

# Social and Emotional Learning: Best Practices and Barriers to Successful Implementation

## Executive Summary

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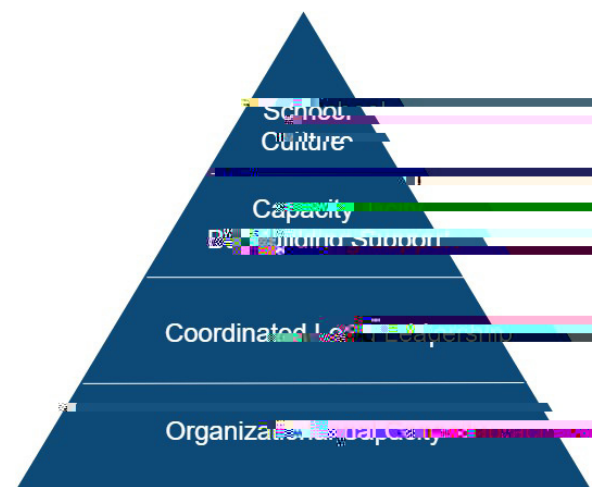
2018 From focus groups and interviews with students, teachers, and other staff members at elementary, middle, and high schools in AISD, four themes emerged as influential to SEL implementation: (a) *Organizational Capacity*, (b) *Coordinated Leadership*, (c) *Capacity Building*, and (d) *School Culture* (Figure 1). These themes exist within a system of interconnected SEL-related processes (Figure 2) and build off each other to empower school leaders, teachers, and students to build SEL skills; strengthen relationships; and ultimately, improve school culture. The following provides a brief overview of the relationship between these themes:

- When campus organizational capacity was high, campus leadership was empowered to determine the vision, scope, and structure for SEL; to translate that vision into action; and to build on that vision over time. When organizational capacity was low, the vision for SEL was unclear, and leaders had more difficulty sustaining SEL work.
- With high organizational capacity and a clear vision for SEL, coordinated leadership in-

to teachers, SEL was more firmly ingrained into the school culture to maximize opportu-

Figure 1

Foundations of Campus SEL Implementation



implementation and learning:

- Continue identifying, coaching and supporting campus SEL leaders, as they are crucial to creating, executing, and sustaining each school's vision for SEL
- Strengthen change-management support for schools that experience leadership turnover or elimination of

services (e.g., Communities in Schools), as these disruptions can cause significant stress to staff and students

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