

## Impact of the Settle Your Glitter Curriculum in Fort Worth ISD Final Summary Report, 2016-17

**Goal:** The primary goal of this report is to evaluate the efficacy of Momentous Institute’s social emotional health (SEH) curriculum for prekindergarten (pre-k) and kindergarten students. This report summarizes the primary results from a three-year research project (2014-15 through 2016-17) implemented in eight schools within the Fort Worth Independent School District (Fort Worth ISD).

**Method:** Provided three years of intensive training and research in four program (SEH) schools and research only in four matched control schools involving 48 pre-k teachers (August 2014- May 2016) and 29 kindergarten teachers (August 2015-May 2017). Each grade level received two years of training.

Table 1. Fort Worth ISD Participating Schools

School	Group	Total Students Enrolled*		
		2014-15 Pre-k	2015-16 Pre-k/Kinder	2016-17 Kinder
School A	SEH	39	76	48
School B	SEH	68	119	56
School C	SEH	64	114	56
School D	SEH	54	152	105
<b>SEH Total</b>		<b>225</b>	<b>461</b>	<b>265</b>
School E	Control	44	83	45
School F	Control	60	109	54
School G	Control	63	125	72
School H	Control	86	174	95
<b>Control Total</b>		<b>253</b>	<b>491</b>	<b>266</b>
<b>All schools total</b>		<b>478</b>	<b>952</b>	<b>531</b>

\*Counts are all students enrolled in schools from Fall snapshot to end of school year. Informed parental consent to participate in the research was received for 70% of enrolled students in each pre-k cohort. When the students were followed to their kindergarten year, this percentage dropped to 60%.

### Core program features:

- **Settle Your Glitter: A Social Emotional Health Curriculum** for students (47 lessons and targeted support for selected students) that explicitly teaches students social skills, such as self-regulation, self-awareness and relationship skills. The curriculum is trauma-informed and addresses the importance of teachers’ SEH and a positive classroom culture/climate.
- **Professional development seminars** (6 sessions totaling 36 hours/year) enhancing teachers’ knowledge of the impact of trauma and toxic stress on children’s developing brains.
- **Observations/coaching with individual teachers** (3 dosages per month per teacher totaling 25 hours/year) to support their execution of the explicit curriculum and their CLASS<sup>1</sup> practices that create a culture/climate of SEH in the classroom. In addition, coaching addressed targeted support for students with challenging behaviors.

<sup>1</sup> Classroom Assessment Scoring System

### Implementation of Program Components and Teacher Feedback:

- Teachers rated the overall quality of the coaching, PD seminars, and the curriculum in the high range (see Figure 1) and reported increases in their knowledge/skills in targeted areas (see Figure 2). Ratings improved from 2014-15 to 2015-16 but declined in 2016-17, but the average ratings still reflected improved knowledge/skills (i.e., average of a 3 which reflects “enhanced” knowledge).

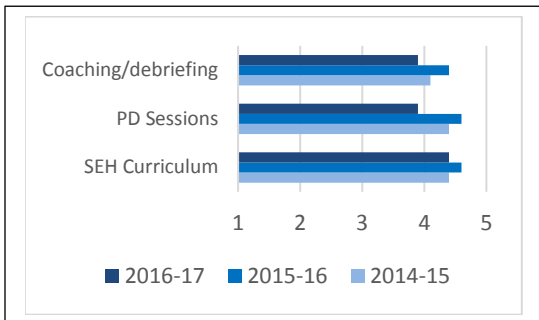


Figure 1. Teacher ratings of program components (5-point scale).

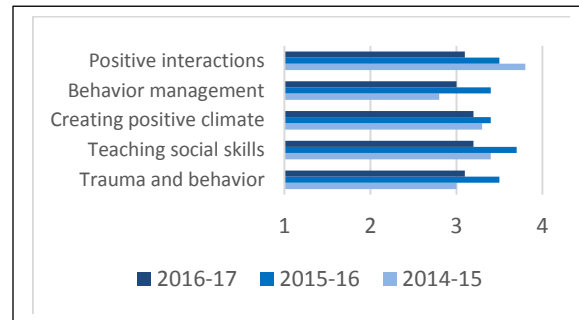


Figure 2. Teacher ratings of areas for which knowledge/skills improved (4-point scale).

- SEH Curriculum.** Teachers indicated high levels of completion of 15 of the 16 units and high levels of student engagement in all lessons.
- PD Seminars.** Attendance rates were high for pre-k (98%) and kindergarten (94%) teachers across the years. The pre-k teaching assistants had the lowest attendance rates (75% in 2014-15 and 62% in 2015-16).
- Coaching Sessions.** Participation rates in coaching sessions across the years were high: 84% for pre-k teachers and 86% for kindergarten teachers.

- Specific feedback from teachers:**

*“Momentous coaches empowered me to become human in the classroom again. Instead of labeling children as ‘bad,’ I have learned ways to develop relationships with them. I now see them within the context of what has happened in their lives. Instead of focusing on what students are doing wrong, I focus on areas of strength.”*

*“Momentous has reenergized me. I feel more confident as a teacher and I’m trying to apply what I learned about social emotional health to my personal life.”*

*“I have learned how to work with my teacher’s aide as a team—we’ve developed a positive, respectful, and caring relationship. Our own relationship then serves as a model of social emotional health for our students.”*

*“I like that we look at kids through the lens of trauma. This was great because I realized they have so many needs. But now I know why.”*

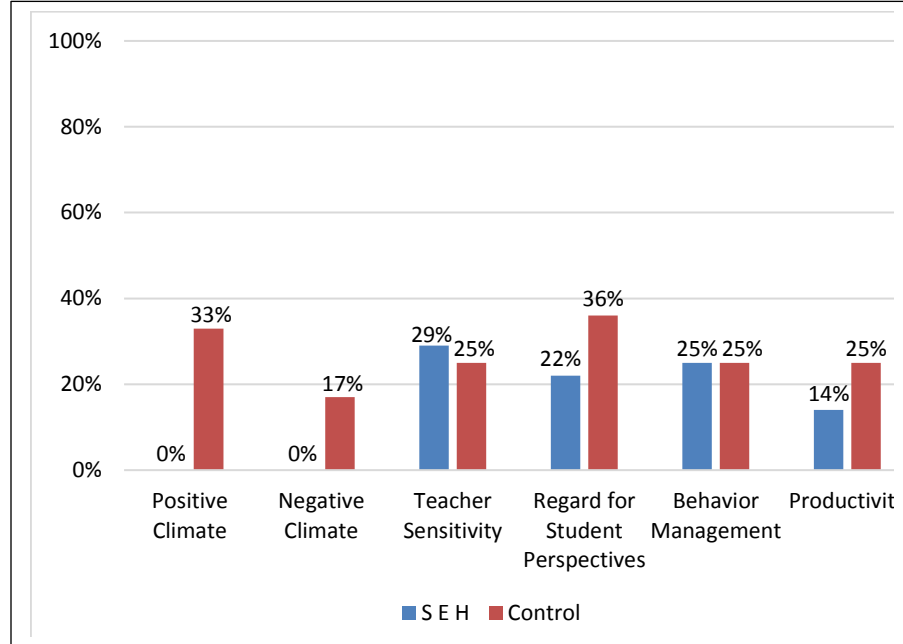
*“Before Momentous I didn’t feel empowered. The system in place makes me feel powerless. Through this project, I feel more empowered. I now have tools for how to become a better teacher. Now, I have calm.”*

**Key Findings:**

1. Coaching for teachers must address their **emotionally supportive classroom practices** (CLASS dimensions) *and* their delivery of explicit curriculum lessons. A training model that focused on both was more effective in improving teachers' practices than a model that focused primarily on their delivery of explicit SEH lessons.

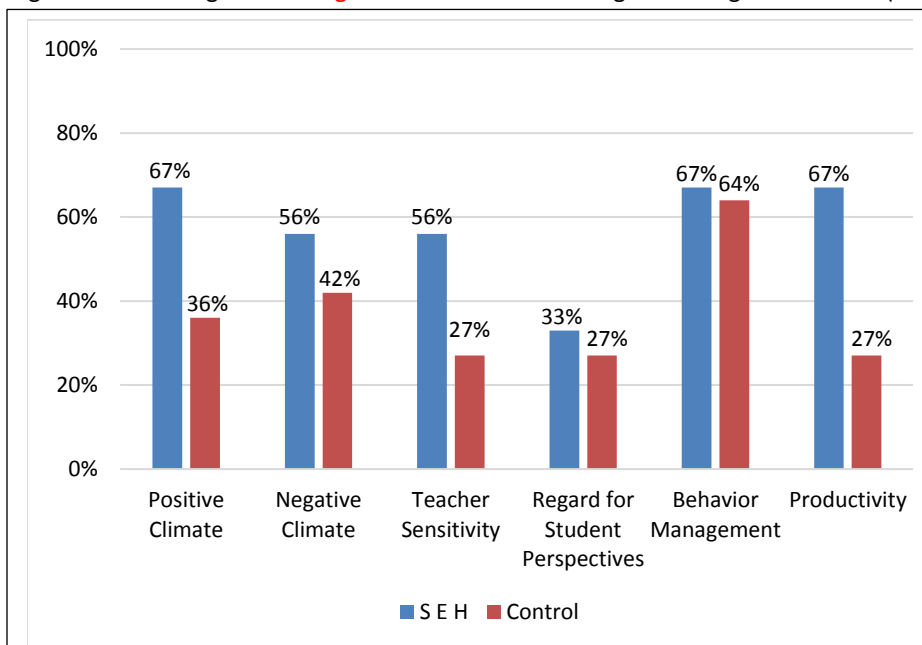
Most pre-k teachers who received **only the lesson-focused coaching** did not meet CLASS growth targets during the two years of their training (see Figure 3).

Figure 3. Percentage of **pre-k** teachers who met growth targets on CLASS (after 2 years)



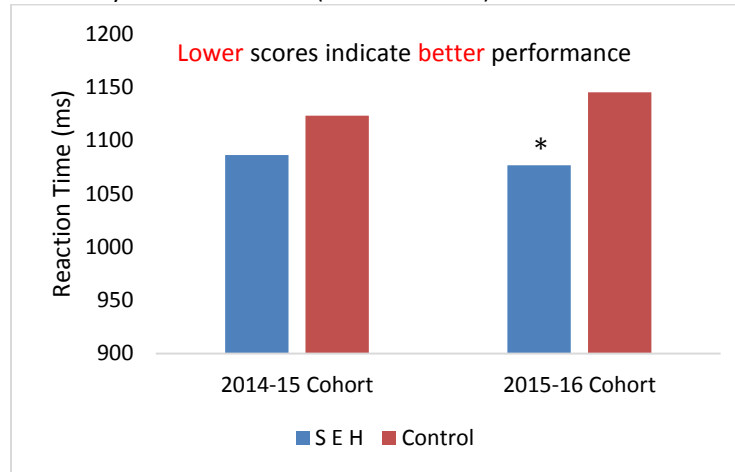
However, kindergarten teachers who received **lesson-focused coaching along with classroom climate coaching** were more likely to meet CLASS growth targets during the two years of the program (see Figure 4).

Figure 4. Percentage of **kindergarten** teachers who met growth targets on CLASS (after 2 years)



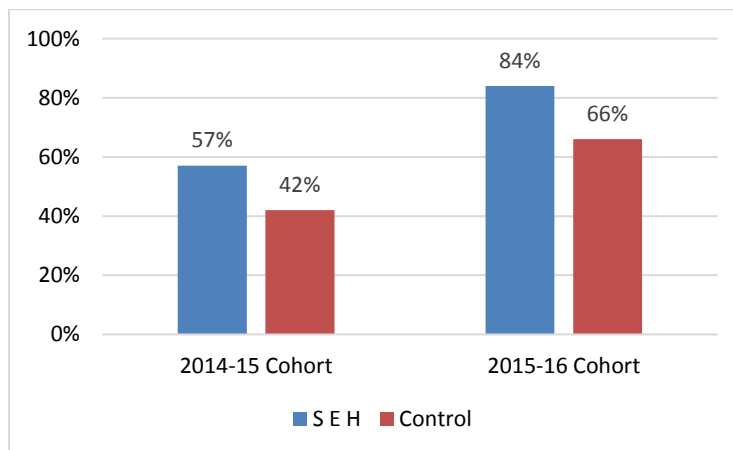
2. **By kindergarten, students in the SEH schools demonstrated quicker reaction times on an executive function task than students in the control schools (see Figure 5).** This difference was statistically significant for students in the 2015-16 cohort only (controlling for baseline scores). On this task, quicker reaction time indicates more efficient coordination of core executive functions (i.e., working memory, inhibitory control, and cognitive flexibility).

Figure 5. End-of-year reaction time (in milliseconds) on an executive function task.



3. **By kindergarten, students in the SEH schools were more likely to show improvements in their prosocial behavior<sup>2</sup> compared to those in the control schools (see Figure 6).** A greater percentage of students from the 2015-16 prekindergarten cohort, compared to the 2014-15 cohort, showed improvements. This difference may be attributable to the fact that their teachers would have been in their second year of training.

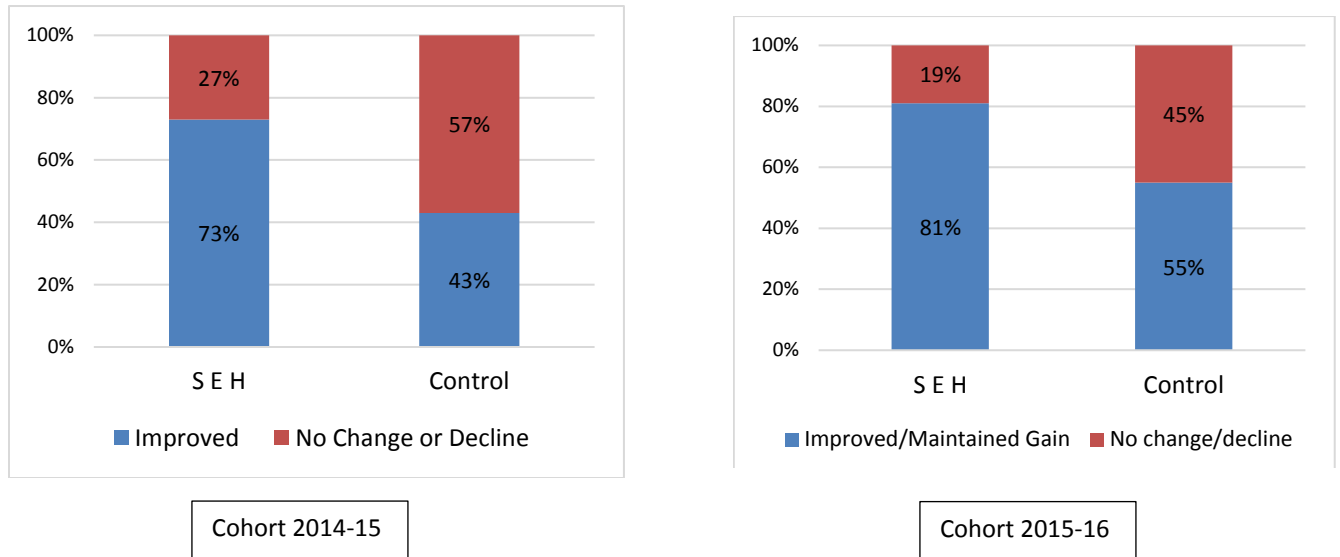
Figure 6. Percentage of all students who showed improvements in prosocial



<sup>2</sup> Prosocial behavior was assessed with the Social Skills Improvement System (SSIS) Performance Screening Guide.

4. A targeted support program for students with challenging behaviors demonstrated a positive impact. **Kindergarten students in SEH schools with problematic behaviors were more likely to improve to average levels by year’s end than those in control schools** (see Figure 7)<sup>3</sup>. This finding is consistent with teachers’ reports that the training enhanced their understanding of the connection between trauma, the developing brain and classroom behavior.

Figure 7. Percentage of kindergarten students whose below-average social skills scores improved to average levels by end of year



### Conclusions

- The Settle Your Curriculum and professional development led to significant improvements in students’ cognitive self-regulation and teacher-reported social skills. In addition, students with challenging behaviors (and below-average social skills) who experienced the targeted support component of the program were more likely to improve to average social skill levels by the end of their kindergarten year, compared to students in control schools.
- These student improvements may be dependent on teachers receiving both lesson-focused coaching and CLASS-focused coaching as the curriculum is implemented.

<sup>3</sup> The social skills of students with challenging behaviors was assessed with the SSIS-Rating Scales (norm-referenced).