

The Secret to Student Success

Best Practices and Lessons Learned

CSN Transition Institute

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Remote



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Overview of Today's Presentation

Review of some of the Winston Innovation Lab's research efforts

1. A longitudinal study about the impact of social and emotional learning (SEL) on academic achievement during the pandemic - with guidance on how to use SEL to help students with transitioning.
2. A longitudinal study following Winston's graduates to find predictors of student success - and how our findings can be used to help your students more successfully transition to post-secondary.

Discussion about Winston Preparatory School's Best Practices for Transitioning Students with Learning Disabilities (SwLD) to life after graduation.



Let's tell the story of the COVID-19 pandemic...as it relates to education...

How did the pandemic affect teachers?



Let's tell the story of the COVID-19 pandemic...as it relates to education...

How did the pandemic affect your students?



What the Research Says...

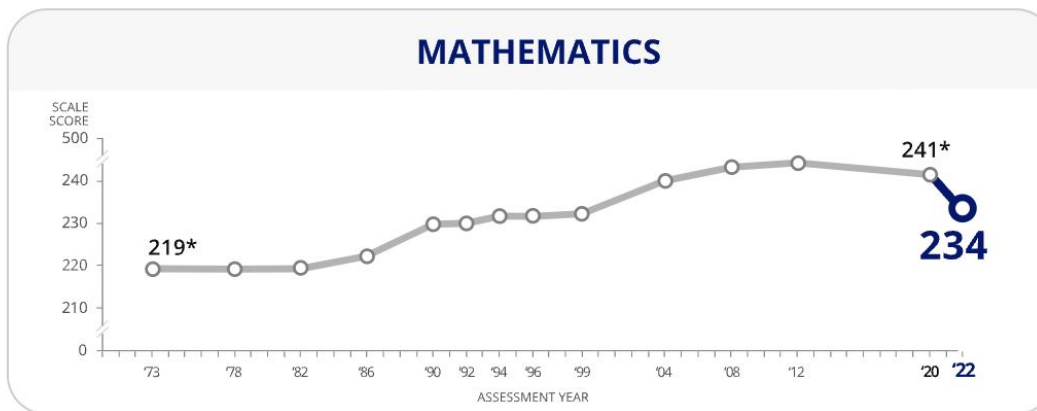
Pandemic's Effect on General Student Population: Academic Performance



Score change between 2020 and 2022



Largest score drop in reading since 1990



Score change between 2020 and 2022



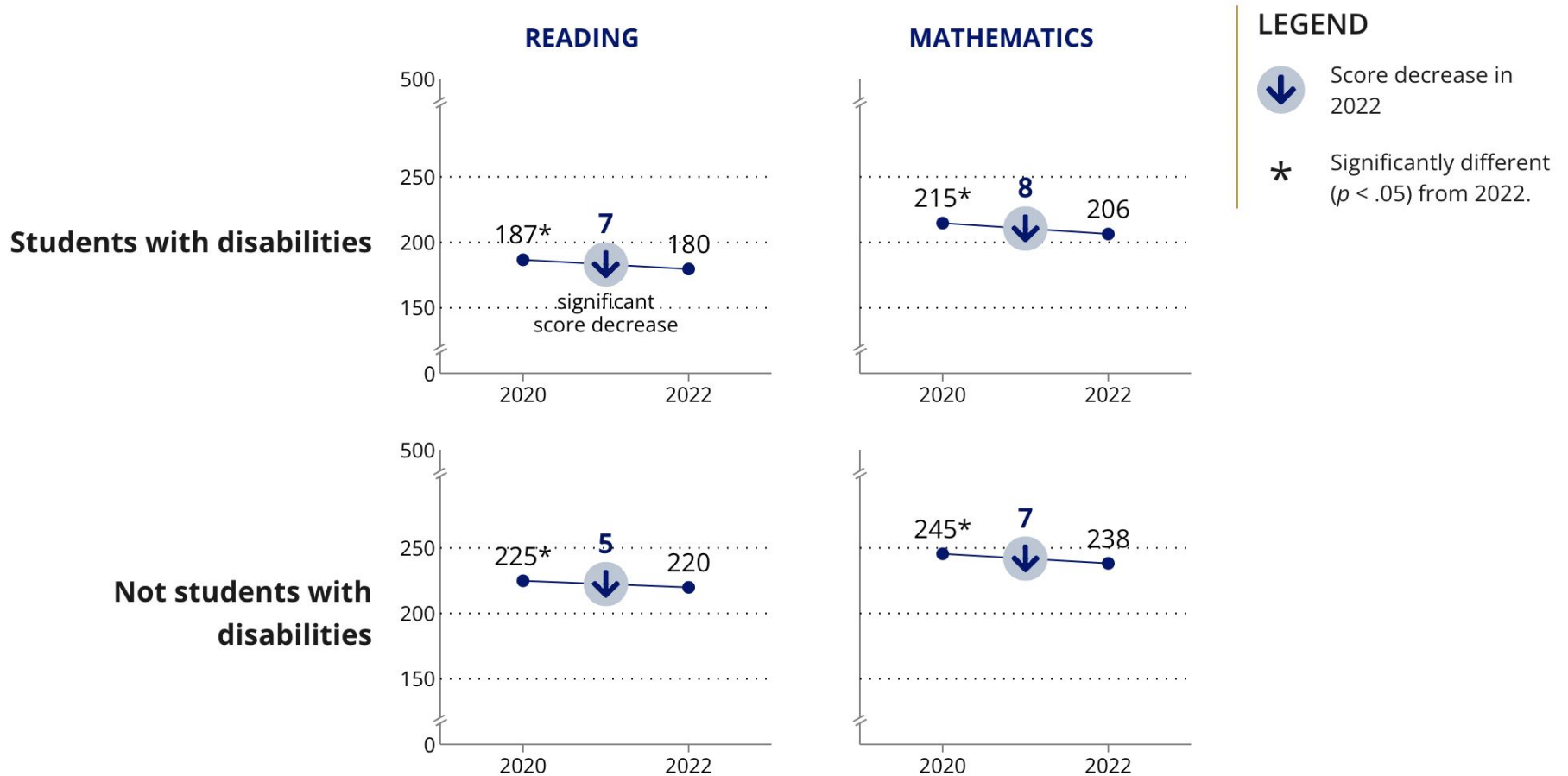
First ever score drop in mathematics

* Significantly different ($p < .05$) from 2022.



What the Research Says...

Pandemic's Effect on Students with Learning Disabilities



What the Research Says...

Skills for Social and Academic Success



Research links SEL to student success

- 23% gain in social-emotional skills
- 9% gain in attitudes about self/others/school
- **11% gain on academic performance via standardized tests (math and reading)**



And reduced risks for failure

- 9% difference in problem behaviors
- 10% difference in emotional distress

Study Site: Winston Preparatory School

- Winston Preparatory School (Winston) is a nationwide, seven-campus school serving SwLD (primarily in New York, New Jersey, Connecticut, California) that advances an evidence-based model for nurturing the holistic development of students with specific learning disabilities (e.g., dyslexia, dyscalculia) and related disorders (e.g., ADHD).
- Currently, over 500 students ages 9-21 attend Winston, which provides intense skill remediation while explicitly building students' SEL skills (i.e., resilience, self-advocacy, social skills, self-regulation, self-reflection, social responsibility, problem solving, and management/organization), referred to as the Qualities of a Sustainable and Independent Learner (QSIL), and they measure these skills and assess academic achievement annually.
- This makes Winston an ideal site for understanding how SEL skills might thwart learning loss for SwLD during the COVID-19 pandemic.



Our Research Study

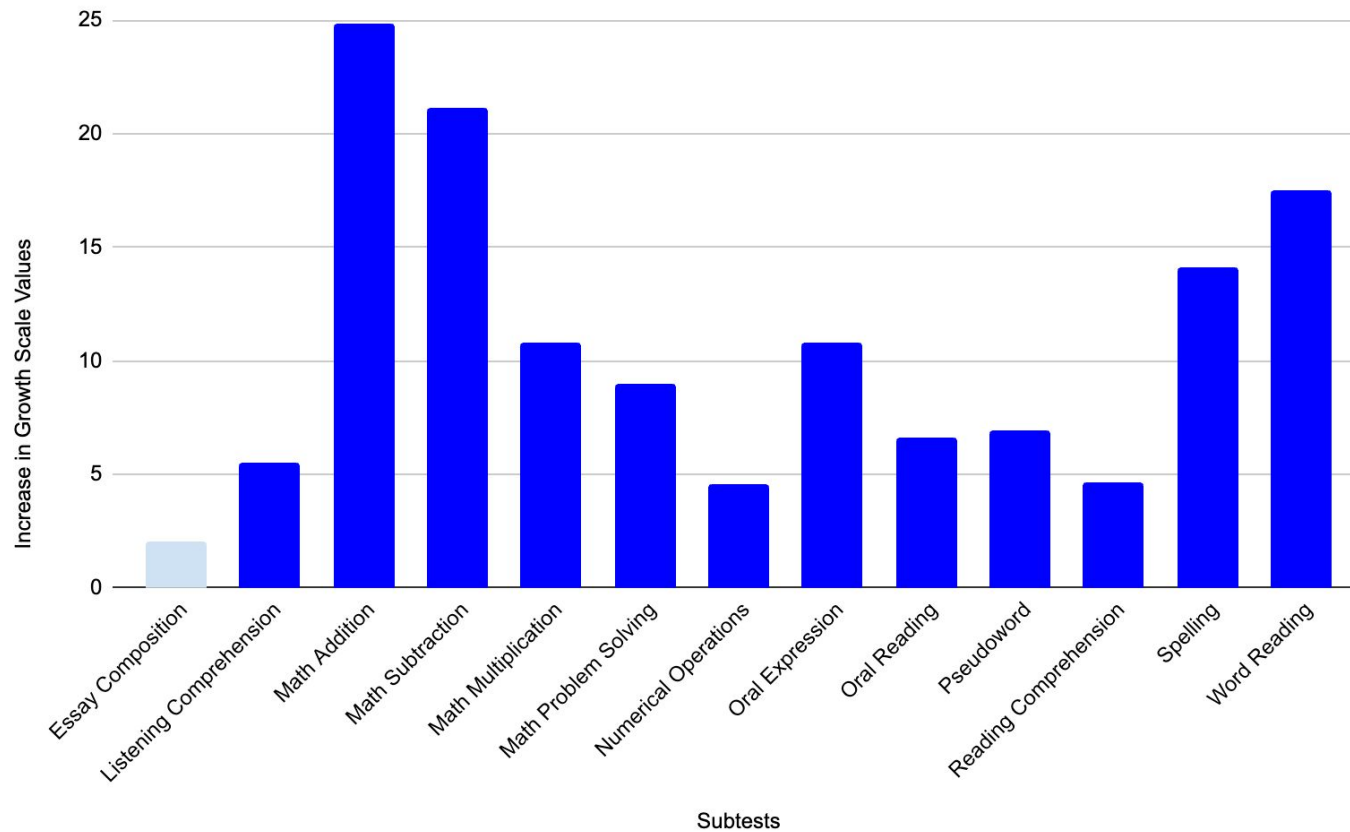
- How did Winston, a school with SEL explicitly taught in the curriculum, students perform academically during the pandemic?
- Did SELS help Winston students with academic performance during the pandemic? If so, which ones?



Results

Hypothesis 1: Academic achievement will improve year-to-year.

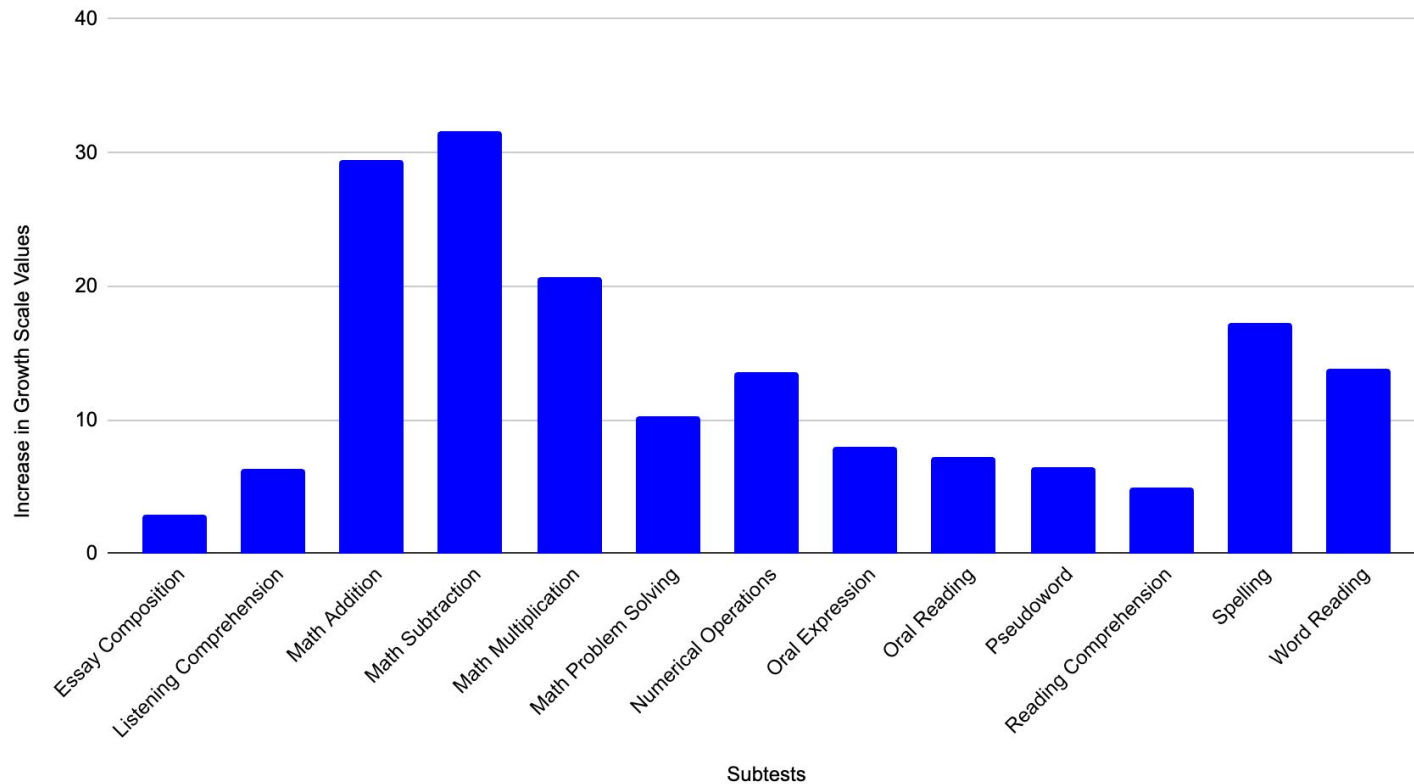
WIAT-III Increases from 2016 to 2017



Results

Hypothesis 1: Academic achievement will improve year-to-year.

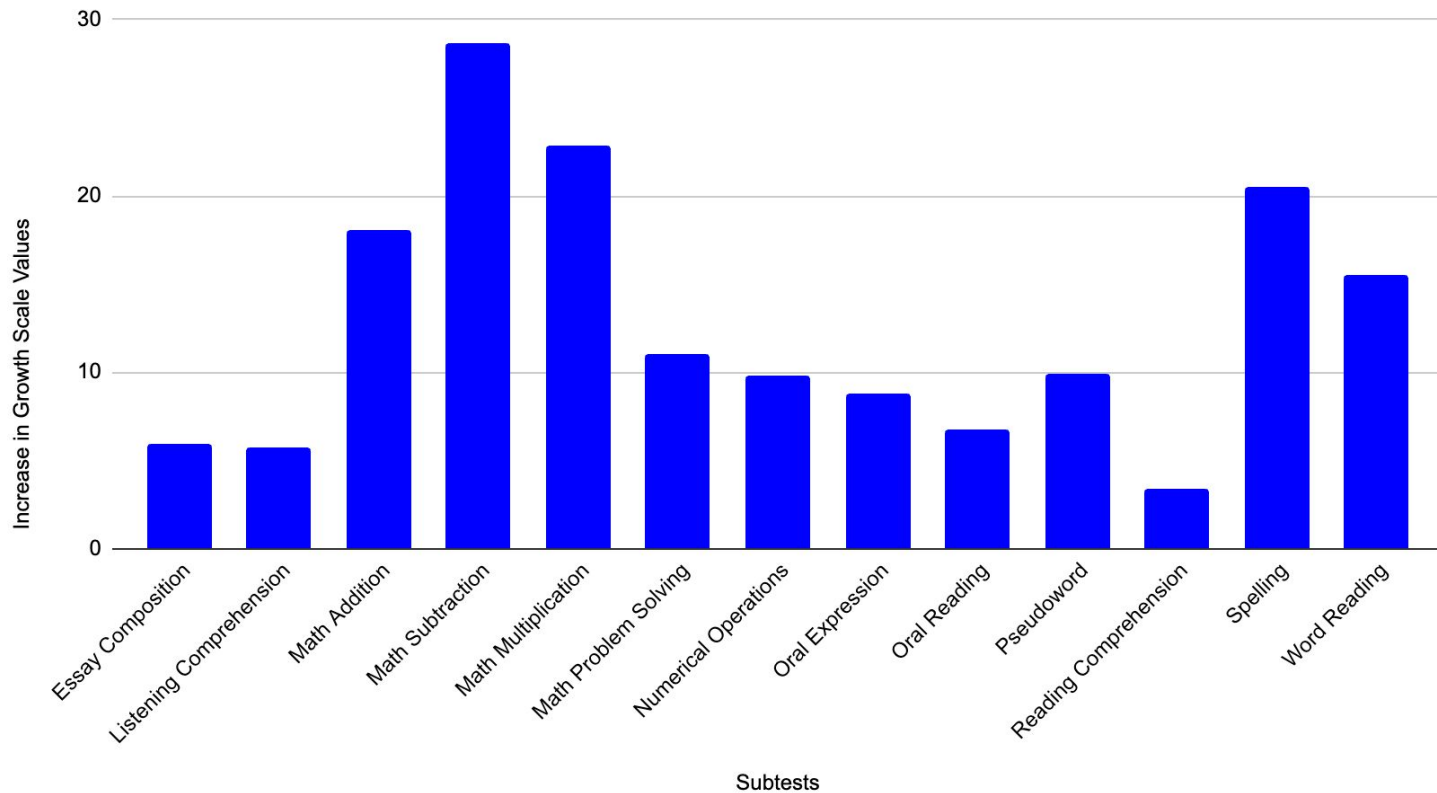
WIAT-III Increases from 2017 to 2018



Results

Hypothesis 1: Academic achievement will improve year-to-year.

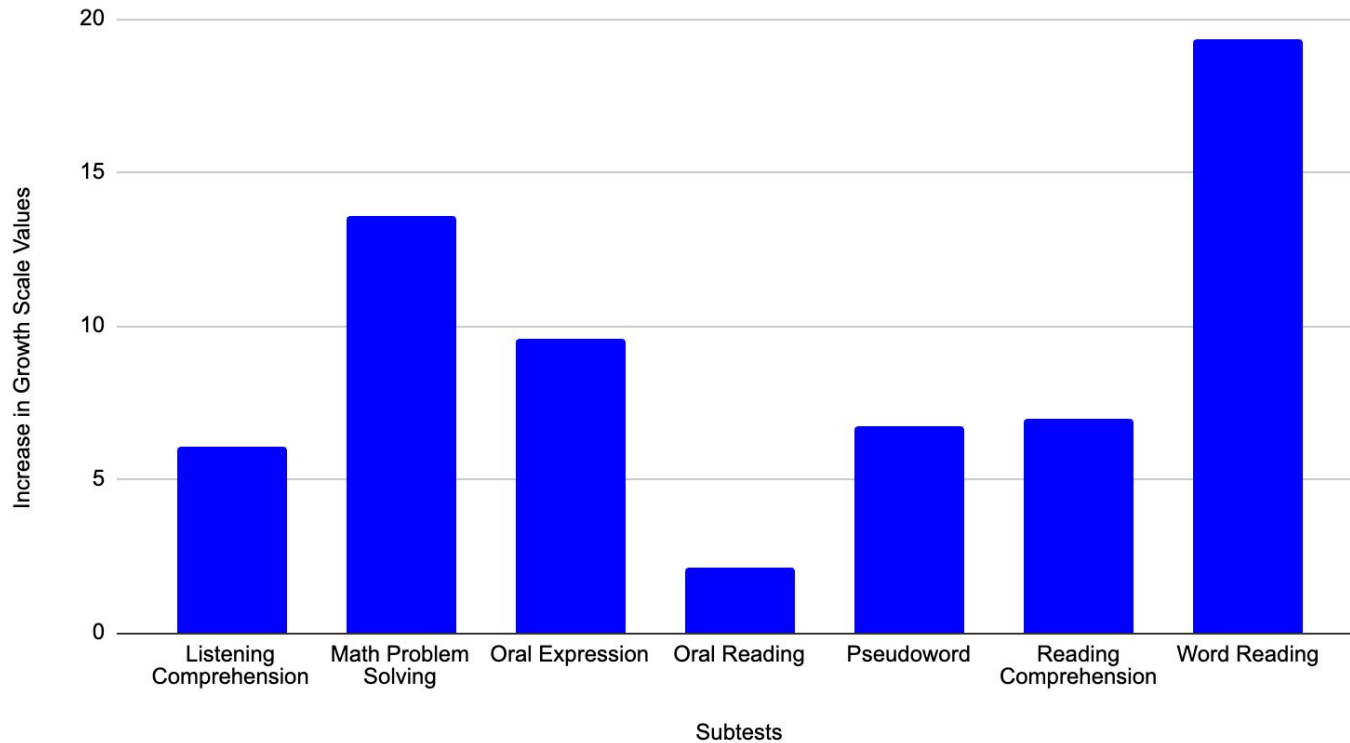
WIAT-III Increases from 2018 to 2019



Results

Hypothesis 1: Academic achievement will improve year-to-year.

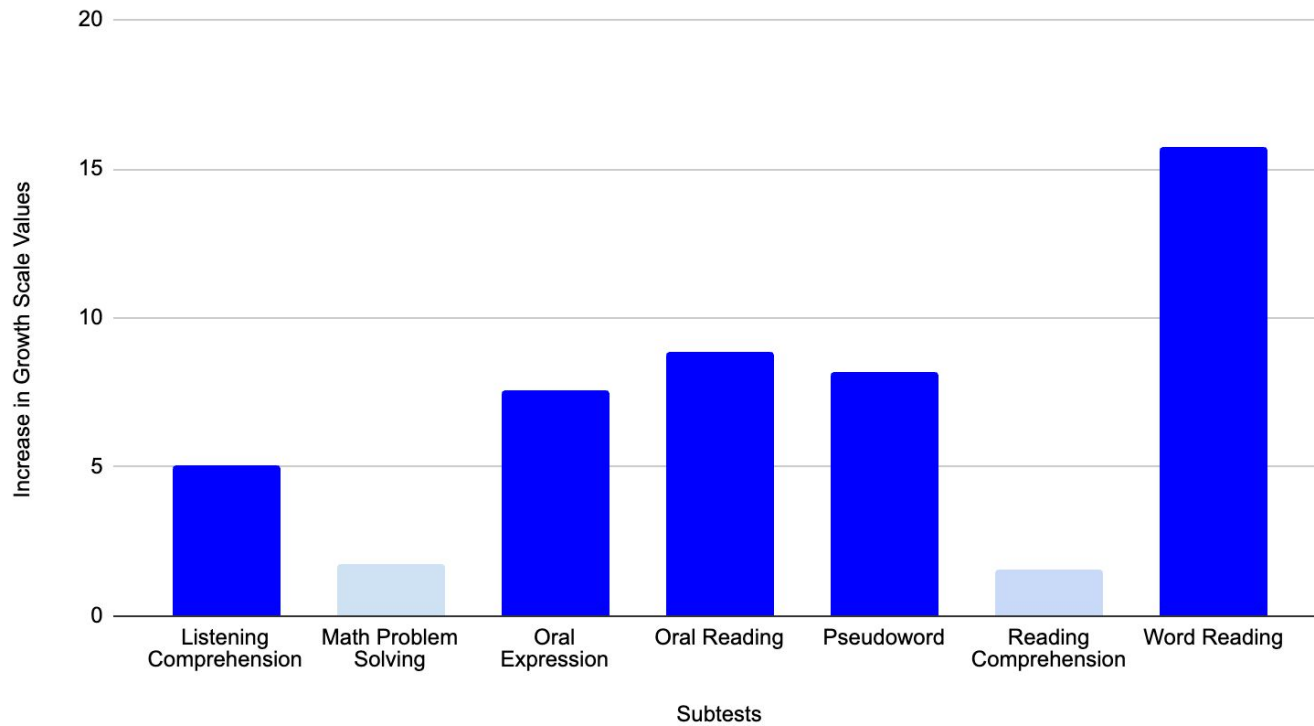
WIAT-III Increases from 2019 to 2020



Results

Hypothesis 1: Academic achievement will improve year-to-year.

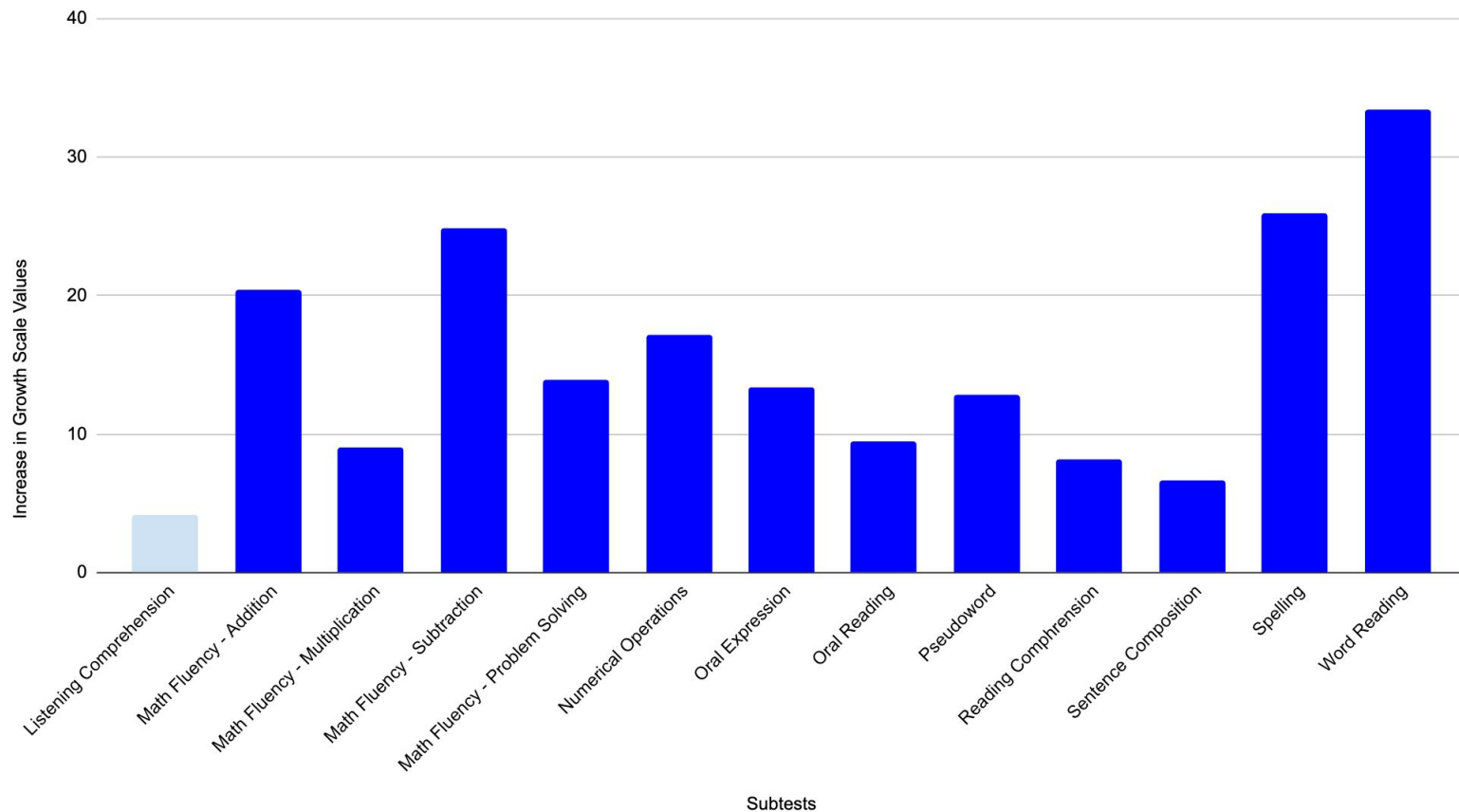
WIAT-III Increases from 2020 to 2021



Results

Hypothesis 1: Academic achievement will improve year-to-year.

WIAT-III Increases from 2019 to 2021



Results

2021 SEL Skills:	Math Problem Solving		Math Multiplication		Word Reading	
	<i>F</i>	<i>p</i>	<i>F</i>	<i>p</i>	<i>F</i>	<i>p</i>
Resilience	.00	.951	4.14	.045	.01	.932
Self-Advocacy	4.71	.032	.00	.961	5.31	.023
Self-Reflection	7.48	.007	1.73	.192	.11	.737
Self-Regulation	1.56	.214	.01	.921	1.76	.186
Management/ Organization	.69	.409	.23	.630	.83	.364
Problem Solving	.137	.712	.00	.950	6.38	.013

Highted SELS indicates that the SEL significantly explained increases on the WIAT-III subtest



Discussion

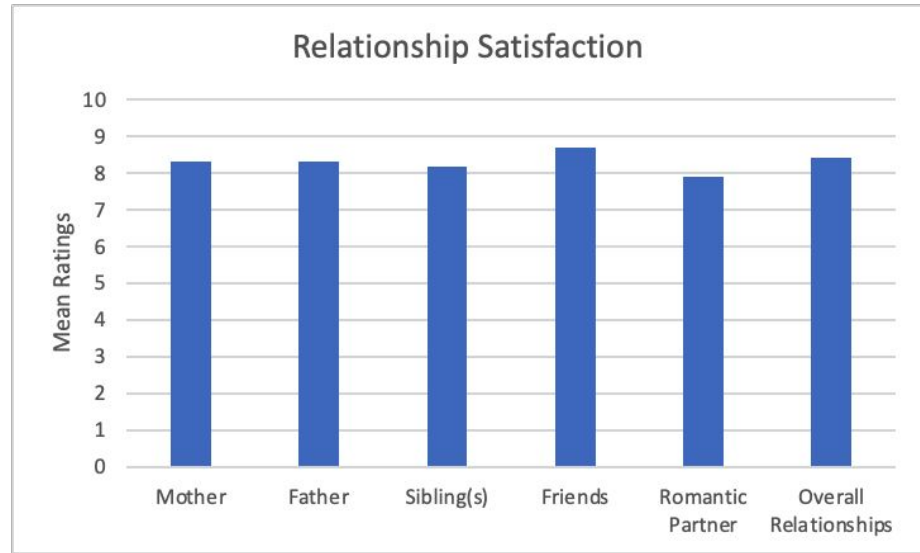
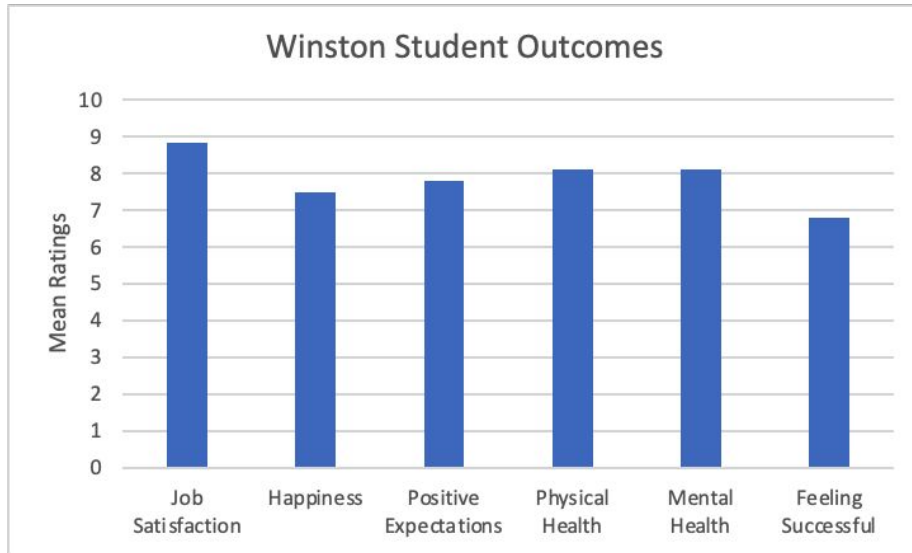
- What does this mean for SwLD?
 - Learning loss during a pandemic is not an inevitability for them
 - Social and emotional learning skills are one explanation for why academic achievement improved during the pandemic
 - There are likely many reasons why academic achievement improved every year, including during the pandemic
 - Making a change in public and private schools
 - Learn from what we did right and wrong.
- Although SELS may help with the academic side of a post-secondary transition, future research should investigate how well SELS helps with navigating college:
 - Transitioning to life in dorms
 - Dealing with multiple professors on their own



Lives Over Time:
An Ongoing Research Effort



Lives Over Time: 2014



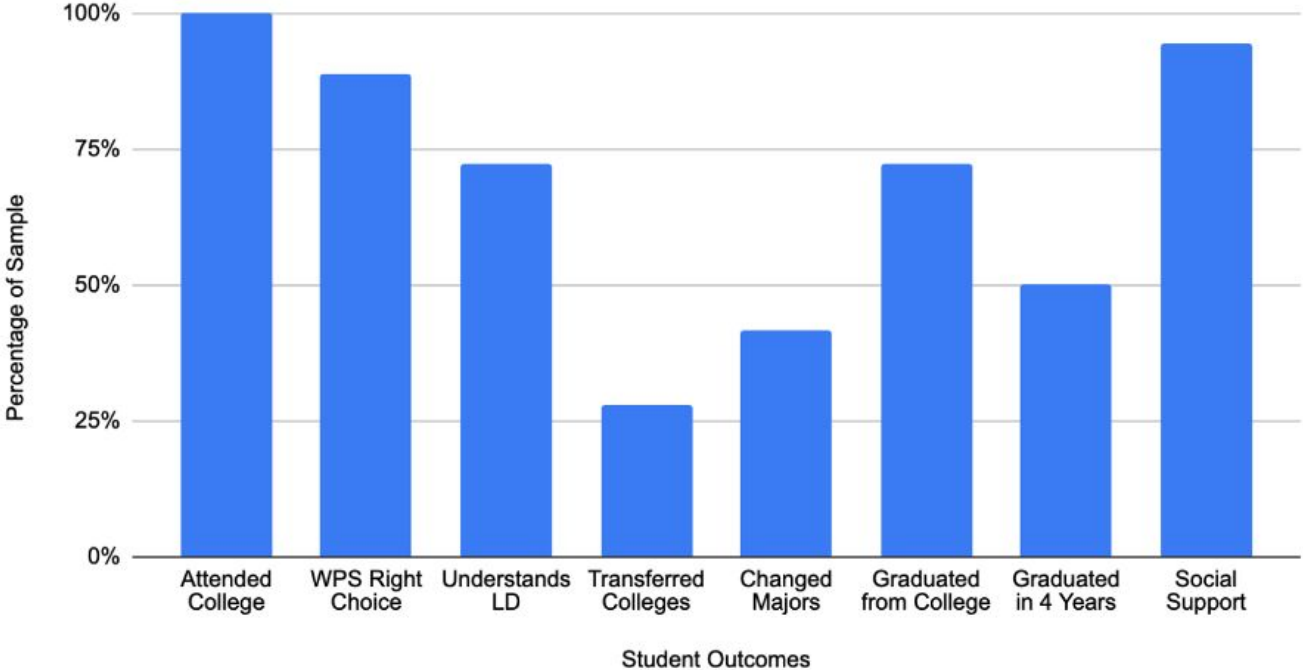
*Rated on a 0 - 10 scale, where high numbers indicate high levels of job satisfaction, etc.



Lives Over Time:

Figure 1

Student Outcomes for Winston Preparatory School Alumni



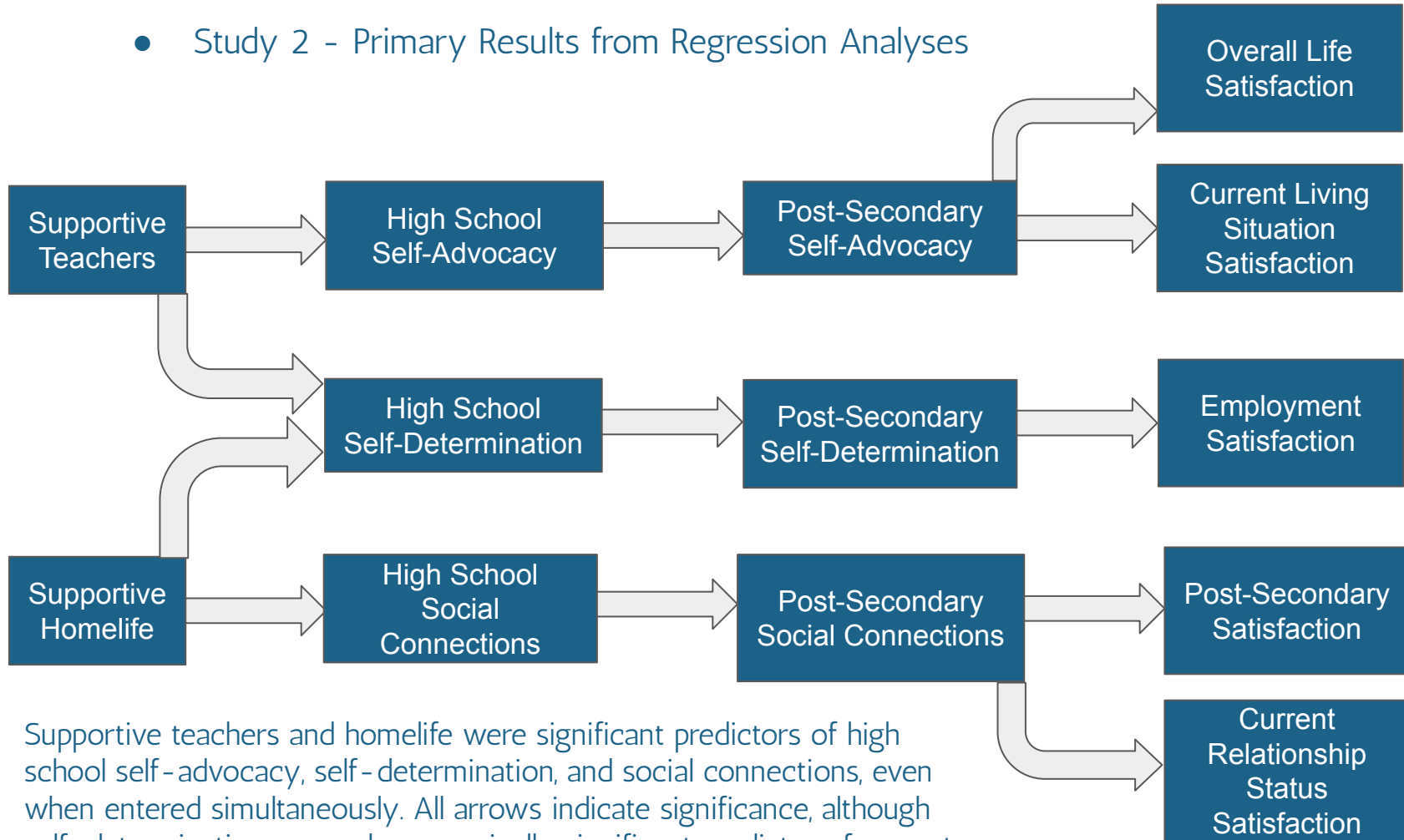
Lives Over Time: 2016

Learning and Attention Issue	Percentage of Sample
Math	68.3%
Social and Emotional	61.9%
Attention	61.9%
Writing	60.3%
Memory	44.4%
Reading	31.7%
Listening	20.6%
Speaking	20.6%



Lives Over Time:

- Study 2 - Primary Results from Regression Analyses



Supportive teachers and homelife were significant predictors of high school self-advocacy, self-determination, and social connections, even when entered simultaneously. All arrows indicate significance, although self-determination was only a marginally significant predictor of current relationship status.



Lives Over Time: 2021

Relevant Diagnoses	Percentage
ADHD	41.3%
Executive Functioning Disorder	26.6%
Dyslexia	18.3%
Non-Verbal Learning Disorder	10.1%
Oral/Written Language Disorder	9.2%
Dysgraphia	8.3%
Specific Reading Comprehension Deficit	5.5%
Dyscalculia	3.7%
Dyspraxia	3.1%



Lives Over Time:

What are some ways your Winston teachers made you feel supported?

44%	Helping Students (without doing what students should be doing on own)	<i>"...helped me learn how to solve problems myself" "teachers...were very willing to help me...not just by giving us the answers, but by supporting our methods of research"</i>
29%	Personal conversations with teachers	<i>"Mr. X from the science department would allow me to come to him to talk all the time if I needed to. He would keep what we talked about private and he wouldn't judge me for the things I would tell him. He was a very strong confidant in eyes and I greatly appreciated his caring personality."</i>
21%	Being available/Giving of time	<i>"Always had an open door policy and were always willing to stay late."</i>
15%	Investing in whole student/Interested in student beyond school	<i>Ms. X would be there for me in my roughest moments, when stuff was getting really hard at home she would always be waiting to hear what I had to tell her."</i>
10%	Encouraging/Pushing students to succeed	<i>"They pushed me to do well in my studies instead of letting me do substandard work" "They understood if you didn't get something done, but they encouraged you to do better with building you up."</i>



Lives Over Time:

What are some ways your families (or other people living in your home) have made you feel supported?

46%	Encouragement / Not Giving Up on Them	<i>"My mother was a huge support and made sure I stayed in school. She supported me by helping me get into Winston and never gave up on me when everyone else did." "Not kicking me out"</i>
35%	Communication: Listening and Understanding	<i>"My parents have always been understanding, and whenever they didn't understand something they would try and figure it out themselves or ask me for assistance in understanding and creating a clearer line of communication."</i>
19%	Helping Behaviors	<i>"They helped me when I was struggling" "helped me with the college process"</i>
10%	Provide Resources	<i>"paid for my college, my parents found a one-on-one program for me that fits my learning style" "My mom has always funded and supported my musical dreams."</i>
8%	Loving / Caring for Them	<i>"They care about my health and the overall quality of my life."</i>



Lives Over Time:

- How do the results from the Lives Over Time Study inform the transition process for SwLD?
 - Supporting students (e.g., helping, encouraging, listening) and SELS (self-advocacy, self-determination, and social connections) seem to help students with the transition process
 - Professional development for teachers so they can better support students may lead to better transition outcomes
 - Incorporating SELS into the curriculum may also lead to better transition outcomes



Applied to Practice



Winston Transitions Mission

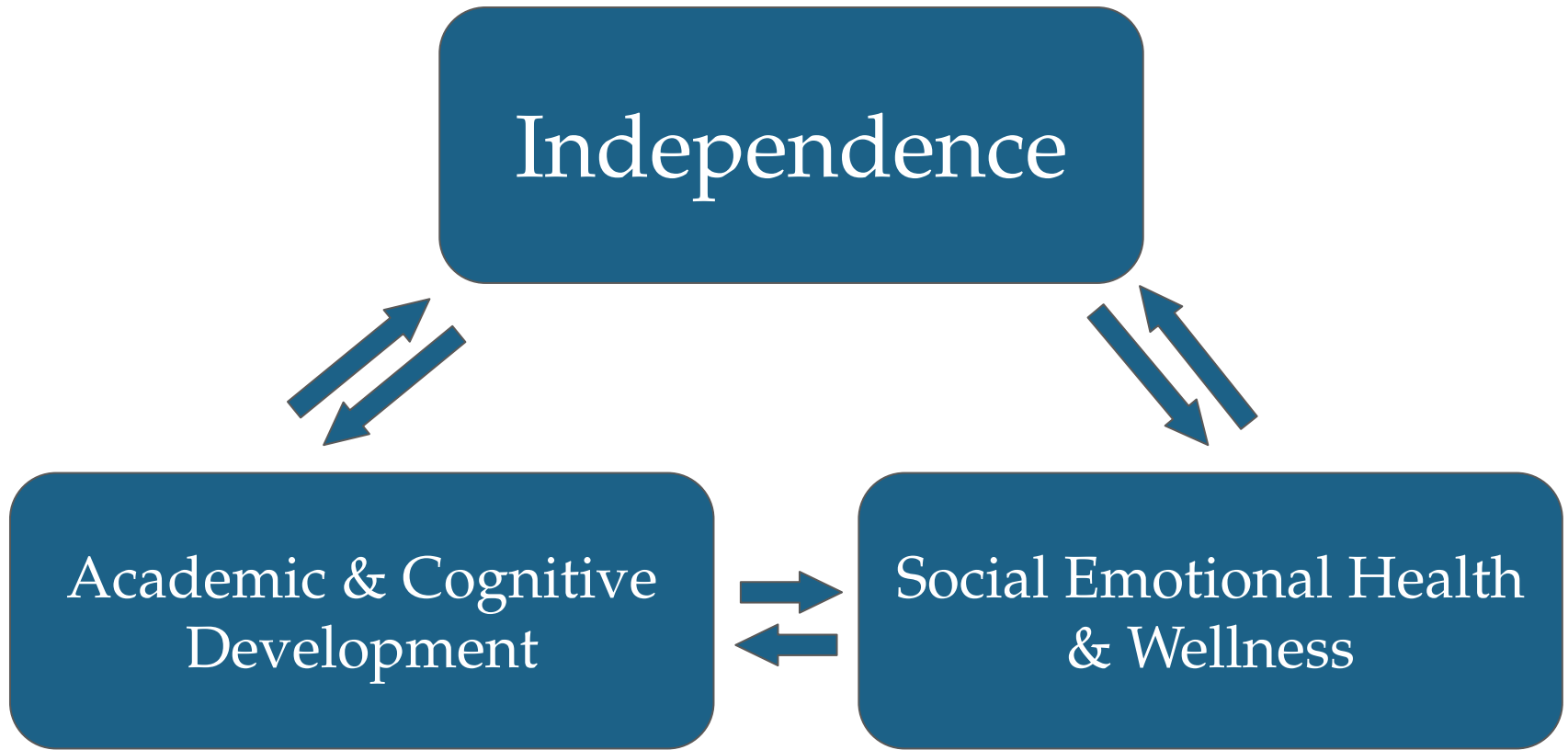
Winston Transitions provides an extension to the Winston Preparatory School educational experience in a way that continues to build academic skills while developing life and work readiness, so that the students can realize individually active participation in education, work and life.

Who is *Transitions* for?

Any student with learning differences who needs more support and time engaging independently with the adult world

- Needs more support with EF / Communication / Problem-Solving before college
- Needs greater independence before entering workforce
- Needs social-emotional growth and development






Core Components and Essential Elements

Academic Program	Internship Program	Focus Program
<p><i>Highly individualized curriculum based on continuous feedback system</i></p> <p><i>Emphasis on skill development, independence and real-world application</i></p> <p><u>Academic Skills</u> Comprehension Problem Solving Executive Functioning Communication</p>	<p><i>On-site and in-school support for placement in a variety of workplaces</i></p> <p><i>Emphasis on development of transferable skills and response to feedback</i></p> <p><u>Employability Skills</u> Initiative and Leadership Teamwork Planning and Organizing Communication Problem Solving & Critical Thinking Self-Management Willingness to Learn</p>	<p><i>One-on-one relationship informed by a clinical approach</i></p> <p><i>Emphasis on goal-setting, developing emotional intelligence and executive functioning</i></p> <p><u>Qualities of a Sustainable and Independent Learner</u> Resiliency Social Responsibility Self-Advocacy Self-Regulation Self-Reflection Social Communication Skills Problem Solving Management and Organization</p>





Applied to Practice
3rd-12th grade
campuses

Example

Learning Profile: NVLD
(eval dx: ADHD, Aspergers)

Entrance: grade 10

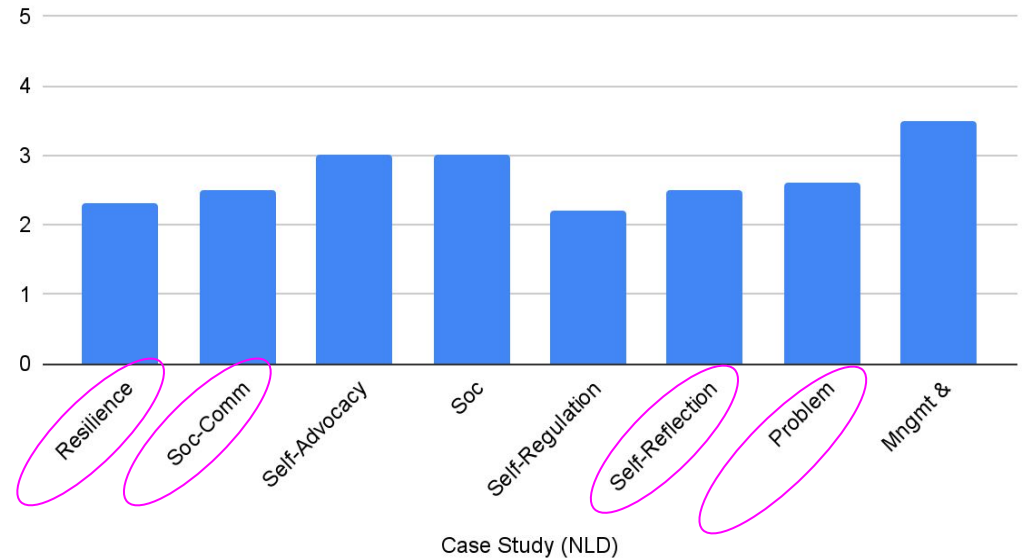
Transitioned to: traditional
4-year college



Social Emotional challenges upon entrance:

- Frustration, anger
- Anxiety
- Difficulties with social relationships
- Extremely dependent on external monitoring / feedback / reassurance
- Problem solving due to conceptual weaknesses + *inflexibility*
- Weak awareness of learning profile

WESS 19-20



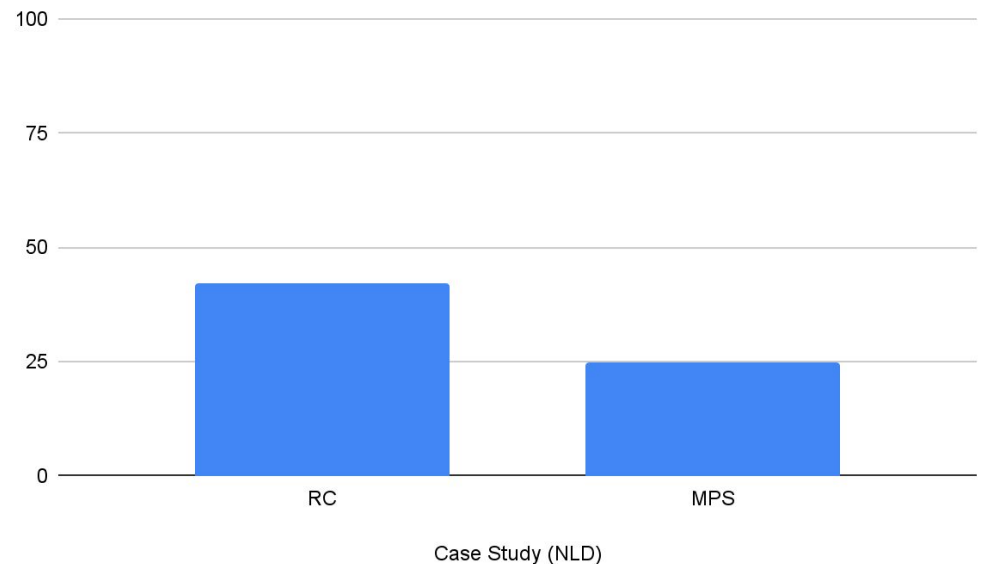
Academic weaknesses upon entrance:

- Higher Order Reading comprehension
- Mathematics applications
- Reasoning skills

Strengths upon entrance:

- Rote memory / fact recall
- Basic reading skills
- Oral expression
- Written expression

WIAT RC and MPS



Pause & Note

What ideas stand out? What am I curious about?

Have I worked to develop these skills in myself? What are my own SE strengths & weaknesses?

Is there a particular student or group of students who come to mind as I think about these skills?

How have I worked to target these skills in the past with students and/or myself?

Resilience

- Recover
- Persevere
- Strengthen
- Learn





Developing Resilience

Self-
Understanding

A Skill to
Build

Comfortable
with the
Uncomfortable

Recognizing
Patterns

Emotional
Coping
Strategies

Explicit
Praise

Communication & Social Skills

*Developing and
sustaining healthy
relationships*



Developing Communication & Social Skills



You're doing it!



Reflection



Emotional
Vocabulary



Parents

Self - Reflection

Awareness of your own strengths and weaknesses and a deep understanding of self is vital and intertwined with all of the qualities that lead to independence and success.



Developing Self-Reflection

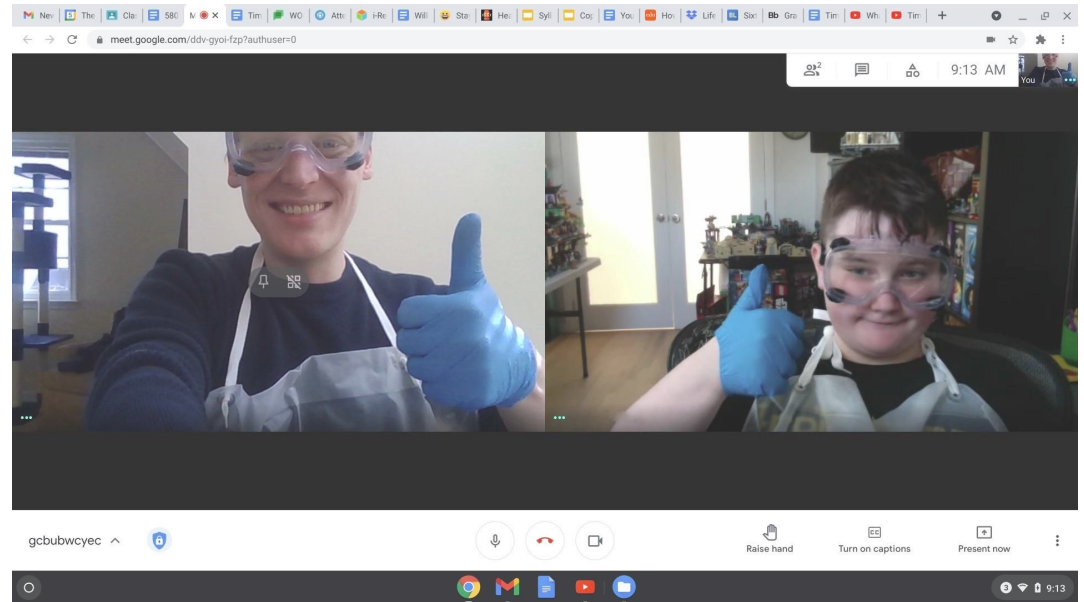
Provide the space and time to be self-reflective & apply structure to make these moments productive.



Problem Solving

Creative problem solvers

- ... ask questions
- ... embrace failure as a way to learn
- ... explore new ideas
- ... are self-motivated
- ... are resourceful
- ... understand themselves
- ... understand how they are connected to the world & others.



Developing Problem Solving

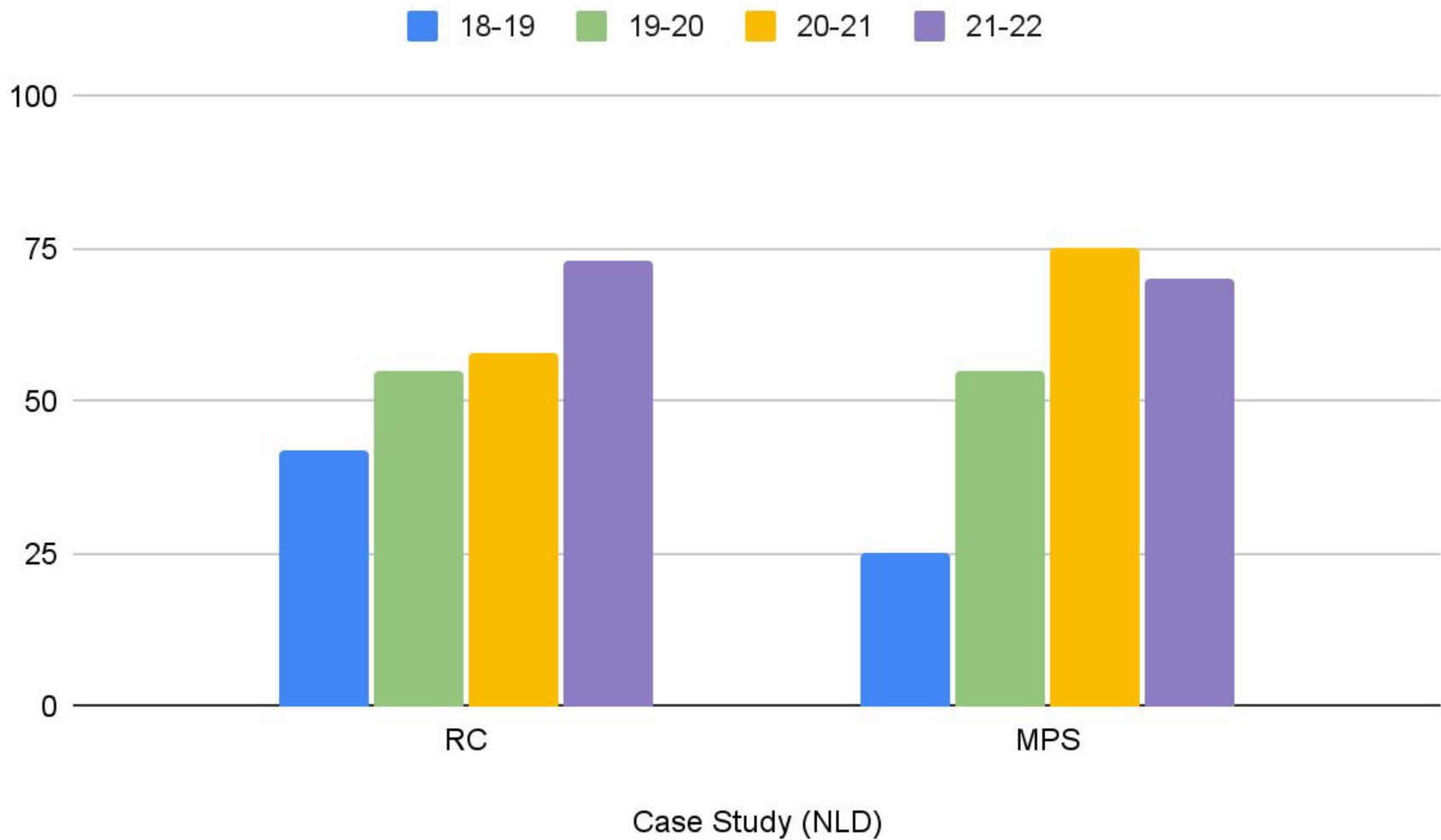
Steps	1	2	3
Recognize a problem	I asked for help after I realized there was a problem.	I noticed a problem as it was happening.	I predicted there would be a problem before it happened!
Identify the cause(s) of the problem.	I asked for help to figure out the cause of the problem.	I thought of 1 possible cause of the problem.	I thought of <i>more than</i> 1 possible cause of the problem.
Come up with a plan(s).	I asked for help to think of a plan.	I came up with 1 solution but it wasn't related to the cause of the problem.	I came up with more than 1 solution & chose the best one based on the cause of the problem.
Apply the plan.	I asked for help to follow through with a solution.	I followed through with my solution but needed a little help.	I followed through with my solution independently.
Evaluate the outcome.	I asked for help to think about the outcome.	I decided if my solution helped the problem or not with a little help.	I decided if my solution helped the problem & came up with another solution if my first plan didn't work.

Leave space for struggle • Model using 'think alouds' • Self vs. Team approach

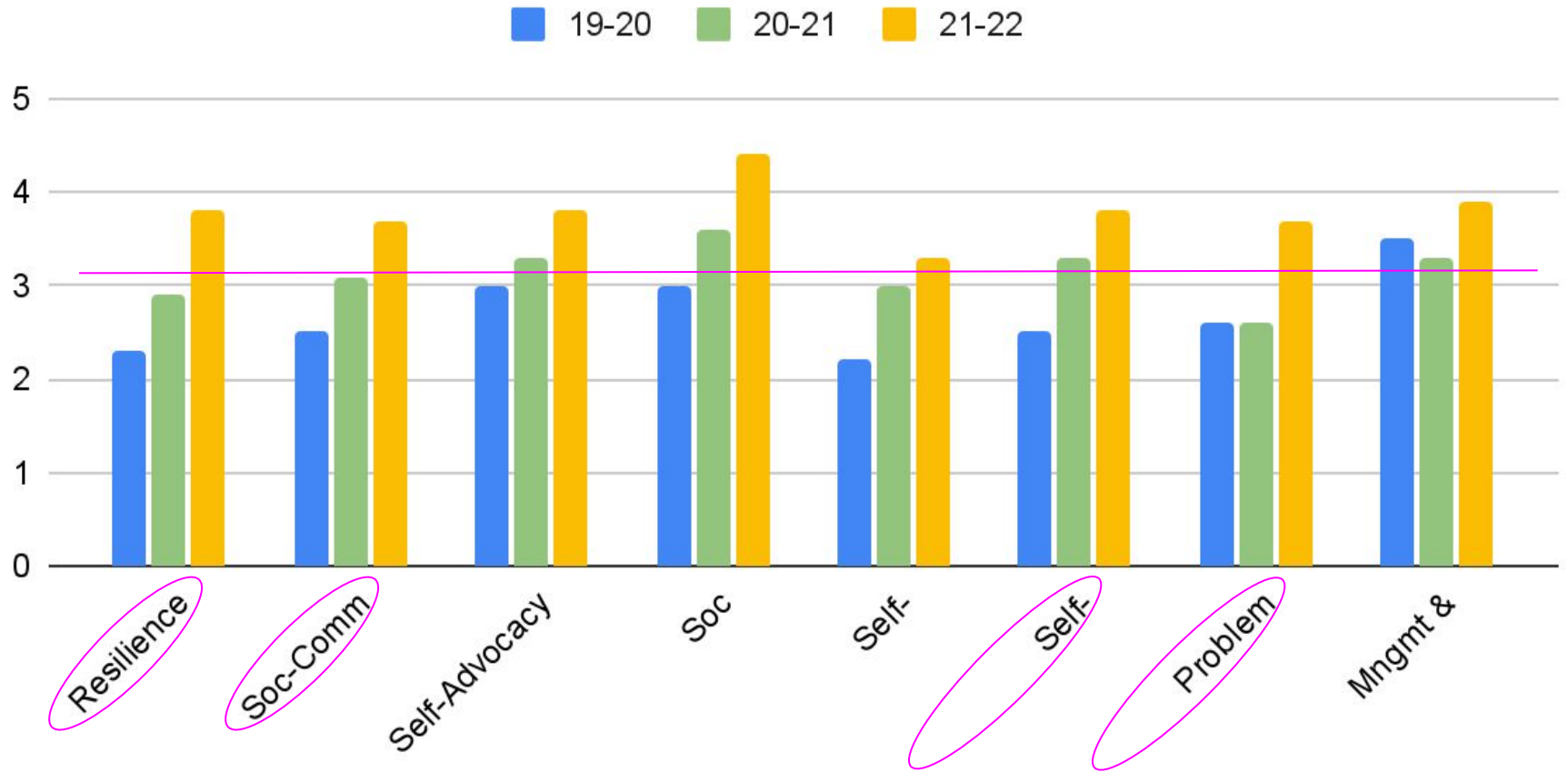
Stress level before problem was solved:				
1	2	3	4	5
Very low			Very high	

Stress level after problem was solved:				
1	2	3	4	5
Very low			Very high	

WIAT RC and MPS



WESS 19-20, 20-21 and 21-22



Case Study (NLD)

Reflection

What ideas stand out? What am I curious about?

Have I worked to develop these skills in myself? What are my own strengths & weaknesses?

Is there a particular student or class of students that come to mind as I think about these skills?

How have I worked to target these skills in the past with students and/or myself?



Qualities of a Sustainable and Independent Learner

- Continually assess the student's understanding of these social-emotional skills
- Help students make a personal connection to these skills--connecting to a specific event that's happened or will likely happen
- Think of these qualities as a *skill to employ* as you need it rather than simply a trait that you possess (or don't)



Help us
Measure
SEL!



WANT A \$45 AMAZON GIFT CARD?

Do You Work with Kids with
Learning Disabilities?

We Need You!

Scan the QR code to complete a
Social Emotional Questionnaire



and receive up to \$45
in Amazon Gift Cards.



Contact

Dr. Jonathan Cohen, Ph.D.
212.877.7328
jc273@tc.columbia.edu



Duration

No longer than 45 minutes



Winston Preparatory School

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