



THE DEPARTMENT OF RESEARCH & PERFORMANCE MANAGEMENT

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Evaluation of 7 Mindsets Implementation in MSCS Model Schools, 2025–2026

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Key Findings

- Across the 15 MSCS model schools implementing 7 Mindsets during the 2025–2026 school year, teachers reported positive implementation experiences across all Support–Receptivity–Understanding–Practice (SERUP) framework domains.
- Average ratings ranged from 3.81 to 4.08 on a five-point scale (5 = highest positive perception), indicating that most teachers generally agreed that they received adequate support, valued the program, understood the framework, and were implementing 7 Mindsets practices in their classrooms.
- Support was the strongest implementation area. Teachers reported positive experiences with professional learning, instructional resources, leadership guidance, and the 7 Mindsets digital platform.
- Teachers demonstrated a strong understanding of the 7 Mindsets framework and generally viewed the program as valuable for students and aligned with school goals.
- Teachers identified student engagement, positive classroom culture, student social-emotional growth, and meaningful real-life discussions as the primary strengths of implementation.
- Time and scheduling emerged as the most significant implementation challenge, followed by a need for ongoing professional learning and coaching. Teachers also identified stronger curriculum integration and additional implementation resources as important areas for development to support consistent and sustainable implementation across classrooms.

Program Overview

The 7 Mindsets framework is a comprehensive social-emotional learning (SEL) program designed to promote positive mindsets, well-being, and academic success among K–12 students. As part of the District’s commitment to comprehensive social-emotional learning

outlined in the 100-Day Plan, Memphis-Shelby County Schools (MSCS) implemented 7 Mindsets in selected model schools. Fifteen schools, representing one elementary, one middle, and one high school from each MSCS region, were selected to serve as 7 Mindsets model schools. Following districtwide professional learning in September 2025, these schools began implementing the program in October 2025 and received ongoing implementation support, coaching, and access to program resources while using 7 Mindsets curriculum throughout the remainder of the school year (Memphis-Shelby County Schools, 2025).

7 Mindsets is delivered through short digital lessons taught twice a week during homeroom or advisory periods. Teachers reinforce the lessons through classroom discussions, daily routines, and schoolwide PBIS/RTI²-B activities. To support implementation, teachers received professional training. Additionally, student progress is monitored using the 7 Mindsets Insights SEL assessments and Climate Surveys, both of which are components of the 7 Mindsets program. Prior to implementation, teachers and district leaders from the 15 model schools participated in a half-day orientation and training on 7 Mindsets to support program implementation.

Theoretical Framework and Survey Development

The purpose of this evaluation was to assess implementation, or the extent to which the program was delivered as intended (Carroll et al., 2007). Specifically, the evaluation sought to identify factors that facilitated or hindered implementation, examine teacher readiness and implementation experiences, review early student outcome data, and develop recommendations to support future implementation efforts.

This evaluation is grounded in the Support–Receptivity–Understanding–Practice (SERUP) framework developed during the national evaluation of The New Zealand Curriculum (Sinnema, 2011). The framework conceptualizes curriculum implementation as a multidimensional process in which level of support provided to educators influences their receptivity, confidence, and understanding of the curriculum. In turn, these factors shape classroom practice. It suggests that professional support can strengthen educators’ beliefs, confidence, and instructional practices.

Applying this framework allows the evaluation to move beyond simple measures of participation and examine how professional support structures, teacher confidence, and conceptual understanding contribute to meaningful instructional change (Sinnema, 2011).

This evaluation drew on the framework as a guiding structure for developing a survey instrument to assess the implementation of the 7 Mindsets program in MSCS. The following

table (Table 1) presents the key domains of the survey instrument and provides a description of the concepts measured by each domain.

Table 1. Domain-Specific Constructs Measured by the Teacher Implementation Survey

Support	Support Encounters	Measures teachers' engagement with professional learning, leadership support, instructional resources, and implementation-related collaboration.
	Support Quality	Measures teachers' perceptions of whether implementation supports were clear, relevant to classroom needs, helpful for building understanding and confidence, and worth the time invested.
Receptivity	Regard	Measures the extent to which teachers believe 7 Mindsets is valuable for students, contributes to student development, and aligns with school goals.
	Confidence	Measures teachers' confidence in delivering 7 Mindsets lessons, understanding high-quality implementation, integrating mindset concepts into instruction, and managing implementation within their existing responsibilities.
Understanding		Measures teachers' understanding of the 7 Mindsets framework, including its goals, how it differs from other SEL initiatives, how the mindsets connect to one another, and what effective implementation looks like.

Practice

Measures the extent to which teachers incorporate 7 Mindsets concepts into classroom instruction, including explicit teaching, student reflection, ownership of learning, behavior support, real-life connections, and family communication.

Data and Methodology

This evaluation utilizes two primary data sources: teacher implementation survey responses and the 7 Mindsets student Insights and SEL assessment data. A mixed-methods approach was adopted to combine quantitative data with qualitative insights, ensuring a comprehensive understanding of the implementation process (Greene et al., 2001). Teacher implementation data were collected through an anonymous online survey administered to educators in the 15 designated 7 Mindsets model schools. Most survey items used a five-point Likert scale ranging from 1 (Strongly Disagree) to 5 (Strongly Agree), and average scores were calculated for each domain and survey item. Descriptive statistics, including frequencies, percentages, and mean scores, were used to summarize implementation experiences.

Open-ended responses were analyzed using a thematic analysis approach. Responses were reviewed and grouped into recurring themes to identify commonly reported strengths of implementation and areas requiring additional support or development. These qualitative findings were used to provide additional context for the survey results and inform recommendations for future implementation efforts.

Student outcomes were examined using matched baseline and year-end Insights SEL assessments, which are part of the 7 Mindsets curriculum package. The analyses focused on the percentage of students performing at or above nationally benchmarked expectations across social-emotional learning competencies. These findings are presented for descriptive purposes and provide a summary of student outcomes observed during the implementation period. However, student outcomes are presented to provide context for program implementation and should not be interpreted as evidence of program impact.

Findings and Results

Survey Participation Overview

Principals had some flexibility to determine how 7 Mindsets would be implemented in their schools, including how many and which teachers would provide the instruction. A roster of

teacher participants was not received, which makes it difficult to know how many teachers taught 7 Mindsets modules and how many students received the instruction. Despite this limitation, survey response still provided valuable information regarding 7 Mindsets implementation.

In total, 109 educators from the 15 designated 7 Mindsets model schools responded to the teacher implementation survey. Of respondents, 93.6% reported directly implementing 7 Mindsets lessons during the 2025–2026 school year, while 4.6% indicated they were aware of the program in their school but were not directly responsible for implementation.

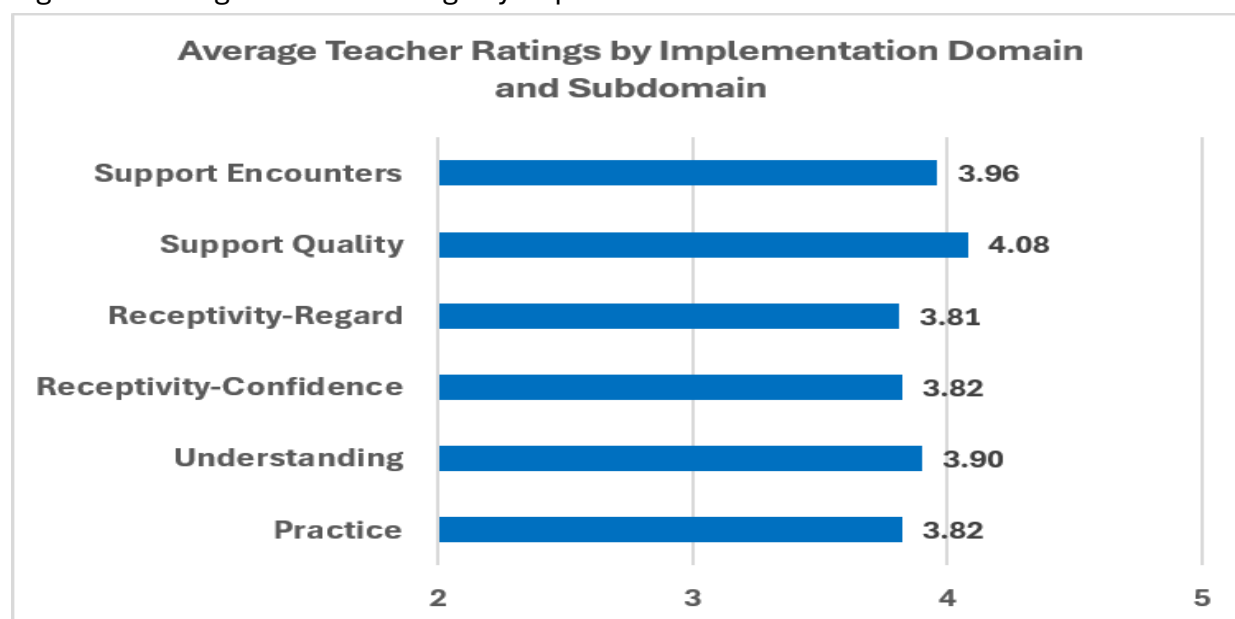
Most respondents reported teaching 7 Mindsets lessons once per week (72.5%). Approximately 79% reported spending between 15 and 44 minutes per week on 7 Mindsets instruction, with 43.1% spending 15–29 minutes and 35.8% spending 30–44 minutes. Additionally, 77.1% reported participating in professional development related to the program.

The survey included both closed-ended and open-ended questions. Open-ended responses were provided by 64 respondents for implementation strengths and 58 respondents for areas requiring additional support or development. These qualitative responses were analyzed alongside survey ratings to better understand teachers' implementation experiences and recommendations for future improvement.

SERUP Framework Results

Figure 1 presents average teacher ratings across the four implementation domains measured by the SERUP framework. Overall, teachers reported positive perceptions across all domains, with average ratings ranging from 3.81 to 4.08 on a five-point scale. Support Quality received the highest rating ($M = 4.08$), followed by Support Encounters ($M = 3.96$) and Understanding ($M = 3.90$). Receptivity–Confidence ($M = 3.82$), Practice ($M = 3.82$), and Receptivity–Regard ($M = 3.81$) also received positive ratings. These findings suggest that teachers generally felt supported, understood the framework, and reported incorporating 7 Mindsets practices into their classrooms.

Figure 1. Average Teacher Ratings by Implementation Domains and Subdomains



Support

“The one key area that needs further development to strengthen 7 Mindsets is more training for the teachers and staff.” (7 Mindsets Implementation Survey, Open-Ended Response, 2026).

The Support domain consists of two dimensions: Support Encounters and Support Quality. Support Encounters measures the frequency with which teachers engage with implementation supports, including professional learning, leadership guidance, instructional resources, and collaboration opportunities. Support Quality measures teachers’ perceptions of the usefulness, relevance, and effectiveness of those supports (Table 1).

Support received the strongest ratings among all implementation domains (Figure 1). Individual survey questions under the Support domain that received the highest ratings included support being clear and easy to apply ($M = 4.16$), use of the 7 Mindsets digital platform and resources ($M = 4.11$), and support helping deepen understanding of the framework ($M = 4.12$).

These findings suggest that teachers had access to meaningful implementation supports and generally viewed those supports as useful and relevant to their work. However, open-ended responses indicated a continued desire for additional training, coaching, and implementation support. This suggests that while teachers valued the support provided, many viewed ongoing professional learning as important for strengthening and sustaining implementation.

Receptivity

“I think there should be a schoolwide focus that can include activities to center and bring focus back to the mindset of the week.” (7 Mindsets Implementation Survey, Open-Ended Response, 2026).

The Receptivity domain consists of two dimensions: Regard and Confidence. Regard reflects teachers’ perceptions of the value and relevance of 7 Mindsets for students, while Confidence reflects teachers’ readiness and comfort implementing the program. Both dimensions received positive ratings.

Regard received an average rating of 3.81, indicating that teachers generally believed 7 Mindsets was valuable for students, aligned with school goals, and contributed to student development. Confidence received a similar rating ($M = 3.82$), suggesting that teachers generally felt capable of delivering lessons and understood what quality implementation looks like. However, the lowest-rated item within this domain was whether implementation was manageable within existing workloads ($M = 3.75$), indicating that time and competing responsibilities may present challenges for some educators.

Understanding

“In my opinion 7 mindset(s) should be implemented into the curriculum. Because a large ratio of students aren’t being taught how to think rationally, make good judgement decisions, and communicate with others” (7 Mindsets Implementation Survey, Open-Ended Response, 2026).

The Understanding domain examines teachers’ knowledge of the 7 Mindsets framework and its intended purpose. Overall, Understanding received a strong rating ($M = 3.90$). Teachers reported high levels of understanding regarding the goals of the framework ($M = 3.95$), how different mindsets connect to one another ($M = 3.98$), and how the program influences student behavior and engagement ($M = 3.98$). The lowest-rated item in this domain concerned understanding how 7 Mindsets differs from other SEL initiatives ($M = 3.69$).

Although ratings remained positive overall, this finding suggests an opportunity to strengthen teachers’ conceptual understanding of the unique features and intended approach of the 7 Mindsets framework. Additional professional learning, coaching, and implementation support may help clarify how 7 Mindsets differs from other SEL programs and reinforce its role within the district’s broader social-emotional learning efforts.

Practice

“Without protected time for explicit instruction, reflection, and follow-up, implementation can become fragmented.” (7 Mindsets Implementation Survey, Open-Ended Response, 2026).

The Practice domain measures the extent to which teachers incorporate 7 Mindsets concepts into classroom instruction and student learning experiences. Overall, Practice received a positive rating ($M = 3.82$). Teachers most frequently reported encouraging students to take ownership of their learning ($M = 3.93$) and connecting mindset concepts to real-life situations ($M = 3.92$).

Teachers also reported using mindset strategies to support student behavior and engagement ($M = 3.83$). Comparatively lower ratings were observed for student reflection and goal-setting activities ($M = 3.72$), explicit teaching of 7 Mindsets concepts ($M = 3.75$), and integration of mindset language into academic instruction ($M = 3.78$). These findings suggest that implementation is occurring across classrooms but may benefit from deeper integration into daily instructional practices.

Teacher Feedback: Open-Ended Responses

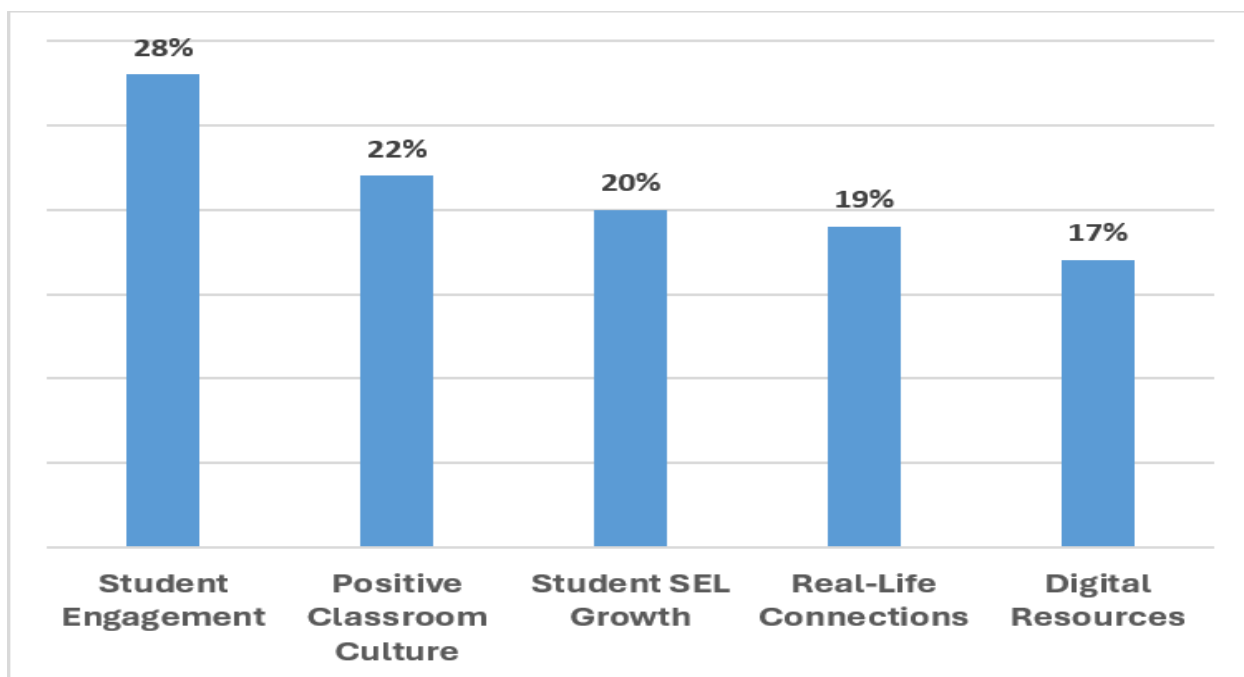
To provide additional context for the survey findings, open-ended responses were analyzed to identify commonly reported implementation strengths and areas for development. These qualitative findings were used to provide context for the survey results and inform insights for future implementation efforts, following the framework of utilization-focused evaluation (Patton, 2008).

A total of 64 respondents provided comments regarding implementation strengths, while 58 respondents identified areas requiring additional support or improvement. Responses were reviewed and grouped into recurring themes, which are summarized below.

What Is Working Well?

Teachers identified several strengths of 7 Mindsets implementation. Student engagement was the most frequently reported strength, with many teachers describing students as actively participating in lessons and discussions. Teachers also highlighted improvements in classroom culture, including stronger relationships and trust among students. Other commonly reported strengths included student social-emotional growth, meaningful discussions that connected to students' real-life experiences, and the ease of using the program's digital resources and instructional materials (See Table 3 in the Appendix for further details).

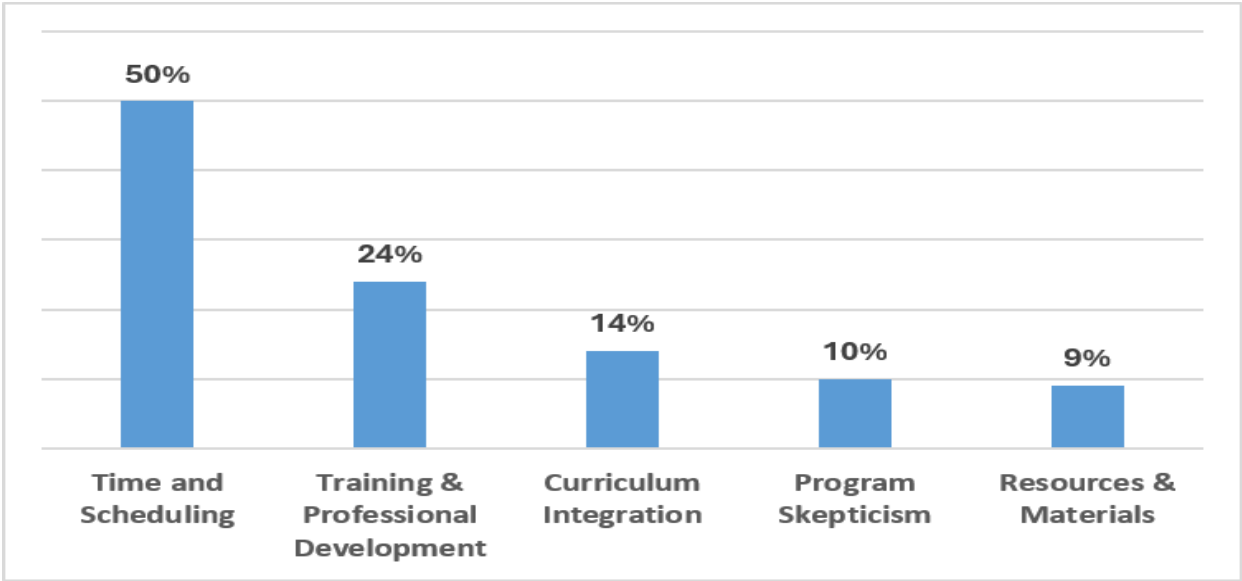
Figure 2. Teachers identified key areas of strength in the implementation.



Key Area of Development

Teachers identified several areas for continued improvement. Time and scheduling emerged as the most common challenge, with half of respondents citing competing instructional demands and limited dedicated time for implementation. Teachers also expressed a need for ongoing professional learning and coaching to strengthen implementation practices. Additional themes included integrating 7 Mindsets more effectively into daily instruction, expanding instructional resources, and addressing concerns raised by a small group of teachers regarding the program's relevance and implementation. Together, these findings suggest that future implementation efforts should focus on strengthening structural support while continuing to build teacher capacity and engagement (See Table 4 in the Appendix for further details).

Figure 3. Teachers identified key areas for development in the implementation.



Student Outcomes

Student outcomes were examined using matched baseline and year-end Insights SEL assessments administered during the 2025–2026 school year. Baseline assessments were administered during the initial implementation period for 7 Mindsets, mainly in mid-to-late fall semesters. Year-end assessments were administered at the end of the school year. Results are presented separately for Early Elementary, Late Elementary, Middle School, and High School student groups. 7 Mindsets classified student responses into four nationally benchmarked categories: Well Below Average, Below Average, At or Around Average, and Above Average. For reporting purposes, findings focus on the percentage of students performing At or Around, and Above Average, which serves as a summary indicator of students meeting or exceeding nationally benchmarked expectations.

The student outcome findings are presented to provide a descriptive summary of social-emotional learning outcomes observed during the implementation period. Because assessing program effectiveness was beyond the scope of the current evaluation, these results should not be interpreted as evidence of the effectiveness or impact of the 7 Mindsets program.

Table 2 below shows the number of schools whose grade band contributed to each analysis. Among the 15 model schools, six schools contributed to the elementary analyses, five to the middle school analysis, and five to the high school analysis. One K-8 school contributed to both the elementary and middle school grade bands.

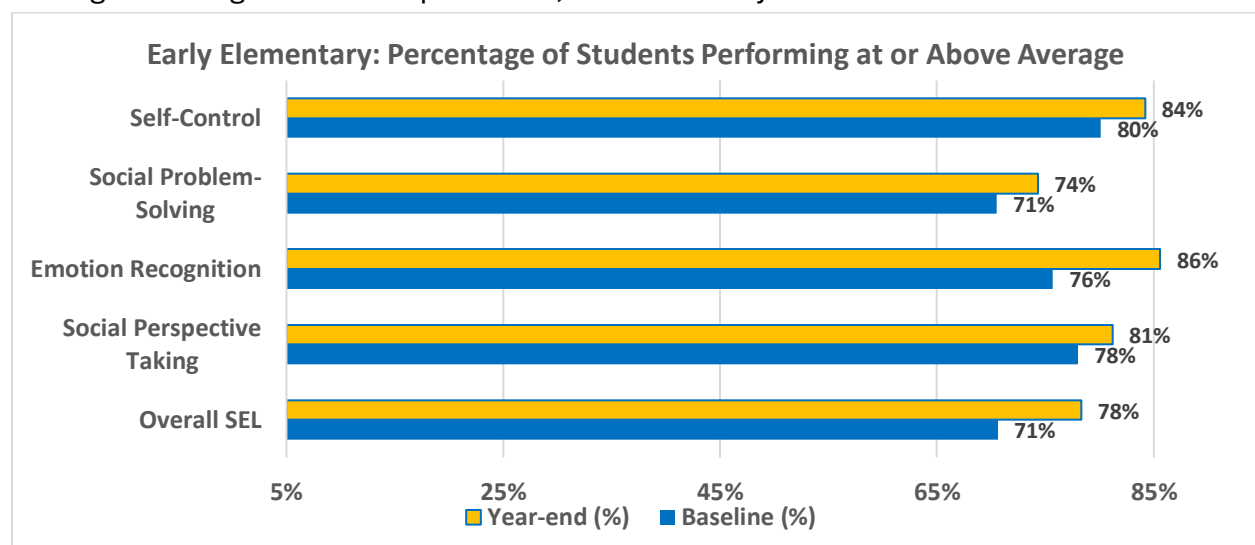
Table 2. Grade Bands Included in the Student Outcome Analysis

School Category	Grade Band	Number of Model Schools
Early Elementary	Grades K-3	6
Late Elementary	Grades 4–5	6
Middle School	Grades 6–8	5
High School	Grades 9-12	5

Early Elementary

Only students with both a baseline and a year-end score (matched students) were included in the analyses as these students were those who received the full amount of 7 Mindsets instruction offered at their school during this pilot phase. Among the 554 matched Early Elementary students, the percentage performing At or Around and Above Average was higher at year-end than baseline across all measured domains. The two domains with the most noticeable difference were Emotion Recognition (9.9 percentage points) and Overall SEL (7.7 percentage points). The findings show higher year-end percentages across all measured social-emotional learning domains among Early Elementary students compared with baseline. As these data are provided for descriptive purposes only, statistical analyses were not conducted.

Figure 4. Percentage of Early Elementary Students Performing ‘At or Around’ and ‘Above Average’ on Insights SEL Competencies, baseline and year-end.

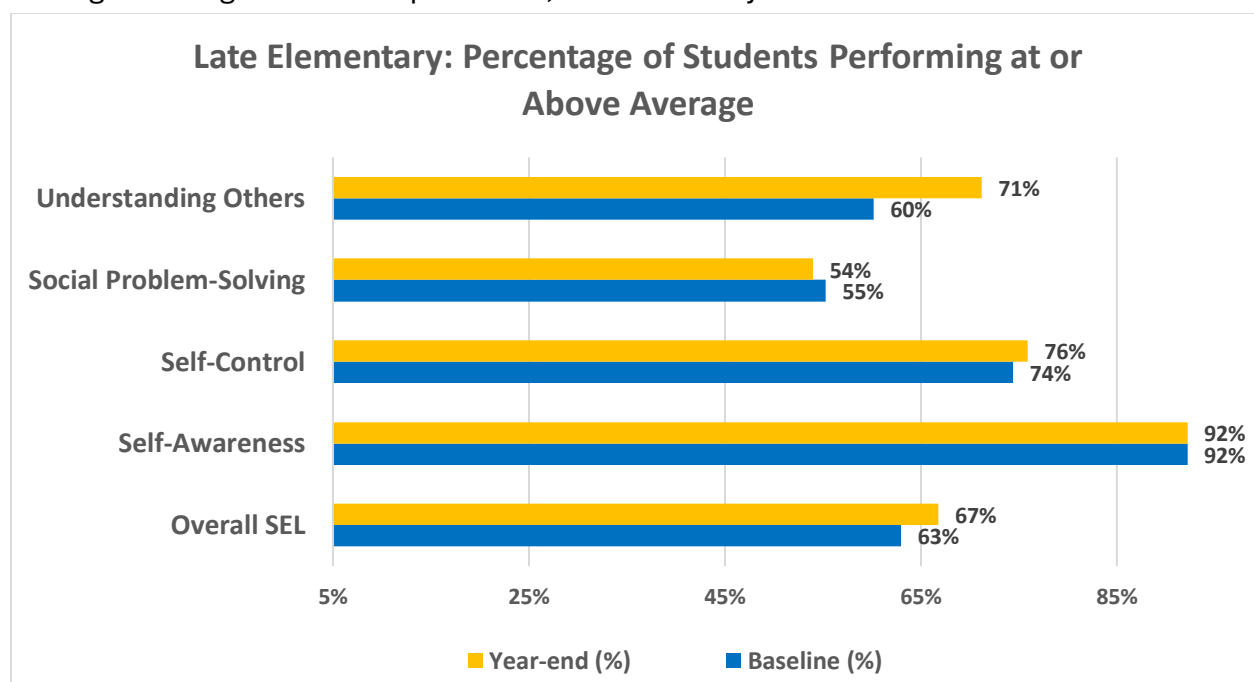


Note: Results are based on 554 students who completed both baseline and year-end assessments. Percentages are rounded to the nearest whole number.

Late Elementary

Among the 292 matched Late Elementary students, year-end percentages performing At or Around and Above Average were higher than baseline for Overall SEL, Self-Control, and Understanding Others. The largest difference was observed in Understanding Others, with an 11.0 percentage point difference between baseline and year-end. Self-Awareness remained stable across both assessment periods, and Social Problem-Solving was slightly lower at year-end.

Figure 5. Percentage of Late Elementary Students Performing At or Around and Above Average on Insights SEL Competencies, baseline and year-end

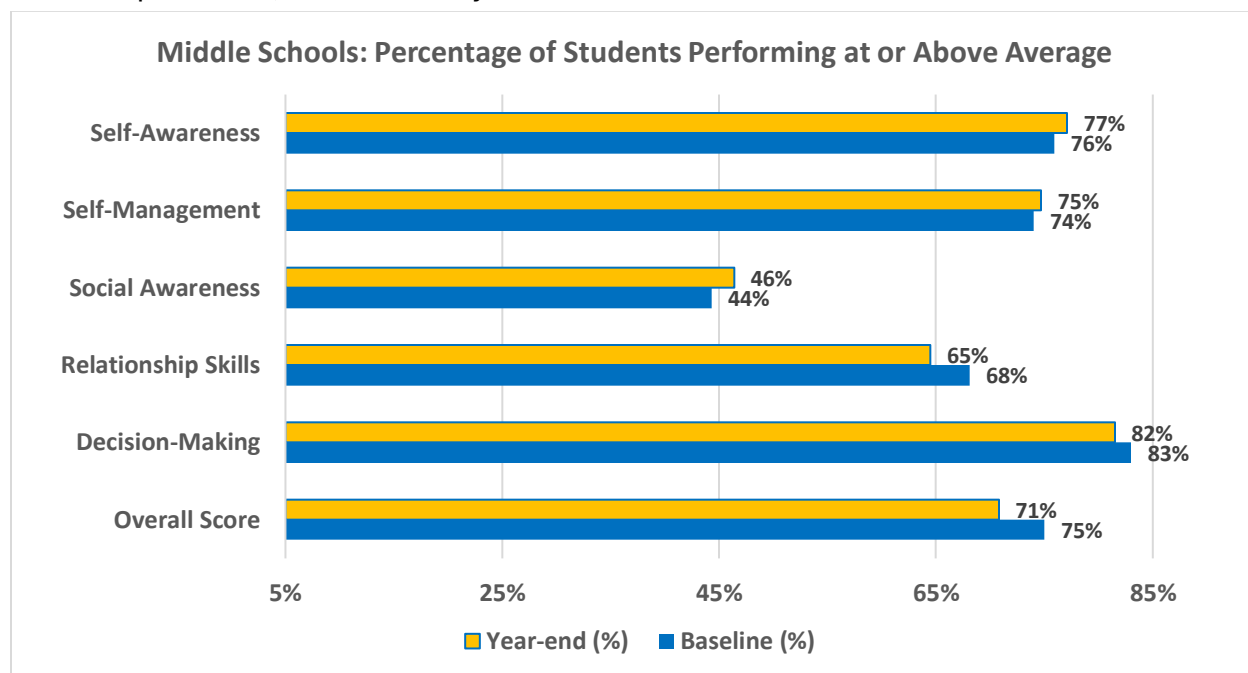


Note: Results are based on 292 students included in the baseline and year-end assessments. Percentages are rounded to the nearest whole number.

Middle School

Among the 349 matched Middle School students, percentages performing At or Around and Above Average were generally similar across baseline and year-end assessments. Year-end percentages were slightly higher for Social Awareness, Self-Management, and Self-Awareness and slightly lower for Overall Score, Responsible Decision-Making, and Relationship Skills. Social Awareness was 2.1 percentage points different, while Overall Score showed a 4.2 percentage point difference. Overall, outcomes remained relatively stable across the two assessment periods.

Figure 6. Percentage of Middle School Students Performing at or Above Average on Insights SEL Competencies, baseline and year-end



Note: Results are based on 349 students included in the baseline and year-end assessments. Percentages are rounded to the nearest whole number.

High School

High school student outcomes are not reported because only eight students completed both the baseline and year-end Insights SEL assessments. Although a larger number of students completed the baseline assessment, the low number of matched responses (n=8) limited meaningful interpretation and raised concerns about student confidentiality. Future implementation efforts should emphasize increasing assessment completion rates to ensure sufficient matched data for examining student social-emotional learning outcomes over time.

Conclusion and Recommendations

This evaluation examined the implementation of the 7 Mindsets program in 15 model schools during the 2025–2026 school year. Findings indicate that implementation is progressing positively. Teachers reported favorable perceptions across all implementation domains, including support, receptivity, understanding, and classroom practice. Survey results suggest that teachers generally felt supported, understood the framework, and incorporated 7 Mindsets concepts into classroom instruction.

Teachers identified student engagement, positive classroom culture, social-emotional growth, and meaningful classroom discussions as important strengths of the program.

Student outcome data provided descriptive information on social-emotional learning outcomes among matched students. Year-end percentages were higher than baseline across all Early Elementary competencies and several Late Elementary competencies, while Middle School percentages were generally similar across assessment periods. Together, these findings suggest that the foundational conditions for successful implementation are in place.

At the same time, teachers identified several opportunities to strengthen implementation. Time and scheduling emerged as the most common challenge, while ongoing professional learning, curriculum integration, and additional implementation resources were also identified as areas for continued support. In addition, the low completion rate for the year-end Insights SEL assessment among high school students limited the ability to examine changes in student outcomes over time. As the program continues to expand, sustained attention to these implementation factors and strategies to improve student assessment participation may help strengthen implementation consistency and future evaluation efforts across schools.

Recommendations

- **Establish clear implementation goals and expectations.** Define consistent expectations for program delivery across model schools and communicate implementation priorities to school leaders and teachers.
- **Provide dedicated time for implementation.** Consider identifying consistent opportunities within existing schedules to support regular delivery of 7 Mindsets lessons and related activities.
- **Continue professional learning for teachers.** Offer ongoing training, refresher sessions, coaching, and opportunities for teachers to share effective implementation strategies and classroom practices.
- **Strengthen integration into daily instruction.** Support teachers in incorporating mindset language, reflection activities, and real-world connections across academic content areas.
- **Expand implementation resources and support.** Provide additional lesson extensions, classroom examples, and practical tools to help teachers deepen implementation and student engagement.
- **Strengthen student assessment participation and completion.** Communicate the importance of completing Insights SEL assessments and encourage consistent participation across schools. District communication channels, such as the

Superintendent's Monday Memo and other leadership communications, may help reinforce expectations and improve completion rates, particularly among secondary students.

- **Continue monitoring implementation and student outcomes.** Use teacher feedback, implementation data, assessment participation rates, and student SEL assessment results to support continuous improvement and guide future implementation efforts.

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Appendix A

Table 3. Implementation Strengths Identified by Teachers

Theme	Frequency	Key Finding
Student Engagement	28%	Students are actively engaged and, in some cases, leading classroom discussions.
Positive Classroom Culture	22%	Teachers reported improvements in classroom relationships, trust, and overall culture.
Student SEL Growth	20%	Teachers observed gains in empathy, self-regulation, and emotional expression.
Real-Life Connection and Discussion	19%	Students connected mindset concepts to their own experiences and participated in meaningful discussions.
Digital Resources and Ease of Use	17%	Teachers frequently praised the digital platform and instructional resources as accessible and easy to use.

Table 4. Implementation Challenges and Areas for Development Identified by Teachers

Theme	Frequency	Key Finding
Time and Scheduling	50%	The most frequently reported challenge. Teachers cited limited instructional time and competing priorities as barriers to implementation.
Teacher Training and Professional Development	24%	Teachers expressed a need for ongoing coaching, refresher training, and implementation support beyond initial professional development.
Curriculum Integration	14%	Some teachers reported difficulty integrating 7 Mindsets into daily instruction and noted that its non-graded status may reduce student buy-in.
Resources and Materials	9%	Teachers requested additional resources, examples, and extension activities to support implementation.
Program Skepticism and Others	10%	A small but notable group of teachers expressed concerns about program

		relevance, effectiveness, or fit within existing instructional demands.
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Note. Percentages represent the proportion of respondents mentioning each theme. Because responses could be coded into multiple themes, percentages do not equal 100%.

Table 5. Summary of Survey Items, Mean Scores, Agreement Levels, and Implementation Domains

Survey Item (abbreviated)	Mean	% Agree+	Domain
Students reflect on growth	3.72	71.3%	Practice
Explicitly teach 7 Mindsets	3.75	71.3%	Practice
Integrate mindset language	3.78	73.3%	Practice
Mindset strategies for behavior	3.83	75.2%	Practice
Connect to real-life situations	3.92	79.0%	Practice
Students take ownership	3.93	80.2%	Practice
Facilitate student reflection	3.92	81.0%	Practice
Prepared to integrate into instruction	3.75	71.3%	Receptivity
Manageable within workload	3.75	69.3%	Receptivity
Contributes to student development	3.78	72.0%	Receptivity
Valuable for students	3.83	76.2%	Receptivity
Aligns with school goals	3.87	78.0%	Receptivity
Understand high-quality implementation	3.84	77.2%	Receptivity
Confident delivering lessons	3.92	78.2%	Receptivity
Guidance from school leadership	3.95	78.4%	Support Encounters
Used the 7 Mindsets digital platform	4.11	86.1%	Support Encounters
Collaborated with colleagues	3.86	77.5%	Support Encounters
School-based discussions	3.94	78.4%	Support Encounters
Support — clear and easy to apply	4.16	82.7%	Support Quality
Support worth time invested	3.99	75.3%	Support Quality
Support relevant to classroom needs	4.08	78.8%	Support Quality
Support improved confidence	4.12	79.6%	Support Quality
Support deepened understanding	4.12	81.6%	Support Quality
7-Mindsets influences student behavior	3.98	84.0%	Understanding
Mindsets connect to one another	3.98	84.2%	Understanding
Different from other SEL	3.69	70.3%	Understanding
Core goals of 7 Mindsets	3.95	83.2%	Understanding

Note. Agreement level represents the percentage of respondents selecting Agree or Strongly Agree. Higher mean scores indicate more favorable perceptions of implementation.