



MEMORANUDM:

To: Dan Grimm, Basic Education Task Force Chair
From: Mary Lou Dickerson, State Representative, 36th Legislative District
Date: August 18, 2008
Subject: Social Emotional Learning Proposal Follow-up

As requested, this memo provides additional information regarding my recent Social Emotional Learning proposal to the Basic Education Finance Joint Task Force. During my presentation taskforce members asked for additional information regarding the potential cost of implementing SEL as part of basic education. In this memo I lay out various funding scenarios for your consideration. Additionally, I have provided background on Illinois' funding model.

As you may recall, I am asking the taskforce to take action in two ways:

1. Include Social Emotional Learning as part of basic education; and
2. Provide a funding component for Social Emotional Learning in your final recommendations to the Legislature.

The enthusiasm for Social Emotional Learning is growing in our state. Parents, educators, and administrators agree that a student's success depends on their ability to manage their emotions, establish positive relationships, make responsible decisions, and handle challenging situations effectively.

The past 16 years have taught us that setting clear expectations and standards can reap great rewards. Our focused state-wide goal to increase academic learning has improved the education system for all students. That same state-wide focus is needed for social emotional learning.

Background on Illinois Funding for Social Emotional Learning

In the summer of 2006, the Illinois State Assembly provided funding to support implementation of the Children's Mental Health Act which included the following amounts for SEL: \$1 million for professional development of the SEL standards. These funds are to be used for recruiting and equipping a cadre of trainers/coaches to train school teams in SEL implementation and to develop materials and training modules for the cadre; and \$1.3 million for grants to school districts. Additional funds were provided for various other elements of the Act.

While Illinois is doing a fair job implementing SEL into their education system, I do not recommend that Washington use this grant-based approach. Since I am asking that SEL be considered basic education, full funding would be required per the state constitution.

Projection of Cost for Social Emotional Learning

As with other initiatives being discussed by your committee, SEL can be phased in over several biennia. There are 5 key cost drivers involved, and further phase-in can occur within these cost areas. My proposal focuses on the key areas of standards, curriculum, professional development, and assessment.

ITEM	PROJECTED COST 2008	PROJECTED COST 2009	COMMENTS
Revision of existing health learning standards ¹	\$200,000	\$209,000	EALR/GLE development work
SEL coordination/curriculum ²	\$145,900	\$152,757	OPSI staffing
Professional development ³	\$772,984	\$809,315	State-wide trainings/conference and teacher substitutes
Revised health classroom based assessment ⁴	\$200,000	\$209,400	Update health CBAs to include SEL
OPTIONAL Intervention specialist ⁵	\$68,602,072	\$71,826,370	Fund one FTE per 1000 students
<i>TOTAL w/o Intervention specialist</i>	<i>\$1,318,884</i>	<i>\$1,380,87</i>	
<i>TOTAL with Intervention specialist</i>	<i>\$69,920,956</i>	<i>\$73,207,241</i>	

As with any cost projection, there are a multitude of assumptions contained necessary to determine an overall idea of cost. Certainly, that is the case with these SEL cost projections. I would be happy to meet with you or your designee to discuss these projections in detail.

The Washington State University Area Health Education Center states⁶, “The behavioral challenges and family concerns children can bring to school not only challenge their own learning but can create significant burdens for the success of schools as systems.” Further, emotional disorders and family disruptions are recognized as primary predictors of school dropout, academic failure, and school discipline problems (Alexander, et al., 2001; Loeber & Farrington, 2000; Kutash et al., 2006).

With Washington State’s tandem educational goals of student success as well as school system success, social emotional development as a core learning objective for all students is imperative.

Attachments: Social Emotional FAQs
Organizations, Agencies, and Individuals supporting SEL Proposal

¹ Based on fiscal projections for technology EALRs and GLEs.

² Provides state-wide coordinator/admin support; maintain website with recommended curriculum and resources.

³ Summer Institute and January OSPI Conferences; substitute time to enable training for all statewide funded teachers on a 10 year cycle; 3 regional trainings per year for 3 years (would cover all ESD regions on a 3 year cycle).

⁴ Modification to existing health classroom based assessments.

⁵ One SEL specialist per 1000 students; focus on socio-emotional screening, conflict resolution, social/guidance support, and dropout prevention.

⁶ Development of Trauma Sensitive Systems Change Models Addressing Mental Health in Schools; Blodgett, Harrington, and Turner, 2008