# A PAN-CANADIAN ANALYSIS OF SOCIAL-EMOTIONAL LEARNING CURRICULUM OUTCOMES IN ELEMENTARY GRADES

by

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## Abstract

Research over the past few decades has demonstrated the efficacy of tier 1 Social-Emotional Learning (SEL) programs to improve student outcomes including social skills, mental health, and academic outcomes. However, there has been no analysis or evaluation of the current inclusion of SEL-related outcomes in Canadian public school curricula. While SEL has been shown to be effective when implemented with fidelity, the current inclusion of SEL in Canadian curricula may be too scattered and fragmented to lead to consistent implementation or the positive outcomes associated with SEL reported in literature. The purpose of this study was to identify the SEL-related knowledge, skills, attitudes, and behaviours currently represented in Canadian elementary curriculum documents. The analysis was descriptive and deductive and provided insights into the current state of SEL inclusion in Canadian elementary curricula. Qualitative thematic coding was implemented to identify the themes currently addressed in curricula. Results indicated that despite significant variation in each province/territory's approach to curricula, emphasis was placed on teaching students social skills such as prosocial behaviour, conflict resolution, and social cues. All provinces placed the least amount of emphasis on teaching or enforcing attitudes such as optimism, enthusiasm, openness, and gratitude.

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# CHAPTER ONE

## Review of Literature and Theory of Social-Emotional Learning

Social-Emotional Learning (SEL) has become a popular instructional concept for teaching students, primarily at the elementary level, the necessary emotional and social skills they need to succeed in school and life. Much research over the past few decades, including several meta-analyses (see Cipriano et al., 2023; Durlak et al., 2010; Durlak et al., 2011; Taylor et al., 2017) have supported the efficacy of high fidelity SEL instruction, demonstrating that if SEL programs are implemented with fidelity, they can lead to a variety of desirable outcomes in students such as improved mental health, decreased drug use, and lower rates of suicidal ideation. However, despite this promising evidence, there has been little research investigating the fidelity of SEL instruction in Canada, or even the current state of SEL inclusion in Canadian curricula. It is important that curriculum documents include comprehensive, evidence-based content and methods to teach students the knowledge, skills, and attitudes that will prepare them for success in school and life.

### What is SEL?

### General Definition of SEL

Despite the rising popularity of SEL, there has been no clear consensus on a universal definition of the construct or the subsets of knowledge, attitudes, and skills it should comprise. Generally, SEL refers to how students are taught social and emotional skills thought to be needed to foster good mental health and strong social relationships, which are skills they need to succeed in school and life (Collaborative for Academic, Social, and Emotional Learning, 2020). The Collaborative for Academic, Social, and Emotional Learning (CASEL) defines SEL as “the process through which all young people and adults acquire and apply the knowledge, skills, and

attitudes to develop healthy identities, manage emotions and achieve personal and collective goals, feel and show empathy for others, establish and maintain supportive relationships, and make responsible and caring decisions" (Collaborative for Academic, Social, Emotional Learning, 2020, p. 1). Some frameworks of SEL focus on a narrow set of skills, such as emotional awareness, while others also include skills involving executive functioning domains such as attention (Jones & Bouffard, 2012).

**Ambiguity Regarding SEL**

There are currently an abundance of definitions and frameworks of SEL, each one different from the next. While there is often overlap between these frameworks, the terminology used to describe the skills and knowledge that make up SEL varies from one framework to the next, which can lead to significant confusion regarding the meaning of SEL-related terminology (Abrahams et al., 2019) and integration into school curricula. When frameworks are examined against one another, one framework might use a different term to describe the same concept as another framework, or several unique frameworks may use the same term to describe different concepts (Jones et al., 2019). For example, "self-management" and "self-control" may be two different terms that refer to the same concept, while the term "self-regulation" may refer to emotional regulation in one framework and regulation of attention and behaviour in another framework. This leads to a lack of clarity among researchers, curriculum writers, educators, and parents regarding what skills are included in SEL, what is important, and how different skills are related to each other. Some educators use SEL terminology to try to lend validity to their own goals and aims in the educational setting, which further convolutes the meaning of the construct and takes away from the validity of evidence-based SEL instruction (Finn & Hess, 2019). For example, a school may promote values such as inclusivity and anti-racism by putting up bulletin

boards about inclusivity and using teaching materials with characters from diverse backgrounds, and say that they are implementing SEL. While inclusivity and diversity are incredibly important values to promote in the school environment, they do not necessarily fall under the umbrella of SEL. Without a clear consensus on the definition of SEL, it risks becoming an educational buzzword that is used to refer to so many different concepts that it fails to retain any meaning.

**Jones et al.'s (2021) Framework of SEL**

In an attempt to catalogue the variety of meanings of SEL, Jones et al. (2021) developed a framework of SEL based on a comprehensive qualitative analysis of several existing SEL programs, frameworks, and models. Their goal in creating this framework was to describe the breadth of skills and knowledge included in current SEL frameworks and programs. As such, the framework produced by their analysis is more comprehensive than any other SEL framework, as it incorporates facets of SEL identified by several dozen other frameworks and programs. Based on their analysis, they identified six broad domains of SEL and 23 sub-domains. Table 1 provides a summary of each of the 23 sub-domains; the full coding guidelines for SEL programs can be found in Appendix C of Jones et al.'s (2021) document beginning on page 525. It is important to note that Jones et al.'s framework describes the current skills and knowledge included in SEL programs across the United States; the purpose of their study was not to determine what skills or knowledge *should* be included in SEL instruction. Thus, while this framework is incredibly helpful to examine the content currently being taught as SEL, not all SEL constructs are necessarily evidence-based simply because they are included in this framework.

## Evidence-Based SEL

### Evidence-Based Practice: A Definition

In schools, educational staff use a variety of strategies to teach students curricular content, provide intervention when a student is struggling to meet outcomes and manage problem behaviours (Thompson et al., 2023). However, not every strategy used by educational staff is effective, even if it seems logical. In fact, some teaching practices are widely used in schools despite research that has shown that they do not lead to improved student outcomes, such as the *Reading Recovery* program (Tunmer et al., 2013). There is no specific definition for evidence-based practice in education, but the disciplines of school, developmental, and child clinical psychology contribute valuable research about learning and child development to the field of education, therefore, the American Psychological Association's (APA) definition of evidence-based practice in psychology (EBPP) can be applied to the education context. The APA defines EBPP as "the integration of the best available research with clinical expertise in the context of patient characteristics, culture, and preferences" (APA, 2006, p. 273). They identify two facets of EBPP: treatment efficacy (i.e., the evaluation of whether the treatment produces the desired outcome) and clinical utility (i.e., the feasibility of implementing the treatment or program with fidelity). When a program does not have sufficient research to support its efficacy, or when research suggests it is not efficacious, the program is considered to be not evidence-based. The *Reading Recovery* program is a prime example of a program that is not evidence-based; whereas it may have clinical utility, it does not lead to improved student outcomes in literacy (APA, 2006; Tunmer et al., 2013). This illustrates an important consideration regarding teaching strategies: just because something is widely used or accepted does not mean it is evidence-based. Many well-meaning teachers and educational staff continue to use non-evidence-based programs

such as *Reading Recovery* with their students' best interests in mind, as they are not aware that their teaching methods are not effective (Slavin et al., 2011). For this reason, it is important to thoroughly examine the evidence behind any new curriculum, intervention or teaching strategy before implementing it widely in classrooms. With the increasing popularity of SEL in educational institutions worldwide, it is especially important to establish clarity about what SEL is and rely on research literature to guide practitioners and educators to the most evidence-based resources available.

To examine the research evidence supporting a particular program, it is important to know which research designs can aid identification of evidence-based programs. The APA (2006) outlines several types of research designs that can be used to evaluate a program for efficacy and clinical utility but highlights the importance of randomized controlled trials (RCTs) to establish a causal relationship between the treatment and outcome. Meta-analyses are also useful for determining the evidence base for a particular program or treatment. These studies systematically analyze the results of numerous previous studies and are considered to be highly reliable due to the wide scope of participants and research contexts they include.

In the context of SEL implementation in schools, it is especially important to consider both facets of EBPP. If a program has ample research to support its efficacy but it is complicated and arduous to implement in schools, then it is likely not going to be a good choice, as it is unlikely to be implemented with the fidelity needed to lead to improved student outcomes. Alternatively, if a program is simple for teachers to implement in the classroom but does not have evidence to support its efficacy, it also will not lead to improved student outcomes. It is important that any SEL instruction included in curricula has research to support both its efficacy and its clinical utility.

## Evidence Regarding SEL Programs

There is substantial research literature outlining the positive effects, both immediate and distal, that SEL can have on students' functioning. Over the past few decades, research has supported the efficacy of some SEL programs leading to improvements in social and emotional skills, which can then lead to positive outcomes such as better mental health and academic performance over time (Cipriano, 2023). A meta-analysis of 213 SEL programs involving over 270,000 students explored outcomes of universal SEL programs, which are programs applied to all students at the tier 1 level of the multi-tiered systems of education (MTSS) model (Durlak et al., 2011). Their results showed that programs can lead to a wide variety of positive outcomes when implemented with efficacy. The authors examined six student outcomes in this meta-analysis: social and emotional skills, attitudes toward self and others, positive social behaviours, conduct problems, emotional distress, and academic performance. Forty-seven percent of the studies included in the meta-analysis used randomized designs, and they included studies that included students from kindergarten through grade 12. Fifteen percent of the studies collected follow-up data at least six months post-intervention. The study found SEL programs that were implemented with fidelity led to statistically significant improvements in all six areas of student outcomes. The largest effect size was for social-emotional skill performance, at 0.69, which included skills such as emotion recognition and regulation, empathy, and problem-solving skills. Additionally, the effect size for academic performance was 0.28, which translated to an 11-percentile gain in academic achievement. A standardized effect size of 0.28 is considered moderate (Cohen, 1992; Funder & Ozer, 2019), and an 11-percentile improvement in academic achievement can make a difference in a student's abilities (Durlak et al., 2011). All gains remained statistically significant for a minimum of six months following program

implementation. These outcomes were assessed using a variety of means including parent or teacher report or rating, self-report or rating, school tests and tasks, and student records.

Taylor et al.'s (2017) meta-analysis examined 82 studies of SEL programs involving over 97,400 students. Sixty-three of the studies used a randomized design and included universal SEL programs targeting students in any grade from kindergarten through grade 12. Their study examined seven dependent variables: social and emotional skills, attitudes toward self, others, and school, positive social behaviours, academic performance, conduct problems, emotional distress, and substance use. Results showed significant improvements in SEL program participants compared to those in the control condition, with mean effect sizes ranging from 0.13 to 0.33. The authors also noted that there were significant positive benefits for SEL participants in all seven outcomes measured for at least 56 weeks (i.e., 13 months) and up to 195 weeks (i.e., 3.75 years) following program implementation. A subsample of studies included post-implementation data up to 936 weeks (i.e., 18 years) following program implementation. In follow-up studies between 572 and 936 weeks (i.e., about 11 years to 18 years) following the SEL intervention, participants demonstrated lower rates of dropping out from high school, higher rates of high school graduation, higher rates of college attendance and college graduation, safer sexual behaviours, lower rates of STD diagnoses, higher socioeconomic status, fewer arrests, fewer clinical mental health disorders, and fewer substance use diagnoses. Taylor et al.'s (2017) meta-analysis demonstrates that even outcomes with small effect sizes can make significant practical differences in the lives of students.

Another example of SEL benefits lasting many years post-implementation is the Good Behaviour Game (Barrish et al., 1969). The Good Behaviour Game is an SEL program for students in early elementary school which focuses on reducing aggressive and/or disruptive

classroom behaviour and helping students learn appropriate behaviour (Wilcox et al., 2008). In Wilcox et al.'s (2008) study, a randomized trial of the Good Behaviour Game was conducted on grade one students across 19 schools, with a total of 1196 participants. Follow-up data were collected 15 years after program implementation. Results found that students assigned to the treatment condition in grade one showed lower rates of suicidality into young adulthood compared to students in the control group. Students in the treatment condition were half as likely to report experiencing suicidal ideation at follow-up than students in the control condition. This is another example of the potential powerful effects of SEL instruction; whereas the Good Behaviour Game did not teach directly about suicidality, it helped students to develop behaviour regulation skills that were hypothesized to benefit them into early adulthood and beyond.

Recent studies also show additional benefits of SEL programming. Sousa et al. (2023) found that SEL programs can effectively decrease social withdrawal and feelings of social anxiety, especially for students who felt that they had a positive relationship with their teacher. A study by Soto et al. (2022) found that SEL-related skills were associated with positive outcomes in academic engagement, school grades, peer acceptance, friendship quality, relationships with parents, social responsibility values, volunteering, and increased life satisfaction, and lower levels of depression and anxiety. Additionally, students' expression of sadness was negatively associated with their level of academic engagement, and students' experience and expression of anger was negatively associated with their level of positive peer experiences (Kwon et al., 2022). Negative peer experiences were also predictive of poorer academic achievement and engagement (Kwon et al., 2022). These studies show the importance of promoting social and emotional skills in the classroom, as these skills lead to better experiences with peers, better mental health, and better academic functioning.

## Impact of SEL on Teachers

The potential benefits of implementing SEL instruction in schools is even more far-reaching than the direct benefits to the students themselves. Research is showing that SEL can also positively affect the lives of teachers (Collie et al., 2012). In Collie et al.'s (2012) study, teachers who felt confident and competent implementing SEL interventions with their students were less likely to experience stress related to students' behaviour and discipline and had higher rates of teaching efficacy and job satisfaction.

## S.A.F.E Criteria

For SEL programs to result in positive short-term and long-term outcomes, it is important that the programs being implemented are effective and implemented with fidelity. In their meta-analysis of SEL programs, Durlak et al. (2010; 2011) identified four characteristics of effective SEL programs, which can be represented by the acronym S.A.F.E. The first component of the S.A.F.E. acronym is *Sequenced*, which refers to the order in which skills are taught. Skills should be taught in a scaffolded, stepwise manner, as teachers connect new skills to previous knowledge and teach skills in a way that students can easily follow along and replicate. Manualized approaches to SEL programming can be helpful to achieve this goal, as teachers are not left with the task of discerning the sequence in which skills should be taught.

The second component of the S.A.F.E. acronym is *Active*; teachers should be teaching new skills in an active way, allowing time for students to practice and master each skill (Durlak et al., 2010; 2011). Simply being told about the SEL strategies is not sufficient for students to learn the strategies, use them in appropriate situations, and experience the associated benefits. Students should be given time to practice not only the skills themselves, but also to practice identifying situations in which the skills will be useful. This will allow students to have enough

mastery of the skills that they can easily apply them in real-world situations, which is the goal of SEL.

The third component is *Focused*, which refers to whether the SEL program contains a component focused on skill development (Durlak et al, 2010; 2011). If the program just teaches broadly about mental health or social relationships without focusing on teaching concrete skills, it will not lead to the desired outcomes. Effective SEL programs should focus not only on giving information, but on focusing on specific, learnable skills. Taylor et al. (2017) also found that positive long-term follow-up effects of SEL program implementation were predicted by skill development rather than students' attitudes. It is important that SEL programs focus on teaching students specific skills rather than trying to enforce attitudes about social and emotional development.

The final component is *Explicit*, which refers to the manner of teaching and assessment. Students should receive explicit information about what skills they are expected to learn, and teachers should have clear information about the objectives they are teaching and assessing (Durlak et al., 2010; 2011). For a program to be effective, there should be no confusion about the purpose or goals of the content. When programs meet all four of these criteria, they can be considered S.A.F.E. programs. Programs that meet the S.A.F.E. criteria lead to the positive outcomes associated with effective SEL programs, whereas programs that do not meet these criteria were found to be less effective (Durlak et al., 2011). These four criteria involve strategies of scaffolded instruction that support student learning in a variety of subject areas and should be considered by curriculum designers when choosing a program or method of delivering SEL instruction.

In Durlak et al.'s 2011 meta-analysis, SEL programs that met S.A.F.E. criteria were significantly more effective than programs that did not meet S.A.F.E. criteria. In all six outcomes of SEL examined, programs that met S.A.F.E. criteria had effect sizes ranging from 0.24 to 0.69, all of which were statistically significant. Alternatively, programs that did not meet S.A.F.E. criteria had effect sizes ranging from 0.01 to 0.26, and only three of the six outcomes had effect sizes that were statistically significant. An updated meta-analysis by Cipriano et al. (2023) identified that 62.7% of programs in studies reviewed met the S.A.F.E. criteria; programs that met S.A.F.E. criteria had significantly better outcomes as compared to those that did not. It is not enough to say that SEL itself is evidence-based; SEL programs must be well defined and implemented with fidelity to lead to the desired student outcomes.

**Additional Considerations for Evidence-Based SEL**

It is important that SEL instruction is implemented with fidelity, and it is just as important that the content of instruction meets the needs of the students. SEL content should be developmentally appropriate for the age of the students to whom it is delivered (Jones & Doolittle, 2017). A child who is seven years old cannot be expected to achieve the same outcomes in emotional regulation or social problem solving as a child who is 10 years old; it is developmentally appropriate for younger children to have a lower capacity for these skills than older children. Another example is executive functioning; a younger child's brain has not developed to the same extent as the brain of an older child, and thus it is developmentally appropriate for younger children to have weaker skills in this area than older children. It is important that program content and outcome expectations are appropriate to the developmental stage of the students to whom it is administered. SEL instruction is cumulative over time; earlier skills act as a basis for the development of later skills (Jones & Doolittle, 2017). To date, there is

no evidence-based learning trajectory for social-emotional skill instruction through childhood. Whereas SEL programs are designed to strengthen and improve students' social and emotional skills, SEL should be implemented with consideration of child development; an SEL program cannot reasonably be expected to improve students' skills beyond what is developmentally possible for their age.

Another important factor for efficacious SEL implementation is teacher competence in SEL-related skills (Abry, Rimm-Kaufman., & Curby, 2017; Jennings., & Greenberg, 2009; Merritt et al., 2012). If the teacher who implements SEL instruction lacks social and emotional skills themselves or is impacted by stress such that their social and emotional capacity is lowered, they may not be able to support their students' development of social and emotional skills (Jones & Doolittle, 2017). Just like a math teacher needs to have a comprehensive understanding of mathematical principles and skills to help their students master math concepts, it is important for teachers to be competent in their own social and emotional skills to foster these skills in their students. Effective SEL interventions often include professional development for teachers, which allows them to develop their own SEL skills and gain a comprehensive understanding of the program prior to implementation (McClelland et al., 2017). When teachers have developed their own competence in SEL skills, they are able to model these skills both in and out of specific SEL teaching sessions.

## Implementing SEL in Schools

### Practical Considerations for SEL Implementation in Schools

Effective implementation of SEL in schools is not limited to a specific lesson plan or program but should rather infiltrate all aspects of the school environment. The first step in effective SEL implementation in schools is to improve school structures, which may involve

creating and updating school policies to align with established social and emotional objectives, setting clear behavioural expectations for students and staff, and outlining procedures for discipline when rules are broken (Greenberg et al., 2017; Oberle et al., 2016). This process ensures that the goals of SEL are part of the school culture and are being reinforced outside of specific teaching times. These skills should be modelled by all staff in interactions with each other and with students (Waasdorp et al., 2012).

It is equally important to ensure that teachers are well-equipped to teach the SEL skills outlined in the curriculum; if teachers have not yet mastered these skills themselves, they will not be able to teach these skills to students (Collie, 2017). Teachers should receive specific training, ideally in their preservice education, that targets SEL competencies so that they are well equipped to teach these skills to students (Schonert-Reichl et al., 2015). Aligning school policies and teacher education with the goals of SEL will create a cohesive learning environment conducive to fostering a variety of social and emotional skills. Durlak et al. (2011) noted in their meta-analysis that teachers and other school staff were able to effectively implement SEL programs; it is not necessary to bring in an outside mental health professional or non-school-based clinician to implement these programs. This finding indicates that with good teacher training, effective SEL led by regular classroom teachers and modeled by all school staff can lead to improved student outcomes. Research has shown that SEL programs, when implemented by classroom teachers with fidelity, can lead to "real-world" change in elementary school classrooms (Gaspar et al., 2024).

Teachers can receive high-quality SEL training in a specific program from the program developers (Domitrovich et al., 2017). This training typically includes pre-program training to familiarize teachers with the program, the psychological theory behind it, and important practical

implementation considerations. Training also often includes ongoing consultation between teachers and trainers to troubleshoot problems in the classroom and continue building skills and strategies to use in the classroom.

In addition to creating a cohesive learning environment, it is important for schools to choose to implement evidence-based SEL programs that support outlined curriculum goals. These programs should align with Durlak et al.'s (2011) *S.A.F.E.* criteria for SEL programs and should be developmentally appropriate for the age of the students. Effective SEL implementation often embeds SEL content into other subject areas, such as Math, Social Studies, and English Language Arts (Greenberg et al., 2017). This gives students the opportunity to practice and use their skills in a variety of contexts.

## Criticisms of SEL

### Barriers to Implementation in Schools

One of the largest barriers to SEL implementation in schools is the lack of clarity about what SEL actually is. If teachers are going to teach something well, they need to have a solid understanding of what they are supposed to teach. Without a universal definition or construct of SEL, it is challenging for teachers to find clear and consistent information about what they should be teaching in the classroom (Jones & Doolittle, 2017; Shriver & Weissberg, 2020).

SEL is typically delivered in a programmatic manner; instead of having teachers come up with their own material based on curriculum outcomes, schools can purchase SEL programs for teachers to implement in their classrooms, such as the MindUp or PATHS curricula. This provides an advantage, as it gives teachers access to a manualized, evidence-based intervention for their students. However, it is not usually as simple as handing a teacher a book of lessons; high-quality SEL implementation requires training before the implementation, often by the

program developers (Durlak, 2016; Domitrovich et al., 2017; Kratochwill & Shernoff, 2004). This requires schools to set aside time and money for teachers to become trained in the program, and not all schools may have the resources available to provide this training for their teachers. Additionally, teachers are already incredibly busy, and some may feel overwhelmed by having yet another task put on their plate (Creagh et al., 2023).

Another barrier is the disconnect present between academic research and educators' practice (Joyce & Cartwright, 2020). Academic research is typically written in field-specific jargon and hidden behind a paywall, which makes it inaccessible for the majority of the population. It is unfortunate that so much high-quality research about child development and education is inaccessible to educators, policymakers, curriculum developers, and other professionals who could put such research into practice (Shonkoff & Bales, 2011). When research findings are not translated into lay language and made accessible to the policymakers, real change fails to happen (Shonkoff & Bales, 2011). If schools enthusiastically buy into the SEL fad without understanding the research base, they risk implementing a jumbled assortment of vague SEL concepts without any real goal or impact (Greenberg et al., 2017). Additionally, the structured laboratory setting where researchers develop effective SEL programs is a very different context than a bustling classroom with one teacher and twenty-five or thirty students (Joyce & Cartwright, 2020). While a certain intervention may yield stellar results in research trials, teachers may not have the time, assistance, or resources to implement the program with the fidelity needed to lead to improved student outcomes (Kratochwill & Shernoff, 2004). Even the most evidence-based SEL program may fail to yield any results if the implementation is not executed well (Durlak, 2016, Jones et al., 2018).

## Assessment of SEL Outcomes

Another challenge facing the field of SEL is a lack of consensus on tools to measure SEL improvements and outcomes (Abrahams et al., 2019). Likert scales are frequently used to assess students' social and emotional development, but some researchers have expressed concerns about the ability of a Likert scale to accurately capture a child's achievement and development with social and emotional skills. Response bias and language development are just two of the possible barriers to accessing an accurate result from a Likert scale (Abrahams et al., 2019). There is also a distinction between whether a student "can" or "will" spontaneously exhibit a social emotional skill in a social context that is not captured by conventional measurement tools (Abrahams et al., 2019). For example, just because a student has previously demonstrated the ability to engage in a specific social skill does not mean that they will use that skill unprompted in a social setting. This distinction adds further confusion to the matter of measurement of SEL outcomes. It may be best to gather data from a variety of sources, such as using a combination of self-report, teacher report, parent report, classroom observation by a third party such as the school psychologist, and Likert scales to gather a fuller picture of the skill set that a specific child possesses (Abrahams et al., 2019). Of course, it may not be practical or feasible to use several methods of data collection for progress monitoring during a universal, tier one classroom SEL intervention, so it will be important to further explore accurate and practical methods to collect individual student data on SEL-related skills.

## Unfounded Grandiose Expectations of SEL

While there is much research supporting the efficacy of many SEL programs, some scholars are critical toward SEL. Some feel that harm can be done when schools prioritize SEL outcomes over academics, resulting in a school atmosphere that is "family-like" but does not set

students up to succeed well in academics (Finn & Hess, 2019). As the SEL movement has gained popularity, people have begun to define it differently, twisting the definition to meet the goals of their school or community, resulting in a concept that may be too vague to be helpful in any meaningful way (Finn & Hess, 2019; Shriver & Weissberg, 2020; Starr, 2019). For example, a school may emphasize building students' self-esteem or promoting an inclusive school environment and say they are teaching SEL. As a result, some people have started to treat SEL as a solution for all of society's problems, including racism, mental illness, violence, and more (Shriver & Weissberg, 2020). Whereas there is evidence to support the claim that evidence-based SEL programs can act as a preventative tool for issues such as mental health disorders (Durlak et al., 2011, Taylor et al., 2017, Wilcox et al., 2008), SEL is by no means a cure-all for the sum of society's ills. It is simply one tool that can be used to promote positive social skills and mental health as fundamental components of healthy child development, which in turn are associated with benefits across the life span.

## The Canadian Context

### Canadian Curricula

In Canada, each of the ten provinces and three territories oversee their own education departments and curricula; there are no nationally prescribed curriculum outcomes, which has resulted in significant variation between regional approaches to education (Lu & McLean, 2011; Robinson et al., 2024). Nunavut and Yukon borrow curricula from other provinces, and The Northwest Territories borrows some of their curricula from other provinces and also has some of their own unique curricula. Curriculum guides can be found on each provincial and territorial government website and are typically organized by grade and subject. Curriculum guides typically provide a list of outcomes that educators are expected to teach to their classes by the

end of the school year. While provinces and territories may provide other materials such as sample lessons, books, curriculum theory or teaching materials, the curriculum guide is simply an organized list of the outcomes or learning goals (i.e., skills, knowledge, and attitudes) that students should master by the time they complete their grade.

Because education is the responsibility of the provincial and territorial governments rather than the federal government, there is no single framework for curriculum documents across the country; thus, there is significant variability in the length, content, time recommendations, and organization of curricula between provinces and territories (Lu & McLean, 2011; Robinson et al., 2024). Most Canadian curriculum documents are generally organized into four levels, from most broad to most narrow. To provide illustration, the following example is taken from Saskatchewan Grade 1 Physical Education curriculum document (2010).

The first level of curriculum is the broad school subject, such as Health. The second level is the unit or theme of study, such as "Relationships" (Saskatchewan Ministry of Education, 2010). There are several units within each subject. The third level of curriculum is the outcome, sometimes called a general curriculum outcome (GCO) or general learning outcome (GLO). This level provides more guidance on the instructional goal, such as "Communicate and demonstrate an understanding of self-control, a consideration for others, and a respect for differences among people (e.g., abilities, interests, likes and dislikes, gender, culture) while participating in physical education settings)" (Saskatchewan Ministry of Education, 2010, p. 41). Finally, the narrowest level of specificity in curriculum documents is the indicator, sometimes referred to as the specific curriculum outcome (SCO) or specific learning outcome (SLO). Indicators are the specific assessable skills, knowledge, or competencies that students must display to have

achieved mastery in the area. Within the subject, unit, and outcome described above, an example of an indicator is: “Describe what it looks like and sounds like when people are being respectful and showing consideration for others, while participating in a movement activity” (Saskatchewan Ministry of Education, 2010, p. 41). This general organization from broad subject area to narrow learning outcome is present in some form in all Canadian provincial and territorial curriculum documents, but the categories often use different names and terminology.

**Current Inclusion of SEL in Canadian Curricula**

SEL content has been included in Canadian educational curricula for many years. However, there is no specific subject area or set curriculum for SEL-related outcomes and instead they are integrated into other subject areas. SEL-related outcomes are scattered throughout curricula, especially in Health, Physical Education, English Language Arts, Social Studies, and Religious Education subject areas. However, teachers may choose to incorporate SEL content into any subject area. There has been no systematic analysis of whether the current inclusion of SEL-related outcomes in Canadian curricula is effective in improving student outcomes such as social skill development, emotional regulation skills, or academic achievement (Whitley & Gooderham, 2015). Further, there has been no synthesis of what Canadian provinces and territories are trying to achieve through the implementation of SEL curricula. Although Canadian provinces and territories include SEL in their curriculum documents, their manner of doing so often pieces together aspects of different packaged SEL programs and often appear to be an afterthought or an “add-on” to core content areas, especially because SEL does not have its own separate subject or curriculum (Whitley & Gooderham, 2015). The current scattered inclusion of SEL content across curricula may not be comprehensive or coordinated enough to be

truly effective, and there is currently no research to show whether the aspects that are included align with evidence-based, effective means of delivering SEL instruction.

**Public Health Approach to SEL**

Many Canadians are currently living without access to a regular health care provider, as there is presently a widespread shortage of primary care physicians. As of 2019, 14.5% of Canadians aged 12 and older did not have access to a primary care physician (Statistics Canada, 2021). This means that a substantial portion of the population does not currently have easy access to health care, and this trend is likely to continue unless drastic changes occur. As many families do not have access to a family doctor, it is more important than ever to put universal preventative measures in place to promote health and well-being.

Approximately 92% of students in Canada attend public schools (Statistics Canada, 2021), meaning that teachers are the only professionals who have regular access to nearly all children in Canada. Children spend a large portion of their lives in school, which makes school an ideal location for universal preventative interventions to promote well-being (Domitrovich et al., 2017). This puts teachers in the best position to implement universal evidence-based SEL programming with the goal of improving the well-being of the student population and contributing to healthy child development and the prevention future health problems (Greenberg et al., 2017). Previous research has shown that SEL has the potential to lead to improved physical and mental health outcomes when implemented with fidelity (Durlak et al., 2011; Taylor et al., 2017). If SEL is taught effectively across Canada, it may support the health and well-being of Canadians and relieve some of the current burden on the health care system, alleviating some of the urgent need for regular health care providers (Greenberg et al., 2017). Since there are not currently enough family doctors across Canada, it is possible that many health

problems in children are going undetected, such as developmental delays/disorders, signs of abuse, and early indicators of mental health problems such as anxiety. Because of the current state of the health care system, it is especially critical that teachers know what early signs to look for and are well equipped to deliver preventative health education to all students. Whereas SEL is not a panacea for all health problems or a substitute for medical care, evidence-based preventative SEL instruction has the potential to be an effective component of an integrated provincial systems approach to supporting children and subsequently ease some of the burden on the health care system by teaching children how to make healthy choices and learn skills that will promote holistic health across the lifespan (Durlak et al., 2011, Taylor et al., 2017, Wilcox et al., 2008).

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# CHAPTER TWO

## A Pan-Canadian Analysis of Social-Emotional Learning Curriculum Outcomes in Elementary Grades

Social-Emotional Learning (SEL) has become a popular instructional concept for teaching students the necessary emotional and social skills they need to succeed in school and life. SEL generally refers to education in the social and emotional skills needed to foster good mental health and strong social relationships, which are skills necessary for success in school and life (Collaborative for Academic, Social, and Emotional Learning, 2020). There is substantial research literature outlining the positive effects, both immediate and distal, that well defined and appropriately implemented SEL programs can have on students' lives. SEL programs have been shown to lead to improved emotion regulation, empathy, problem-solving skills, and academic achievement in the short term, and benefits such as increased rates of high school and college graduation and lower rates of STD diagnoses, arrests, substance use diagnoses, suicidality, and clinical mental health disorders in the long term (Cipriano et al., 2023; Durlak et al., 2011; Taylor et al., 2017 ; Soto et al., 2024, Wilcox et al., 2008).

Despite the rising popularity and promising research about SEL, there has been no clear consensus on a definition of the construct. There is currently an abundance of definitions and frameworks of SEL, each one different from the next. While there is often substantial overlap between these frameworks, the terminology used to describe the skills and knowledge included in SEL varies from one framework to the next, which can lead to significant confusion regarding the meaning of SEL-related terminology (Abrahams et al., 2019). Some educators may also misunderstand what SEL is or use SEL terminology to try to lend validity to their own goals and aims in the educational setting, which further convolutes the meaning of the construct and takes

away from the validity of evidence-based SEL instruction (Finn & Hess, 2019). Without a clear consensus on a definition of SEL, it risks becoming an educational buzzword that is used to refer to so many different concepts that it fails to retain any meaning.

With the goal of cataloguing the variety of meanings of SEL, Jones et al. (2021) developed a framework of SEL based on a comprehensive qualitative analysis of several existing SEL programs, frameworks, and models. This framework organizes and describes the breadth of skills and knowledge included in current SEL frameworks and programs. This synthesized framework is organized into six broad domains: cognitive, emotion, social, values, perspectives, and identity. Each broad domain has three to five sub-domains which further categorize SEL concepts. Table 1 provides a summary of each of the 23 sub-domains; the full coding guidelines can be found in Appendix C of Jones et al.'s (2021) document beginning on page 525.

**Research on Canadian Health and Physical Education Curricula**

Robinson et al. (2019) conducted a descriptive qualitative analysis of the sexual health education outcomes within Canada's elementary health education curricula. For their analysis, they used UNESCO's 2018 framework containing eight key recommendations for sexual health education outcomes. They first collected all the specific curriculum outcomes from every provincial and territorial elementary health curriculum document and organized these outcomes in an Excel spreadsheet. Each outcome was then compared to UNESCO's framework; if an outcome contained at least one of the key recommendations indicated by UNESCO, it was highlighted for further examination. All highlighted outcomes were then analyzed to identify the specific topic addressed within that outcome. Once this process was complete, the researchers were able to describe the ways in which the recommendations suggested by the UNESCO framework were present in Canadian elementary health curriculum documents.

Kilborn et al. (2016) conducted a qualitative analysis of Canadian physical education curricula with the aim of synthesizing and analyzing the current topics and outcomes represented in Canadian physical education and health curricula in grades one through nine. Only primary curriculum documents were used in their analysis; secondary documents such as teaching strategies or evaluation tools were not included. Their analysis included 3,134 specific learning outcomes from all provinces across Canada. All outcomes were organized and coded in an Excel spreadsheet. Their coding process was inductive; they read each outcome and applied a descriptive and interpretive code. This process allowed them to develop their own coding framework for the data, and their framework included the three broad themes of fitness, movement skills, and healthy living. Frequency statistics were calculated to describe the distribution of each code within each province.

**Canadian Educational and Health Context**

In Canada, each of the ten provinces and three territories oversee their own education departments and curricula; there are no nationally prescribed curricula, which has resulted in significant variation between regional approaches to education (Lu & McLean, 2011; Robinson et al., 2024). There is significant variability in the length, content, time recommendations, and organization of curricula between provinces and territories. Most Canadian curriculum documents are generally organized into levels, from the broad subject area to specific learning outcomes. This general organization from broad subject area to narrow learning outcome is present in some form in all Canadian provincial and territorial curriculum documents, but the categories often use different names and terminology across provinces and territories.

SEL content has been included in Canadian educational curricula for many years. However, there is no specific subject area or set curriculum for SEL-related outcomes; instead,

they are integrated into other subject areas. SEL-related outcomes are scattered throughout curriculum subjects and can be found most frequently in Health, Physical Education, English Language Arts, Social Studies, and Religious Education subject areas. There has been no systematic analysis of whether the current inclusion of SEL-related outcomes in Canadian curricula is effective in improving student outcomes such as social skill development, emotional regulation skills, or academic achievement (Whitley & Gooderham, 2015). Further, there has been no synthesis of what Canadian provinces and territories are trying to achieve through implementation of SEL curricula. The current scattered inclusion of SEL content across curricula may not be comprehensive or coordinated enough to be truly effective, and there is currently no research to show whether the aspects that are included align with evidence-based, effective means of delivering SEL instruction.

Because effective SEL implementation is associated with long-term physical and mental health benefits (Cipriano et al., 2023; Durlak et al., 2011; Taylor et al., 2017; Soto et al., 2024; Wilcox et al., 2008), SEL has the potential to be a powerful preventative health tool, which may be especially useful given the current state of access to health care across Canada. Many Canadians are currently living without access to a regular health care provider, as there is presently a widespread shortage of primary care physicians. As of 2019, 14.5% of Canadians aged 12 and older did not have access to a primary care physician (Statistics Canada, 2021). Since approximately 92% of students in Canada attend public schools (Statistics Canada, 2021), teachers are the only professionals who have regular access to nearly all children in Canada. Children spend a large portion of their lives in school, which makes school in ideal location for preventative interventions to promote well-being (Domitrovich et al., 2017). Public schools have a long history of taking effective active roles in promoting child health (Pulimeno et al., 2020).

This puts teachers in the best position to implement universal SEL programming with the goal of improving the well-being of the student population and preventing future health problems (Greenberg et al., 2017). If SEL is taught effectively across Canada, it may support the health and well-being of Canadians and relieve some of the current burden on the health care system, alleviating some of the urgent need for regular health care providers (Greenberg et al., 2017).

Since there are not currently enough family doctors across Canada, it is possible that many health problems in children are going undetected, such as developmental delays/disorders, signs of abuse, and early indicators of mental health problems such as anxiety (Greenberg et al., 2017, Li et al., 2023). Because of the current state of the health care system, it is especially critical that teachers know what early signs to look for and are well equipped to deliver preventative health education to all students. Whereas SEL is not a panacea for all health problems or a substitute for medical care, evidence-based, preventative SEL instruction has the potential to ease some of the burden on the health care system by teaching children how to make healthy choices and learn skills that will promote holistic health across the lifespan (Durlak et al., 2011; Greenberg et al., 2017; Taylor et al., 2017; Wilcox et al., 2008).

Given the benefits associated with effective SEL instruction and the current landscape of healthcare in Canada, it is more important than ever that all Canadian children have access to evidence-based instruction that prepares and empowers them to use skills and make choices that will support healthy development. To ensure that effective SEL is being implemented in classrooms across Canada, it is important to first examine the current landscape of SEL instruction in Canada. The present study aimed to examine current Canadian provincial and territorial curricula in a range of subjects to analyze the inclusion of outcomes related to SEL.

The present study was exploratory and descriptive. Jones et al.'s (2021) six broad domains of SEL were used to synthesize the current inclusion of SEL-related outcomes in Canadian elementary curricula. The analysis identified percentage frequencies of inclusion of each domain both across Canada and in each individual province or territory. Based on the national average inclusion of each domain, individual provincial and territorial differences were identified based on the method outlined by Jones et al. (2021).

## Method

### Data Collection

The present study was a descriptive, deductive, qualitative analysis of the inclusion of SEL-related specific learning outcomes (SLOs) in Canadian elementary school curricula. A similar approach was used by Robinson et al. (2019) and Kilborn et al. (2016) to evaluate aspects of the Canadian health and physical education curricula. All Canadian public education curriculum documents are publicly available on provincial or territorial government websites. A search was conducted to obtain public curriculum documents from each Canadian province and territory in the areas of Health, Physical Education, English Language Arts, and Social Studies for grades Kindergarten through six. Newfoundland and Labrador offer a public Religion curriculum and Quebec offers a public Ethics curriculum; these were included in the analysis as well. Any curricula developed by private educational institutions were not included in the analysis. Each curriculum document was given a unique numeric code for identification and was organized into a comprehensive table of contents for easy retrieval. Each title in the table of contents was assigned an individual live link to the web version of that specific curriculum document. Only the curriculum materials that were in use at the time of data collection (June 2023) were included in the analysis; past iterations of curricula or updated iterations that were

released after June 2023 were not included in the analysis. Since data collection, Alberta has updated their Kindergarten to grade 12 social studies curriculum, New Brunswick has updated their Kindergarten to grade two "You and Your World" curriculum, and Ontario has updated their grades one to eight English Language Arts curriculum. Nunavut and Yukon borrowed their curriculum documents for these subjects from other provinces, therefore these territories did not have unique curriculum documents to use in the analysis. Yukon uses the British Columbia curriculum, with some adaptations to make the material more culturally relevant (Government of Yukon, n.d.). Nunavut uses curriculum from Alberta, Saskatchewan, Manitoba, and the Northwest Territories (Nunavut Department of Education, 2019). All curricula used in this analysis is listed and linked in Appendix B with the publication date, if available.

In most cases, the full curriculum guide was available, so these documents were used for the analysis. In some cases, such as when a province or territory was in the process of revising the curriculum document, a full curriculum guide was not available and instead the province provided a curriculum framework or summary document. In these instances, the most comprehensive curriculum document available at the time of data collection was used. The analysis for the present study only examined the general curriculum outcomes and specific learning outcomes put forward by each province; secondary resources such as teaching strategies, instructional samples, suggested programs, assessment guides or brochures were not examined.

Specific curriculum outcomes were organized into an excel file to prepare for further analysis. Each subject area in each province was assigned a separate worksheet, and all the curriculum outcomes across all grades in that subject within that province's curricula were included in the worksheet (e.g., the Manitoba English Language Arts curriculum outcomes for

kindergarten through grade six were included in one worksheet). Only curricula for grades kindergarten through six were included in the analysis, even if a curriculum document included curricula for middle school or high school grades as well. Descriptive information about the curriculum outcomes were organized into spreadsheet columns including grade level, numerical table of contents code, subject area, specific outcome code (if applicable), section or unit, specific learning outcome, and general learning outcome. Each specific learning outcome was assigned its own row. See Table 1 for an illustration using an example taken from the Ontario Health and Physical Education Curriculum (2010).

**Measure**

The coding manual used in the present study was created by Jones et al. (2021). While Jones et al. (2021) examined SEL programs and theoretical models of SEL, the present study took their coding manual and applied it to Canadian elementary curricula to identify and describe the facets of SEL that are being taught to Canadian students without any required adaptations. The analysis procedure was similar to the method and procedure completed by Robinson et al. (2019) in their examination of the alignment of sexual health curriculum outcomes with the 2019 UNESCO framework. In the present study, each specific learning outcome was individually examined and coded according to the Jones et al.'s (2021) framework of SEL. Each of Jones et al.'s (2021) six broad domains consist of three to five sub-domains, and broad domains did not have definitions separate from each sub-domain. That is, when applying this coding scheme to the Canadian data set, only the sub-domains were defined as individual codes with their own descriptions; the domains were simply the broader categories into which the sub-domains fit. Jones et al. (2021) noted that it is common for there to be overlap between these codes, and some codes (e.g., prosocial/ cooperative behaviour and conflict resolution/social problem solving)

were frequently coded together. All spreadsheets were imported and coded in MAXQDA 2024 (VERBI Software, 2023). The 23 sub-domains were used as codes for the data; broad domains were not used as codes for the data and were simply used for categorization of data following the qualitative analysis.

**Procedure**

Following the coding of all SLOs, a cross-provincial/territorial analysis was conducted to identify the distribution of SEL domains across all provinces and territories included in the analysis. Using MaxQDA software, a total of 12,837 specific curriculum outcomes were individually analyzed and 6,376 codes were applied following the method outlined by Jones et al. (2021). Frequency data for each code in each document was imported to a table in Excel. All sub-domains were collapsed into their broader domain, and curriculum documents were grouped by province/territory. A percentage was calculated to determine how much of the province/territory's curriculum was represented by each of the six domains. This was done by dividing the number of domain codes applied to that province/territory's documents by the total amount of specific curriculum outcomes in that province/territory. Then, a national mean was calculated to determine the average frequency of each domain across all of the curricula included in the analysis.

A percentage was calculated comparing the degree to which each province included a domain relative to the average of all Canadian provinces and territories. This percentage represents whether each province was high, low, or typical in their inclusion of a specific element of SEL. Specific guidelines for this analysis are included in the Jones et al. (2021) document (p. 513) and summarized in Table 3 of this document. To determine how much a provincial percentage differed from the national average, the provincial percentage was

subtracted from the national average, and the difference was divided by the national average. For example, in Alberta, 8.46% of their curricula fell into the cognitive domain, and the cross-provincial average for the cognitive domain in all curriculum subjects was 10.52%. The above formula was applied, and Alberta's inclusion of the cognitive domain in their curricula was 19.55% below the national average.

$$(8.46 - 10.52) / 10.52 = -19.55\%$$

To determine whether a province or territory's inclusion of a specific domain was higher, lower or consistent with the national average, each provincial percentage was compared to the national percentage to determine the difference, as seen in Table 3. The difference required for a province to be considered high or low in a particular domain was dependent on the national average. If a province did not meet criteria to be considered high or low in a particular domain, then it was considered typical in that domain. This quantitative description indicated the differences between the areas of SEL that were prioritized or neglected in each province.

## Results

During data coding, there was no limit to the number of codes that could be applied to a data point. Codes were assigned to each specific learning outcome that contained any of the outlined elements of SEL. Some SLOs did not receive any codes, as they were not, on further inspection of the data, related to SEL, and other SLOs received several codes as they contained several different facets of SEL within a single outcome. There was significant variability in the length of curriculum outcomes between provinces/territories, and thus there was also significant variability in the number of codes applied to each curriculum outcome. Ontario had the longest curriculum outcomes of all the provinces and territories, with their outcomes often taking the

form of a long run-on sentence or short paragraph. The following is a specific learning outcome taken from the Ontario grade two health and physical education curriculum:

> *Describe how to relate positively to family members, caregivers, and others (e.g., cooperate, show respect, communicate openly, manage anger, pay attention to what people say and to their facial expressions and body language), and describe behaviours that can be harmful in relating to others (e.g., verbal abuse, including both online and face-to-face name calling, insults, and mocking; deliberately ignoring someone, or ignoring the feelings they express; physical violence, including pushing, kicking, and hitting).* (Government of Ontario, 2019, outcome D3.1)

In this instance, seven different sub-domain codes were applied to this single outcome. "Prosocial/cooperative behaviour" was applied because the overall goal of the outcome was about relating positively to other people, including cooperating, showing respect, and communicating openly. "Emotional and behavioural regulation" was coded because the outcome mentioned managing anger. "Ethical values" was coded because the outcome mentioned showing respect to others and avoiding abuse. "Understanding social cues" was applied because the outcome includes awareness of people's facial expressions and body language. "Conflict resolution/social problem solving" was applied because the outcome mentioned having awareness of behaviours that can cause harm to others. "Empathy/perspective taking" was coded because the outcome involves understanding that it can be harmful to ignore another person's feelings. "Emotional knowledge and expression" was coded because the outcome requires students to understand appropriate and inappropriate ways to express anger. This example illustrates how a single curriculum outcome may be complex and involve several different implicit components of SEL.

Alternatively, some curricula included SCOs so short and cryptic that it was difficult to understand what specific skill was being taught and how it could be assessed. Quebec's curricula had many such curriculum outcomes, including "relaxation," "fighting spirit," and "fairness" (Government of Quebec, n.d.). These types of outcomes could be challenging to code as the purpose or meaning of the outcome was often ambiguous and unclear.

All six of Jones et al.'s (2021) domains and all 23 sub-domains of SEL were represented across Canadian provincial and territorial curricula. Table 4 indicates the percentages of each domain included across curriculum subjects in each province and territory. Table 5 compares each province or territory's inclusion of each domain to the national average. Based on the data in Table 5 and the analysis procedure outlined by Jones et al. (2021) and summarized in Table 3, Table 6 indicates whether each province and territory's inclusion of each broad domain was high, low, or typical when compared to the national average of inclusion for each domain. Figures 1 – 11 indicate the percentage of all curriculum outcomes analyzed which fit into each of the six broad factors of SEL for each province and territory. Individual profile descriptions explaining figures 1 – 11 in the context of national averages can be found in Appendix A.

## Discussion

The present study examined the inclusion of Jones et al.'s (2021) six broad domains of SEL across Canadian provincial and territorial curriculum documents. Curriculum outcomes were individually coded according to Jones et al,'s (2021) coding manual, and percentage statistics were calculated to identify similarities and differences between provinces/territories. There were a few notable trends across all provinces and territories. First of all, for most provinces and territories, the social domain was most heavily represented across curriculum documents. The only two provinces for which the social domain was not the most prominent

were Quebec and British Columbia. For both of these provinces, their inclusion of the social domain came second place after the cognitive domain, and both provinces' inclusion of the social domain represented over 10% of curriculum outcomes. This indicates that all provinces and territories place great emphasis on teaching elementary students how to develop social skills such as being cooperative, showing empathy, and solving conflicts, and devote at least 10% of curriculum material to teaching these outcomes. Another trend among provinces was that the perspectives domain was the least frequently included domain among all provinces and territories. The rate of inclusion for the perspectives domain ranged from < 0.01% to 3.53%. This indicates that all provinces and territories are not presently prioritizing cultivating perspectives of optimism, gratitude, openness, and enthusiasm in their elementary school curricula. While research has not been collected on the evidence supporting each of Jones et al.'s (2021) broad domains, it is possible that the perspectives domain is least relevant to SEL out of all the domains. Taylor et al.'s (2017) study found that concrete skills, rather than general attitudes, led to positive outcomes. While attitudes such as optimism or gratitude may be positive attributes, it may not be necessary to enforce or evaluate these in an academic context.

A national average for each domain was calculated for the purpose of comparison between the provinces and territories; however, there was a significant amount of variation between the provinces. No province had more than three of six domains that were considered typical compared to the national average. This indicates that while there are themes in the distribution of SEL domains across provinces and territories, there is no comprehensive agreement on the inclusion of SEL in curricula across provinces and territories. It was much more common for a province to be high or low in a domain than to be typical, which indicates how much difference and variation there is between provinces in their inclusion of each domain.

Although some provinces were considered "typical" in their inclusion of a domain, there was so much variation that there truly is no "typical." This variation is to be expected as there is no national curriculum and each province and territory is in charge of its own education system (Lu & McLean, 2011).

Ideally, the inclusion of a domain of SEL should be based on research evidence that supports the efficacy of the content in that domain. However, there has not been specific research on what SEL content is necessary to teach to students, and the Canadian education system is presently fragmented into individual provincial or territorial systems. As a result, there is no guideline or recommendation as to which domains should be prioritized over others, leading to the significant variation between provinces. If curriculum outcomes were strictly based on research as to what students should be taught, then there would be more uniformity among curriculum documents, even though provinces and territories may have separate curricula. At this time, it is not possible to conclude which provinces are doing the "best" or "worst" with their SEL instruction as there is not enough research to conclude that one domain is more evidence-based than another. This means that students across Canada presently may or may not be receiving evidence-based instruction in SEL, and this is an important area for further research.

Overall, the findings from this study show the effects of having education fragmented into provincial and territorial governments. The variability between provinces and territories makes it difficult to claim that Canada as a whole has a certain approach to SEL. The three main similarities across provinces were that all provinces and territories included each of the six domains to some extent, all provinces prioritized the social domain, and all provinces minimized the perspectives domain. Beyond these similarities, there was a high degree of variability in each province and territory's inclusion of SEL in their curricula. Similarly, Kilborn et al. (2016) and

Robinson et al. (2019) noted inconsistency and variation between provinces and territories in their analyses of Canadian health and physical education curricula.

Simply because these broad domains and sub-domains were highlighted by Jones et al. (2021) as common facets of preexisting SEL programs or curricula does not mean that they are all evidence-based and should be taught. The framework provided by Jones et al. (2021) simply outlines what is included in frameworks and curricula that people label as SEL. It is possible that some domains or sub-domains of SEL are more important or evidence-based than others. One example is the Perspectives domain, which is made up of four sub-domains: optimism, gratitude, openness, and enthusiasm/zest. Whereas these attitudes can be considered positive or desirable attributes, they should not necessarily be included under the umbrella of SEL (Taylor et al, 2017). Taylor et al. (2017) found in their meta-analysis that learning specific skills was associated with long-term follow-up effects, and having certain attitudes was not associated with such effects. It seems that it is more important and beneficial for a student to learn skills that will support them throughout different social or emotional situations in their lives rather than aiming to have a positive or enthusiastic disposition. As it relates to this study, it may be more important for students to learn and be evaluated on their ability to learn and perform specific social and emotional skills, as seen in the cognitive, emotion, and social domains, rather than their general attitude or values, as seen in the values, perspectives, and identity domains.

Additionally, just because an outcome is included in the curriculum does not guarantee that it gets taught to students. Some curriculum documents are so long that it would be very difficult for a teacher to ensure they teach each individual outcome by the end of the school year. For example, the Northwest Territories English Language Arts curriculum for grades Kindergarten through six has 1059 specific learning outcomes, which results in around 150

outcomes per grade only in one subject. In elementary school in Canada, one classroom teacher typically teaches all subjects (except for specialized subjects such as music or languages). This means that teachers must find a way to teach all the outcomes from nearly all the subjects to their class by the end of the year; and the sheer number of outcomes makes this a daunting or, arguably, impossible task. Additionally, the curriculum does not indicate how content should be taught to children or how it should be assessed, and it is probable that SEL-related skills and concepts are not being taught with enough fidelity to be effective (Durlak et al., 2011).

Another important consideration is that much of the existing SEL research examines efficacy based on the implementation of a program rather than on the content of the program itself. For example, Durlak et al. (2011; 2010) outlined effective SEL as being aligned with the S.A.F.E. method of instruction but did not note any specific areas of content that must be included to produce the desired outcomes. Taylor et al. (2017) found that programs that taught specific skill development led to measurable outcomes, as opposed to programs that only teach knowledge of concepts related to SEL. However, curriculum documents typically only outline the content of what is to be taught, rather than the method of instruction. This means that one cannot draw direct conclusions of the efficacy of Canadian curriculum outcomes based on these meta-analyses alone. For example, one of the indicators in Nova Scotia's Health curriculum is, "conflict in relationships is normal and if handled well, can often lead to beneficial change." (Nova Scotia Department of Education and Early Childhood Development, 2019). If a teacher reads this outcome to their class, or even leads a discussion or reads a book about conflict and relationships, they may believe that they have taught the outcome sufficiently as they have imparted the factual knowledge about conflict and relationships. However, for this outcome to lead to actual improvements in students' conflict management and peer relationships, it is

important for the teacher to teach specific conflict-management skills to their classroom, and for the students to practice these skills and get feedback (Durlak et al., 2010; 2011; Taylor, 2017). Just like students need to practice and receive feedback when learning spelling or math skills, students need a similar level of instruction to become competent at SEL-related skills. When students learn a skill, see the skill modelled by school staff, and have the opportunity to practice the skill in real-life scenarios, they are much more likely to learn healthy conflict management skills than if the topic of conflict is merely discussed in the classroom (Durlak et al., 2010; 2011; Taylor, 2017).

While it is unknown what the specific "active ingredient" of SEL programming is in terms of content, some effective content can be inferred from the programs and outcomes included in various studies. It is known that positive social-emotional outcomes are linked to specific skill instruction, practice and development (Taylor et al., 2017), so it is likely that programs resulting in improved conflict resolution skills teach content that would fall under Jones et al.'s (2021) "Conflict Resolution/Social Problem Solving" sub-domain within the social domain. Previous research has shown that skills can be effectively taught to students because they are explicit, practicable, and measurable; the question is now which skills are necessary and developmentally appropriate to teach to students.

The first three of Jones et al.'s (2021) domains are the cognitive, emotional, and social domains, all of which comprise behaviours and skills that can be taught, such as inhibitory control, critical thinking/problem solving, emotional and behavioural regulation, and conflict resolution/social problem solving. The latter three domains are the values, perspectives, and identity domains, which largely consist of attitudes that students can hold, such as having a sense of purpose, displaying enthusiasm/zest, and holding ethical values. While there has not yet been

an investigation of which domains or sub-domains are evidence-based and necessary for SEL instruction, it is evident that the first three domains are more skill-based and the last three domains are more attitude-based. Research has shown that it is more efficacious to teach specific skills than to encourage certain attitudes; it is skill knowledge and development that leads to measurable improvement in student outcomes rather than knowledge or attitudes (Durlak et al., 2010; 2011; Taylor et al., 2017). Additionally, a student's attitudes and values are highly influenced by a variety of factors, such as their family upbringing and their culture. It is possible that SEL instruction focusing on the first three of Jones et al.'s (2021) domains will lead to better student outcomes than the last three domains as they are more skill-based.

Curriculum is often designed by experienced teachers and educators (Lu & McLean 2011). Teachers are trained professionals and their contribution to the curriculum-designing process is invaluable; there are countless contributions and insights that teachers can provide about the feasibility of implementing a certain curriculum in an actual classroom with actual students. It is also important to consider the contributions of subject matter experts when designing curricula. Teachers are experts in teaching, but many teachers, especially those who teach elementary school subjects, are not necessarily specialists in every subject they teach (e.g., an elementary school teacher does not need any background in science to teach a science class). When designing curriculum outcomes related to SEL, it is important for curriculum designers to consult with experts who have specialized knowledge and experience in evidence-based SEL and child development (e.g., psychologists). This will help ensure that the curriculum truly is evidence-based; that it is backed by high-quality research evidence and is feasible to implement in a classroom setting. Drawing from the strengths and expertise of multiple professions will help to ensure that students are getting the best possible SEL instruction.

There should also be consideration given to the diversity represented across Canadian provinces and territories. For example, one of Jones et al.'s (2021) sub-domains is "Understanding Social Cues," which targets a student's competency in understanding and using nonverbal cues such as facial expression or eye contact. Some individuals may struggle with Western social cues such as eye contact for a variety of reasons. For example, some individuals with Autism Spectrum Disorder (ASD) struggle with making eye contact as it may result in sensory overload or strong physical or emotional discomfort (Trevisan et al., 2017). In these cases, it could be considered discriminatory to grade a student on their ability to understand and use neurotypical social skills that are extremely uncomfortable for them. Additionally, some non-Western cultures view eye contact differently than Western cultures typically do; individuals in some Asian cultures may perceive eye contact to be a sign of anger or unapproachability compared to individuals in Western cultures due to differences in social norms (Akechi et al., 2013). Additionally, many Indigenous cultures across Canada use eye contact and other social cues differently than settler cultures in Canada. In these cultures, individuals may use less eye contact and more silence in conversations than individuals who are more familiar with Western social cues (Kelly & Brown, 2002). Eye contact is simply one example of how and why curriculum developers and educators should consider the unique backgrounds and needs of Canadian students. Other social skills included across curriculum data include using appropriate tone of voice, gestures, turn-taking in conversation, facial expressions, and personal space, which are all social cues that are highly influenced by culture and disability. It is important to question whether specific social skills are necessary to teach or are simply a way of imposing Western norms of typically developing people onto the diverse student population (McCall et al., 2022).

During the process of coding the curriculum documents, there were two areas of instruction that seemed as though they may be related to SEL but were not included in Jones et al.'s (2021) framework. The first area was mental health. While Jones et al.'s (2021) framework includes plenty of constructs related to healthy emotion recognition and management, it did not include anything specifically related to mental health or mental illness. Some Canadian curriculum documents specifically address mental disorders and maintaining positive mental health. A few examples include, "recognize the signs and symptoms of depression" (Nova Scotia Department of Education and Early Childhood Development, 2015), "distinguish between mental health and mental illness" (Newfoundland and Labrador Department of Education, n.d.), and "assess personal characteristics related to mental and emotional well-being" (Northwest Territories, Education, Culture and Employment, Health and Social Services, 1995). Many of these outcomes were still coded within the Jones et al. (2021) framework, but it was noted that these outcomes seemed to be specifically targeting knowledge and skills related to mental health rather than emotions in general. However, good mental health is hypothesized to be an outcome of effective SEL instruction (Durlak et al., 2010; 2011; Taylor et al., 2017; Wilcox et al., 2008), and it may not be necessary to directly address mental health in SEL instruction.

The other area of instruction that was missing from the framework was Indigenous well-being. Canada has a diverse Indigenous population, with 1.8 million Indigenous individuals living in Canada, comprising five percent of the total population of Canada (Statistics Canada, 2022). Canada has a painful history of residential schools, with over 150,000 children taken from their families and cultures to attend church-run residential schools (National Centre for Truth and Reconciliation, n.d.). The intent of these schools was a cultural genocide, with the goal of wiping out all Indigenous cultures. Thousands of students were involuntarily moved from their homes

and communities to these schools, where many were physically, sexually, and emotionally abused. Many students did not survive. When teaching SEL, it is important to consider whether the content is culturally relevant and promotes the well-being of Indigenous students using wisdom and knowledge from Indigenous cultures and ways of knowing. Canadian provinces and territories are currently including instruction about Indigenous cultures in their curricula. Going forward, it will be important for provinces and territories to collaborate with Indigenous elders and educators when creating curriculum documents in order to ensure that the curriculum is accurate and culturally relevant (Woodroffe, 2020). It is also important that outcomes related to Indigenous history and well-being are well integrated into the curricula, rather than tacked on as an afterthought. The only way to truly learn about Canadian Indigenous history, cultures, worldviews, values, and needs is to learn from Indigenous people and to listen to Indigenous perspectives (Woodroffe, 2020). In order for curriculum outcomes to translate into effective classroom instruction, it is important that teachers receive ample professional development in which they have the opportunity to learn directly from Indigenous people about how best to teach and support their students.

**Implications for School Psychologists**

In the school environment, school psychologists are typically the professionals with the most training in mental health and evidence-based psychological practice (Sheridan & Gutkin, 2000). Given their expertise, it is important for school psychologists to be involved with tier 1 preventative education such as SEL instruction, rather than only tier 2 and 3 interventions such as counselling, small group intervention, behavioural assessment, or referral to external mental health services (Jordan et al., 2009). However, school psychologists' allocation of time and resources is often dictated by their administrators, school boards or government, which means

that some school psychologists may not be able to implement evidence-based practices even if they have the knowledge (Jordan et al., 2009; Kratochwill & Shernoff, 2004). Additionally, a study by Jordan et al. (2009) found that 84% of Canadian school psychologists surveyed indicated that there were not enough school psychologists to meet the needs of their schools. When school psychologists have high caseloads, they are forced to focus more of their time and resources on urgent cases at the tier three level rather than on preventative measures at the tier one level. In the Jordan et al. (2009) study, 69% of Canadian school psychologists indicated that they desired to spend more of their time at the tier 1 level doing preventative, universal intervention.

Even if the school psychologist is not able to assist with implementation of the SEL program, they can use their knowledge about research and evidence-based practice to act as a consultant with administrators and classroom teachers to choose an evidence-based SEL program tailored to the needs of the school or class. Because psychologists are trained both as scientists and clinicians, they have experience discerning between evidence-based and nonevidence-based interventions and can recognize the strengths and limitations of different programs (American Psychological Association, 2006; Dozois et al., 2014). School psychologists can also assist with coaching teachers and training them in SEL interventions or providing professional development in behavioural principles. Efficacious SEL programs involve skill development (Durlak et al., 2010; 2011; Taylor et al., 2017), and skill development is behaviour; therefore, teachers can support SEL skill development by applying behavioural techniques in their classroom. A school psychologist can support teachers in using behaviour management techniques to support SEL instruction in their classrooms. School psychologists are health-care professionals and have a commitment to support the well-being of students.

## Limitations and Future Directions

The present study is only the first step in understanding the current landscape of SEL instruction in Canada, which will help teachers and curriculum developers to better meet the needs of Canadian students. This study provided an analysis of the categories of SEL content currently included in Canadian elementary curricula. Further research will be needed to explore whether the current inclusion of SEL content in curricula is evidence-based, necessary, and developmentally appropriate. Perhaps a mapping of outcomes to evidence-based content, strategies and approaches to assessment could lead to a streamlined and manageable amount of curriculum outcomes for classroom teachers. Ensuring that evidence-based SEL is being implemented in schools will support the use of SEL as a preventative public health approach. Further research could also link Canadian health data with education data to investigate the association between Canadian students' SEL skills and specific SEL-related health variables such as rates of STIs, diagnoses of mental health disorders, and drug use (see Durlak et al., 2011; Taylor et al., 2017).

One limitation of the present study is that it only examined four core subject areas rather than every subject area in the whole curriculum. Because there is no separate SEL curriculum and SEL-related outcomes are scattered throughout multiple subject areas, it is possible that some SEL-related outcomes were missed in curriculum subjects that were not included in the analysis, such as science, music, visual arts, or math. The Jones et al. (2021) coding guidelines were initially developed through the coding of existing SEL programs and frameworks, not government curriculum documents. The application of this framework to curriculum documents is novel. Without other existing frameworks for comprehensive description of what SEL entails,

this framework was easily applied to curricula. It will be beneficial to compare these results to any future efforts to synthesize SEL curricula in other countries.

The present study explored the inclusion of SEL in Canadian elementary curricula as a first step toward answering the bigger questions of what *should* be in the curricula and *how* it should be implemented and evaluated. This study has described general trends in SEL inclusion across Canadian curriculum documents. Next steps might include exploring whether the current inclusion of SEL aligns with evidence-based literature on content and implementation of SEL skills and knowledge. Results from this study indicate that Canada is covering all the outcomes synthesized by Jones et al. (2021), plus content about mental health and indigenous ways of knowing. Additionally, the present study only addressed specific curriculum outcomes, which typically only address the content of instruction rather than teaching strategies or programs. Most research on SEL has examined the effects of specific programs of SEL rather than the impact of specific SEL-related knowledge or skills. There has been research supporting evidence-based implementation methods for SEL programs (e.g., S.A.F.E. method by Durlak et al., 2010; 2011). However, it is difficult to apply this research to curriculum documents as these documents typically address the content of instruction rather than the method of instruction. Further, classroom-based research is required to assess fidelity and track potential short- and long-term outcomes.

In closing, although research shows that SEL can be effective, researchers have yet to figure out *why* it is effective. It will be important to determine what component of SEL programs make them effective; what the "active ingredient" is (Domitrovich et al. 2017). Perhaps there are one or two components of SEL that need to be included, and the rest is inconsequential. It is worth exploring whether effective SEL programs need to include all 23 sub-domains of SEL,

perhaps there are only two or three that need to be included to lead to improvements in student outcomes. Further research is required to determine what aspects of SEL contain the most potential for supporting child development and well-being. This will improve the efficacy of SEL programs and refine curricula as any unnecessary components can be removed and the most important components can be amplified.

This study was the first step in a broader goal to ensure implementation of evidence-based SEL programming in Canadian elementary schools. To identify steps needed to reach this goal, it is important to first understand the current state of SEL instruction in Canada. This qualitative curriculum analysis provided insight into the current inclusion of SEL-related outcomes across Canadian provincial and territorial curricula. English Language Arts, Social Studies, Health, and Physical Education curricula from ten provinces and one territory were included in the analysis. The analysis found a significant amount of variability between provinces and territories in their inclusion of SEL, but general themes showed that most provinces placed emphasis on teaching social skills such as prosocial behaviour and conflict resolution, and provinces placed the least emphasis on enforcing specific attitudes in their students such as enthusiasm or optimism. This research may provide a starting point for further exploration into implementation of evidence-based SEL instruction in Canadian elementary schools in order to support the overall health and well-being of Canadian students.

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**Table 1**

*Summary of Jones et al.'s (2021) Sub-Domains*

| Domain and sub-domain | Sub-domain summary |
|---|---|
| Cognitive domain | |
| Attention control | Selecting relevant information or tasks to attend to, maintaining attention, and ignoring distractions. |
| Working memory and planning skills | Holding information in mind and manipulating it to carry out a task; identifying and organizing steps of a plan to achieve a goal. |
| Inhibitory control | Suppressing a specific behaviour in order to achieve a goal. |
| Cognitive flexibility | The ability to shift thinking from one concept to another, or to consider multiple concepts at once. |
| Critical thinking/problem solving | Identifying, understanding, and solving problems, and engaging in reasoning and analytical thinking. |
| Emotion domain | |
| Emotional knowledge and expression | Identifying and understanding emotions experienced by oneself or others, and expressing emotions in an appropriate manner. |
| Emotional and behavioural regulation | Using strategies to manage one's emotional and behavioural responses and self-regulate. |
| Empathy/perspective taking | Understanding another person's perspective, opinions, and feelings. |
| Social domain | |
| Understanding social cues | Accurately understanding and using social cues including non-verbal cues and identifying the motivations of others. |
| Conflict resolution/social problem solving | Using strategies to appropriately navigate conflict and other challenging interpersonal situations. |

| | |
|---|---|
| Prosocial/cooperative behaviour | The ability to initiate and maintain positive and cooperative social relationships. |
| Values domain | |
| Ethical values | Prosocial values and habits related to justice, fairness, and the well-being of others. |
| Performance values | Values and habits related to a strong work ethic, giving one's best effort, and meeting goals. |
| Civic values | Values and habits related to active participation in the community and seeking the common good of the group. |
| Intellectual values | Values and habits related to learning, curiosity, and creative thinking. |
| Perspectives domain | |
| Optimism | Having a positive attitude and approaching the future with hope. |
| Gratitude | A sense of thankfulness and appreciation for the things in one's life. |
| Openness | Displaying traits of adaptability and acceptance, including adapting to change, accepting one's circumstances, and appreciating beauty. |
| Enthusiasm/Zest | Having an attitude of excitement, enthusiasm, and energy. |
| Identity domain | |
| Self-knowledge | Having self-awareness and an established self-concept, including awareness of one's personality, strengths, and weaknesses. |
| Purpose | Being motivated by something larger than yourself that shapes your values, goals, and actions. |
| Self-efficacy/growth mindset | A belief in one's own ability to learn, improve skills, and succeed. |

| | |
|---|---|
| Self-esteem | A belief in one's own self-worth; feeling a sense of belonging and feeling valued by others. |

**Table 2**

*Ontario Grade 2 Health and Physical Education Curriculum: Outcome A1.5*

| Grade | Table of Contents Code | Subject Area | Outcome Code | Section | Specific Learning Outcome | General Learning Outcome |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| 2 | 5.1.1 | Health and Phys Ed | A1.5 | Social-Emotional Learning Skills | Apply skills that help them develop self-awareness and self-confidence as they participate in learning experiences in health and physical education, in order to support the development of a sense of identity and a sense of belonging *(e.g., Active Living: monitor their body's physical and mental responses when they are participating in a physical activity; Movement Competence: after jumping, consider what they did well as they tried to land in a stable position, and what they could do* | Apply, to the best of their ability, a range of social-emotional learning skills as they acquire knowledge and skills in connection with the expectations in the Active Living, Movement Competence, and Healthy Living strands for this grade. |

| | |
|---|---|
| | *better; Healthy Living: complete a checklist to monitor their daily care of their teeth and explain how the checklist can help build their awareness of health habits that contribute to their overall health).* |

**Table 3**

*Criteria for Comparison of Domains to National Average as Developed by Jones et al. (2021)*

| **Province/territory is considered high or low in a domain when:** | **And the national average for that domain is:** |
|---|---|
| Provincial average was ≥ 20% above/below the national mean. | > 20% |
| Provincial average was ≥ 15% above/below the national mean. | 11-20% |
| Provincial average was ≥ 10% above/below the national mean. | 5-10% |
| Provincial average was ≥ 5% above/below the national mean. | < 5% |

**Table 4**

*Percentages of Each Domain Included Across Curriculum Subjects in Each Province and Territory*

| | Cognitive | Emotion | Social | Values | Perspectives | Identity |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Alberta | 8.46% | 6.25% | 14.56% | 12.12% | 0.38% | 5.95% |
| British Columbia | 13.16% | 6.88% | 10.02% | 5.70% | 0.00% | 9.82% |
| Manitoba | 10.53% | 7.89% | 19.21% | 17.02% | 3.25% | 7.89% |
| New Brunswick | 9.09% | 11.66% | 17.02% | 11.66% | 1.17% | 7.46% |
| Newfoundland and Labrador | 10.46% | 11.17% | 20.73% | 10.37% | 0.98% | 8.94% |
| Nova Scotia | 7.06% | 7.70% | 12.62% | 8.45% | 0.53% | 3.53% |
| Northwest Territories | 7.82% | 3.83% | 11.93% | 10.55% | 1.18% | 9.49% |
| Ontario | 13.99% | 10.69% | 15.38% | 7.49% | 1.40% | 6.69% |
| Prince Edward Island | 6.73% | 6.57% | 14.09% | 10.01% | 0.96% | 3.84% |
| Quebec | 16.50% | 3.22% | 10.35% | 4.34% | 0.56% | 3.22% |
| Saskatchewan | 11.89% | 5.69% | 15.24% | 10.47% | 0.23% | 6.98% |
| National Average | 10.52% | 7.41% | 14.65% | 9.83% | 0.97% | 6.71% |

**Table 5**

*Comparison of Each Province or Territory's Inclusion of Each Domain Above or Below the National Average*

| | Cognitive | Emotion | Social | Values | Perspectives | Identity |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Alberta | -19.55% | -15.68% | -0.63% | +23.26% | -60.60% | -11.40% |
| British Columbia | +25.17% | -7.24% | **-31.61%** | -42.05% | **-100.00%** | **+46.40 %** |
| Manitoba | +0.10% | +6.50% | +31.12% | **+73.08%** | **+235.57%** | +17.66% |
| New Brunswick | -13.55% | **+57.23%** | +16.15% | +18.54% | +20.50% | +11.17% |
| Newfoundland and Labrador | -0.58% | +50.70% | **+41.52%** | +5.43% | +1.64% | +33.19% |
| Nova Scotia | -32.88% | +3.88% | -13.86% | -14.07% | -44.71% | -47.40% |
| Northwest Territories | -25.66% | -48.37% | -18.57% | +7.26% | +22.08% | +41.39% |
| Ontario | +32.99% | +44.20% | +5.01% | -23.80% | +44.60% | -0.25% |
| Prince Edward Island | **-36.05%** | -11.43% | -3.82% | +1.79% | -0.66% | -42.72% |
| Quebec | **+56.93%** | **-56.60%** | -29.36% | **-55.90%** | -42.16% | **-52.06%** |
| Saskatchewan | +13.08% | -23.19% | +4.05% | +6.47% | -76.26% | +4.01% |

*the highest and lowest rate of inclusion for each domain are highlighted in bold font.

**Table 6**

*Level of inclusion of each domain by province compared to the national average.*

| | Cognitive | Emotion | Social | Values | Perspectives | Identity |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Alberta | low | low | typical | high | low | low |
| British Columbia | high | typical | low | low | low | high |
| Manitoba | typical | typical | high | high | high | high |
| New Brunswick | low | high | high | high | high | high |
| Newfoundland and Labrador | typical | high | high | typical | typical | high |
| Nova Scotia | low | typical | typical | low | low | low |
| Northwest Territories | low | low | low | typical | high | high |
| Ontario | high | high | typical | low | high | typical |
| Prince Edward Island | low | low | typical | typical | typical | low |
| Quebec | high | low | low | low | low | low |
| Saskatchewan | high | low | typical | typical | low | typical |

**Figure 1**

*Distribution of Alberta's Curriculum Outcomes into Each of the Six Broad Factors of SEL.*

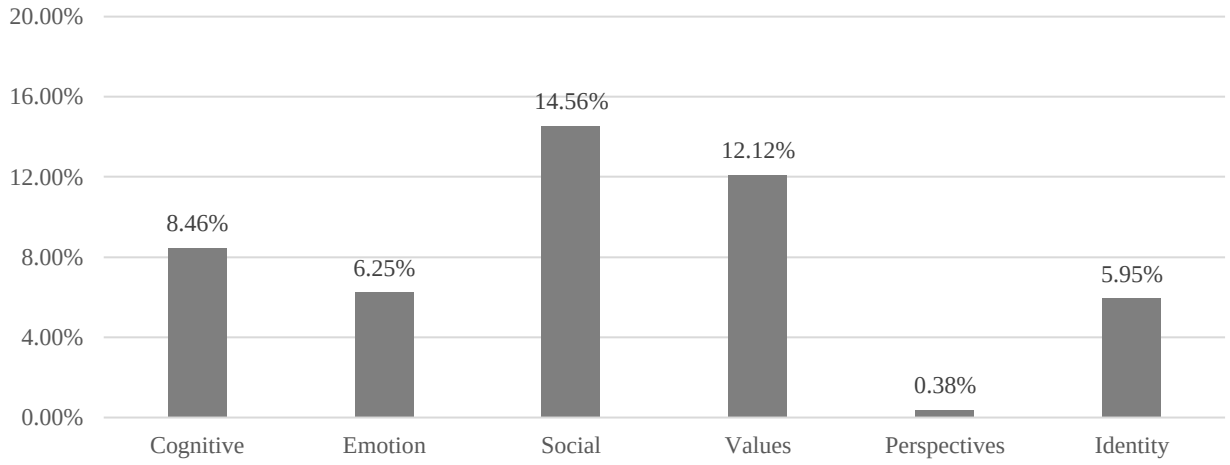


**Figure 2**

*Distribution of British Columbia's Curriculum Outcomes into Each of the Six Broad Factors of SEL.*

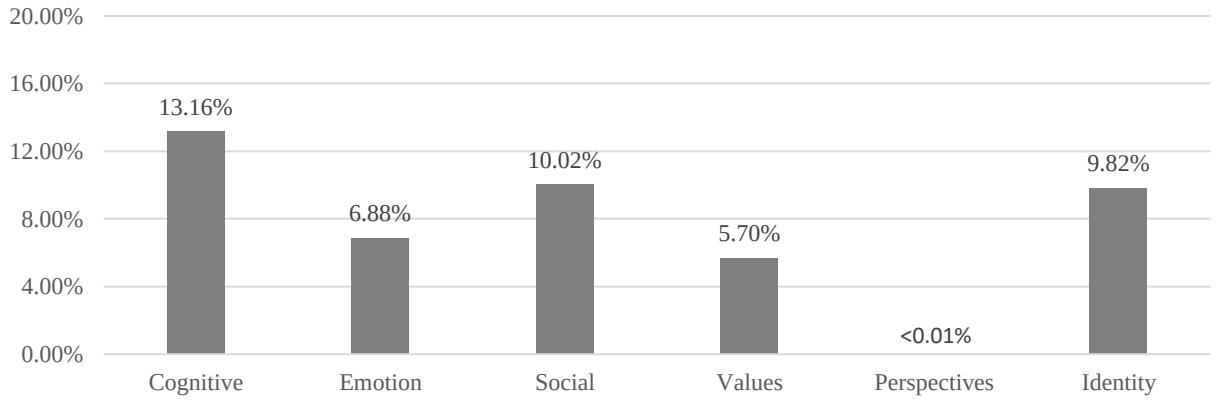


**Figure 3**

*Distribution of Manitoba's Curriculum Outcomes into Each of the Six Broad Factors of SEL.*

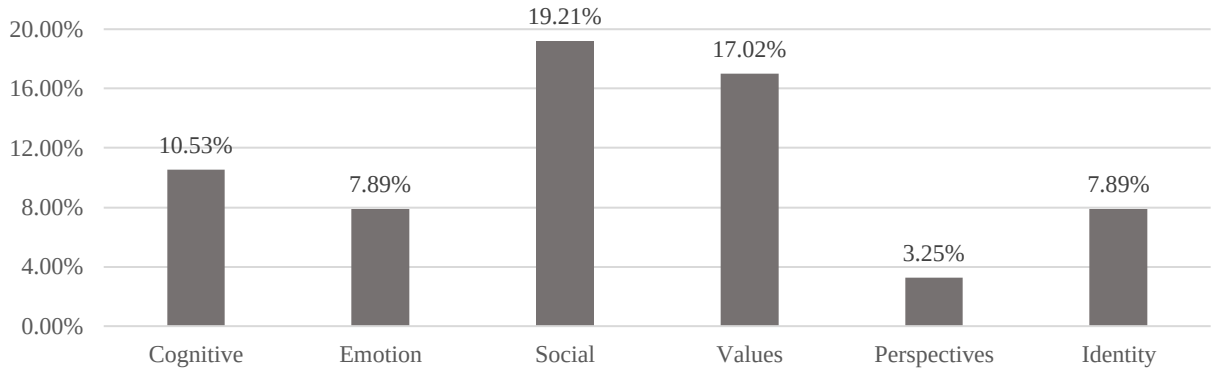


**Figure 4**

*Distribution of New Brunswick's Curriculum Outcomes into Each of the Six Broad Factors of SEL.*

**Figure 5**

*Distribution of Newfoundland and Labrador's Curriculum Outcomes into Each of the Six Broad Factors of SEL.*

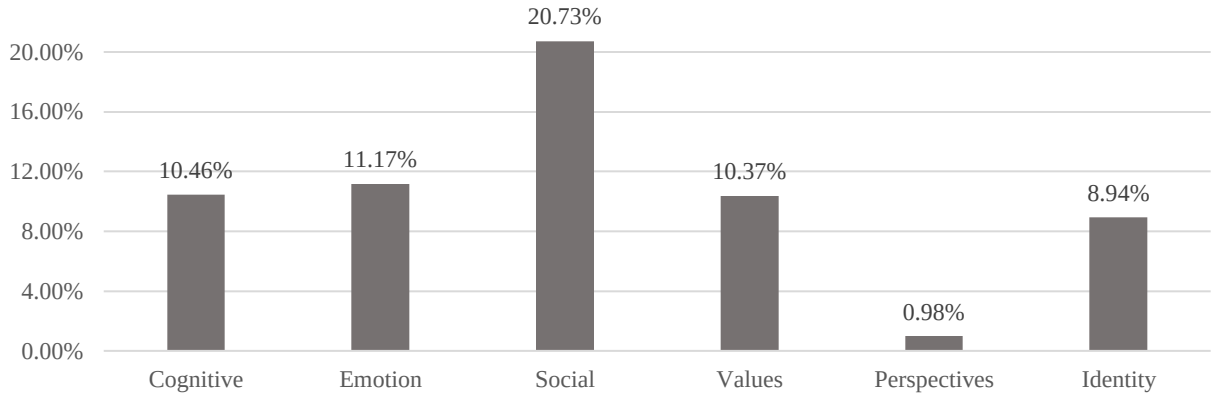


**Figure 6**

*Distribution of Northwest Territories' Curriculum Outcomes into Each of the Six Broad Factors of SEL.*

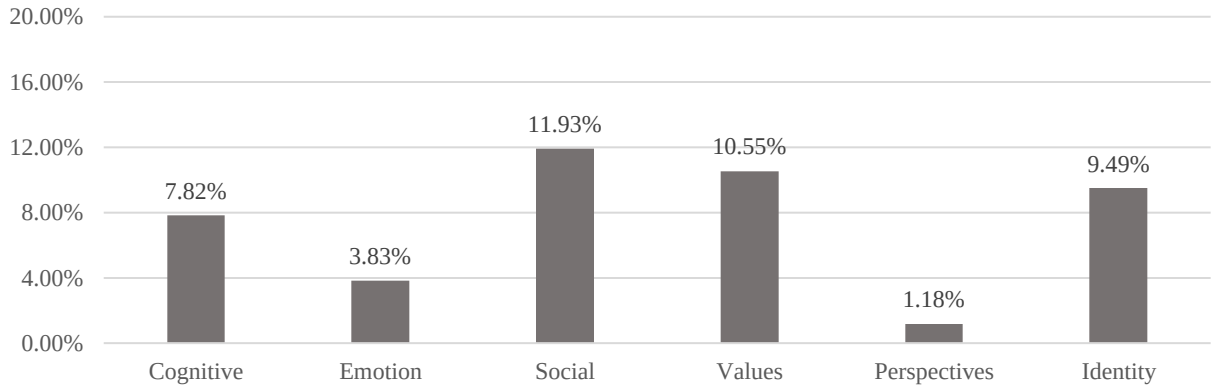


**Figure 7**

*Distribution of Nova Scotia's Curriculum Outcomes into Each of the Six Broad Factors of SEL.*

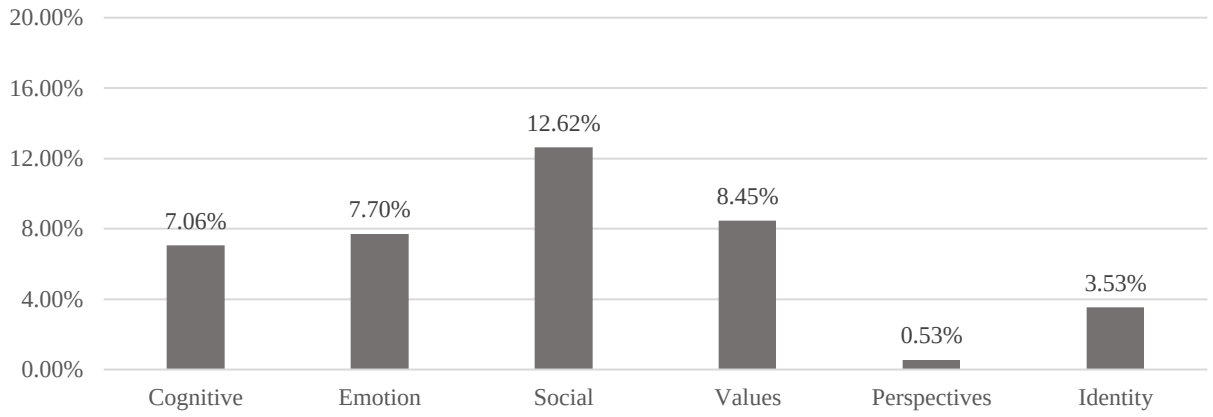


**Figure 8**

*Distribution of Ontario's Curriculum Outcomes into Each of the Six Broad Factors of SEL.*

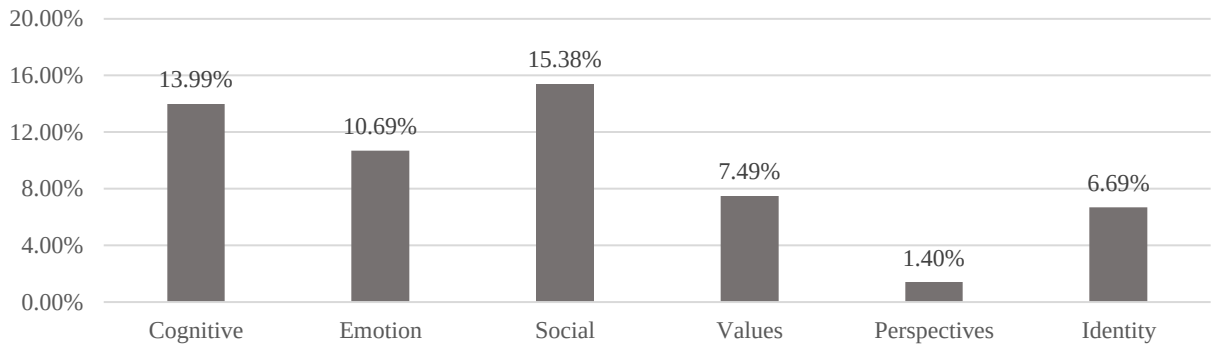


**Figure 9**

*Distribution of Prince Edward Island's Curriculum Outcomes into Each of the Six Broad Factors of SEL.*

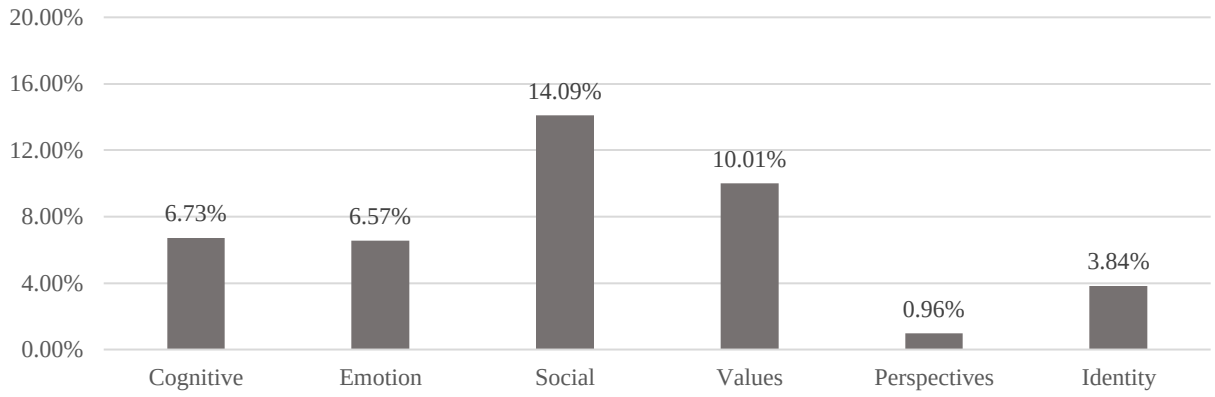


**Figure 10**

*Distribution of Quebec's Curriculum Outcomes into Each of the Six Broad Factors of SEL.*

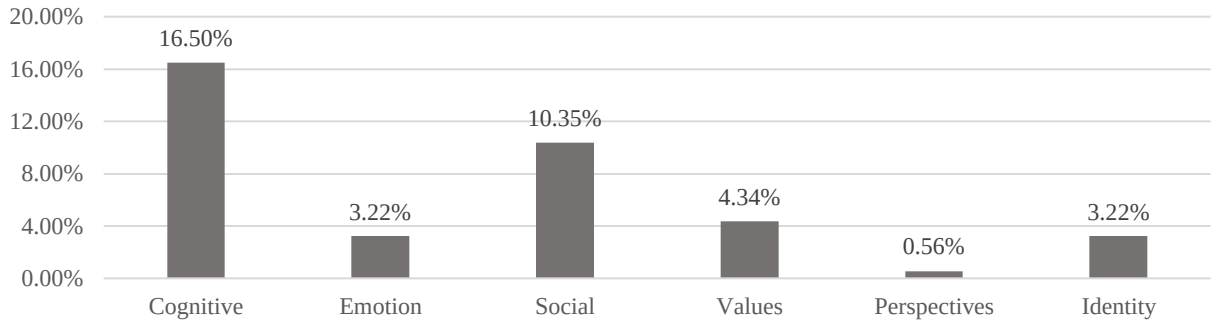
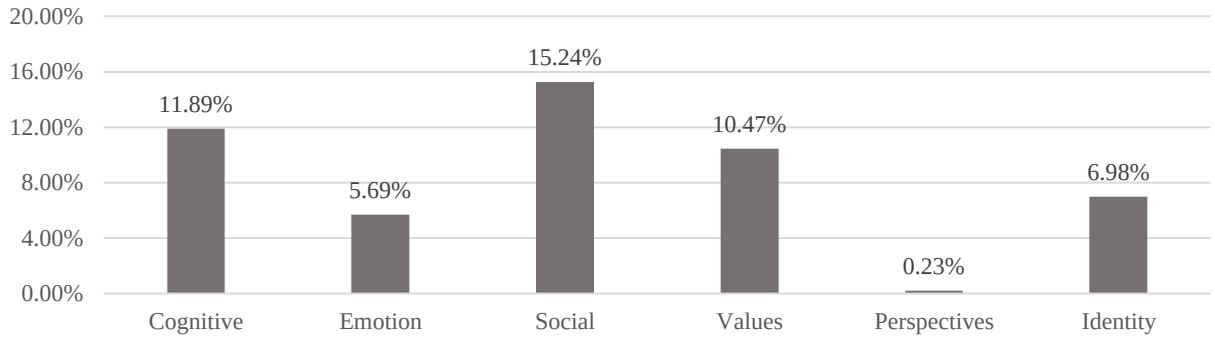


**Figure 11**

*Distribution of Saskatchewan's curriculum outcomes into each of the six broad factors of SEL.*



## Appendix A: Provincial Profiles

### Alberta

The Alberta curriculum was structured into Organizing Ideas, Guiding Questions, and Learning Outcomes. The Organizing Idea was the broadest factor and the general topic or unit of study within the subject of curriculum. The Guiding Question was the second most broad category, with a question about the topic of study to be considered during the teaching process. The narrowest factor was the Learning Outcome, which was further divided into Knowledge, Understanding, and Skills and Procedures. Only the Knowledge outcomes were included in the analysis; these were considered to be the Specific Learning Outcomes for Alberta's curricula.

In the Alberta curricula, the most frequent domain of SEL incorporated into elementary subjects was the social domain, with 14.56% of all curriculum outcomes having content related to one or more of the following: understanding social cues, resolving conflict and other social problems, and engaging in prosocial and cooperative behaviour. Alberta's inclusion of the social domain was typical compared to the national average. The second most frequent category was the values domain, as 12.12% of all curriculum outcomes included content related to various combinations of cultivating ethical, performance, civic, and intellectual values. Alberta's inclusion of the values domain was high compared to the national average. The third most frequent category was the cognitive domain, with 8.46% of curriculum outcomes focusing on helping students improve their skills with attention control, working memory and planning skills, inhibitory control, cognitive flexibility, critical thinking and problem solving. Alberta's inclusion of the cognitive domain was considered low compared to the national average. The fourth most frequent domain was the emotion domain, as 6.25% of curriculum outcomes focused on teaching emotional knowledge and expression, emotional and behavioural regulation, as well as empathy

and perspective taking skills. Alberta's inclusion of the emotion domain was considered low compared to the national average. The fifth most frequent domain represented in Alberta's curricula was the identity domain, with 5.95% of all curriculum outcomes including content about exploring self-knowledge, purpose, self-efficacy and having a growth mindset, and/or self-esteem. Alberta's inclusion of the identity domain was low compared to the national average. Finally, the least frequent domain of SEL in Alberta's curricula was the perspectives domain, with only 0.38% of all curriculum outcomes including content encouraging students to display attitudes of optimism, gratitude, openness, or enthusiasm. Alberta's inclusion of the perspectives domain was low compared to the national average.

### British Columbia

In British Columbia, the curricula are structured into Curricular Competencies, Content, and Elaborations. The Curricular Competencies section outlines skills that should be learned and a student's ability to demonstrate their knowledge in a certain area. The Content section contains knowledge students should have once the curriculum material has been taught. The Elaborations section includes additional definitions, details, and questions for discussion. For the purpose of the analysis, the information in the Curricular Competencies and Content sections were considered the Specific Learning Outcomes.

In British Columbia's curricula, the cognitive domain was prioritized above all other domains of SEL, indicating that teaching students skills in attention control, working memory and planning skills, inhibitory control, cognitive flexibility, critical thinking and problem solving was taught at a higher frequency than other factors related to SEL. British Columbia's inclusion of the cognitive domain in their curricula was high compared to the national average. The second most frequent domain was the social domain, as 10.02% of curriculum outcomes involved

various combinations of the following: understanding social cues, conflict resolution and social problem solving, and prosocial and cooperative behaviour. While this was the second most frequently included domain, British Columbia's inclusion of the social domain in their curricula was low compared to the national average. In fact, British Columbia had the lowest rate of inclusion of the social domain of all provinces and territories in Canada. The third most frequently included domain was the identity domain, with 9.82% of curriculum outcomes focused on exploring one's self-knowledge, purpose, and developing a sense of self-esteem, efficacy, and a growth mindset. British Columbia's inclusion of this domain was higher than the national average, and the highest rate of inclusion of the identity domain of all provinces and territories in Canada. The fourth most frequently included domain was the emotion domain, with 6.88% of outcomes focused on helping students develop emotional knowledge and expression, emotional and behavioural regulation, and empathy and perspective taking. British Columbia's inclusion of the emotion domain is typical when compared to the national average. The fifth most frequent domain in British Columbia's curriculum was the values domain, with 5.70% of all curriculum outcomes focusing on helping students cultivate ethical, performance, civic, and intellectual values. British Columbia's inclusion of the values domain was low compared to the national average. The least frequently included domain in British Columbia's curriculum was the perspectives domain; less than 0.01% of all curriculum outcomes included content related to this domain. British Columbia's inclusion of the perspectives domain in their curricula was low compared to the national average, as they had the lowest rate of inclusion of the perspectives domain out of all provinces and territories in Canada.

## Manitoba

Manitoba's curricula were clearly organized into General Learning Outcomes and Specific Learning Outcomes. The exception was the English Language Arts curriculum; the curriculum document posted on the Government of Manitoba's website at the time of data collection was a "Living Document" posted in 2019. Instead of general and specific learning outcomes for each grade, the learning objectives were written as paragraphs with no explicitly stated outcomes. Additionally, the learning objectives were separated by grade band rather than grade (i.e., instead of learning objectives specific to grade one, learning objectives for kindergarten through grade two were grouped together, grades three through five were grouped together, and grades six through eight were grouped together). At the beginning of each unit of content in the "living document," there is a header summarizing the content of the learning objective, followed by a paragraph explaining the objective in more detail. For the analysis, these headers were used as the specific learning objectives.

In Manitoba, the social domain was the most frequent domain across all curriculum documents, with 19.21% of outcomes. Manitoba's inclusion of the social domain was high compared to the national average. The second most frequent domain was the values domain, with 17.02% of outcomes. Manitoba's inclusion of the values domain was high compared to the national average; Manitoba had the highest rate of inclusion of the values domain of any province or territory in Canada. The third most frequent domain was the cognitive domain, with 10.53% of outcomes. Manitoba's inclusion of the cognitive domain was typical compared to the national average. The emotion and identity domains occurred equally frequently in Manitoba's curriculum, at an inclusion rate of 7.89%. Manitoba's inclusion of the emotion domain was typical compared to the national average, while Manitoba's inclusion of the identity domain was

high compared to the national average. The least frequent domain in Manitoba's curricula was the perspectives domain, with 3.25% of outcomes. Manitoba's inclusion of the perspectives domain was high compared to the national average; Manitoba had the highest rate of inclusion of the perspectives domain of any province or territory in Canada.

## New Brunswick

New Brunswick's "You and Your World" curriculum was used for analysis, which includes subject areas of Health, Personal Development and Career Planning, Science, and Social Studies subject areas in one curriculum. This curriculum spans grades kindergarten through grade two; the subject areas are separated into individual curriculum documents after grade two. It is noted that the "You and Your World" curriculum was retired in June 2023; however, at the time of data collection, it was the document in use at the time. The Government of New Brunswick did not upload a new curriculum document in place of the "You and Your World" document; thus, this is the document that was used in the analysis. This curriculum is divided into general learning outcomes and specific learning outcomes; the specific learning outcomes in this curriculum were used for analysis.

New Brunswick and Prince Edward Island share an English Language Arts curriculum; the outcomes in this curriculum were included in the analysis for each province. This curriculum was published in 1998. The kindergarten through grade four curriculum is divided into "Emergent," which includes kindergarten and grade one, "Early," which includes grades one and two, and "Transitional," which includes grades three and four. There is another curriculum document for grades four through six, which means that outcomes for grade four are listed in two separate curriculum documents. The kindergarten through grade four curriculum has general learning outcomes and specific learning outcomes, the specific learning outcomes were used in

the analysis. The grade four through six curriculum includes general curriculum outcomes, specific learning outcomes, essential graduation learning, and key-stage curriculum outcomes. Only the specific learning outcomes were included in the analysis.

The New Brunswick Physical Education curriculum has specific curriculum outcomes that are broad and include many different skills that other provinces typically separate into individual outcomes. These specific curriculum outcomes were used for the analysis.

The most frequently included domain in New Brunswick's curriculum was the social domain, with 17.02% of outcomes. New Brunswick's inclusion of the social domain was high compared to the national average. The emotion and values domain were the second most frequently included domains, with both including 11.66% of outcomes. New Brunswick's inclusion of both the emotion and values domains were considered high compared to the national averages for these domains. Their rate of inclusion of the emotion domain in particular was the highest of all provinces and territories in Canada. The fourth most frequently included domain was the cognitive domain, with 9.09% of outcomes. New Brunswick's inclusion of the cognitive domain was low compared to the national average. The fourth most frequently included domain was the identity domain, with 7.46% of outcomes. New Brunswick's inclusion of the identity domain was high compared to the national average. The least frequently included domain was the perspectives domain, with 1.17% of outcomes. Despite the small percentage of outcomes included in the perspectives domain, New Brunswick's inclusion of this domain was considered high compared to the national average, which was 0.97%.

### Newfoundland and Labrador

Newfoundland and Labrador's curriculum documents are divided into four types of outcomes: general curriculum outcomes, specific curriculum outcomes, essential graduation

learning, and key-stage curriculum outcomes. Only the specific learning outcomes were included in the analysis.

The most frequently included domain in Newfoundland and Labrador's curricula was the social domain, with 20.73% of outcomes, which was high when compared to the national average. Newfoundland and Labrador had the highest rate of inclusion of the social domain of any other province or territory in Canada. The second most frequent domain was the emotion domain, with 11.17% of outcomes, which was also high when compared to the national average. The third most frequently included domain was the cognitive domain, with 10.46% of outcomes, which was considered typical compared to the national average. The fourth most frequently included domain was the values domain, with 10.37% of outcomes, which was considered typical compared to the national average. The fifth most frequently included domain was the identity domain with 8.94% of outcomes, which was considered high compared to the national average. The least frequently included domain was the perspectives domain with 0.98% of outcomes, which was typical when compared to the national average.

### Northwest Territories

The Northwest Territories was the only territory included in the analysis, as it is the only territory that has its own curricula for the subject areas examined. The Health curriculum document was last updated in August 1995. The curriculum document does not specifically include general curriculum outcomes or specific curriculum outcomes; rather, the curriculum took the form of a table which listed the unit, theme, concept, and objectives in columns. The objectives were used as the specific learning outcomes for the purpose of this study. The Northwest Territories presently use the 2000 iteration of the Alberta Physical Education curriculum. However, this curriculum is no longer in use in the province of Alberta, as they

revised their curriculum and retired the previous document 2022. The government of the Northwest Territories was contacted to determine which iteration of the curriculum was presently in use, and they indicated that the version listed on the website was the document in use, which was the Alberta Physical Education document from 2000. There was not a curriculum document listed for grades 5 and 6 in Social Studies for the Northwest Territories, so these grades were not included in the analysis for this subject.

The Northwest Territories English Language Arts curriculum is divided into three levels: general outcomes are most broad, specific outcomes are the second broadest category, and learning outcomes were the most detailed specific outcomes. The learning outcomes were treated as specific learning outcomes and used for analysis in this study. The Northwest Territories Social Studies curriculum includes the curriculum areas Skills, Core Concept: Citizenship, General Learning Outcomes, and Specific Learning Outcomes. The specific learning outcomes were used for analysis in this study.

The most frequently included domain in the Northwest Territories' curricula was the social domain, with 11.93% of outcomes, which was low compared to the national average. The second most frequently included domain was the values domain, with 10.55% of outcomes, which was low compared to the national average. The third most frequently included domain was the identity domain with 9.49% of outcomes, which was high compared to the national average. The fourth most frequently included domain was the cognitive domain, which included 7.82% of outcomes, which was low compared to the national average. The fifth most frequently included domain was the emotion domain, with 3.83% of outcomes, which was low compared to the national average.

## Nova Scotia

Nova Scotia's curricula are divided into outcomes and indicators. The outcome describes the broader topic or unit of study, and the indicator is equivalent to a specific learning outcome. It is noted that the Health curricula for grades four, five, and six are marked as being in the draft stage, and are dated 2015. There were no official curriculum documents for these grades in Health, so the drafts were used as the most up-to-date documents. In the draft documents, there are only outcomes, and no indicators. However, there is another delineation titled "Enduring Understanding," which lists several bullet points of content that students should understand at the end of the unit. Because there are no official indicators or specific learning outcomes, these bullet points were used as specific learning outcomes for the analysis of the draft documents.

The most frequently included outcome in Nova Scotia's curriculum is the social domain, with 12.62% of outcomes, which is typical when compared to the national average. The second most frequently included domain is the values domain, with 8.45% of outcomes, which is low compared to the national average. The third most frequently included domain is the emotion domain, with 7.70% of outcomes, which is typical compared to the national average. The fourth most frequently included domain is the cognitive domain, with 7.06% of outcomes, which is low compared to the national average. The fifth most frequently included domain is the identity domain, with 3.53% of outcomes, which is low compared to the national average. The least frequently included domain is the perspectives domain, with 0.53% of outcomes, which is low compared to the national average.

## Ontario

Ontario's curricula are separated into strands, which denote the broad area of content and can be considered equivalent to a unit. Within each strand there are specific expectations, which

were used as the Specific Learning Outcomes for analysis in this study. It was noted that Ontario's Specific Learning Outcomes were the longest and most wordy of any province or territory included in this study. Ontario's Specific Learning Outcomes frequently took the form of a paragraph or long run-on sentence, and for this reason Ontario's Specific Learning Outcomes often received several codes per outcome as each outcome covered a range of topics.

The most frequently included domain in Ontario's curricula is the social domain, with 15.38% of outcomes, which is typical compared to the national average. The second most frequently included domain is the cognitive domain, with 13.99% of outcomes, which is high in relation to the national average. The third most frequently included domain is the emotion domain, with 10.69% of outcomes, which is high in relation to the national average. The fourth most frequently included domain is the values domain, with 7.49% of outcomes, which is low compared to the national average. The fifth most frequently included domain is the identity domain, with 6.69% of outcomes, which is typical compared to the national average. The least frequently included domain is the perspectives domain, with 1.40% of outcomes, which is high compared to the national average.

## Prince Edward Island

The Prince Edward Island curricula include units, general curriculum outcomes, and specific curriculum outcomes; the specific curriculum outcomes were used for analysis.

The most frequently included outcome in Prince Edward Island was the social domain, with 14.09% of outcomes, which was typical compared to the national average. The second most frequently included outcome was the values domain, with 10.01% of outcomes, which was typical compared to the national average. The third most frequently included outcome was the cognitive domain, with 6.73% of outcomes, which was low compared to the national average.

Prince Edward Island had the lowest rate of inclusion of the cognitive domain of any other province or territory in Canada. The fourth most frequently include outcome was the emotion domain, with 6.57% of outcomes, which was low compared to the national average. The fifth most frequently included domain was the identity domain, with 3.84% of outcomes, which was low compared to the national average. The least frequently included domain was the perspectives domain, with 0.96% of outcomes, which was considered typical compared to the national average.

## Quebec

Quebec's curriculum organization was significantly different from any other province or territory. The curriculum is divided into chapters like a book, and the Physical Education and Health curriculum is included in the "Personal Development" chapter. One of the most significant differences between Quebec's curriculum and that of other provinces is that Quebec does not organize students by grade. Instead, Quebec's elementary levels are separated into Cycle One, Cycle Two, and Cycle Three. Cycle One is equivalent to grades one and two, Cycle Two is equivalent to grades three and four, and Cycle Three is equivalent to grades five and six.

Quebec's curriculum included "key features of the competency," which was a five to ten word summary of the skills involved in the competency, "evaluation criteria," which outlined the skills a child should be able to perform at the end of the teaching period, "end-of-cycle outcomes," which consisted of one paragraph for each of the three cycles summarizing what a student's performance should look like at the end of each cycle, and "essential knowledges," which is the narrowest component of the curriculum documents. These essential knowledges were considered equivalent to specific learning outcomes for the purpose of analysis in this study. Sometimes the essential knowledge was a heading with a number of bullet points under it;

in other cases the "essential knowledge" was simply a heading with no bullet point. When bullet points were present, each individual bullet point was considered a separate specific learning outcome. However, sometimes bullet points have another level of bullet points under them. In this case, the highest-level bullet point was considered as the specific learning outcome, and the second-level bullet points were included under the initial bullet points as part of the outcome.

An additional difference between Quebec's curricula and other provinces' curricula is that Quebec's outcomes are organized by theme, rather than by grade (or cycle). For example, other provinces typically have a document for a subject (e.g., English Language Arts), and then have outcomes organized by grade, with kindergarten outcomes first and followed by each additional grade. Sometimes each grade even has their own document within each subject (e.g., English Language Arts Grade Two). Instead, Quebec lists the outcome and then indicates with a "1," "2," or "3" which cycle or cycles for which that essential knowledge should be taught. This means that all the outcomes for one outcome are not necessarily grouped together; one must read all of the essential learnings to identify which outcomes apply to each cycle.

Additionally, it is noted that only the English versions of all Quebec curriculum documents were included for analysis.

The most frequently included domain in Quebec's curriculum was the cognitive domain, with 16.50% of outcomes included, which was high compared to the national average. The second most frequently included domain was the social domain, with 10.35% of outcomes, which was low compared to the national average. The third most frequently included domain was the values domain, with 4.34% of outcomes, which was low compared to the national average. The fourth most frequently included domain were the identity and emotion domains, each including 3.22% of curriculum outcomes. Quebec's inclusion of both the identity and

emotion domains were considered low compared to the national averages for these domains. The least frequently included domain was the perspectives domain, with 0.56% of outcomes, which was low compared to the national average. It is notable that Quebec's rate of inclusion of the SEL domains varied more from the national average than any other province; Quebec had the lowest rate of inclusion of three domains of all provinces and territories across Canada, and the highest rate of inclusion for one domain. This means that four out of six SEL domains are extremely different from the national average.

### Saskatchewan

Saskatchewan's curricula are divided into goals, outcomes, and indicators. The goal is similar to a broad unit or topic of study. The outcomes can be considered equivalent to general learning outcomes and the indicators are equivalent to specific learning outcomes. The indicators were used for analysis in this study.

In Saskatchewan's curricula, the most frequently included domain was the social domain, with 15.24% of outcomes, which is typical compared to the national average. The second most frequently included domain was the cognitive domain, with 11.89% of outcomes, which was high compared to the national average. The third most frequently included domain was the values domain, with 10.47% of outcomes, which was typical compared to the national average. The fourth most frequently included domain wax the identity domain, with 6.98% of outcomes, which is typical compared to the national average. The fifth most frequently included domain was the emotion domain, with 5.69% of outcomes, which was low compared to the national average. The least frequently included domain was the perspectives domain, with 0.23% of outcomes, which was low compared to the national average.

## Appendix B: Curriculum Documents Used in Analysis

### Alberta

Kindergarten to Grade Six English Language Arts and Literature Curriculum (2022)
Kindergarten to Grade Six Physical Education and Wellness Curriculum (2022)
Kindergarten to Grade Twelve Social Studies Curriculum (2005) (no longer available; updated 2024)

### British Columbia

Kindergarten to Grade Nine English Language Arts Curriculum (2016)
Kindergarten to Grade Nine Physical and Health Education Curriculum (2022)
Kindergarten to Grade Nine Social Studies Curriculum (2016)

### Manitoba

Kindergarten to Grade Twelve English Language Arts Curriculum Framework: A Living Document (2020)
Kindergarten to Grade Four Physical Education/Health Education: A Foundation for Implementation (2001)
Grades Five to Eight Physical Education/Health Education: A Foundation for Implementation (2002)
Kindergarten to Grade Eight Social Studies: Manitoba Curriculum Framework of Outcomes (2003)

### New Brunswick

Kindergarten to Grade Three Atlantic Canada English Language Arts Curriculum (1998)
Grades Four to Six Atlantic Canada English Language Arts Curriculum (1998)
Kindergarten to Grade Two You and Your World Curriculum (2005)
Grade Three Social Studies Curriculum – Provincial Identity (2011)
Grade Four Social Studies Curriculum – Exploration (2012)
Grade Five Social Studies Curriculum – Investigating Past Societies (2013)
Grade Six Social Studies Curriculum – World Cultures (2006)
Kindergarten to Grade Five Physical Education Curriculum (2017)
Grades Six to Eight Physical Education Curriculum (2002)
Grades Three to Five Personal Wellness Curriculum (2016)
Grades Six – Eight Personal Wellness Curriculum (2023)

### Newfoundland and Labrador

Kindergarten English Language Arts Curriculum (2014)
Grade One English Language Arts Curriculum (2017)
Grade Two English Language Arts Curriculum (2014)

Grade Three English Language Arts Curriculum (2015)
Grade Four English Language Arts Curriculum (2017)
Grade Five English Language Arts Curriculum (2013)
Grade Six English Language Arts Curriculum (2014)
Kindergarten Health Curriculum (2021)
Grade One Health Curriculum (2021)
Grade Two Health Curriculum (2022)
Grade Three Health Curriculum (2022)
Grades Four to Six: Towards a Comprehensive School Health Program: A Health Curriculum Guide (1994)
Kindergarten Religious Education Curriculum (2016)
Grade One Religious Education Curriculum (2016)
Grade Two Religious Education Curriculum (2016)
Grade Three Religious Education Curriculum (2016)
Grade Four Religious Education Curriculum (2015)
Grade Five Religious Education Curriculum (2016)
Grade Six Religious Education Curriculum (2016)
Kindergarten Social Studies Curriculum (2023)
Grade One to Two Social Studies Curriculum (1999)
Grade Three Social Studies Curriculum (2011)
Grade Four Social Studies Curriculum (2010)
Grade Five Social Studies Curriculum (2012)
Grade Six Social Studies Curriculum (2007)
Kindergarten Physical Education Curriculum Outcomes (2010)
Grades One to Six Physical Education Theme: Games – Space, Directions, and Body Awareness Curriculum (n.d.)
Grades One to Six Physical Education Theme: Games – Locomotor Skills Curriculum (n.d.)
Grades One to Six Physical Education Theme: Games – Non Locomotor Skills Curriculum (n.d.)
Grades One to Three Physical Education Theme: Games – Manipulative Skills: Projecting and Receiving Small Objects Curriculum (n.d.)
Grades One to Three Physical Education Theme: Games – Manipulative Skills: Projecting and Receiving Large Objects Curriculum (n.d.)
Grades One to Three Physical Education Theme: Games – Manipulative Skills: Projecting and Receiving with Implements (n.d.)
Grades Four to Six Physical Education Theme: Games – Manipulative Skills: Projecting and Receiving Curriculum (n.d.)
Grades One to Six Physical Education Theme: Games – Manipulative Skills: Accompanying Apparatus Curriculum (n.d.)
Grades One to Six Physical Education Theme: Rhythmic Activities Curriculum (n.d.)
Grades One to Six Physical Education Theme: Gymnastics Curriculum (n.d.)
Grades Four to Six Physical Education Theme: Sports Lead-Up Activities Curriculum (n.d.)
Grades Four to Six Physical Education Theme: Fitness Curriculum (n.d.)

**Northwest Territories**

Kindergarten to Grade Three English Language Arts Curriculum (2011)

Grades Four to Six English Language Arts Curriculum (2011)
Junior Kindergarten/Kindergarten Curriculum: A Holistic Approach to Children's Early Learning (2017)
Grade One Health Studies Curriculum (1995)
Grade Two Health Studies Curriculum (1995)
Grade Three Health Studies Curriculum (1995)
Grade Four Health Studies Curriculum (1995)
Grade Five Health Studies Curriculum (1995)
Grade Six Health Studies Curriculum (1995)
Grade One Social Studies Curriculum (2009
Grade Two Social Studies Curriculum (2009)
Grade Three Social Studies Curriculum (2009)
Grade Four Social Studies Curriculum (2008)
Grade Five Social Studies Curriculum (2011)
Grade Six Social Studies Curriculum (Kindergarten to Grade Six is listed in this document, only used for Grade Six; 1997)
Kindergarten to Grade Twelve Physical Education Curriculum (Previous Alberta Curriculum; 2000)

**Nova Scotia**

Grades Primary to Six English Language Arts Curriculum Outcomes (2019)
Grades Primary to Three Health Education Curriculum (2019)
Grade Four Health Education Curriculum (2019) (No longer available; 2021 "At a Glance" document is now posted instead.)
Grade Five Health Education Curriculum (2021)
Grade Six Health Education Curriculum (2021)
Grades Primary to Six Physical Education Curriculum Outcomes (2019)
Grades Primary to Six Social Studies Curriculum Outcomes (2019)

**Ontario**

The Kindergarten Program (2016)
Grades One to Eight English Language Arts Curriculum 2006 (No longer available; updated June 2023)
Grades One to Eight Health and Physical Education Curriculum (2019)
Grades One to Eight Social Studies Curriculum (2023)

**Prince Edward Island**

Kindergarten Integrated Curriculum (2008)
Grade One Social Studies Curriculum (2009)
Grade Two Social Studies Curriculum (2008)
Grade Three Social Studies Curriculum (2012)
Grade Four Social Studies Curriculum (2012)
Grade Five Social Studies Curriculum (2012)

Grade Six Social Studies Curriculum (2014)
Kindergarten to Grade Six Physical Education Curriculum (2011)
Grade One Health Curriculum (2006)
Grade Two Health Curriculum (2006)
Grade Three Health Curriculum (2006)
Grade Four Health Curriculum (2009)
Grade Five Health Curriculum (2009)
Grade Six Health Curriculum (2009)
Grades One to Three English Language Arts Curriculum (n.d.)
Grades Four to Six English Language Arts Curriculum (n.d.)

**Quebec**

Elementary Languages Curriculum (n.d.)
Elementary Social Sciences Curriculum (n.d.)
Elementary Physical Education and Health Curriculum (n.d.)
Elementary Ethics and Religious Culture Curriculum (2008)

**Saskatchewan**

Kindergarten Curriculum (2010)
Grade One English Language Arts Curriculum (2010)
Grade Two English Language Arts Curriculum (2010)
Grade Three English Language Arts Curriculum (2010)
Grade Four English Language Arts Curriculum (2010)
Grade Five English Language Arts Curriculum (2010)
Grade Six English Language Arts Curriculum (2008)
Grade One Health Education Curriculum (2010)
Grade Two Health Education Curriculum (2010)
Grade Three Health Education Curriculum (2010)
Grade Four Health Education Curriculum (2010)
Grade Five Health Education Curriculum (2010)
Grade Six Health Education Curriculum (2009)
Grade One Physical Education Curriculum (2010)
Grade Two Physical Education Curriculum (2010)
Grade Three Physical Education Curriculum (2010)
Grade Four Physical Education Curriculum (2010)
Grade Five Physical Education Curriculum (2010)
Grade Six Physical Education Curriculum (2009)
Grade One Social Studies Curriculum (2010)
Grade Two Social Studies Curriculum (2010)
Grade Three Social Studies Curriculum (2010)
Grade Four Social Studies Curriculum (2010)
Grade Five Social Studies Curriculum (2010)
Grade Six Social Studies Curriculum (2009)

## Appendix C: Link to Curriculum Outcomes Used in Analysis

All curriculum outcomes used in the analysis for this project can be found at the following link: http://www.kristaritchie.ca/sel