INTER-OFFICE CORRESPONDENCE
Los Angeles Unified School District
Office of Data and Accountability

TO: Members, Board of Education
Vivian Ekchian, Interim Superintendent

FROM: Oscar Lafarga, Executive Director

SUBJECT: RESULTS OF THE 2017-18 SCHOOL EXPERIENCE SURVEY: "SOCIAL-EMOTIONAL LEARNING" QUESTIONS

This informative presents the results of the annual LAUSD School Experience Survey *Social- Emotional Learning* questions administered to students and school staff during the fall semester of the 2017-18 school year. Surveys were completed online by students in grades 4[1] through 12 and by teachers and other staff at elementary, middle, and high schools, special education centers, and continuation schools. Social-emotional learning questions were first added to the survey in 2014-15 as part of LAUSD's ongoing commitment to the development of our students' social-emotional skills.[2]

Social-emotional skills are an important complement to academic preparation in helping our students succeed in college, career, and life. The School Experience Survey's social-emotional items[3] focus on four competencies: self-efficacy, self-management, growth mindset, and social awareness. These competencies are defined as follows:

❖ **Self-Efficacy** – The belief in one's own ability to succeed in achieving an outcome or reaching a goal. Self-efficacy reflects confidence in the ability to exert control over one's own motivation, behavior, and environment.

❖ **Self-Management** – The ability to regulate one's emotions, thoughts, and behaviors effectively in different situations. This includes managing stress, delaying gratification, motivating oneself, and setting and working toward personal and academic goals.

❖ **Growth Mindset** – The belief that one's abilities can grow with effort. Students with a growth mindset see effort as necessary for success, embrace challenges, learn from criticism, and persist in the face of setbacks.

❖ **Social Awareness** – The ability to take the perspective of and empathize with others from diverse backgrounds and cultures, to understand social and ethical norms for behavior, and to recognize family, school, and community resources and supports.

HIGHLIGHTS FROM FALL 2017 RESULTS

- Over 80% of principals indicated that social-emotional learning skills were being integrated into existing academic subjects.
- *Self-Efficacy:* Compared to their peers in middle and high school, elementary students have consistently responded more favorably to the self-efficacy questions over the past three years and have posted gains of up to 11 percentage points since 2014-15.
- *Self-Management:* All school levels posted gains on each of the self-management questions this year compared to last year. Of note this year: over 80% of LAUSD students felt confident in their ability to remember and follow directions.

---

[1] In past years, surveys were administered to students in grades 3 through 12. Grade 3 no longer participates.
[2] Where possible we included the first year the question was included on the survey and the most recent two years to present a 3-year comparison. However, if the question and/or scale were changed, we only reported 2017-18 results.
[3] Social-emotional items on the School Experience Survey were developed by CORE and are administered by all CORE Districts: http://coredistricts.org/wp-content/uploads/2017/07/SEL_6.9.17.docx

- *Growth Mindset:* There was an increase at all three school levels in students reporting that if they were not naturally smart in a subject they could still do well in it.
- *Social Awareness:* Overall, elementary students responded more favorably to the social awareness questions than their peers in middle and high school, with differences as large as 27 percentage points between groups.

Response Rates

Exhibit 1 shows the participation rates on the School Experience Surveys among students, teachers, and all school staff from the first year the surveys were administered (baseline year 2008-09) compared to the 2016-17 and 2017-18 administrations of the surveys. While response rates for all stakeholder groups grew from 2008-09 to 2017-18, response rates decreased in 2017-18 compared to 2016-17. The change in the Survey administration window from spring (as was done for previous administrations) to fall likely explains this variance. As schools learn to adjust to the new timeframe for the annual Survey, participation rates will increase.

Exhibit 1. Comparisons of School Experience Survey Participation Rate Percentages by Stakeholder Group[4]: 2008-09, 2016-17 and 2017-18
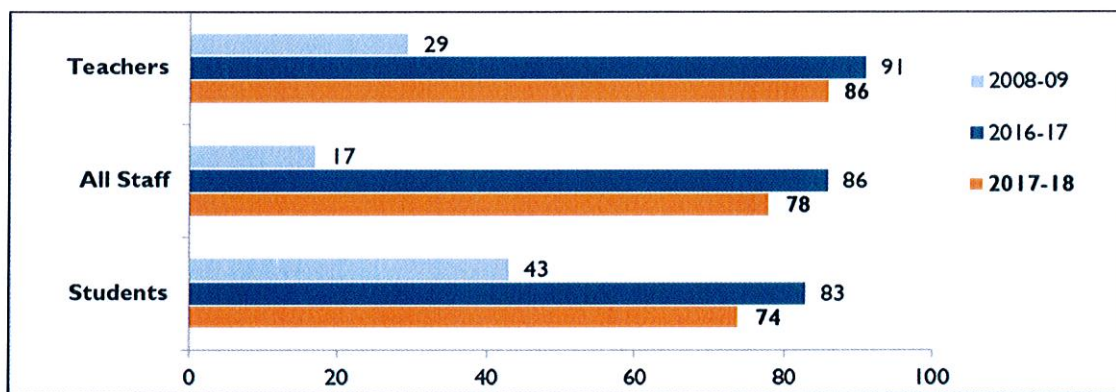

Exhibit 2 presents the number of Survey participants.[5]

Exhibit 2. Number of Survey Participants by Group: 2008-09, 2016-17, and 2017-18

Group	2008-09	2016-17	2017-18
Students	230,983	305,017	239,202
Teachers	7,754	26,628	23,895
All Staff [4]	12,136	49,958	44,167

The survey was administered to students in grades 4 through 12 at traditional public schools and affiliated charter schools,[6] with students in elementary schools taking the Elementary Student Survey and students in middle and high schools taking the Secondary Student Survey.[7] Comparisons across school levels in this report are intended to highlight differences in students' perceptions of their school experiences or their socioemotional skills. Student demographic data is displayed in Exhibit 3.

---

[4] *All Staff* includes principals, assistant principals, teachers, clerical staff, coaches, teachers' assistants, plant managers, cafeteria workers, librarians, etc.

[5] The lower number of students in 2017-18 can be attributed to a number of factors including 3rd graders no longer participating in the Survey, schools adjusting to the new fall administration window, and to a decline in enrollment.

[6] The School Experience Survey was not administered at adult schools and was optional at independent charter schools.

[7] Elementary schools with K-6 configurations administered elementary surveys to all students. Sixth grade students at middle schools or at span schools (i.e. having a K-12 or 6-12 configuration) took the secondary survey.

Exhibit 3. Student Demographics for the 2017-18 School Experience Survey[8]

Grade	# of Participating Students	% of ALL Participants
Grade 4	35,519	15%
Grade 5	35,864	15%
Grade 6	28,996	12%
Grade 7	26,874	11%
Grade 8	26,460	11%
Grade 9	24,292	10%
Grade 10	22,192	9%
Grade 11	19,875	8%
Grade 12	19,130	8%

Student Group[9]	# of Participating Students	% of ALL Participants
African American	17,386	7%
Asian	9,277	4%
Latino	180,691	76%
White	22,220	9%
Other	9,628	4%
English learners	36,146	15%
Socio-economically disadvantaged	198,157	83%
Students with disabilities	26,738	11%
Foster youth	2,300	1%

## KEY RESULTS FOR TEACHERS AND PRINCIPALS

Since 2014-15, teachers and principals have been asked if teaching social-emotional learning was happening schoolwide. This year, while only elementary teachers posted an increase compared to last year, all three school levels have posted gains since 2014-15 (see Exhibit 4).

Exhibit 4. Percentage of Teachers Who Felt that Teaching Students Social-Emotional Learning is Happening Schoolwide.
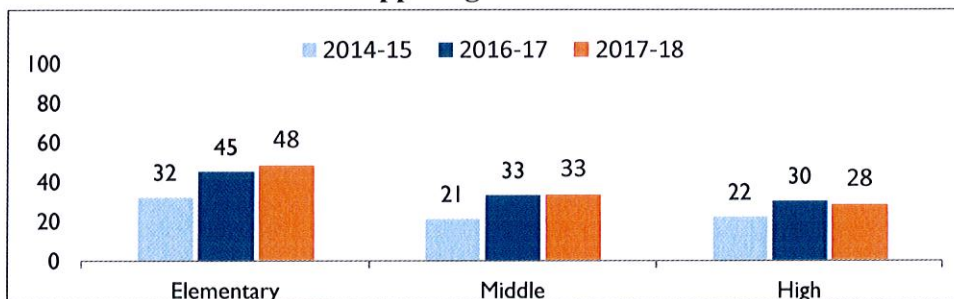
Although elementary, middle, and high school principals were more likely than teachers to report that social-emotional learning was occurring schoolwide, neither group's percentages has ever exceeded 50% at any school level (see Exhibits 4 and 5).

Exhibit 5. Percentage of Principals Who Felt that Teaching Students Social-Emotional Learning is Happening Schoolwide.
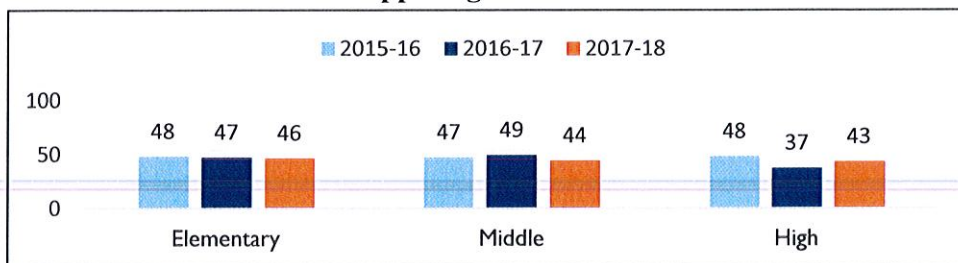

Although fewer than half of the principals felt social-emotional learning (SEL) was happening schoolwide, over 80% felt social-emotional skills were being integrated into existing academic subjects (see Exhibit 6). Similarly,

---

[8] All percentages in this report have been rounded to the nearest whole number.
[9] Students may be included in more than one student group.

over 80% of elementary and high school principals reported integrating SEL outside of academic subjects while this rate has steadily declined at the middle school level.

Exhibit 6. Percentage of Principals Who Felt that Social-Emotional Learning was Integrated/Implemented in their School.
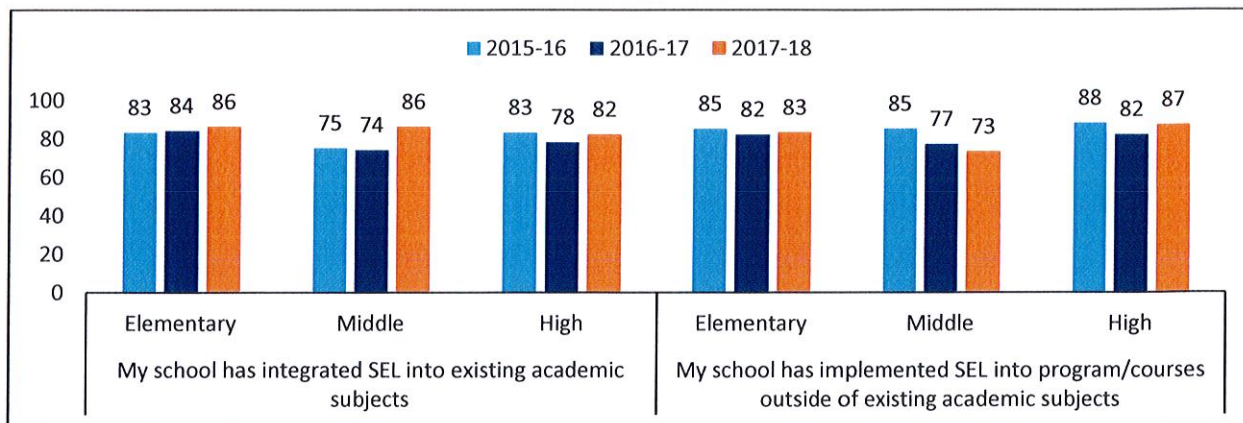

Note: Response options "agree" and "strongly agree" were combined.
SEL = Social-Emotional Learning

KEY RESULTS FOR STUDENTS BY SOCIAL-EMOTIONAL COMPETENCY

Self-Efficacy

Self-Efficacy is the belief in one's own ability to succeed in achieving an outcome or reaching a goal. The School Experience Survey's self-efficacy construct consists of three questions (see Exhibit 7). Compared to their peers in middle and high school, elementary students have consistently responded more favorably to these questions over the past three years and have posted gains of up to 11 percentage points since 2014-15. Comparatively, middle school students have posted modest gains since 2014-15 and high school students posted decreasing percentages on all but one of these questions since 2014-15 and on all three questions compared to last year.

Exhibit 7. Percentage of Students Who Agreed with the Self-Efficacy Statements.
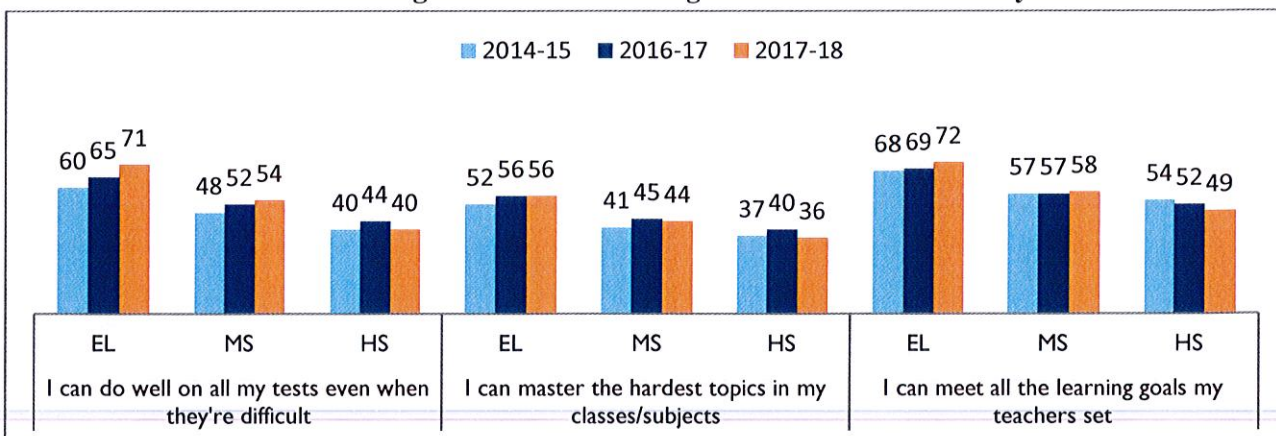
Note: Response options "mostly confident" and "completely confident" were combined.

Exhibit 8 displays the self-efficacy data broken down by race/ethnicity and student subgroups. Higher percentages of Asian and White students than Latino and African American students reported being confident about their abilities across all three self-efficacy questions. This was especially true at the middle school level where gaps between these groups were as large as 13 percentage points. Of the four student subgroups, students with disabilities tended not to be as confidents as their peers, with gaps as large as 10 percentage points on the self-efficacy survey items.

**Exhibit 8. Self-Efficacy by 2017-18 Student Demographics.[10]**

Self-Efficacy	Level	Student Race/Ethnicity				Student Subgroup			
		% African American	% Asian	% Latino	% White	% English Learners	% Socio-Econ. Disadvan.	% Students w/ Disabilities	% Foster Youth
I can do well on all my tests, even when they're difficult	ES	70%	71%	69%	77%	62%	69%	59%	68%
	MS	55%	61%	51%	63%	48%	52%	46%	49%
	HS	39%	43%	39%	46%	43%	39%	35%	39%
I can master the hardest topics in my classes	ES	57%	58%	55%	63%	50%	55%	49%	52%
	MS	47%	51%	42%	55%	39%	42%	38%	42%
	HS	37%	40%	35%	44%	37%	36%	31%	36%
I can meet all the learning goals my teachers set	ES	71%	73%	71%	76%	66%	71%	64%	68%
	MS	59%	66%	55%	68%	53%	56%	51%	52%
	HS	51%	54%	47%	56%	50%	48%	43%	43%

Note: Response options "mostly confident" and "completely confident" were combined.

Self-Management

Self-Management is the ability to regulate one's emotions, thoughts, and behaviors effectively in different situations. The Self-Management construct consists of three questions (see Exhibit 9). On all three questions, students reported improvements compared to last year. In 2017-18, over 80% of LAUSD students felt confident in their ability to remember and follow directions.

Exhibit 9. Percentage of Students Who Agreed with the Self-Management Statements.
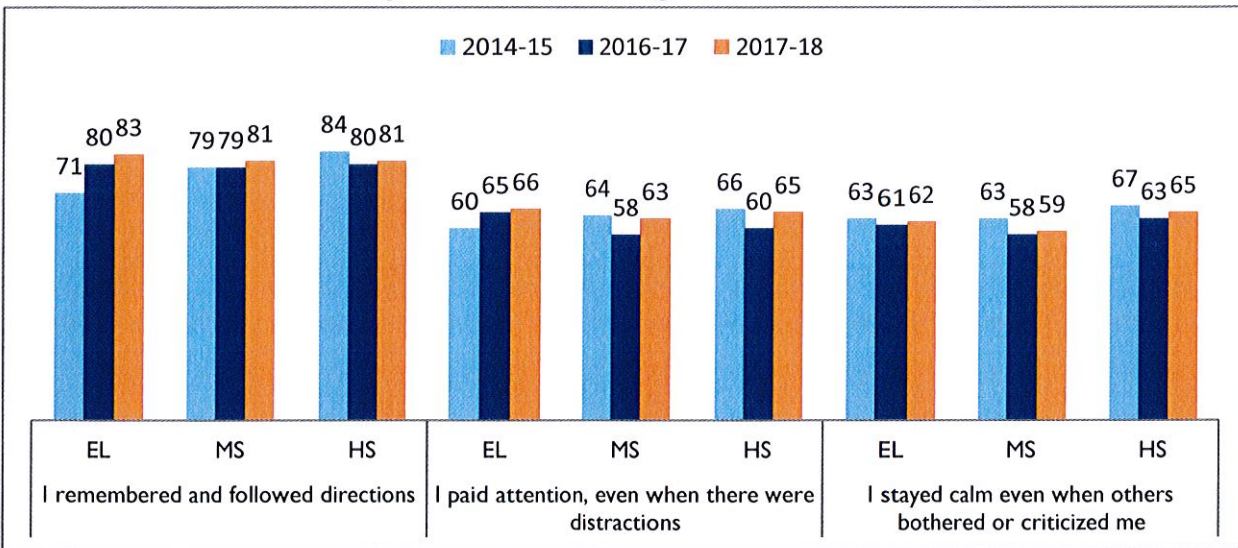
Note: Response options "often" and "almost all of the time" were combined.

Similar to the results of the Self-Efficacy questions, higher percentages of Asian and White students than Latino and African American students reported that they "often" or "almost all of the time" employ self-management skills (see Exhibit 10), with differences as large as 21 percentage points between groups. Students with disabilities tended to have lower percentages on the three self-management questions than their peers in other student subgroups, with differences as large as 11 percentage points.

---

[10] Throughout this document, "Level" refers to the level of schooling of the students that participated in the School Experience Survey: Elementary School (ES), Middle School (MS), and High School (HS).

**Exhibit 10. Self-Management by 2017-18 Student Demographics.**

Self-Management (During the past 30 days…)	Level	Student Race/Ethnicity				Student Subgroup			
		% African American	% Asian	% Latino	% White	% English Learners	% Socio-Econ. Disadvan.	% Students w/ Disabilities	% Foster Youth
I remembered and followed directions	ES	75%	89%	82%	91%	73%	81%	70%	76%
	MS	75%	90%	79%	90%	69%	79%	70%	73%
	HS	76%	88%	81%	86%	74%	80%	71%	73%
I paid attention, even when there were distractions	ES	58%	72%	66%	74%	58%	65%	54%	58%
	MS	57%	74%	60%	73%	54%	60%	53%	52%
	HS	59%	74%	65%	70%	64%	65%	57%	59%
I stayed calm even when others bothered or criticized me	ES	49%	66%	62%	68%	53%	60%	51%	53%
	MS	48%	69%	58%	68%	49%	57%	50%	48%
	HS	56%	72%	65%	69%	58%	65%	56%	58%

Note: Response options "often" and "almost all of the time" were combined.

Growth Mindset

Growth Mindset is the belief that one's abilities can grow with effort. A student's growth mindset is based on self-perception of abilities that can play a key role in motivation and achievement. The Growth Mindset construct consists of three questions (see Exhibit 11). Survey items for this construct were worded so that students had to disagree to indicate a growth mindset. For example, students who disagreed with the statement, "Challenging myself won't make me any smarter" were more likely to believe that overcoming challenges makes them smarter. Although a majority of students "disagreed" with all three growth mindset statements, fewer students disagreed with the "challenging myself…" question compared to last year. The most improvement on the growth mindset questions for all school levels was students reporting that they do not have to be naturally smart in a subject to do well in it.

Exhibit 11. Percentage of Students Who Disagreed with the Growth Mindset Statements.
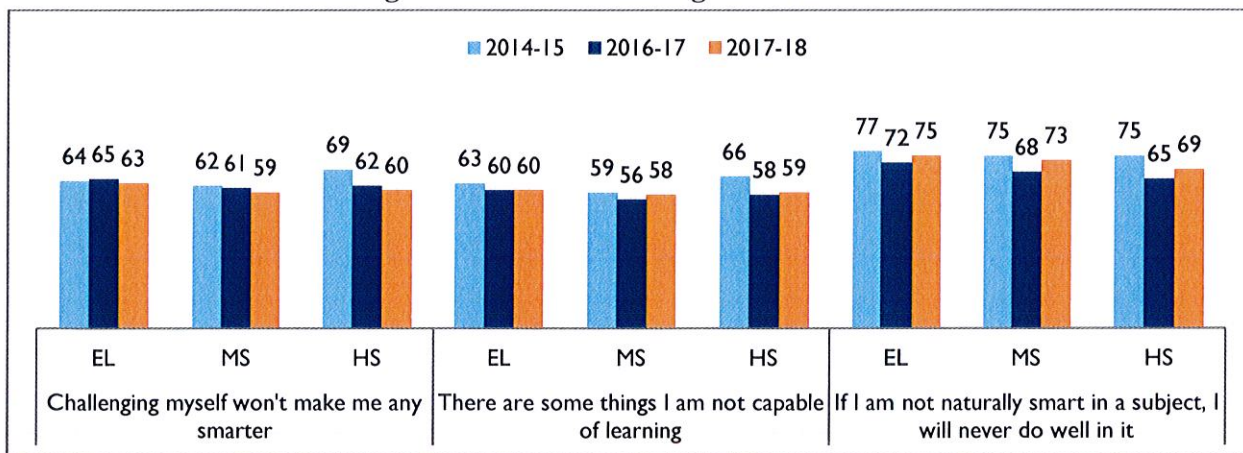
Note: Response options "not at all true" and "a little true" were combined.

In all but one instance, Asian and White students again had a higher growth mindset than African American and Latino students (see Exhibit 12). For student subgroups, English learners posted the lowest percentages across all school levels for the growth mindset questions, with differences as large as 23 percentage points compared to their peers in other subgroups.

**Exhibit 12. Growth Mindset by 2017-18 Student Demographics.**

Growth Mindset	Level	Student Race/Ethnicity				Student Subgroup			
		% African American	% Asian	% Latino	% White	% English Learners	% Socio-Econ. Disadvan.	% Students w/ Disabilities	% Foster Youth
Challenging myself won't make me any smarter	ES	63%	72%	60%	73%	49%	60%	53%	56%
	MS	62%	72%	56%	71%	39%	57%	46%	52%
	HS	63%	70%	58%	69%	36%	59%	45%	56%
There are some things I am not capable of learning	ES	57%	66%	58%	70%	47%	58%	49%	55%
	MS	61%	67%	55%	70%	38%	55%	43%	50%
	HS	63%	63%	57%	64%	39%	58%	42%	54%
If I am not naturally smart in a subject, I will never do well in it	ES	73%	84%	73%	87%	58%	73%	60%	70%
	MS	73%	85%	70%	83%	49%	71%	56%	63%
	HS	72%	76%	67%	75%	50%	68%	53%	65%

Note: Response options "not at all true" and "a little true" were combined.

Social Awareness

Social Awareness is the ability to take the perspective of and empathize with others. The Social Awareness construct consists of five questions (see Exhibit 13 and 14). Although most percentages for this construct are higher this year compared to last year, there has been a general decline since 2014-15 in the percentage of students agreeing with the social awareness statements on the School Experience Survey. Of the five social awareness questions, only one item ("When others disagreed with you, how respectful were you of their views?"), posted continuous gains since 2014-15, but that was only for elementary and middle school students. Overall, elementary students responded more favorably to the social awareness questions than their peers in middle and high school, with differences as large as 27 percentage points between groups.

Exhibit 13. Percentage of Students Who Agreed with the Social Awareness Statements.
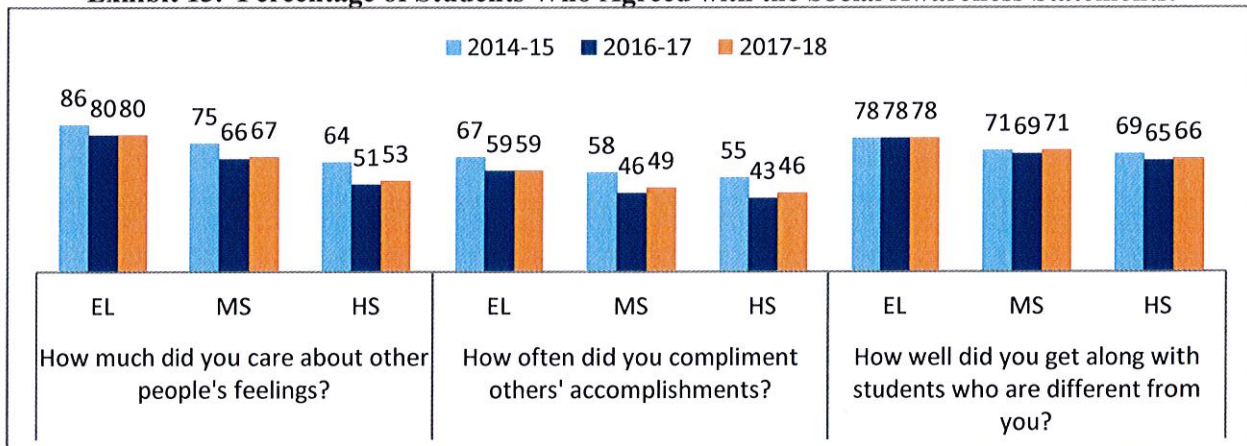
Note: The top two positive response options were combined for each question.

Exhibit 14. Percentage of Students Who Agreed with the Social Awareness Statements.
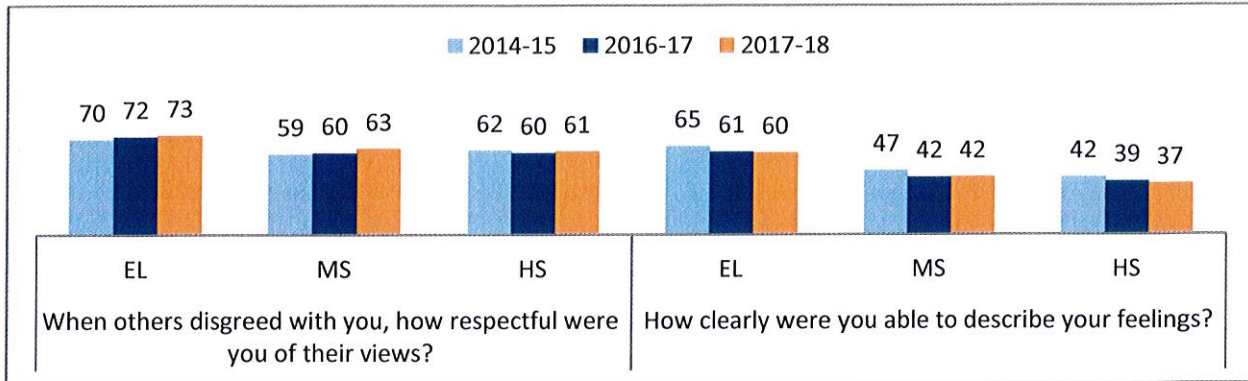
Note: The top two positive response options were combined for each question.

Unlike the other constructs, there were inconsistent differences in how racial/ethnic groups responded to these questions (see Exhibit 15). For example, White and Latino elementary students posted the highest percentages of students indicating that they were able to get along with students that were different from them compared to their Asian and African American peers. Whereas for the question, "How clearly were you able to describe your feelings?" White and African American high school students posted the highest percentages of students reporting being able to describe their feelings clearly compared to their Latino and Asian peers.

Exhibit 15. Social Awareness by 2017-18 Student Demographics.

Social Awareness (During the past 30 days...)	Level	Student Race/Ethnicity				Student Subgroup			
		% African American	% Asian	% Latino	% White	% English Learners	% Socio-Econ. Disadvan.	% Students w/ Disabilities	% Foster Youth
How much did you care about other people's feelings?	ES	70%	83%	80%	86%	74%	79%	70%	77%
	MS	56%	69%	67%	73%	60%	66%	57%	61%
	HS	41%	60%	53%	60%	51%	52%	50%	44%
How often did you compliment other's accomplishments?	ES	55%	62%	57%	68%	51%	57%	51%	59%
	MS	47%	57%	46%	61%	37%	46%	38%	43%
	HS	45%	54%	44%	55%	34%	45%	37%	39%
How well did you get along with students who are different from you?	ES	69%	77%	79%	81%	73%	78%	69%	74%
	MS	66%	72%	71%	75%	62%	71%	63%	64%
	HS	64%	68%	65%	71%	53%	65%	59%	62%
When others disagreed with you, how respectful were you of their views?	ES	62%	72%	74%	76%	68%	72%	63%	70%
	MS	51%	66%	63%	68%	56%	62%	54%	57%
	HS	52%	65%	61%	65%	56%	61%	52%	57%
How clearly were you able to describe your feelings?	ES	52%	56%	61%	59%	62%	60%	57%	60%
	MS	39%	41%	42%	46%	47%	42%	43%	40%
	HS	40%	39%	36%	42%	39%	36%	36%	37%

Note: The top two positive response options were combined for each question.

Recommendations

- Principals should be encouraged to make every effort to provide opportunities for all stakeholders to complete the School Experience Survey. The higher our response rates are, the more accurate our data will be.

- A districtwide consistent definition of social-emotional learning and the constructs that the school experience survey measures should be agreed upon and disseminated.

- In order to develop and implement plans to address social-emotional learning at the school level, administrators should be provided with professional development regarding how to access, interpret, and analyze school experience survey data.

- Students in middle school should be provided with direct support to assist with their perceptions around self-efficacy.

- In order to address the gap between the African American and Latino students and the Asian and White student groups on the social-emotional learning questions, professional development on culturally and linguistically responsive pedagogical practices should be ongoing.

- Ongoing direct instruction in social-emotional learning should be provided to all students with an emphasis on students in the following subgroups: English Learners, Socio-economically Disadvantaged students, Students with Disabilities, and Foster Youth.

For more information about this Board Informative, please contact the Research & Reporting Branch in the Office of Data and Accountability at (213) 241-5600. For more information about Social-Emotional Learning in our district, please contact Dr. Lori Vollandt at (213) 241-2554.

c: Alma Peña Sanchez
       David Holmquist
       Frances Gipson
       Nicole Elam-Ellis
       Jefferson Crain
       Diane Pappas