S. Department of Education. Available at:

    https://www2.ed.gov/news/pressreleases/2009/06/06152009.html

Dyson, B., Howley, D., Shen, Y., & Baek, S. (2021). Educators' experiences of establishing

    social and emotional learning pedagogies in an elementary school with at-risk students.

    International Electronic Journal of Elementary Education, *13*(5), 625–638. Retrieved

    from https://doi.org/10.26822/iejee.2021.217

Green, J. H., Passarelli, R. E., Smith-Millman, M. K., Wagers, K., Kalomiris, A. E., & Scott, M.

    N. (2019). A study of an adapted social-emotional learning: small group curriculum in a

    school setting. *Psychology in the Schools*, *56*(1), 109–125.

Haymovitz, E., Houseal-Allport, P., Lee, R. S., & Svistova, J. (2018). Exploring the perceived

    benefits and limitations of a school-based social-emotional learning program: a concept

    map evaluation. *Children & Schools*, *40*(1), 45–54. Retrieved from

    https://doi.org/10.1093/cs/cdx029

Jeffery, A., Auger, R., Pepperell, J. (2013). "If we're ever in trouble, they're always there": a

    qualitative study of teacher-student caring. *The Elementary School Journal, Vol. 114, No.*

    1, pp. 100-117. The Chicago Press.

Jones, S., Bailey, R., & Khan, J. (2019). The science and practice of social and emotional

    learning: implications for state policymaking. State Education Standard.

Kopelman-Rubin, D., Mufson, L., Siegel, A., Kats-Gold, I., Weiss, N., & Brunstein-Klomek, A.

    (2021). I can succeed, a new social emotional learning program for children based on

    interpersonal psychotherapy for adolescents. *European Journal of Developmental*

    Psychology, *18*(1), 112–130. https://doi.org/10.1080/17405629.2020.1768068

Kreamer, H. M., Orme, S., Hobson, V., Moran, M., Mahoney, K., Moon, T. R., & Brighton, C.
(2020). Elevating instruction: enhancing literacy practices for advanced readers in
primary grades. *Gifted Child Today*, *43*(1), 34–45. Retrieved from
https://eric.ed.gov/?id=EJ1237992

McCann, R. A., & Austin, S. (1988). At-risk youth: definitions, dimensions, and relationships.
Retrieved from https://eric.ed.gov/?id=ED297196

Naylor, A., Spence, S. E., & Poed, S. (2019). Using video modelling to teach expected
behaviours to primary students. *Support for Learning*, *34*(4), 389–403. Retrieved from
https://doi.org/10.1111/1467-9604.12274

Public School Review, (2022). *West Carrollton City School District.* Public School Review.
Retrieved from https://www.publicschoolreview.com/ohio/west-carrollton-city-school-
district/3904505-school-district

Scottish child mental health referrals increase by more than 25%. (2022). *Education Journal*,
481, 10–11. Retrieved from https://login.wu.opal-
libraries.org/login?url=https://search.ebscohost.com/login.aspx?direct=true&db=ehh&A
N=156562928&site=ehost-live

Taylor, R. D., 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. Retrieved from
https://doi.org/10.1111/cdev.12864

Wabiser, Y. D., Prabawa, T. S., & Rupidara, N. S. (2022). The exploration of elementary school
students' learning motivation: a case study in papua. *Eurasian Journal of Educational
Research (EJER)*, *97*, 59–85. Retrieved from https://doi.org/10.14689/ejer.2022.97.04

Wachtel, T. (2013). Defining restorative. International Institute for Restorative Practices.

Retrieved from https://www.iirp.edu/pdf/Defining-Restorative.pdf

Appendix A

7 Mindsets Intervention Protocol and Procedures

Intervention Materials: Teacher access to 7 Mindsets lesson slideshows, device to showcase videos and discussion questions on the board for students to view, student journals, pencils

Procedures: These lessons take place during advisory class (20 minute period) on Tuesdays and Wednesdays.

(5 minutes) The teacher starts the lesson with an icebreaker.

(1 minute) The lesson opens with a quote.

(2 minutes) The teacher asks a hook question of the students to get them engaged in the lesson.

(4 minutes) The teacher shows a video that revolves around the lesson focus.

(8 minutes) The teacher asks four discussion questions of the students to get them to critically think about the video and the theme of the lesson.

(15 minutes) The students participate in a journal activity to reflect on the theme of the lesson.

(5 minutes) The teacher invites the students to share their journal responses.

The 7 Mindsets and Corresponding Lessons:

Unit 1: Everything is Possible	Unit 5: Attitude of Gratitude
1.1 Dream Big	5.1 Treasure Yourself
1.2 Embrace Creativity	5.2 Be More Grateful
1.3 Think Positive	5.3 Thank It Forward

Parental Consent for Research Study

Dear Pirate Families,

As some of you know, I am currently enrolled at Wittenberg University. One of the requirements of my coursework is to complete a research study involving students in my class. I am writing to inform you of the procedures that will take place during the research and to invite your student to participate.

The Research and Intervention Procedures: You may be aware that the school district is putting an emphasis on Social-Emotional Learning, and we are putting the 7 Mindsets program into place. All students are receiving this instruction during their advisory class. My research will involve asking students and other teachers how effective and useful they think this program is.

Time/Duration: The research will begin in mid-November and will last until around mid-December. Students that participate in the research will complete a 10-minute survey. This will take place during their math class. Additionally, I may ask your student to complete a 10- to 15-minute interview based on their survey questions. This can be done at an agreed upon time with your student, such as during recess.

Benefits: The goal is to increase desirable behaviors in our students, help them make life goals, and lead them to build connections with their classmates. My research will help to determine if it seems like these goals are being met through the 7 Mindsets program.

Confidentiality: If you agree to your student's participation in this study, their data will be used in my report, which will be shared with colleagues at Wittenberg University and administrators in the West Carrollton School District. Your student's name and any other identifiable information will NOT be shared. When I collect and analyze any data that your student produces, I will white-out the name and replace it with "Student #." All student participants will be referred to as "Student #," and real names will never be used in the reporting of the data. Your student's data will not be used or distributed for future research studies.

Participation: Participation is voluntary. Refusal to participate will involve no penalty or loss of benefits to which your student is otherwise entitled. Your student may discontinue participation at any time without penalty or loss of benefits to which your student is otherwise entitled.

Please reach out to me if you have any questions or concerns regarding this form or the research study.
Email: mcochran@wcsd.k12.oh.us
Phone: (937)859-5121 Ext: 7727

For questions regarding your rights as a participant in this research or IRB approval, contact Dr. Darby Hiller, Associate Provost for Academic Affairs and Institutional Research, IRB Chair, at 937-591-1024, or by email at hillerd@wittenberg.edu.

Thank you for your consideration,
Megan Cochran
Please complete the form on the back of this page to give or deny consent for your child to participate in the study.

- -

Date_____

Parent/Guardian First and Last Name_____

Student First and Last Name_____

Please select one of the following options:

☐ I **grant permission** for my student's survey data **AND** interview data to be included in the research study.

☐ I **grant permission** for my student's survey data **ONLY** to be included in the research study.

☐ I **do NOT grant permission** for my student's data to be included in the research study.

Parent/Guardian Signature_____

Student Signature_____
(only required if permission is granted)

Appendix C

Consent for Research Study

Dear Staff Member,

As many of you know, I am currently enrolled at Wittenberg University. One of the requirements of my coursework is to complete a research study for my class. I am writing to inform you of the procedures that will take place during the research and to invite you to participate.

The Research and Intervention Procedures: You are aware that the school district is putting an emphasis on Social-Emotional Learning, and we are putting the 7 Mindsets program into place. All students are receiving this instruction during their advisory class. My research will involve asking students and other teachers how effective and useful they think this program is.

Time/Duration: The research will begin in mid-November and will last until around mid-December. Staff that participate in the research will complete a 10-minute survey. Additionally, I may ask you to complete a 10-minute interview based on your survey questions. This can be done at an agreed upon time.

Benefits: The goal is to increase desirable behaviors in our students, help them make life goals, and lead them to build connections with their classmates. My research will help to determine if it seems like these goals are being met through the 7 Mindsets program.

Confidentiality: If you agree to your participation in this study, your data will be used in my report, which will be shared with colleagues at Wittenberg University and potentially with administrators in the West Carrollton School District. Your name and any other identifiable information will NOT be shared. When I collect and analyze any data that you produce, I will white-out the name and replace it with "Staff Member #." All staff participants will be referred to as "Staff Member #," and real names will never be used in the reporting of the data. Your data will not be used or distributed for future research studies.

Participation: Participation is voluntary. Refusal to participate will involve no penalty or loss of benefits to which you are otherwise entitled. You may discontinue participation at any time without penalty or loss of benefits, to which you are otherwise entitled.

Please reach out to me if you have any questions or concerns regarding this form or the research study.
Email: mcochran@wcsd.k12.oh.us
Phone: (937)859-5121 Ext: 7727

For questions regarding your rights as a participant in this research or IRB approval, contact Dr. Darby Hiller, Associate Provost for Academic Affairs and Institutional Research, IRB Chair, at 937-591-1024, or by email at hillerd@wittenberg.edu.

Thank you for your consideration,
Megan Cochran

Please complete the form on the back of this page to give or deny consent to participate in the study.

– –

Date_____

First and Last Name_____

Please select one of the following options:
☐ I **grant permission** for my survey data **AND** interview data to be included in the research study.
☐ I **grant permission** for my survey data **ONLY** to be included in the research study.
☐ I **do NOT grant permission** for my data to be included in the research study.

Signature_____

Appendix D

The Effectiveness of 7 Mindsets Student Survey

Directions: Please take this survey to the best of your ability. Be as honest as possible and remember that your participation is voluntary. If you would like to stop at any time, you are allowed to do so. Your name will not be directly associated with your answers for anyone except Mrs. Cochran.

1. How often does your advisory talk about the 7 Mindsets lessons?

   ☐Strongly agree ☐Somewhat agree ☐Somewhat disagree ☐Strongly disagree

2. I enjoy the 7 Mindsets lessons.

   ☐Strongly agree ☐Somewhat agree ☐Somewhat disagree ☐Strongly disagree

3. When my teacher asks the 7 Mindsets discussion questions, I usually answer them.

   ☐Strongly agree ☐Somewhat agree ☐Somewhat disagree ☐Strongly disagree

4. The majority of my class helps to answer the discussion questions from the 7 Mindsets lessons.

   ☐Strongly agree ☐Somewhat agree ☐Somewhat disagree ☐Strongly disagree

5. My teacher is honest with us about his/her own feelings and experiences during the 7 Mindsets conversations.

   ☐Strongly agree ☐Somewhat agree ☐Somewhat disagree ☐Strongly disagree

6. I do **not** like the 7 Mindsets lessons.

   ☐Strongly agree ☐Somewhat agree ☐Somewhat disagree ☐Strongly disagree

7. My classmates and I share stories about our lives during the 7 Mindsets lessons.

   ☐Strongly agree ☐Somewhat agree ☐Somewhat disagree ☐Strongly disagree

8. I do **<u>not</u>** participate when my teacher asks questions during the 7 Mindsets lessons.

    ☐Strongly agree   ☐Somewhat agree   ☐Somewhat disagree   ☐Strongly disagree

9. I feel like I have learned good lessons from 7 Mindsets.

    ☐Strongly agree   ☐Somewhat agree   ☐Somewhat disagree   ☐Strongly disagree

10. I do **<u>not</u>** think the 7 Mindsets lessons have changed the way I think, feel, or act.

    ☐Strongly agree   ☐Somewhat agree   ☐Somewhat disagree   ☐Strongly disagree

Appendix E

The Effectiveness of 7 Mindsets Staff Survey

Directions:

Please take this survey to the best of your ability. Be as honest as possible and remember that your participation is voluntary. Your name will not be directly associated with your answers for anyone except Megan Cochran.

1. How many years have you been teaching? Where have you taught? What grade levels and subject areas?

2. How many years have you been teaching? Where have you taught? What grade levels and subject areas?

3. How often do you administer the 7 Mindsets curriculum lessons during your advisory class?

   ☐Twice a week (approximately 40 minutes)

   ☐Once a week (approximately 20 minutes)

   ☐Less than once a week (0-20 minutes)

   ☐Never (0 minutes a week)

4. The majority of my class participates in the 7 Mindsets lessons each week.

   ☐Strongly agree ☐Somewhat agree ☐Somewhat disagree ☐Strongly disagree

5. The number of students participating in the 7 Mindsets lessons has increased over the course of the year.

   ☐Strongly agree ☐Somewhat agree ☐Somewhat disagree ☐Strongly disagree

6. My students seem to enjoy the 7 Mindsets lessons.

☐Strongly agree   ☐Somewhat agree   ☐Somewhat disagree   ☐Strongly disagree

7. I enjoy the discussions I have with my students during the 7 Mindsets lessons.

☐Strongly agree   ☐Somewhat agree   ☐Somewhat disagree   ☐Strongly disagree

8. I have to do lots of prompting to help my students answer the discussion questions during the 7 Mindsets lessons.

☐Strongly agree   ☐Somewhat agree   ☐Somewhat disagree   ☐Strongly disagree

9. I do not think my students enjoy the 7 Mindsets lessons.

☐Strongly agree   ☐Somewhat agree   ☐Somewhat disagree   ☐Strongly disagree

10. My students' behavior improves when we are discussing the 7 Mindsets lessons as opposed to their behavior during our academic class time.

☐Strongly agree   ☐Somewhat agree   ☐Somewhat disagree   ☐Strongly disagree

11. My students' behavior improves after we discuss the 7 Mindsets lessons as opposed to their behavior before the lessons.

☐Strongly agree   ☐Somewhat agree   ☐Somewhat disagree   ☐Strongly disagree

12. I think the 7 Mindsets curriculum is effective in improving my students' Social-Emotional well-being.

☐Strongly agree   ☐Somewhat agree   ☐Somewhat disagree   ☐Strongly disagree

13. The 7 Mindsets curriculum does nothing to improve my students' behavior at school.

☐Strongly agree   ☐Somewhat agree   ☐Somewhat disagree   ☐Strongly disagree

14. If I had the choice, I would implement the 7 Mindsets curriculum again next school year.

☐Strongly agree   ☐Somewhat agree   ☐Somewhat disagree   ☐Strongly disagree

Appendix F

The Effectiveness of 7 Mindsets: Interview Questionnaire for Students

Purpose of this Interview Instrument

The purpose of this interview protocol is to obtain further information from a select few of those who completed the Likert Scale survey. The question to be answered is "What is the perceived effectiveness of the 7 Mindsets Social-Emotional Learning curriculum?" These interview questions will narrow to if students believe the curriculum is potentially responsible for improving their behaviors.

This interview is trustworthy because the questions allow for great elaboration of the interviewee. There are multiple follow up questions that will encourage them to keep speaking about their answer and clear up any possible questions the interviewer may have. This interview also aims to eliminate bias. In an effort to triangulate data, a survey will be given before this interview to help choose participants. The survey asks questions about implementation of the Social-Emotional Learning curriculum while the interview allows for elaboration of its perceived effectiveness. If any of the answers from interviewees seems unclear, I will be sure to return to that person to ensure I understand their answer and their perspective.

<u>Interview Information</u>

Interviewer: _____

Interviewee: _____

Date and Time: _____

Location: _____

<u>Directions for Interviewer</u>

Before beginning the interview, remind the interviewee that the interview will be audio recorded. In addition to the audio recording, take notes in the space provided regarding the interviewee's responses. Give the interviewee ample wait time after each question to mention additional thoughts. After beginning the audio recording, remind the interviewee that their participation is voluntary, and they may stop the interview at any time without question. At the end of the interview, thank the interviewee for their time and participation.

This is a semi-structured interview. Additional topics may arise during conversation that are related to the research question but that are not included in this interview protocol.

<u>Interview Questions</u>

1. Do you think you approached the 7 Mindsets lessons with an open mind? This means that

    you were willing to try to listen, understand, and relate to the lessons. Why or why not?

2. Have you been putting effort into the lessons, such as during the discussions and the

    journaling? Explain.

3. Do you think you and your classmates are well behaved during your regular classes?

    Explain some of the behaviors you see.

4. Do you think you and your classmates are well behaved during the 7 Mindsets lessons in advisory? Describe what you see.

5. Do you think 7 Mindsets has an impact on your behavior at school? Why or why not?

6. Do you think anything could be done to make your 7 Mindsets experience better? Explain.

Appendix G

<u>The Effectiveness of 7 Mindsets: Interview Questionnaire for Teachers and Staff Members</u>

<u>Purpose of this Interview Instrument</u>

The purpose of this interview protocol is to obtain further information from a select few of those who completed the Likert Scale survey. The question to be answered is "What is the perceived effectiveness of the 7 Mindsets Social-Emotional Learning curriculum?" These interview questions will narrow to if students believe the curriculum is potentially responsible for improving their behaviors.

This interview is trustworthy because the questions allow for great elaboration of the interviewee. There are multiple follow up questions that will encourage them to keep speaking about their answer and clear up any possible questions the interviewer may have. This interview also aims to eliminate bias. When it asks teachers and staff to examine their students' behavior, it also then has them analyze what could possibly be contributing to behavior changes, since they may believe that it is not the Social-Emotional Learning curriculum. In an effort to triangulate data, a survey will be given before this interview to help choose participants. The survey asks questions about implementation of the Social-Emotional Learning curriculum while the interview allows for elaboration of its perceived effectiveness. If any of the answers from interviewees seems unclear, I will be sure to return to that person to ensure I understand their answer and their perspective.

<u>Interview Information</u>

Interviewer: _____

Interviewee: _____

Date and Time: _____

Location: _____

<u>Directions for Interviewer</u>

Before beginning the interview, remind the interviewee that the interview will be audio recorded. In addition to the audio recording, take notes in the space provided regarding the interviewee's responses. Give the interviewee ample wait time after each question to mention additional thoughts. After beginning the audio recording, remind the interviewee that their participation is voluntary, and they may stop the interview at any time without question. At the end of the interview, thank the interviewee for their time and participation.

This is a semi-structured interview. Additional topics may arise during conversation that are related to the research question but that are not included in this interview protocol.

Interview Questions

1. Do you think your students have been open to the 7 Mindsets curriculum lessons? Have
    they been putting in effort into the lesson activities? Explain.

2. Have you participated in the 7 Mindsets discussion questions with your students? Do you
    feel you have been open and honest with your students during those discussions? Why or
    why not?

3. Describe the behavior of your students during their academic class time, which is when
    you focus on your class content, not the 7 Mindsets curriculum.

4. Describe the behavior of your students during the administration of the 7 Mindsets

    Social-Emotional Learning curriculum.

5. Describe the behavior of your students after the administration of the 7 Mindsets Social-

    Emotional Learning curriculum.

6. Is there a difference in the students' behavior from before administration, during

    administration, and after administration of the 7 Mindsets curriculum? If there is a

    difference, do you think that is attributable to the 7 Mindsets curriculum? If not, what do

    you think it could be attributed to?

Appendix H

Student Perceived Effectiveness Survey Results

Student	How often does your teacher talk about the 7 Mindsets lessons during advisory?	I enjoy the 7 Mindsets lessons.	When my teacher asks the 7 Mindsets discussion questions, I usually answer them.	The majority of my class helps answer the discussion questions.	My teacher is honest about their own feelings/experiences during the 7 Mindsets lessons.	I do (not) like the 7 Mindsets lessons	My classmates and I share stories about our lives during the 7 Mindsets.	I do (not) participate in the 7 Mindsets lessons.	I feel like I have learned good lessons from 7 Mindsets.	I (do not) think 7 Mindsets has changed the way I think, feel, or act.
Student 1	2x a week	3	1	4	2	3	1	1	2	3
Student 2	Never									
Student 3	2x a week	2	2	4	1	3	2	1	2	4
Student 4	2x a week	2	4	3	1	2	1	1	2	2
Student 5	2x a week	1	4	2	3	4	4	3	4	
Student 6	2x a week	3	2	2	3	3	2	2	2	2
Student 7	2x a week	2	2	1	1	1	1	1	1	
Student 8	Less than once a week	2	2	3	2	2	2	1	2	
Student 9	Never									
Student 10	2x a week	2	2	1	2	2	1	2	2	3
Student 11	1x a week	2	2	2	2	3	2	2	1	3
Student 12	1x a week	2	1	2	2	2	2	2	2	3
Student 13	2x a week	3	1	2	3	3	1	1	1	2
Student 14	2x a week	1	3	2	1	2	2	2	2	2
Student 15	2x a week	1	3	1	1	1	1	1	1	1
Student 16	2x a week	2	2	2	1	1	1	2	1	2
Student 17	2x a week	2	2	2	1	2	2	1	2	3
Student 18	2x a week	2	3	1	2	2	4	3	3	2
Student 19	2x a week	1	3	1	1	1	2	3	2	1
Student 20	1x a week	1	1	2	1	2	2	1	1	2
Student 21	1x a week	2	2	1	1	1	1	1	2	1
Student 22	Never									
Student 23	1x a week	2	2	2	2	1	1	1	1	2
Student 24	2x a week	2	2	4	1	2	2	2	2	4
Student 25	2x a week	2	2	3	1	1	2	2	2	2
Student 26	<1x a week	2	1	4	1	3	2	2	1	1
Student 27	Never									
Student 28	2x a week	2	2	3	2	3	3	2	2	1
Student 29	1x a week	3	3	2	1	3	2	3	3	4

1=Strongly agree, 2=Somewhat agree, 3=Somewhat disagree, 4=Strongly disagree

**Questions that are worded opposite of another question have changed to reflect the "opposite". Ex: 1=4, 2=3.

***I have reflected the change in the question this creates by striking out the word that no longer applies.

Appendix I

Staff Perceived Effectiveness Survey Results

Staff Member	How many years have you been teaching? Where have you taught? What grade levels and subject areas?	How long have you been administering the 7 Mindsets curriculum?	How often do you administer the 7 Mindsets curriculum lessons during your advisory class?	The number of students participating in the 7 Mindsets lessons has increased over the course of the year.	My students seem to enjoy the 7 Mindsets lessons.	I enjoy the discussions I have with my students during the 7 Mindsets lessons.	I have to do lots of prompting to help my students answer the discussion questions during the 7 Mindsets lessons.	I do (not) think my students enjoy the 7 Mindsets lessons.	My students' behavior improves when we are discussing the 7 Mindsets as we discuss the 7 Mindsets lessons.	My students' behavior improves after discussing the 7 Mindsets lessons.	I think the 7 Mindsets curriculum is effective in improving my students' Social-Emotional well-being.	If I had the chance, I would implement the 7 Mindsets curriculum again next school year.
Staff Member 1	32 years teaching. Taught all years in West Carrollton. I started in Special Ed for grades 1-6, then taught 1st grade, moved to second grade, then taught 5th reg. ed., now I am teaching 6th grade ELA.	Started this year	2x a week	1	1	1	3	2	4	2	4	2
Staff Member 2	29 years, 6th grade resource room	Just this year	1x a week	2	3	4	1	4	2	2	4	1
Staff Member 3	24 yrs. 6th, 7th, and 8th Grade Science, Social Studies	1/2 year	1x a week	3	3	2	2	3	3	3	3	2
Staff Member 4	25 years - Beavercreek 1 year, 1st grade; West Carrollin 24 years (1 year 7th grade ELA, 23 years 6th grade ELA/Science/Social Studies)	3 months	2x a week	4	2	2	1	2	3	3	2	3
Staff Member 5	21 years West Carrolton, 6-8 grade math	1st year	2x a week	1	1	2	2	2	3	2	2	2
Staff Member 6	20, WC, 6th grade ELA	1 year	1x a week	3	2	4	2	3	2	3	3	2
Staff Member 7	25 years, West Carrollton Schools [High School (9-12 Special Ed)., Frank Nicholas (3rd grade), Middle School (6th and 8th grade science), Intermediate School (6th grade science)]	2022-2023 school year	1x a week	4	4	4	1	4	4	4	4	4
Staff Member 8	This is my second year. I taught at Elmwood place elementary 5th and 6th grade science and social studies. This year at West Carrollton I teach 6th grade social studies.	About 3 months	2x a week	2	3	1	2	3	2	2	2	2

1=Strongly agree

2=Somewhat agree

3=Somewhat disagree

4=Strongly disagree

**Questions that are worded opposite of another question have had their score changed to reflect the "opposite." Ex. 1=4, 2=3.

***I have reflected the change in the question this creates by striking out the word that no longer applies.

Appendix J

Student Interview Audio Index Example

Megan Cochran   Audio Index: 12-08-2022

Date	12-08-2022
Time	11:35 AM - 11:40 AM
Setting	Big River Intermediate School Room 206
Type	Student Interview
Summary	Interview with Student 3 about personal feelings about the *7 Mindsets* curriculum and its potential impact on student behaviors
Focal Participants	Student 3

Time	Description	Personal Notes
0:00	I remind the student that we are being audio recorded. I let the student know they may leave at any time along with other procedures for the interview.	
0:25	I ask the student if they think they approached the *7 Mindsets* curriculum with an open mind and describe what that means. The student says yes because they believe it could potentially make you better behaved and a nicer person.	
1:01	I ask the student if they think they have been putting effort into the lessons such as with participation during the discussions and journaling. The student says most of the time if their teacher has them use their journal and write. I asked if the teacher does not have them write all the time and they said yes.	This is interesting because the students are supposed to use their journals each week.
1:51	I ask the student if they think they and their classmates are well behaved during their regular classes and what behaviors they see during class. The student says three of their classes act up more than the others. They describe seeing students get up to sharpen their pencil when it did not need sharpened and students talking during their quiet	

	work time. I asked what the student sees during the well-behaved classes and they said people pay attention and it's rare for people to get out of hand.	
3:21	I ask the student if they believe they and their classmates are well behaved during the *7 Mindsets* lessons in advisory. The student says sometimes. They describe that sometimes people are talking so much that it's hard to hear the video for the lesson. They will argue with each other.	
4:02	I ask the student if they believe *7 Mindsets* has an impact on their behavior at school. The student describes that if they saw someone struggling on the street that they could donate clothes to them. I asked the student if that is something they have done because of *7 Mindsets*, but they say they have not done that yet. I try to steer them back to thinking about their current behavior at school. They said they think about the lessons while they are happening and what they could do to help but other than that they "don't really think about it."	
5:12	I ask the student if there is anything that could make the *7 Mindsets* experience better and the student says they don't think so because the lessons can teach morals the way they are.	

Appendix K

Staff Interview Audio Index Example

Megan Cochran   Audio Index: 12-20-2022

Date	12-20-2022
Time	12:34 PM - 12:37 PM
Setting	Big River Intermediate School Room 216
Type	Staff Member 7 Interview
Summary	Interview with Staff Member 7 about personal feelings about the *7 Mindsets* curriculum and its potential impact on student behaviors
Focal Participants	Staff Member 7

Time	Description	Personal Notes
0:00	I remind the staff member that we are being audio recorded. I let them know they may leave at any time along with other procedures for the interview.	
0:10	I ask the staff member if they think their students have been open to the *7 Mindsets* curriculum lessons and if they have been putting effort into the lessons. The staff member says no and that they put no effort into what they are discussing. They believe the students say what they think the teacher wants to hear. They make fun of any students that actually try to contribute a real answer. The staff member says when they did a couple of the journals the students only cared about if the journal was for a grade and asked why they had to do it. The staff member says there were many one sentence responses.	This is the second mention of students saying what they think the teachers want to hear.
0:51	I ask the staff member if they have participated in the discussion questions with their students and were open and honest during those conversations. The staff member says yes, and they felt like they were the only one that really talked in class. They describe that they had to give lots of examples so the students understood what the questions were asking but that does not work for all of them.	

1:28	I ask the staff member to describe the behaviors they see during their academic class time. The staff member says it is slightly better during regular class than during advisory. They say that students do not make fun of each other as much during regular class time.	
1:50	I ask the staff member to describe the behaviors of their students during the administration of the *7 Mindsets* curriculum. The staff member says they talk over each other a lot and make fun of each other.	This is consistent with what many students said.
2:03	I ask the staff member to describe the behaviors they see in their students after the administration of the *7 Mindsets* curriculum. The staff member says there is no change.	
2:13	I ask the staff member if there is a change in behavior over the last three questions, do they think this could be attributable to *7 Mindsets*, but if not, what do they think it could be attributed to. The staff member says there is no change in their behavior at all and they would do anything to change it but they have not found anything that has.	