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THE TRUST-BASED CLASSROOM: AN ANALYSIS OF CURRENT TRENDS IN SOCIAL AND EMOTIONAL LEARNING AND THE DEVELOPMENT OF A NEW TRUST-BASED APPROACH TO ART EDUCATION

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THESIS

A thesis submitted in partial fulfillment of the
requirements for the degree of Master of Arts in the
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By

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ABSTRACT OF THESIS

THE TRUST-BASED CLASSROOM: AN ANALYSIS OF CURRENT TRENDS IN SOCIAL AND EMOTIONAL LEARNING AND THE DEVELOPMENT OF A NEW TRUST-BASED APPROACH TO ART EDUCATION

Many current social and emotional learning (SEL) programs cite building trust as a key factor to an effective SEL program. Despite these references, however, they often lack an emphasis on teaching methods of building trust between students and their peers, the teacher, and the environment. Instead, they focus on a specific aspect of teaching like the procedural practices of Responsive Classroom or communication and open-mindedness as in Open Circle. Explicitly building trust, however, could create an art classroom atmosphere conducive to high quality learning. This thesis analyzes current trends in social and emotional learning and outlines the characteristics of the Trust-Based Classroom, an SEL program I have developed to address this deficit through careful analysis of current research on trust and SEL. Although creating the right environment to build trust can be difficult, recognizing, implementing, and evaluating methods of creating a trusting atmosphere, encouraging students to create individualized concentrations, emphasizing process over product, and encouraging collaboration and communication could assist teachers in their efforts of creating an artistic environment rich with learning. The Trust-Based Classroom focuses students on individualized, strengths-based, social and emotional learning where students and teachers alike are working to build trust between themselves and their environment.

KEYWORDS: Social and Emotional Learning (SEL), Trust, Art Education, Trust-Based Classroom, Instructional Methods

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CHAPTER 1. WHY TRUST? ADDRESSING THE NEED FOR A SOCIAL AND EMOTIONAL LEARNING PROGRAM BASED ON TRUST

Background to the Problem

Research suggests that many art teachers struggle to create an environment encouraging creative thinking, risk-taking, collaboration, or open inquiry (Burton, 2001, p.140). Many of the newest educational standards in the United States, however, call for an emphasis on 21st century skills, making it imperative for art teachers to create this type of classroom environment (Mahlmann, J. J., and Others, 1994). Recent studies in art education indicate multiple emerging methods of instruction and a resurgence of some previously developed instructional techniques to combat this problem. Design thinking, problem-based learning, and Zhao's entrepreneurial approach are all gaining momentum as methods of teaching 21st century skills to students in public schools (Brown, 2009; Buck Institute for Education, n.d.; Zhao, 2012).

This call for educational action behind the façade of 21st century skills, however, is concerning because common skills cited, like critical thinking, collaboration, and communication seem to be humanistic goals for all time periods from ancient Greece to now (Partnership for 21st Century Skills, n.d.). Additionally, 20 years into the 21st century and still calling for change to meet 21st century needs could indicate a problem in the current educational approaches designed to reach these skills. Every accepted educational approach I have encountered from the aforementioned approaches focused on 21st century learning, to the social and emotional learning programs highlighted later in this thesis, seems to be lacking one particular key element of teaching: a specific focus on trust.

The Significance of Creating a Trust-Based SEL Approach

As a new teacher nearly 13 years ago, I was able to observe that building trust might have an impact on learning environment and could possibly be the keystone to creating an ideal educational setting. Neither my teacher education training nor any professional development (PD) opportunity in which I have participated over the course of 13 years, however, have taught me any significant knowledge about trust and its implications on students or our world. In my teaching experience, trust has been largely left out of conversations about student behavior, academic achievement, and even teacher growth and development.

Despite this trend, trust has significant impacts on many facets of our 21st century world. This is supported by ample research as cited by Sandra Susan Smith (2010) in her analysis titled "Race and Trust."

> Trust, generalized, particularized, and strategic, has been associated with a whole host of benefits, not only for individuals, but for communities and nations as well. Luhmann (1979) describes trust as a "social lubricant" that "reduces complexity." In so doing, trust encourages solidarity, cohesion, consensus, and cooperation (Suttles, 1968; Rotter, 1980; Fukuyama, 1995; Misztal, 1996; Yamagishi, 2001), which reduces transaction costs (Putnam, 2000) and promotes health (Kawachi et al., 1997), happiness (Rotter, 1980; Yamagishi, 2001), safety (Sampson & Raudenbush, 1999), the development of mutually beneficial, cooperative relationships (Cook et al., 2005), economic prosperity (Fukuyama, 1995), and democracy (Brehm & Rahn, 1997; Putnam 2000; but see Uslaner, 2002). (p. 468)

Given such important outcomes of trust, it is startling to me that trust is not more of a conversation within the education sector. Why are we not working to build trust with our students and among our students? If the outcomes of a trusting environment are so widely positive and beneficial, then certainly the opposite environment, where trust does

not exist or is not given adequate priority, would be disadvantageous or even detrimental to student growth, achievement, and behavior.

Purpose for Creating a Trust-Based SEL Approach

An atmosphere conducive to highly effective learning might only be successful when the entire classroom is built on trust. Trust must extend beyond student learning to adult learning, as well. "Communities of adults who know and trust one another and who are skilled at working together toward shared goals are more successful in implementing, improving, and sustaining SEL" (CASEL, 2019). The Trust-Based Classroom approach to art education I have developed herein places extreme importance on creating social, emotional, cognitive, and physical environments centered on trust, developing individualized concentrations, encouraging effective collaboration and communication, and valuing process over product. The trust created in this kind of environment should be multidirectional between students and their peers, between the teacher and the students, and beyond the classroom. After teaching in this environment and welcoming well over 3000 students into my classrooms, I have witnessed how each of these indicators of a Trust-Based classroom could have clear impacts on student achievement.

Limitations

I am currently developing an evaluation tool to assess the results of this teaching approach. Given a return to a school setting where students can share materials and sit closer than 6 feet apart, I will begin studies of this program to test its efficacy and validity. The tools used to test should be modeled after those widely accepted in the field and should address not only student academic achievement and behavior but also the multi-faceted outcomes trust can have on a society as a whole.

At this time, my classroom is the only sample available to be tested for program efficacy. Broadening this sample will be a limitation, but a goal to complete in the upcoming school years. Currently, I am in a unique position to offer a pre-implementation test and post implementation test as I am new to the district and have not implemented the program due to the pandemic.

When considering the testing tool, it is impossible to perfectly gauge the feelings of every student, especially students who are only 6 years of age. The testing tool will need to broken down into language applicable to primary students. Because self-reporting is often ineffective gauge, however, observation will be a large method of gathering data. In regards the type of data gathered, specific measurable outcomes concerning trust and its impact will be measured on a Likert scale to provide quantitative data. Qualitative data will also be important when describing the atmosphere of the classroom and the artwork created with the room.

The observation recording tool will be designed through iObservation so that it may be controlled and easily recorded. Questions on the observation tool will be designed to check for validity of the tool and its application to measuring the efficacy of the Trust-Based Classroom.

The content of the testing tool will be based largely on the information complied in Chapter 2: Review of Social and Emotional Learning Literature as well as the widely acknowledged outcomes of trust compiled by Sandra Susan Smith (2010) in her analysis titled “Race and Trust.”

Ultimately, these test results guide enhancements to the program before broadening it to other art classroom teachers.

Definition of Terms

For the purposes of this thesis the following terms will be used as defined below.

cognitive environment- the depth and breadth of thinking and the mental stimuli available in a learning setting

emotional environment- personal feelings and expressions of those feelings within a specific location

individualized concentration- an area of study specifying content and techniques unique student-artists use to learn and create artworks; similar to a cohesive body of work or a series for working artists

physical environment- the tangible and visual aspects of a location.

Social and Emotional Learning (SEL)- a facet of learning focused specifically on the social growth and wellness as well as the emotional growth and wellness of those involved. Effective SEL programs generally address one or more of the following key components: environmental foundations, mindfulness and metacognition, and/or actions and consequences.

SEL competency- a measurable variable of an SEL program used to determine efficacy.

social environment- the communicative facets of a school or community atmosphere

trust- reliance on another person, place, object, or concept to act as expected

Trust-Based Classroom (TBC)- a social and emotional learning approach to art education placing extreme importance on creating social, emotional, cognitive, and physical environments centered on trust, developing individualized concentrations, encouraging effective collaboration and communication, and valuing process over product.

CHAPTER 2. REVIEW OF SOCIAL AND EMOTIONAL LEARNING LITERATURE: THREE DIVERGENT DEFINITIONS AND COMPETENCY SETS OF SEL

Recalling my own K-12 schooling, social and emotional learning (SEL) strategies have been a regular part of teachers' classrooms, instinctively, long before educators designated a name and an acronym for it. I can remember an English project in high school, for example, a personal narrative in which we had to pick one object we hated and explain how we were similar to our hated object. Along the way, we were regularly encouraged to find the emotional connections with this object rather than just the physical comparisons. This teacher regularly encouraged her students' social and emotional growth.

Since then, however, varying studies have helped distinguish exactly what social emotional learning is and does for students (Waters & Sroufe, 1983; CASEL, 2012; CASEL, 2015; Cozolino, 2013). And although many programs exist, consistency between programs is lacking. Despite the discrepancies, many of the programs are designed with similar outcome objectives, often looking to improve student behavior and academic achievement (CASEL 2012, CASEL 2015). SEL program effectiveness, then, can be measured based on these objectives, but it can be hard to determine which practices actually go beyond the surface level of student behavior and academic achievement—which practices will actually produce responsible 21st century citizens.

Because social and emotional learning is such an important indicator of the Trust-Based Classroom it must be addressed before outlining the approach. Reviewing the divergent definitions and competencies of social emotional learning as well as assessing some of the established programs for teaching social emotional well-being will be essential to the development of a successful program. This analysis will provide a

foundation for the Trust-Based Classroom approach in addition to developing a tool for analyzing its success. Understanding existing social and emotional learning programs, their successes, as well as their growth areas, allows me to develop the Trust-Based Classroom from an educated perspective, using science backed information, likely leading to a successful trust-based art education program.

Analyzing Divergent Definitions and Competencies of Social Emotional Learning

Scholars often differ when they define social and emotional learning in education. Educational scholars and teachers have been developing techniques to address students' social skills and emotional competency, but purposeful practices went uncharted for many years (Waters & Sroufe, 1983). Now that we have the language to study its effects, the diverging SEL concepts are beginning to become a regular part of classrooms nation-wide (CASEL, 2020). Over the course of the last six years, for example, I have taught at three different schools in two different states. In that time, each school addressed social and emotional learning in a different way. Each of the three schools, however, made social and emotional learning a priority for all teachers as evidenced by professional development offered within faculty meetings, summer professional development, and within the regular school year professional learning communities (PLCs). Before addressing some specific SEL programs, including those in which I was able to participate, it is important to define the key components of social and emotional learning.

While defining a social and emotional learning environment/program of study might seem fairly easy because it is so widely used in the education vernacular—and seems to be a top priority—currently, as a method of enhancing classroom management, I am surprised at the lack of consistency and scholarly organization surrounding the topic.

To organize the information that exists on social and emotional learning I review the literature chronologically and briefly outline three major thresholds and their contributions to the topic.

Everett Waters, State University of New York, and L. Alan Sroufe, University of Minnesota, began studying Social Competence and supporting the validity of those studies nearly 40 years ago in 1983. This research is some of the first to prioritize social competence within education.

Drawing on those studies and definitions the Collaborative for Academic, Social, and Emotional Learning (CASEL), an organization focused on SEL, began defining core competencies of SEL programs in 1994. CASEL evaluates programs being implemented across the United States and has continued research for 26 years. This organization is known for its collection of social and emotional learning programs as well as its measurement tool to determine the success of each program.

Additionally, many others outside the realm of education, including researchers like Louis Cozolino, a psychologist and professor of psychology at Pepperdine University, and even Brené Brown, a researcher and professor at the University of Houston who has published five #1 New York Times bestsellers, are conducting studies and researching SEL. Cozolino published The Social Neuroscience of Education in 2013 defining five elements of SEL (p. 16) that look in and beyond the classroom. Brown explores the concept of social and emotional learning in adults regularly. Her books and podcasts are read and heard across the world.

Social and emotional learning has worked its way beyond the classroom and into our daily lives (Brown, 2020). The definition of SEL, however seems to be evolving as

we gain more knowledge. It is important to evaluate the many perspectives and definitions, so that, moving forward, we can continue to improve the empirical evidence and research on SEL.

The Research of Waters and Sroufe (1983) on Social Competence

Returning to Waters and Sroufe (1983) and their exploration of social competence nearly 40 years ago, I will assess their groundwork so that this information can be applied to the Trust-Based Classroom.

At the foundation of social competency studies is the study and defense of Social Competence as a Developmental Construct (Waters & Sroufe, 1983). Examining that study contextualizes what researchers are actually studying with regards to SEL and where the professional conversation on the topic began. Focused on social competence, the two determined that "Competence is viewed as an integrative concept which refers broadly to an ability to generate and coordinate flexible, adaptive responses to demands and to generate and capitalize on opportunities in the environment (i.e., effectiveness)" (Waters & Sroufe, 1983, p. 80). This definition of social competence can be broken into three parts to more easily understand what they were examining, and upon a careful look, the learnable behaviors emerge. Those three parts Waters and Sroufe (1983) define include "integrative concept" (p. 80), "an ability to generate and coordinate flexible, adaptive responses to demands" (p. 80), and "generate and capitalize on opportunities in the environment" (p. 80).

Making connections.

First, Social Competence is an "integrative concept" (p. 80) meaning, to be effective, it requires connections between multiple situations, stimuli, and learned

behaviors (Waters & Sroufe, 1983). A person must, therefore, be able to combine their innate responses with lessons learned at home, in the community, or at school in a variety of situations to help determine actions they will take. Waters and Sroufe determined that the most effective way to study this "integrative concept" was to look at composite scores of affect (feelings), cognition (thinking), and behavior (actions) (Waters & Sroufe, 1983, p. 90). These three aspects of social competence continue to be an integral part of how we assess and discuss social psychology (Jeshmaridian, 2012).

In the classroom we can assess affect, cognition, and behavior in many facets of an educational program. Addressing the regularly assessed indicators of a successful student, academic achievement and behavior, all three concepts are essential to positive growth. Addressing the outcomes of a Trust-Based Classroom, however, we should focus on the aforementioned goals of that type of classroom. These goals include solidarity, cohesion, consensus, and cooperation, in addition to student and teacher happiness, safety, and the development of mutually beneficial, cooperative relationships and the ways that affect, cognition, and behavior actually impact each of these trust-based outcomes (Smith, 2010). This analysis will be essential to the effective development of a tool. The tool will measure the validity and efficacy of a Trust-Based Classroom approach.

Responding to stimuli.

Waters and Sroufe (1983), secondly, determine that socially competent people must have "an ability to generate and coordinate flexible, adaptive responses to demands" (p. 80). Throughout persons' daily experiences, they are faced with a variety of demands. A person might need to problem-solve, for example, learn something new, or complete a

task within a specific timeframe. Within a classroom, the demands might be similar—having to cooperate with someone to finish a project, or having to save materials for someone else to use, or even sharing a space with someone while working separately. Considering those demands, and the affect, cognition, and behavior discussed above, a student-artist must come up with a solution and methods to carry out a project effectively.

Further, the solution should be able to be altered as the stimuli or variables change (Waters & Sroufe, 1983). As artists experiment, for example, materials may not respond as the artists expect. The ability then to alter the behavior should be essential to continuing to produce an effective work of art. Successfully completing this adjustment is complex and seemingly reliant on a person's affect, cognition, and behavior simultaneously.

Taking action.

Thirdly, according to Waters and Sroufe (1983), a person must be able to "generate and capitalize on opportunities in the environment," (p. 80) meaning they can see that opportunities can, should, or do exist and can take action to make situations better. This third concept then, addresses how effective the problem-solving is and the timing of the actions taken. Waters and Sroufe (1983) identified that the ability to "capitalize" (p. 80) is often related to specific skills within the individual, like self-esteem, disposition, or motivation (p. 82).

Bringing this concept into the Trust-Based Classroom one can look at student-artists to determine how successfully they are able to capitalize on opportunities within the environment. If materials are limited, for example, and a student-artist sees the material they need to complete their work of art is available, the student could effectively

capitalize on the availability to successfully produce a work of art. This is essential in a Trust-Based Classroom because many students are working on a variety of projects requiring multiple materials at once.

Conclusions and extensions.

Waters's and Sroufe's (1983) definition of social competence seems concise at first glance, but the abilities that come into play here are often complex and difficult to learn, practice, and study. By breaking down and scaffolding each part, understanding how educators can use these lessons to teach social and emotional learning becomes essential to developing an effective approach like the Trust-Based Classroom. The integration of social competence within the classroom becomes the foundation for an effective social emotional learning program. As the conversation concerning SEL continues, this study provides the groundwork and the essential language used to discuss the aspects of social competence.

The Collaborative for Academic, Social and Emotional Learning

While the work of Waters and Sroufe (1983) was completed nearly 40 years ago, other organizations have since developed more encompassing definitions of social and emotional learning that can be applied to newly developed SEL programs (CASEL, 2020). CASEL got its start conjunction with the term social and emotional learning (SEL) in 1994 during a meeting of researchers, educators, and child-advocates particularly focused on "education-based efforts to promote positive development in children" (CASEL, 2020, History). The group then partnered with the Association for Supervision and Curriculum Development (ASCD) to co-author Promoting Social and Emotional

Learning: Guidelines for Educators (Haynes et al., 1997). The book was innovative, providing actual practical strategies to promote SEL in a coordinated effort (CASEL, 2020, History).

Since then, CASEL has continued research and collaboration efforts to advance the scope of SEL in education. Eleven years after the "Social Competence" researchers, Waters and Sroufe defended their research, CASEL developed a definition of SEL that is well accepted within the cohort who identify as educators, albeit just one of the many fields who now contribute to SEL research.

This definition states "Social and emotional learning (SEL) is the process through which children and adults understand and manage emotions, set and achieve positive goals, feel and show empathy for others, establish and maintain positive relationships, and make responsible decisions" (CASEL, 2020) This definition, as it is a list, can be broken down into its parts to scaffold understanding and practices of SEL and can be used to build an effective social and emotional learning approach.

First and foremost, CASEL identifies SEL as a process. In contrast to the competencies outlined by Waters and Sroufe, CASEL recognizes that social and emotional learning is more about the steps it takes to reach the competencies (CASEL, 2020). The organization does not outline the best steps to achieve these competencies, and rather leaves room for differing approaches to reach those competencies. Ultimately, CASEL assesses a variety of approaches for their efficacy based on multiple factors (CASEL, 2012; CASEL, 2015).

CASEL (2020) identifies five SEL competencies separate from its definition, and in order to understand each, we must consider the competencies and the definition

together. The five competencies are outlined as, “self-awareness, self-management, social awareness, relationship skills, and responsible decision making” (CASEL, 2020, What is SEL?). These competencies, therefore, are not the definition, but rather a way to talk about the variables that the collaborative has determined effect social and emotional learning. These five competencies play a key role in a person’s ability to, as the definition delineates, “understand and manage emotions, set and achieve positive goals, feel and show empathy for others, establish and maintain positive relationships, and make responsible decisions” (CASEL, 2020).

The possible results of effective competencies paired with the SEL definitive constructs viewed together will allow the connections between the competencies and the definition to be made more clearly. To compare, I have broken out CASEL’s specific parts of their definition of social emotional learning. Within each segment, I have identified each of the five competencies and how they might manifest in the specific parts of CASEL’s definition of social and emotional learning. It is important to evaluate this definition and the competencies’ impact on the definition together in order to understand the ways that many educators view social emotional learning.

Governing feelings.

Considering how and to what extent a person “understands and manages emotions” for example, all five CASEL competencies come into play. One should have self-awareness to be able to name and govern feelings effectively at any given moment and should have practiced self-management skills to be in control of how those feelings manifest into outward actions. Externally, social awareness and relationship skills could be an extremely important construct dictating how a person outwardly shows feelings or

reacts to the emotions of others. Finally, addressing the competency of responsible decision making, one's actions with regards to understanding and managing emotions, ultimately, can be influenced by the ability to make a decision on how to take action.

Goal setting.

The second aspect of SEL as outlined by CASEL (2020, What is SEL?) involves goal setting. Contemplating the methods and effectiveness of a person's ability to "set and achieve positive goals," all five competencies show possible impacts on goal setting. One should have self-awareness, for instance, to understand what goals might actually be achieved and what roadblocks might come into play. Self-management could be essential to scaffolding goals into achievable thresholds. Discipline, then, could be a determining factor under the umbrella of responsible decision making, deciding whether or not persons might successfully accomplish their goals. Taking into account social awareness and relationship skills together, these competencies could have a great effect on the collaboration needed to set and achieve group or community goals. Each of the five competencies has a great impact on the goal setting segment of SEL that CASEL defines.

Empathy.

Analyzing the techniques and the extent to which a person can "feel and show empathy for others," all five competencies, once again are integral. With regards to self-awareness, we must understand our own intersectionality to be fully aware of how we view others, treat others, and feel for others. Self-management might impact the ways we outwardly act on our empathy for others. This could consequently dictate our ability to set boundaries allowing empathy for others while maintaining our own self-worth.

Empathy seems to be direct result of social awareness and our abilities to be empathetic of the perspectives of diverse populations, and relationship skills can help people move beyond feeling empathy and into taking action. When we are able to appropriately show empathy for others, we do so with positive relationship skills. The actions a person takes to actually show empathy for others falls directly under the category of responsible decision making. These SEL indicators and the competencies that impact them are relevant to any SEL program that has been or is yet to be developed.

Relationships.

The fourth aspect of the CASEL (2020, What is SEL?) definition, "establishing and maintaining positive relationships" is also significant and worthy of analysis with regard to the five CASEL competencies. Self-awareness of a person's strengths and limitations within a relationship might dictate how that relationship develops, whereas self-management and the ability to regulate could create consistent behavior on which others can rely. Social awareness would assist a person's ability to understand others and, therefore, maintain positive relationships with others while relationship skills would be necessary to keep consistent behavior among relationships. Ultimately responsible decision making could aide in developing new relationships and maintaining old ones.

Decisions.

Each of these factors has lifelong implications, and making responsible decisions is perhaps one of the most important factors of social and emotional learning. Self-awareness with regard to responsible decision making can allow persons to assess their own place in the world and tackle decision making with confidence and optimism. Self-management can provide the discipline needed, whereas social awareness, and

relationship skills might dictate what decisions need to be made. Because responsible decision making can be found in both the definition and in the five competencies, its importance is two-fold and is an integral component of social and emotional learning.

Conclusions and extensions.

CASEL is the current authority for the language and expectations of social and emotional learning within the school/educational setting. They have set the precedent for evaluation of programs and approaches, and they continue to conduct research that impacts the evolving field of SEL. When developing my own trust-based approach to art education, and considering social and emotional learning within that approach, CASEL has been my resource for implementing SEL into my approach. As with many other SEL programs this definition and these competencies are a great way to assess the efficacy of any SEL program.

Since CASEL identified its definition of social and emotional learning in 1994, scholars have continued to research the topic and many people have implemented change in positive ways based on research by CASEL's members (CASEL, 2020). As members of alternative fields develop research and analyze prior research from their unique perspectives beyond the classroom, the language we use and the knowledge we have with regards to SEL is growing.

Cozolino's Application of Social Neuroscience to Social and Emotional Learning

The conversation of social and emotional learning has now extended beyond the educational field and is reaching into realms of psychology and social science. Common threads remain, however, and those can easily be seen in the perspective and research of Louis Cozolino, a professor of psychology at Pepperdine University and private practitioner, through his book The Social Neuroscience of Education: Optimizing Attachment & Learning (2010).

How the social brain learns.

His research is exhaustive, covering the gaps in "Brain-Based education…the primitive nature of the social brain…and the brain's ability to take on new information with regards to the social constructs of modern interpersonal relationships" (p.xxi) Cozolino recognizes that effective education is not just about the science of proper nutrition or sleep. While he acknowledges that those are important, he imagines a classroom "based on democratic leadership, cooperation, group cohesion, equality, fairness, trust, and strong personal relationships" (Cozolino, 2013, p. 12).

Cozolino continues and relates these values to instinctive values of hunters and warriors. Referencing their basic nature, Cozolino (2013) points out that these values use "primitive social instincts" (p. 13). He determines, consequently, they can and should be used in all classrooms to optimize learning. He acknowledges these values are important especially for students whose ability to learn in the industrialized classroom (one where information is given and received in a cookie cutter or assembly line fashion) has been

suppressed by “trauma, social emotional challenges, and cultural disconnections” (p.12). No matter the population, however, Cozolino’s primary research for this book concerns the ways in which learning is impacted by social stimuli within all instructional settings in school and out (Cozolino, 2013).

Beyond the instructional methods that have been in practice within schools for centuries, Cozolino (2013) points out that “our ability to learn is regulated by how we are treated by our teachers, at home and in the classroom” (p.xxi). This concept is at the root of the Trust-Based Classroom because it opens the door for teachers to make change. Knowing that a teacher can have an impact on students in a similar way as a parent, allows teachers to build trust among students who may be raised in an environment where trust is not emphasized.

The five social elements of SEL.

Cozolino (2013) defines five specific social elements that impact learning as, “safe and trusting relationships…low to moderate stress of arousal…activating thinking and feeling…the co-construction of narratives…and interpersonal neurobiology” (p.17-23). Each of these five elements has a scientifically significant impact on neuroplasticity and the ability to learn, Cozolino (2013) determines, yet they are not the same competencies that CASEL or Waters and Sroufe determined. Cozolino, alternatively, analyzes the impact of teachers and environments and the social constructs of those stimuli on effective learning rather than relying on determining what students can do in certain environments to measure learning and growth (Cozolino, 2013).

Conclusions and extensions.

If we do, in fact, have control over the environments and social values that learners are subjected to in a classroom, as Cozolino suggests, then perhaps we should be focused on enhancing those elements to effectively address social and emotional learning.

The Difficulty of Applying Divergent SEL Definitions

Further examination of SEL references within the education realm qualifies many approaches identifying traits that help us determine how programs address teaching social and emotional learning (Norris, 2003; Durlak et al., 2011; Morcom, 2014). Some programs set out to teach educators how best to teach SEL directly, while others focus on regular classroom practices integrating social and emotional learning naturally (CASEL, 2012; CASEL, 2015). All SELect programs identify by CASEL either qualitative or quantitative research that supports how their method works and how it should be used (CASEL, 2020). Considering the major differences in programs, though, how can educators best determine which methods to use in their schools/classrooms if scholars and researchers have yet to agree on comprehensive elements of implementation of social emotional learning including effective delivery methods?

An Analysis of Three Specific SEL Programs.

In order to successfully create a SEL program that is centered on trust, it is important to understand the upsides and downfalls of specific SEL programs that currently exist. The Collaborative for Academic, Social, and Emotional Learning identifies “SELect programs” and rates them based on their scientifically developed ratings guide (CASEL, 2012; CASEL, 2015). The guide reviews specific programs in a consumer report format. Exemplary programs model the best parts of the programs across the board, and creating a new program, like the Trust-Based Classroom, can build on the

successes of social and emotional learning programs that already exist. With a basic understanding of the key components of social and emotional learning, program developers can evaluate a program's effectiveness and therefore build on those positive qualities for the betterment of education as a whole.

Because they have all be scientifically tested, I will use CASEL's SELect programs and review three specific approaches to exemplify the methods of programing SEL. It is important to note that the CASEL Guide (2012) delineates the various SEL programs in many ways including but not limited to the style of their approach. This delineation is broken down as follows:

1. "Most" SEL programs "used explicit lessons to teach students social and emotional skills." (p. 4)
2. "Several…provide teachers with academic content while simultaneously promoting SEL." (p. 4)
3. "Others…emphasize using teacher instructional and classroom management practices to create classroom environments that foster social, emotional, and academic competence." (p. 4)

Below are three exemplary programs that scored well in the CASEL guide and a defense of the scores.

Responsive Classroom.

Responsive Classroom is an SEL program that is fully integrated into the curricula taught and relies on "teacher instructional practices" (CASEL, 2012, p.58) to convey the concepts instead of explicit lessons to teach social and emotional learning. According to its website, the Responsive Classroom (2020), program focuses on four

specific education elements including “Engaging Academics[,] Positive Community[,] Effective Management[, and] Developmentally Responsive Teaching” (About). These domains put heavy responsibility on the teacher to be sure that the environment is concussive to positive outcomes.

The program is designed particularly for use in grades K-8 within a context of classroom, school, and family, but does not include a community context (CASEL, 2012; CASEL 2015). As for implementation, the program includes ten practices with regards to grades 5-8 and nine practices for elementary (k-6) (Responsive Classroom, 2020). The shared practices include “interactive modeling” of procedures and routines in addition to academic and social skills, “teacher language” that supports students’ SEL in and out of school, “logical consequences” that require the teacher to set clear boundaries and expectations while also allowing students to learn from their mistakes, and “interactive learning structures” that require the teacher to create lessons with hands-on and social interactions as part of the lesson (Responsive Classroom, 2020, Principles and Practices). Among the other practices, are “meeting times[,] collaborative rule setting[,] purposeful breaks and energizers[,] and active teaching with student practice (Responsive Classroom, 2020, Principles and Practices).

Considering the 2013 CASEL Guide evaluation of the program, the program developers have included tools for “Monitoring Implementation” and for “Measuring Student Behavior” (p. 58). Research on Responsive Classrooms found improvements in student achievement and teacher-student interactions, as well as higher quality instruction in math (Responsive Classroom, 2020, About). Ultimately, Responsive Classroom is an

SEL program that boasts scientifically proven positive results as the outcome with regard to student behavior and achievement (CASEL, 2012).

Open Circle.

Open Circle is an SEL approach that began in 1987 as one of the first programs developed specifically for social and emotional learning (CASEL, 2012). Designed for a diverse range of students K-5, children sit in a circle with an open chair signifying that there is always room for one more (Open Circle, 2015). According to the 2013 CASEL Guide, the program is designed with a classroom wide, school-wide, and family context, but similar to Responsive Classroom, includes minimal community context. In contrast to Responsive Classroom, however, Open Circle includes approximately 34 age-appropriate lessons specifically teaching SEL concepts connected to an English/language arts curriculum (CASEL, 2012).

The Open Circle Curriculum (2015) focuses on five specific curriculum topics including "Beginning Together[,] Managing Ourselves[,] Strengthening Relationships[,] How to Spot Problems[, and] Problem-Solving" (Open Circle, 2015) Within each topic are four to seven lessons specifically designed to teach SEL. Although the concepts are the same across all K-5 grade levels, the lessons are differentiated to meet the students' developmental needs (Open Circle, 2015). As stated in the 2013 CASEL Guide also included in the curriculum is information on "KEY Cultural Factors" (p. 52) and "Dimensions of Difference and Similarity" (p. 52) so as to reach a broad spectrum of students.

Similar to Responsive Classroom, the makers have included tools for "Monitoring Implementation" and for "Measuring Student Behavior" (CASEL, 2013, p. 52). Research on the Open Circle program has yielded results showing increased positive social behavior and reduced conduct problems but did not identify academic outcomes related to implementation of the program (CASEL, 2013, p. 52). This program, ultimately, is set up to explicitly teach social and emotional behaviors that can then be accessed when needed throughout the day/school year to help maintain a positive learning environment (Open Circle Curriculum, 2015).

Project Based Learning (PBL).

Project Based Learning by Buck Institute for Education was established first as a secondary education program, although many elementary schools also use this approach now (CASEL, 2015; Buck Institute for Education, n.d.). The program uses teaching practices to promote SEL similar to Responsive Classroom, but from a completely different approach (CASEL, 2015). Like Responsive Classroom, I have also had experience working with Project Based Learning though in a high school setting rather than an elementary one. This method of teaching allows students to participate in real-world and personally meaningful projects over an extended period of time as opposed to what they call "dessert projects" punctuating the culmination of a lesson (Buck Institute for Education, n.d.).

Although CASEL (2015) identifies many of its SEL contexts as only "Adequate," the approach is larger in scope than just an SEL program. The PBL website (Buck Institute for Education, n.d.) identifies "Seven Essential Project Design Elements" (What is PBL?), and seven "Project Based Teaching Practices" (What is PBL?) that serve as the

framework for the approach. The project design elements include "challenging problem or question[,] sustained inquiry[,] authenticity[,] student voice and choice[,] reflections[,] critique and revision[, and] public product" (Buck Institute for Education, n.d., What is PBL?). Alternatively, the teaching practices include "design and plan[,] align to standards[,] build the culture[,] manage activities[,] scaffold student learning[,] assess student learning[, and] engage and coach." (Buck Institute for Education, n.d., What is PBL?). Within these 14 standards we can find a variety of social and emotional learning supports including "student voice and choice[,] reflections[, and] engage and coach" (Buck Institute for Education, n.d., What is PBL?). Among others these three are evident in their alignment to SEL merely in their title and even more so when diving into the specific practices of each.

Ultimately, the context of SEL, where PBL excels, is one where many other SEL approaches fall short: community engagement. The Project Based Learning framework is focused on real-world learning and therefore naturally requires a community context. The approach boasts statistically significant improved academic performance but has not identified other areas of growth based on implementation (CASEL, 2015).

Review of SEL Literature Conclusions and Extensions

By evaluating these three SEL programs, while also assessing others that exist, those who are interested in building effective, new programs can discover more than a guess and check procedure for building a program. Rather, like a conversation, new programs can build on the empirical evidence of the successes of previously existing SEL approaches. Using established science and reaching into fields other than education can

help teachers prepare students to grow the social and emotional skills they will need beyond the classroom.

Using the science and research about programs that already exist can help us move forward in building strong students who are socially and emotionally competent when they enter the real world. As researchers we can build programs that are strong, effective, and could make great change to the world in which we live.

CHAPTER 3. A COMPREHENSIVE DEFINITION OF SOCIAL AND EMOTIONAL LEARNING

Despite the diverging constructs of social and emotional learning from Waters and Sroufe (1983) to the many fully formed programs integrated into modern education, key congruencies arise, when comparing the references identifying the topic. Analyzing these similarities and differences, the pieces begin to come together to define the key concepts of social and emotional learning comprehensively. Ultimately the research and definitions do have enough congruencies that we can easily define three main concepts that are relevant when discussing SEL. A collective definition of social and emotional learning could help determine how best to teach students and what it is students should be able to learn and do within and beyond the classroom.

Implementing the practices that create positive social and emotional learning environments is difficult without first agreeing on a comprehensive definition of social and emotional learning. I have identified three main components of SEL approaches and programs, and although not all programs address all components, all programs address at least one key component of this comprehensive definition.

Three Linear Key Components within the Comprehensive Definition of SEL and Their Connections to the Established Research

The three comprehensive and essential components of social and emotional learning I have identified are Environmental Foundations, Intrapersonal Mindfulness and Metacognition, and Interpersonal Actions and Consequences. These three essential components encompass, within one or more, the key components or competencies of each established definition from Waters and Sroufe (1983), CASEL (2020), and Cozolino (2013) as well as many other references of SEL (Haynes et al.,1997; Buck Institute for Education, n.d.; CASEL, 2012; CASEL, 2015) in the following ways:

1. Environmental Foundations addresses what must exist before SEL action can take place.
    a. These foundations are distinguished by Cozolino (2013) as "Safe and trusting relationships [and] Low to Moderate Stress of Arousal" (p. 18, 19).
    b. They are also stressed by CASEL (2020) as "building and maintaining relationships" (What is SEL?).
2. Intrapersonal Mindfulness and Metacognition addresses the present—what is currently effecting change as a result of SEL practices.
    a. Waters and Sroufe emphasize socially competent people are "empathic and independently were more frequently observed to initiate and respond to others with positive affect, as well as to use positive affect to sustain ongoing interactions and recognize and manage emotions" (p. 95).

b. Cozolino categorized this concept under the index of "Activating Thinking and Feeling" (p. 20).
c. CASEL encourages "self-awareness[,] self management[, and] social awareness" (CASEL, 2020, What is SEL?).

3. Interpersonal Actions and Consequences identifies how present actions impact the future.
    a. This component is addressed by Waters and Sroufe (1983) when they define that socially competent people can effectively "generate and coordinate flexible, adaptive responses to demands/generate and capitalize on opportunities in the environment" (p. 80).
    b. Cozolino delineates actions and consequences under the SEL components of "The Co-Construction of Narratives" (p. 20), and "Interpersonal neurobiology" (p. 21).
    c. CASEL recognizes the importance of actions and consequences in an SEL definition encouraging persons to achieve positive goals[,] make responsible decisions[,] build and maintain relationship skills[, and] handle interpersonal situations constructively" (CASEL, 2020, What is SEL?).

Environmental Foundations: The impact of person, place, material, or concept

Each key component interacts with the four factors that help describe the world: person, place, thing, or concept. Consequently, all should be considered when addressing social and emotional learning because SEL is integrated completely into the real world.

When thinking about the environmental foundations considered in an SEL approach, we are looking closely at past and present, but this concept does not address future actions or consequences.

Person.

When we consider the people who impact the environmental foundations of social and emotional learning we must understand that not only the people who are visible inside the classroom, school, or even the community play a role in the environmental foundation of learning, but so do those people generations before us and what seems worlds away in other countries (Kahane-Nissenbaum, 2011; DeAngelis, T., 2019). Each person's historical significance is essential to who they are as people and thus must be respected as impactful to social and emotional learning. Two examples that might enter the classroom unnoticed, unaddressed, but in an essential and impactful way are generations from the Holocaust and racial inequities in the United States.

As a first example, even three generations removed from the Holocaust, survivors' grandchildren are impacted by the traumas their grandparents endured (Kahane-Nissenbaum, 2011). Generational descendants of Holocaust survivors have been studied by social psychologists and are said to be working through "transmitted guilt, anger, mistrust, and feelings of marginality" (Kahane-Nissenbaum, 2011, p. 2) I, myself, am a "Third-Generation Survivor" and find myself confronting the "intergenerational transmission of trauma" Melissa C. Kahane-Nissenbaum outlines in her social work dissertation.

I was raised with a father who practiced Buddhism. Every night at dinner before we began to eat, my dad would say a prayer like many households in the United States. In

Buddhism, it is called a meal chant. There was a rotation of differing chants, addressing acknowledgement of others, self-awareness, and even environmental awareness. One such chant, that I remember well, still seems to permeate many aspects of my own adulthood despite my not practicing Buddhism, “72 labors have brought us this food, let us know how it comes to us” (Dōgen, 1200-1253, p. 91)

Generational traumas like those suffered because of the Holocaust might be easy to name as they have been scientifically studied, but imagine a classroom full of students who bring their own intergenerational trauma into the classroom even beyond this specific example. The interconnected nature of the human condition, similar to the ways we receive food as address in the Buddhist meal chant, often go unnamed and unstudied. So much of how students exist, communicate, and move through a space seems to be dependently reliant on their ability to manage and even celebrate who they are generationally.

As a second example, racial inequities stemming from generations of mistreatment often permeate the classroom and school setting as evidenced by records of office referrals presented to our Equity Team even within my current school (Hopkins, 2020). Though these conversations have been important for over a century, in recent years, the blaring disparities between people who are white and people of color, are once again becoming a predominant and politicized topic of conversation within schools.

When considering the “72 labors” Buddhists are acknowledging that naming all the factors that play a role in the food we eat or in the people we become is impossible. Recognizing that all people play a role in the environmental foundations of the classroom in which we are teaching will help us begin to understand each child as an individual and

as a part of the whole: the whole classroom, the whole school, the whole community, and the whole world. With this in mind, we can begin to build trusting relationships with those of us actually inside the classroom. We can talk about who we are, where we have been, why we make the choices we make, and where we might be going, and ultimately, we can construct a meaningful foundational relationship.

Place.

In the International Baccalaureate Primary Years Programme (PYP) (2012), a line of inquiry exists addressing "Where we are in place and time" (p. 2). When teaching this unit, teachers often address the migration of people or historical events that might impact a community. Community, therefore, should play a role in the key component of Environmental Foundations of social and emotional learning in a classroom. While it may be easy to quickly turn to the physical environment teachers create in their classrooms when considering the ways place impacts SEL, geographical location and neighborhood also has a significant impact on the social and emotional learning of students and teachers.

Addressing trust specifically, the multiple layers of economics, joblessness, poverty, even density of children, can have a major impact on neighborhood disorders like violence (Smith, 2010). Smith (2010), draws the connection between neighborhood disorders and trust. She argues that "neighborhood disorder significantly diminishes trust in the generalized other…disorder also indirectly affects trust by feeding individuals perceptions of powerlessness, which amplifies the effect of disorder on trust" (p. 459). Ultimately, she determines that in communities where there is neighborhood disorder, there will generally be a more severe lack of trust.

With this information on trust, we can extrapolate to the classroom and understand that students will respond differently to social and emotional learning programs, especially those requiring trust, based on their own cultural intersectionalities and neighborhood experiences. All schools implementing SEL programs, need to be aware of the varying effects on their SEL programs. Within the Trust-Based Classroom approach outlined later and the social and emotional learning comprehensive definition, specifically Environmental Foundations, considering place, recognizing the impact of neighborhoods is essential to the efficacy of social and emotional learning. Acknowledgment of this association at the start of any program and throughout its implementation should be a regular part of discussions.

Narrowing from the community to the classroom, place is also important to the environmental foundations of a social and emotional learning environment. Based on years of classroom experience both as a student and a teacher, I have observed teachers regularly pay attention to the tangible environmental choices within their classrooms. Considering the physical space, how we move through an area, the way we feel because of the colors of the space, location of desks allowing or disallowing student movement, and even the ways we interact with a place and touch materials within it should addressed as a part of a productive SEL environment. All of these more purposeful, tangible environmental choices also have an impact on social and emotional learning (Cozolino, 2013).

Materials.

The materials we touch and see and the ways we interact with them could also play a significant role in the environmental foundations with regards to social and

emotional learning. The importance of natural materials versus synthetic ones, for example, or the ability to learn through "hands-on" lessons rather than reading about them in a book, might impact social-emotional learning similar to the impacts on academic achievement (Ekwueme, Ekon, & Ezenwa-Nebife, 2015). Imagine a classroom with students who are stationary for the duration of class, for example. Students in this type of classroom may not experience and learn how to interact with others within a space. They also may find it difficult to learn how to gather their own materials when presented with that opportunity. The materials students experience could, therefore, be a factor of the Environmental Foundations of a classroom focused on SEL.

Concept.

When we consider how concepts might play a role in the environmental foundations of a classroom focused on SEL, we might look at how concepts and ideas actually look in a tangible way outside the classroom. All people within a particular environment, a chosen one like a political organization, for example, might gather around a similar idea. Because of that ideal, or set of morals, their outward actions and even inner feelings can be dictated by this belief or concept. Religion is a prime example of a set of morals that students might hold and therefore bring into the classroom. Cultural norms are also ideals that student bring with them into the classroom. When we can consider the varied ideas that students might hold as a foundational part of their personality or even behavior, we might then begin to more easily understand students and where they might begin their own SEL journeys.

Discipline or hard work would also qualify as concepts to be considered as a factor of the Environmental Foundations of SEL. These two ideals, however, as opposed

to those outlined above, are ideals for which a teacher can teach, set expectations, and perhaps even enact change. Conceptually, then, the term "classroom management," encompassing the things we do routinely in our classroom, can be controlled and measured (Norris, 2003). These concepts, therefore, might have a significant impact on the environmental foundations of a group of people focused on social emotional learning.

Notice, then, that even within, or perhaps especially within the key concept of Environmental Foundations, many of the ideas that the definitions of Waters and Sroufe (1983), CASEL (2020), or even Cozolino (2010) concerning SEL seem to barely address the major role Environmental Foundations can in an SEL program's efficacy.

In the following sections, I will address how these same four factory, person, place, material, or concept might also play a role in the subsequent two key components of a comprehensive definition of SEL, intrapersonal mindfulness and metacognition and interpersonal actions and consequences.

Mindfulness and Metacognition: The impact of person, place, material, or concept

The importance of awareness of self and mindfulness is recognized by many eastern countries where they are celebrated as a key component to positive mental health reduced perception of stress (Charoensukmongkol, 2014). Increasingly, western cultures are embracing the importance, as well (Panaïoti, 2015). Mindfulness has even worked its way into school-based settings across the United States (Sapthiang, Van Gordon, & Shonin 2019). Looking at the ways we raise children, then, why wouldn't we start these mindfulness practices as young as possible.

Not only should students be mindful of their surroundings, but also of the four factors, person, place, material, and concept, that contribute to the three key components of the collective definition of SEL.

Person.

People in present time are those who impact intrapersonal mindfulness and metacognition, the second key concept of social and emotional learning in my comprehensive definition. These people should include student-as-self, student peers, all faculty and staff, families, and the local/surrounding and global communities. Consider the role of the teacher, for example in an SEL centered classroom. Teachers can help students acquire awareness of self (Sapthiang, Van Gordon, & Shonin 2019). Teachers regularly offer behavioral instruction and even thinking techniques like divergent thinking and open-mindedness (Brown, 2009; Stevenson, Thomson, & Fox, 2014).

Cultural norms, as a second example, like avoidance of discomfort, suffering, or boredom are all examples of our societal impact on mindfulness and metacognition. Artistically, however, discomfort can lead to powerful content like the self-portraits of Frieda Khalo, and boredom can lead to creativity and novel thought (Brown, 2009). People in present time, therefore, both inside the classroom and out of it can influence the key component of mindfulness and metacognition under the umbrella of social and emotional learning.

Place.

Beyond personal mindfulness and metacognition, specific mindfulness of place can encourage active thinking and feeling. Listening to the rain on the window, the tapping of a pencil, feeling the coolness of the desk you are touching, smelling lunch

cooking, actively watching a demonstration of a particular technique, even having a bottle of water to drink are all present time, location specific, tangible prompts that can bring a student to the present moment and are mindfulness practices that might encourage awareness. The more students practice identifying nameable things with their five senses, the more possibility teachers and students might have to talk about metacognition.

Materials.

The tangible things in a classroom should be considered to enact mindfulness and enhance social and emotional learning. From my observations the types of material goods in a classroom can purposefully activate and enhance feeling and thinking. For example, in an art room focused on social and emotional learning, using glass instead of plastic cups could help students gain control of motor skills as students learn the responsibility of carrying something breakable. Writing or drawing with crayons instead of pencils might help student release some control over detail. The choices a teacher makes have can significant impact on mindfulness and metacognition.

Concept.

The fourth and final consideration of interpersonal mindfulness and metacognition is concept. With practice of mindfulness, we can begin to understand why we make the choices we make. We can pay attention to feelings and have control over the actions we take following these the feelings. Thinking about thinking or about our thoughts is one of the best ways to make change in self-actions and behaviors. Brown (2019) gives us the language to be aware of our perspectives by stating our thoughts within the structure of "The story I'm making up…" (p.1). Metacognition by definition

should encourage awareness of our intersectionality. With this recognition, we can learn to talk about feelings allowing them to become less taboo, and we might begin to take action and figure out solutions to the problems.

Interpersonal Actions and Consequences: the impact of person, place, thing, and idea

Newton's third law of motion tells us "For every action, there is an equal and opposite reaction" (Isaac Newton, n.d). Interpersonal actions and consequences could be the most easily measured outcomes of positive and effective social and emotional learning because consequences are often clearly visible. Like Newton's law, actions and consequences are almost always equally connected. Thinking about this key concept of SEL, consider the ways in which persons outwardly connect with the people, places, materials, and concepts surrounding them daily. These actions include decision making, problem-solving, and more.

This part of my comprehensive social and emotional learning definition is most connected with the CASEL (2020) definition and competencies of SEL. The specific elements of this concept are deeply interconnected with the other two key concepts I have identified as part of a comprehensive definition of SEL. Although the people and materials involved with the first two key concepts sometimes overlap here, there are specific people, materials, and methods of interacting with them that impact the actions and consequences taken and received by each person involved in the classroom, school, or community.

Person.

The relationships we build within the classroom, school, and external communities are a part of our environmental foundations, but they are also nurtured with purposeful practices that impact our current and future relationships through interpersonal actions and consequences. These purposeful practices often need to be explicitly taught and modeled to ensure we are all practicing them regularly. The outward actions that people take and the words we all use are all a part of this key concept of actions and consequences.

Returning to the experiences in the art classroom as an example of a person's impact on actions and consequences, students regularly practiced giving and receiving feedback about their artwork at specific times. Midway critiques should be both self-evaluative and peer-evaluative. If students pause their art making at the point at which there is still room for development, a peer critique can be received with purpose. Rather than judgment on a final critique when the artist may feel as though they have finished the work and edits would be detrimental, a midway critique can allow a student-artist to feel as though they can make changes to their work if it needs them.

Place.

Mindfulness of place and environmental surroundings is an excellent teaching tool when considering how one's actions always have consequences. Beyond the classroom, looking at the example of climate change, it is evident that our actions can impact the environment with severe consequences (The Causes of Climate Change, 2020). Although the consequences of actions within a classroom have a much different impact than our actions on the global environment, often the consequences can be visible

in a similar way. Considering cleaning routines, for example. If actions indicate that we are rushed to move on to the next task rather than mindfully cleaning a space, what is left behind is a messy and perhaps unsafe environment. Practicing mindful actions within the environment of the classroom, school, home, and community can have lasting and positive consequences.

Materials.

An effective SEL program should address how actions and their consequences impact our materials in addition to the personal relationships we maintain. The ways we treat our tools, be they books, pens, or even the tidiness of a locker or cubby, have tangible consequences that can be seen in time cost as well as monetary cost.

In my own studio, I often find myself in a struggle. I feel the pressure to complete a task quickly, but inevitably, when I give into this pressure my work is of lower quality. If I take my time to keep my studio tidy, keep my tools in their proper places, and keep blades sharp as well as tools in good working order, although it takes time, the artwork I produce is always better than when I am producing work in an untidy and disorganized environment. For myself, I developed a habit of always cleaning, tidying, and reorganizing where necessary, before I move onto the next big task in a project on which I am working. These actions have visual, and even monetary and emotional consequences that can hold positive or negative connotations depending on the choices I make.

Concept.

In addition to the relationships we foster and nurture, those involved in productive social and emotional growth must all practice responsible decision making, actively

working to achieve goals (CASEL, 2020; Waters & Sroufe, 1983). To measure these actions, we can look to the consequences. The consequences are the measurable outcomes of the actions we take. If we do not take action to achieve our goals, the consequence is that we likely will not achieve our goal. Alternatively, if we do take action the consequence might be achieving our goal. Waters and Sroufe (1983) remind us to act in a way that is flexible and adaptive as well. These intangible actions are all conceptual elements of the Interpersonal Actions and Consequences component of the comprehensive definition of SEL. Behavioral action concepts such as decision-making can be measured by the consequences, the outcomes of decisions, the more tangible and measurable effects of the actions we take.

Drawing Conclusions from the Comprehensive Definition of SEL

Despite the varied definitions of social and emotional learning, all seem to involve these three key concepts of Environmental Foundations, Mindfulness and Metacognition, and Actions and Consequences. Moving forward then, I will use these three concepts to help contextualize the research on specific SEL Programs and apply these concepts when defining and building the Trust-Based Classroom.

CHAPTER 4. THE TRUST-BASED CLASSROOM

The Evolution of the Trust-Based Classroom

My trust-based approach to art education did not evolve overnight. I have not always taught using this methodology. As many teachers have experienced, my first year of teaching was difficult, if not terrible. I gave every student the same project, as art educators are taught while in university and as we learned ourselves, by example, from our own art teachers in K-12.

What I found, however, was that my students did not care about creating art, and as an art teacher who is deeply passionate about the arts, I was left wondering how I could help these students develop not only an appreciation for art, but a connection to it. I wanted to help them build a relationship with art and thus with themselves.

I was twenty-one in my first year of teaching, fresh out of university, only three or four years older than some of my students. I did not know much about myself, nor did I have the relationship with art that I myself was longing to have. Without much of my own self-awareness and even personal development as a young adult, how could I create an environment where students could trust themselves, their peers, or even me as an art teacher? How could I help the students build a relationship with art and with themselves, when they were completing step-by-step projects they cared nothing about? There was a lack of not only interest in the work they were completing, but also a lack of genuine connection to it. Based on the products students were creating, their drive to create, and the actual learning outcomes, I knew it wasn't working. I was unhappy with my approach.

The summer between my first and second years of teaching was a reflective time for me. I looked back at notes I had taken and considered the conversations I'd had with students. I realized that the honest conversations I was having with individual students about their personal stories, dreams, goals, who they were, and hardships they were enduring were having a greater influence on the art that they were preparing to make than the simple step-by-step instructions I had been giving in the first year.

I was finding that my students wanted to create art that reflected who they were at that point in their growth as human beings. I realized that I needed to trust my students to

make choices about the works they were going to create and give them the time and space to not only express who they were but allow them to explore who they were going to become.

At the start of my second year of teaching, I decided to work in a new approach based on the reflections and conversations I had recorded and explored over the summer. That year, I decided to merge what I had been taught to teach with what I was learning about my students in the classroom.

I decided, instead of a single project with step-by-step instructions for every student in every class, I would ask students to choose from a set of three projects. What I found was that given the option to choose what they'd like to do, that freedom made students feel that I trusted them, and in turn, they trusted me enough to speak with me candidly about the art that they were preparing to create. My students started questioning whether or not they could add or subtract certain elements to those projects. We were beginning to have organic conversations about art, much like I was able to have in art studio settings in my own university studies. I started listening to students more.

At this time, teaching became more about listening to my students instead of instructing and telling certain guidelines or parameters for projects. I realized that what my students needed was to not only be heard, but seen. Just like anyone, my students wanted to know that who they were was going to be held with care. I understood, then, that they wanted to not only trust someone to listen to them, but they also wanted to be trusted to make decisions about their own thoughts, lives, and creativity.

> Example: Miles, who later went on to study Outdoor Recreation Programming and Administration at university, had a connection to nature that was different than the other students who were sitting at his table. My conversations with Miles explored his interest and personal connection to nature. Miles' projects needed

> differentiation from the other students in his class, simply because of who he was. He desired to explore the connection between the outdoor world and art. Miles began to paint birds and collect sticks, which he later carved into wooden spoons. I trusted that Miles was going to make something great because he cared about the subject matter, and I entrusted him to create freely. That gave Miles a sense of empowerment and individualism. In the previous year, when I had given Miles a set project with step-by-step instructions, I did not see him flourish or connect with the work. Once Miles felt he was trusted and supported to create on his own, he began to have a stronger drive to make art. He would bring me work that he made at home, outside of the classroom. Suddenly a student became an artist. Miles was creating art like an artist in the real world, not just a high school student in a classroom.

The subsequent years of teaching continued that shift to what has now become what I call the Trust-Based Approach to art education. Because of this shift, I could clearly see students, like Miles, taking a stronger sense of ownership over their work, resulting in high-quality student engagement while creating art in the classroom. The students' desires to individualize their projects demonstrates enhanced investment in the process and the products they create.

At the start of this evolution of the Trust-Based Classroom, independence and choice of projects was only offered to students who I knew could handle the freedom. Eventually, though, I recognized with structure, all students could be successful with this approach. Modeling an entire classroom of mixed abilities after one I had previously reserved for only advanced students, I saw students were growing not only as artists, but also as individuals.

The Social and Emotional Learning Environment

When students begin to immerse themselves in the social and emotional environment of the Trust-Based Classroom, they begin to more fully accept themselves and others (TBC Interviews, 2020). To qualify this statement, I conducted interviews

with students (names have been changed) who participated in the Trust-Based Classroom that included the following response:

> You had a massive impact on the person I am today. You helped me grow as a person and encouraged everyone around you to be the best they could be. Not only did you do a great job teaching but even more importantly you helped young people feel welcome and included no matter what. People felt safe to be genuine in your class and you helped them figure out how to be themselves. (Andrew, 2020)

Through this approach to art education a teacher is opening the classroom to all students and their unique personalities. It is essential to welcome all students, no matter their difficulties or resistance, into the classroom. The practice of interacting with others can build trust (Smith, 2010). When students show trust in a teacher, peer, or environment within the classroom, asking for comfort or advice, or ear for listening, or a place for thinking, a Trust-Based Classroom must be welcoming in nature. Creating this trust-driven social and emotional learning environment is perhaps the most important indicator of this type of classroom.

The Trust-Based Classroom: A snapshot

> Example: Chase and Jenny are students in the Trust-Based Classroom. I have been working with both of these students for four years. Here is a closer look at both students. They are in class at the same time of day and are in the same grade level, although the art that they create and their dispositions are completely different.
>
> When clay moves like rolling waves under his touch, Chase is at ease. Forming a vessel, the student-artist accepts the challenge; he understands the way the clay will react to him. He works with the medium, letting the clay behave as it will. He acknowledges his mistakes and learns from them, making the minor muscle changes required to work the clay into a bowl he will later use at home. Unlike the clay, his daily life is unpredictable. He struggles with anger and fear during most interactions.
>
> Working intently in the opposite corner of the same art classroom/studio is a student who is eloquent in her speech. She can easily communicate with adults and has been producing exceptional work since her first art project in the classroom. She watches him occasionally, fascinated with his ability to

> manipulate the clay and be so driven to succeed. Knowing Chase as the notoriously loud and disrespectful person that she experienced just a few years ago, she watches as he now throws bowls on the pottery wheel instead of punching lockers. When his anger rises, he comes to the art classroom/studio to work with the clay as an outlet for the pain simmering inside.
>
> Despite spending his middle school years in a highly restrictive residential facility, the student potter is beginning to see that he is not so different from other people. And Jenny is beginning to understand him, to appreciate him, not to change him, but to welcome him as a friend just as he is. These two students are not so different. Actively engaged within a classroom focused specifically on building a trusting social, emotional, cognitive, and physical environment, both of these students are opening and growing.

Beyond technical art skills and creativity, this example is what a Trust-Based Classroom environment can facilitate. When Chase came into my classroom, his IEP addressed his emotional behavior disorder. When I was introduced to him, I was also given a magnetic chart where I was required to move a magnet between the colors of green, yellow, and red, based on his behavior.

Like all of my students, I also had conversations with Chase. In those talks, we worked through any emotional challenges that he was experiencing, such as anger with other students or fear of being judged. Chase responded to these conversations with trust, respect, and vulnerability. I quickly began to realize that Chase did not always need the chart I had been given when I was able to communicate effectively with him. The chart was less important, as it was only a gauge for his behavior. The magnet representation rarely changed his behavior or the way he was feeling. Through the honest conversations that we were able to have, because of the trusting environment that I had already established in the classroom, he was able to reflect on his own behavior instead. And as a result, he needed the stoplight chart much less.

We built trust between us. He trusted me and told me what he was feeling. I trusted him to manage his own behavior and also to create art on his own. Chase began

exploring different media, but he was most drawn to the pottery wheel. One day he went over, sat down, and asked for help in centering the clay. I only had to show Chase once. The wheel and the clay were like an extension of himself. Chase was such a kinesthetic person already, he often expressed his anger through physical violence. Working with clay, which is such a tactile artform, was entirely natural for him, and he connected with the clay in a way I have never seen from any student before and still have yet to see in the classroom.

As time went on, Chase routinely found his way to the wheel each day he was in my classroom. The other teachers in our school building began to understand that Chase's connection to this kinesthetic art form was essential to positive changes in his behavior and his own self-management of his anger and fear. When Chase was having a hard time in other classrooms, teachers would allow him to step away and return to mine, where he would take a seat back at the wheel and put his hands into the clay calmly and peacefully.

While Chase entered the art room with emotional difficulties, Jenny did not. What happens, however, when a child can follow the rules of a traditional art classroom? On the opposite side of the classroom, Jenny was creating art. Honestly, I cannot remember the first art project she created. She was a rules follower. She fit into a "normal" classroom. She was a traditional student and completed the work I asked of her. Jenny worked hard at every task at hand. Yet a person, an artist, can get complacent like this. And great artists, passionate artists, are not complacent. I watched Jenny talk with other artists in the classroom. I watched her interact with Violet, Miles, all the students who seemed to make a home in the art room. She was younger than them, but she trusted that they would help guide her. And they trusted that she could be a great artist.

Through those conversations with other student-artists, she understood how to connect with herself and how to find depth in her everyday experiences. She began to value her interactions between people and to make art about those interactions. I can recall countless artworks of hers with a clear style: dark, rich colors, where a person's gaze would draw you near, asking a viewer to look deeper, to wonder what the subjects had experienced that made them look as they did. She was breaking the right rules for portraits and methods of using materials. She began to work experimentally, like many current working artists.

Her trust grew not only with the people in the classroom, but with the materials she used. She began to make her own paintbrushes, her own unconventional canvases. She came to understand how her materials would respond and stretched how she used them. She was no longer a complacent artist. She stood out. Over time, Jenny learned to trust her own ability to make great art. She then was able to help others make art and make art for other people. Ultimately, after her graduation, Jenny decided to pursue a career in the arts.

The compassion that these two students had for each other, and for other artists within our classroom, was a direct result of the trusting environment of our art classroom. These two students were not the only ones to build trust with their materials, with themselves, with other students, and with me, the teacher.

Classroom Management

After two years of teaching in a government identified low-income school, I recognized that the majority of the students entering my classroom had home-based difficulties that greatly impacted their wellbeing at school. So much of building a trusting

environment and encouraging social and emotional learning has to do with classroom management focused on routines, structures, and consistency (Norris, 2003). During the years I have been teaching, I have been involved in many schoolwide classroom management and discipline structures. I have found, however, that the most effective classroom management involves building trust. If trust is defined as relying on others, then clear expectations consistent between all students and teachers would be essential to building a classroom centered on trust (Smith, 2010).

The Trust-Based Classroom Mantras

In response to this, the Trust-Based Classroom features a series of mantras, agreements, words we all can repeat regularly to help form the atmosphere required to educate high quality artists and people. These mantras address the three key components of the comprehensive definition of social and emotional learning, Environmental Foundations, Mindfulness and Metacognition, and Actions and Consequences. They cover relationships and everyday interactions between people, materials, and art, and have event-driven prompts to help students remember them. They also become a part of a teacher's everyday speech, and students should routinely speak these words to other students to help each other become better student-artists in and outside of the classroom.

Analyzing the mantras, each has a physical prompt at the start. They are also outlined as "I" statements, placing responsibility in the hands of students. With practice, students begin to take ownership of their own actions. The mantras also address how students' behaviors impact other people, materials, and the classroom environment. The mantras are essential to a trusting environment and help guide students, teachers, and even guests

who come into the Trust-Based Classroom to grow their own social and emotional learning. Below are the seven art room mantras we use:

Art Room Mantras.

1. As I walk through the doorway, I recognize that I am no more or less important than any other person or material in this room. I will, therefore, be mindful of how my actions affect others and their materials.
2. As I get out my daily work, I am aware that others around me are also creating art, and I understand that their art is as valuable as the art that I am creating.
3. As I retrieve my materials for the day, I am mindful of my needs and the needs of others. I will work, today, to use only what I need and leave what I don't need for others to use.
4. As I plan, create, destroy, and reconstruct my artwork, I am aware of my energy and the energy of others around me. I am mindful of how my energy changes the atmosphere of the room.
5. As I replace my materials, I am thankful for the opportunity I have been given to use them. I am aware that others like me will use them, and I recognize that by taking care of these materials, I may use them again tomorrow.
6. As I clean my area and help others clean their area, I remember how others have helped me, and recognize my resistance toward cleaning and my rush to move on to the next task.
7. As I leave the room, I am grateful to those around me for allowing me the opportunity to work. I see what I did well today and what I will improve on tomorrow.

These mantras are some of the first content students should experience in the Trust-Based Classroom and are posted next to cabinet handles, on desks, on the doorframe, and many other places to prompt consistent student reflection. By using these mantras both in speech and in everyday practice, students have the opportunity to make them habit and effectively shift the momentum of their experiences to begin trusting themselves and others following the same mantras.

Physical environment

Considering the mantras as part of the physical environment, the rest of the physical environment in a Trust-Based art classroom should be one conducive to safe and

effective play and productivity. As the mantras suggest, the physical environment, including material consumption and space usage for example, should be one where students respect materials and space and take ownership in those classroom organizations. The layout of the classroom should be purposefully arranged in a way that encourages exploration of materials and allows for effective collaboration.

Materials.

Materials should be accessible to all students. When possible, students should be required to share materials so that they might understand the benefit of working with others. The materials available to students should also be predictable in their availability and quality, although the introduction of novel materials is also essential to student growth, as Cozolino (2013) suggests about neuroplasticity.

Encouraging students to collect materials, for example, found materials and otherwise, helps bring in a team environment to the classroom. Providing a space for students to add materials to the classroom and take materials that others have discarded, is a great way to introduce trust and sharing between students. If one student brings a material they found interesting, they are relying on another student to use it productively in a work of art. Students, therefore, are practicing trust in others.

At the high school where I taught art in rural Kentucky, students were always thrilled to check out what new art materials might be on the "Sharing Shelf." The "Sharing Shelf" is what we called the place to keep found materials—a place where students would add and take materials like rocks, recycling, wood scraps, light bulbs, stuffed animals, fabrics, and many other discarded items. Often these materials were set

up in the form of a still life or used to make art tools. Occasionally student-artists formed sculptures from the materials found there. Sometimes students, however, commandeered these materials to put on display in their own homes to be viewed as art just as they were. Student access to the shelf depended on the communal trust that students would only "take what they need and leave what they it did not need for others to use," as the mantra required. We all needed to trust one another in order to make this shelf functional for everyone.

Place.

In the same way that students need to be able to participate in the "Sharing Shelf," students also need to be able to move throughout the classroom and be trusted to participate in that movement safely. Movement should be an essential part of a Trust-Based Classroom. Students should be trusted to move throughout the classroom in a way that is productive to their art making. They should be able to gather materials, change materials, view peers' artwork, clean materials, display artwork, or any other form of movement that would be necessary for artists in a studio-classroom. Teaching students to move respectfully through the classroom is an extremely valuable part of a trust-based physical environment.

Consider the ways that elementary school students might get water to clean their paintbrushes as an example of movement in the art classroom. In the school where I taught elementary students in Indiana, even kindergartners were encouraged to gather their own materials. Through mindfulness practices, I observed students' focus while carrying materials, a cup of water for instance. It seemed less likely that the student would spill that cup of water or run to return to their seat with a purposeful mindfulness

practice added to the cup carrying. When a student would fill a cup of water to clean their paintbrush at their table while they were working, on the way back from the sink, I encouraged them to sing "Happy Birthday" to the water. "Happy birthday dear cup of water, happy birthday to you!" they would sing. Rather than rushing to their tables or thinking about games from recess, as examples, their focus became the water cup. Small mindfulness training like this in addition to the mantras allow the successful movement of students throughout the classroom and can aid in building trust between students, between the teacher and the students, and between students and their materials.

Because of my own studio experiences, I also expect the same mindfulness of place from my students in the classroom. I have included this concept as one of the agreements of the Trust-Based Classroom that I expect students to live by within the art room. Almost all of us have an innate desire to rush onto the next task. In school, that might be rushing out to the next class because the bell rang. It might be following classmates out of the classroom to talk with them before the next class. It might even be turning in a project for a grade. In a Trust-Based Classroom, students are encouraged to notice that rushed feeling and to understand the consequences of rushing. Teachers must help students to understand that an organized workspace, even if busy or filled, generally allows artists to produce higher quality work.

Cognitive environment

The cognitive environment in a Trust-Based Classroom should encourage real-life intrigue. Drawing on the earlier evaluation of Problem-Based Learning, this real-life intrigue is what PBL achieves so well (Buck Institute for Education, n.d.). In an art classroom it is essential to encourage students to look at their tools, and consumables, and

even the ways that they interact with the people in the world around them, as learning experiences and as artistic inspiration. The ways we sit in a chair inspired Eames; the ways we enter and exit a building inspired Wright. To rely on those predictable feelings every time we interact with the piece of art, that expectation, is trust. Teaching student awareness, therefore, is an invaluable and essential part of the Trust-Based Classroom.

Similarly, recognizing the value of every individual's ideas, reducing judgement, is also vital in building and maintaining trust within the classroom (Zhao, 2012). Based on our own cultures, identities, and life experiences, we all will approach a material, idea, or concept for an art project differently. The Trust-Based Classroom should always work to encourage inclusivity. As qualified in a different TBC interview, "You taught me art is for everyone. And you genuinely care about all of your students" (TBC Interviews, 2020). Showing all students that each idea is valuable, that every student has the capacity to make great art, and to have great ideas, is imperative to the cognitive environment in the Trust-Based Classroom.

Individualized Concentrations

Encouraging ideation, iteration, and real-world experiences through a rich cognitive curriculum might be difficult for many teachers to achieve on an individualized basis considering classrooms of 30 to 40 students. The following section concerning individualized concentrations, however, identifies a method of instruction that seems to effectively support a trust-based cognitive environment.

In his Entrepreneurial approach, Yong Zhao (2012) indicates that a school environment that is flexible and rich with resources enables personalization. "Children should have the freedom to self-select when and how to make use of available resources"

(Zhao, 2012, p. 181). Designing this freedom in a small classroom packed with over thirty students, concentrations provide a flexible structure similar to a real-world experience like a specific job, task, or art exhibition.

In the Trust-Based Classrom, concentrations determine what (subject/content) each student will create and how (media/method) each student will create. Derived from the Advanced Placement Studio Art course, "A concentration is a body of related works describing an in-depth exploration of a particular artistic concern" (Ryan et al., 2011, p.13) Student concentrations can be organized simply through a statement beginning, "I am interested in…" To develop a concentration in the Trust-Based Classroom, students are called on to seriously consider their strengths and recognize that a concentration cannot be developed overnight.

Subject/Content.

Subject or content, the "what," of a concentration, should be centered around something the students think about when they leave school, while they are walking through the grocery store, or while they are beginning to fall asleep. At the beginning of each semester, every student is asked to be vulnerable, to explore a concept with which they may have a deep connection. Among other questions, students then are asked to journal about the difficulties they face every day, or the message they want the world to know. Although most students choose to share, in a Trust-Based Classroom, they know that their responses will not be read unless they invite a reader. From this vulnerability, student-artists are encouraged to find a reason to create.

When students are asked to take risks like this from the start of the class, it is essential to the continuation of this trust that students know they are vulnerable together, that no one will take advantage of this vulnerability. Through this lesson, students immediately are called on to trust the teacher and their peers.

Media and Method.

Beyond the development of content students create through an individualized concentrations, students recognize who they are as individual artists and how they create, embracing their own stylistic differences in media and method. In a lecture, Sir Ken Robinson (2009), an international advisor on arts education to governments and a leader in the development of creativity and innovation in education, made a statement that spoke clearly to people's knowledge of self. He stated,

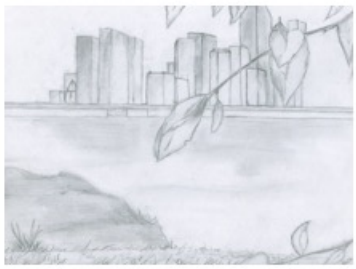
I suppose I've been struck from an early age about how different we are and how deeply hidden, often, our talents are and our abilities, that we all have tremendous natural talents and often people don't know them. They don't recognize them, and they don't develop them. And to the extent that they don't know what their talents are, they don't really know what they can do. And to the extent that they don't know that, they don't really know who they are. (Robinson, 2009)

Through effective concentrations, however, I have observed student-artists begin to open to who they are. They begin to understand their individual stylistic differences. Throughout their artistic work, they learn how, specifically, they create, and perhaps as a result they begin to embrace themselves within an environment of other unique individuals.

The following images show a selection of examples from some high school students.

I am interested in depicting fear bluntly and shockingly through images that are often graphic or disturbing. I show that the subject is feared or fearful using warm, bloody colors and sharp contrast at the point of vulnerability, as well as by distorting the human form through warped, seemingly painful proportion. My multi-media creations showcase the raw vulgarity and grotesquely desperate emotion that is fear.

I am interested in manipulating the human form by extending the lines of features and extremities and exaggerating proportion often by stretching or warping body parts. This exploration of the body challenges the mind to see human form as a collection of shapes and lines as opposed to a collective mass.



I am interested in showing how the geometric forms of architecture contrast with the organic forms of nature. Despite these distinct categories, I intend to show the interaction of the two forms while also emphasizing depth and movement in my pencil drawings.

I am interested in reducing natural forms to their simplistic geometric identity. I use color blending in an unrealistic way to prove that a subject is identifiable even without one of its most recognizable elements. I am particularly interested in creating a sense of movement with my line usage.

Collaboration and Communication

Collaboration and communication are additional key factors in the Trust-Based Classroom. When using this strategy, the teacher must trust students to assist each other and students must trust themselves to assist others. Key indicators of collaboration and communication within a Trust-Based art classroom include requiring students to critique

together, making connections between student artwork and significant cultural aspects or current working artists, arranging tables in groups conducive to communication, and allowing students to move freely. Encouraging students to not only trust each other, but also, more importantly, trust themselves, can be a difficult task. The role collaboration plays in building this trust could stems from students' interactions with each other.

All students within the Trust-Based Classroom are required, for every project they create, to critique together and to perform multiple middle critiques to check progress. Often, these critiques happen naturally in casual conversation in a Trust-Based Classroom. For this to happen effectively, students must trust each other, first from the perspective of the artist—that there will be no harsh judgment from peers—and second from the point of view of the peers critiquing—that their thoughts and opinions are valid. To build trust in this way seems to require the teacher to provide consistent encouragement to students when they give feedback to their peers. Teaching students to communicate about the artistic process can happen at each step of the artistic process. A teacher must not, however, lose trust of students by over correcting peer-to-peer feedback. Trusting students to communicate, with occasional guidance during this feedback, provides the opportunity to build trust within each student and around the room.

Students must also make connections. Careful comparisons of individual work to a current working artist or designer, historical artist, family member, or classroom artist allow opportunities for students to gain insight into their own work as well as the work of others. These comparisons allow students to understand that they are not alone in their creating, and they fit within a collective of artists. The role of the teacher, when

encouraging these comparisons, is to ensure students do not feel inferior, but instead feel as if they are learning from other artists. These comparisons help students grow and feel stronger in their own techniques and experiences.

In order for collaboration and communication to be effective in the Trust-Based Classroom, students must exist in groups. Within the classroom students are arranged in groups they initially choose based on friendship and comfort. As the semester progresses, however, I have observed students rearranging themselves in groups more conducive to effective art making and critiquing. This encourages collaboration because students are constantly sharing space. Space should be available not only for artistic communication, but also for students to merely converse about life events. Allowing the opportunity for students to be comfortable with each other as people, as well as artists, seems to directly transfer and encourage students to communicate about their artistic experiences.

A final indicator of effective trust building in relation to communication and collaboration is the allowance of movement within the classroom. In the same vein that students must be allowed to move their locations for making and critiquing, free movement is a necessity all over the classroom. When students are able to move from various stations, they witness other student-artists creating in a way that varies from their own. They are, then, more likely to open communication with a peer than they would have been were they required to stay at one location. A student who never gets a chance to see the artmaking of the diverse perspectives of all artists in the classroom, could not fully understand those artistic perspectives nor experience open communication. The availability of movement allows collaboration and communication to happen naturally, thus enhancing each student's breadth of artistic growth and trust within the classroom.

These concepts are mirrored in a community context in Smith's (2010) analysis of "Race and Trust" when she summarizes,

> [T]o the extent that individuals live in racially heterogeneous neighborhoods and can develop knowledge-based trust in neighbors of different racial and/or ethnic backgrounds, as a result of having social interactions and direct experiences with them, then these positive out-group experiences might feed a propensity to trust the generalized other. (p. 461)

Process Over Product

In the International Baccalaureate Primary Years Programme (PYP) (2012), students are taught to be "open-minded" and to be "thinkers." In a trust-based art classroom, teachers can easily apply these concepts to an emphasis on process over product. When educating students, an art teacher has a fantastic opportunity to teach thinking by considering the processes by which artists create and the parallels to everyday learning. In a Trust-Based Classroom, open-mindedness comes to fruition when students are encouraged to be divergent thinkers and when students learn how other artists have tackled similar problem-solving tasks. Consider how a child learns to tie a shoelace, for example. Songs and rhymes can guide children through the process, and when they follow the process, children can successfully tie their shoelace. Successfully tied shoelaces, however ending at with a shoe that stays on a foot, can be tied using a myriad of methods. At an age when students are developing knowledge of the real world, understanding processes is essential.

When emphasizing process over product in the art classroom, the teacher has a primary responsibility to clearly outline expectations of the artistic process within four

key aspects of planning and instruction. It is imperative that the art teacher, first, reflect upon, and understand, real-world processes, second, encourage students to assist in developing the process, third, grade work only when students have followed the process, and, forth, remain open to input to make adaptations based on student reactions. While teachers are focused on teaching students to be open-minded in their process, teachers also have to be open minded to the idea that students' processes may be different. Modeling this behavior for students in the classroom and trusting that students can help themselves be successful, instills trust between the teacher and students.

Before asking anything of students, however, a teacher in a Trust-Based Classroom must first reflect on real-world experiences. Teachers must be able to understand similarities between the processes of buying a car, remodeling a room, or a variety of other real-world circumstances. They must be able to translate those experiences into a more uniform process that all students can understand and use. With this in mind, a teacher can then enter a classroom and prompt students in a discussion to understand the processes of real-world experiences, as well, allowing students to determine their own creative processes. This student formed process will then become the process by which they create art within the Trust-Based Classroom. Like the essential agreements of the International Baccalaureate programs when students are involved in the educational process, they seem to take ownership and participate in the processes they have created.

Even while the teacher in a Trust-Based Classroom knows the process that students will likely develop together, student voice is an integral part of the learning environment and should be emphasized at every opportunity. With teacher guidance, students help develop the process of creating. Yong Zhao (2012), in his book, World Class Learners:

Educating Creative and Entrepreneurial Students, states that "student voice helps improve confidence and self-esteem and other crucial competencies" (p.183). In a Trust-Based Classroom, when students genuinely participate in decision making, they take ownership of the classroom and of their artwork. By asking questions to help guide students, with the teacher as the facilitator, students are able to feel empowered in their decisions and are more likely to follow a process of creating that will, in turn, allow them to be successful artists.

An interview of a student from the Trust-Based Classroom revealed the way the students took ownership of the classroom in a positive and trusting way.

> I think sometimes students don't give enough credit to their teachers for the amount of inspiration that they bring. As a teacher I feel like you were inspiring, honest, and kind which sometimes is missed so easily in grade school. Inspiring in that you were always very innovative and coming up with open ended questions to make us think, honest and that it felt like you were never putting on a front to be a figure of authority but more like an equal and a friend, and kind in that your classroom felt safe and accepting. I always felt that your classroom was an open space beyond being creative but it felt welcoming as a developing young person. I think a lot of your students felt that way, that they could be themselves and pushed into their individuality because of your guidance (Laney, 2020).

With the emphasis placed on process over product, where students have helped shape the process, students should have trust in the teacher that the process is what is being graded. This is not to say the teacher should not have high expectations for every student, or that the students do not hold themselves accountable for producing great work. Conversely, when students take ownership in how they create, they seem to be more invested in what they create and its outcome. Remember Miles, the student-artist who loved nature. When he was given the space to make his own decisions, his drive to create could not be stopped. He would bring in sculptures he had started at home and pridefully exhibit them alongside artworks he was creating in class.

Including student voice when developing the artistic process, however, requires a continual review. When students have difficulties with the process they have created, for example, a teacher in a Trust-Based Classroom must be flexible and adaptive, similar to the language of Waters and Sroufe (1983) and their definition of social competence. The teacher's role in this instance is to continuously reflect based on student reactions and be open to input from the students to enhance learning. This open-minded nature should facilitate trust between the teacher and the students.

The process my students and I consistently determine to be the best way to create involves the following steps: plan (appendix A), draft/study, mid-way self and peer critique (appendix B), make adjustments, create, drawing connections/comparisons (appendix C), evaluate/final critique (appendix D), and exhibit.

In the Trust-Based Classroom students find themselves in a studio setting where they are required to start every project with a plan, a draft, a self-critique, and a peer-critique. This process that guides the onset of every project, is one that many artists, scientists, engineers, and architects, follow when they are developing their own methods leading to successful projects in the real world.

At this point in the process, teachers must also reinforce the artists trust in themselves. Encouraging artists to make decisions not based on others' opinions, but on their own opinions. Teachers should embolden students to trust themselves as artists while also being openminded to change. Placing trust in others, student-artists learn that someone else's perspective might help their process or product improve. Artists can learn to trust others to help them grow in addition to trusting themselves in their self-expression.

Following the peer critique, students are then able to make adjustments where they see fit. This is the place where they grow as artists, where they learn to incorporate others' ideas to make a work of art that speaks to a larger audience. After making adjustments, artists in the Trust-Based Classroom then work on their final project and find artists who are also working in a similar way. At the completion of an art project, all students are then required to perform a final artist statement/self-critique, allowing them to reflect on their experiences including the process of creating art. At this time artists also evaluate the outcome of the actual product itself. This process, as a whole, is essential to the Trust-Based Classroom and encourages thinking rather than creating a great product. Ultimately, from my observations, I have learned that students do create great products when they follow this process, but also grow as thinkers willing to explore the many iterations of a single idea.

In an earlier section, I outlined the importance of concentrations to the Trust-Based Classroom. Considering process over product, however, it is essential that students are allowed the opportunity to play with materials and ideas and are encouraged to diverge from their individual concentrations when they find the motivation to do so. This digression encourages a great depth of learning and the divergence builds a breadth of knowledge that I have observed often finding its way back into the artworks within student concentrations. Essentially, emphasizing process over product seems to create an environment where students are trusted to learn, trusted to help each other, and trusted to develop their own cognitively rich environment.

CHAPTER 5. SUMMARY, CONCLUSIONS, AND RECOMENDATIONS

The Trust-Based Classroom

Through a Trust-Based approach to art education, students are immersed in a classroom environment that is physically, socially, emotionally, and cognitively built to enhance trust. They are a part of a learning environment made specifically to encourage students to develop self-awareness and individuality as artists and people. Students in this type of classroom have the opportunity to hone their communication and collaboration skills, and they can gain skills in problem-solving that extend far beyond the classroom with a focus on process rather than product.

The goal of creating quality concentrations is to "Encourage students to become independent thinkers who will contribute inventively and critically to their culture through the making of art" (Ryan et al., 2009, p.4). Concentrations in the Trust-Based Classroom also allow for specialized instruction and expectations for learning that contribute to a non-judgmental atmosphere. Zhao (2012) recognizes the impact of generalized instruction through a comparison of educational standards in the United States and China. Zhao (2012) states, "When children are judged by a single criterion they are constantly asked to compare with their peers" (p.129), and as a result, "the majority of children learn to internalize a sense of inferiority and eventually lose self-confidence" (p.129). Concentrations can help create a non-judgmental atmosphere conducive to trust between individual students and their peers because all students are creating in unique ways.

This non-judgmental atmosphere and extension into real-world learning is reflected in an interview of a student from the Trust-Based Classroom.

> A good teacher is one that makes you feel safe to express your ideas and tells you about the world. A great teacher, truly legendary, creates a home in their

> classroom. They encompass what good teachers are with the special miracle of inspiring the student to push the bounds of what they know. Instead of just telling them about the world, they show the student how to question and seek answers themselves. Ellen Prasse is one of those miraculous teachers that are as rare as they are astounding. I still, to this day, think of her often and fondly when facing times in my own life (some 10 years after knowing her) and am inspired by her existence. What she taught in her class about art and what she taught me about being a person, has shaped who I am. (Camden, 2020)

Collaboration and communication are humanistic behaviors essential to the function of our entire world. They are skills that have been important since the first human interaction and will continue to be important to our futur. Practicing these skills in an art classroom, particularly one centered on trust, is essential to developing students' growth socially and emotionally, in addition to their growth as an individual. Practicing trust skills within the Trust-Based Classroom encourages students to gain an understanding of self, community, and the world.

Finally, emphasizing process over product can be essential to creating an encouraging, nonjudgmental atmosphere built on trust. A former Trust-Based Classroom student stated, "You teach in a very unique way that really seems to reach a lot of children, even those that don't believe they are artistic. You are always open minded and strive for your students to be their best" (Sam, 2020) Focusing on the creative process, rather than the products students create, allows all students to become innovative in their techniques and products. With this emphasis in a Trust-Based classroom, students are learning to think rather than to merely comply with a particular set of standards.

Focusing heavily on creating a trust-based physical, social, emotional, and cognitive environment allows students the opportunity to make meaningful and purpose-driven art. The Trust-Based Classroom is an environment rich with diverse ideas, and

student-artists are taught techniques to accept themselves and others with diverse circumstances. Recently, I interviewed former students involved in my Trust-Based Classroom. A few of these former students have been featured in this thesis. I asked very simply how they would describe our classroom and me as a teacher. I was curious to find out if the methods I have developed actually created the environment I intended. Ultimately, what I learned was that many of the students involved in the Trust-Based Classroom not only grew as artists, which was evidenced by the ample student-run art shows over the years. They also learned to trust themselves and became adults who could understand the impact our classroom had on their own social and emotional learning. One final quotation from these interviews qualifies the emotional learning another student experienced.

> I know personally you helped me through the worst parts of my life and showed me that it's okay to be myself, my true self. And that no matter what other people think or say I will ALWAYS be valid. You really changed my life more than you could ever know. I don't think I would have ever had the courage to become who I am today without the encouragement and love from you. (Fain, 2020)

Based on the responses from the Trust-Based Classroom Interviews (2020) I have sourced within this thesis, and the many others I received during the student interviews, the Trust-Based Classroom is a place students should never be without. Just as I have done during every step of developing this Trust-Based approach, every day I continue to listen. In an administrative evaluation of my teaching methods in the Trust-Based Classroom, the principal of our school wrote,

> Ellen is indeed an exemplary teacher. Her student voice scores were among the highest in the school. Ellen has a way of developing the trust of her students so they feel comfortable sharing their artwork and opening up to critique in a safe environment. Ellen has done an amazing job of restructuring her class so it is "open art," having students across the spectrum of Art I to AP Art. Although this

> keeps her moving (she rarely is at her desk) the design has allowed students to learn from each other. Ellen's art classes should be required so that every student can discover their art abilities as well as the connection of art to the real world. (Granada, 2014)

I am continuously working to improve the Trust-Based Classroom approach, because, ultimately, what is important is that all people participate in a continual practice of gaining trust in themselves and an appreciation for the cultures in which we live. In an ideal world, art educators would comfortably take advantage of their unique opportunity to teach students not only the content and skills required of all students, but also the real-world experiences offered by a classroom centered on trust.

Recommendations

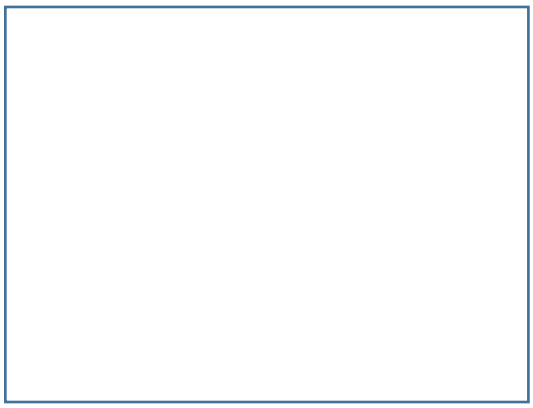
To test this program, careful research of classrooms implementing this method needs to be studied. A measurement tool based on social outcomes of trust should be applied to study the Trust-Based Classroom approach. At this time, however, due to world-wide restrictions and a global pandemic, this approach is not applicable in its fullest extent. Instead, students may not share materials, move around a classroom, or even exist in group. I hypothesize, however, that upon a return of normalcy, a classroom environment like this one will be essential to the productive return of student engagement and have positive effects on behavior and achievement.

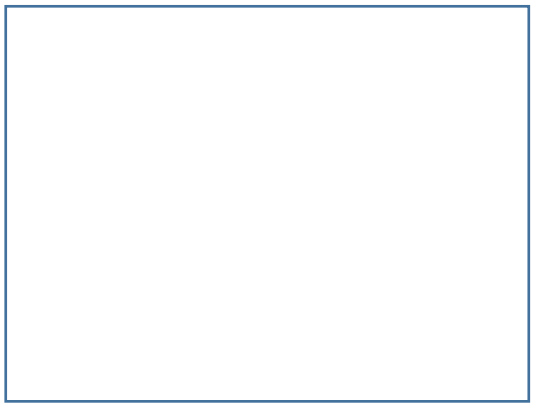
APPENDICES

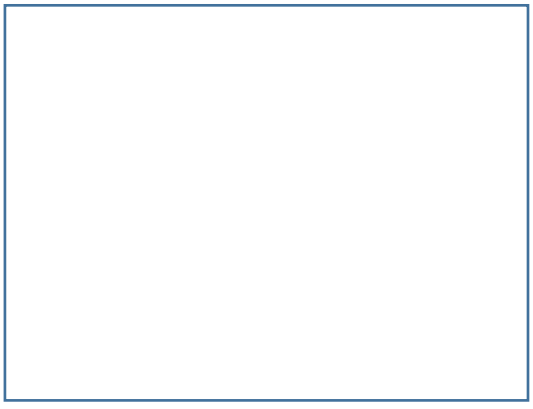
Planning

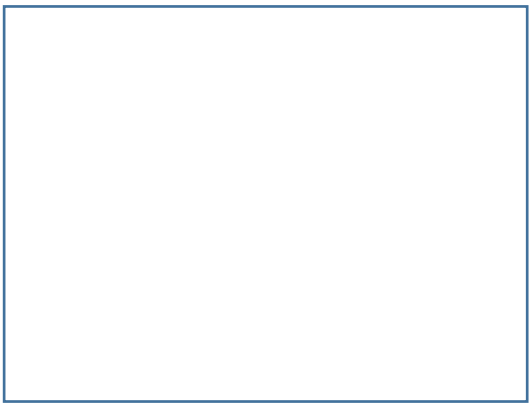
Complete the following tasks/questions before beginning any work of art. (You may attach pages if necessary.)

1. What elements or principles would you like to emphasize in your work?
2. How will you use that element or principle?
3. What makes this work different from the rest of your pieces?
4. Design several different ways to structure your work.









5. Which design do you like best and why?

Midway Self-Critique

1. In at least 5 sentences describe what you see.

2. What are you trying to say with this artwork? What visually proves that?

3. What problems do you face with your project?

Midway Peer-Critique

Evaluate the effectiveness of the work.

1. What is the artist trying to show?

2. What do you see that proves the artwork is communicating ideas effectively?

3. Provide possible solutions to the problems the artist faces.

4. Name at least one question or concern you have about the work.

Comparison

In a book, magazine, or online, find a current working artist, a historical artist, a campaign, factory, or a designer who works like you. Where do you see what you are creating in our community? Describe what they do and explain how their work is similar and different from what you created?

Final Critique

On your own paper, reflect on your art experience.

Picture label information Title and category (painting, sculpture, etc.) of the work?

Subject Matter Does the artwork contain recognizable images of people, animals, things, or conditions? If so, what are figures doing? If not, what are you saying with your design?

Art Elements: Choose two of the following elements to address.

- Line Describe type of lines used. Are they outlines, implied lines, or contour lines? Why are they important?
- Shape and Form Are they representational, abstract, nonrepresentational, organic, geometrical, open, closed? Why is shape/form important?
- Value and Color What are the colors used? What are the most dominant colors? Are there values of black and white; shades and tints? What is the strength of value/color contrast?
- Space How is space described/used? What techniques are used to imply space and depth?
- Texture Is it real or invented? Where does it occur? Describe the texture?

Principles of Design: Choose two of the following principles to address.

- Unity How did you create a sense of cohesion throughout your work?
- Variety Are there variations in elements, figures, or objects to avoid monotony? Is there a contrast of color, value, shape, form, texture, line direction, size, complexity/simplicity? Why is this important?
- Emphasis Is there a most important area, element, or arrangement of elements? Is your attention drawn to a specific object? How so? Why did you choose to emphasize that element?
- Rhythm How did you create rhythm? Did you use repetition, alternation, or progression (large to small, dark to light, etc.) of art elements, objects, or figures? Why did you use rhythm?
- Movement Do elements suggest movement or direct your eyes? Is movement due to illusions or real?
- Proportion Are size and amount relationships normal or exaggerated? Why did you alter proportion or keep it realistic?
- Pattern Is there repetition of an element or combination of elements? How is pattern used?
- Balance Is the work symmetrical, approximately symmetrical, asymmetrical, or have radial balance? Why did you make that decision?

What Mood, or Feeling do you associate with the work? Does this work seem connected with or removed from your everyday life? Identify the meaning/purpose/function of artwork.

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2020 – Present	MCCSC University Elementary School Art Teacher	Bloomington, IN
2014 – Present	The Modern Caravan Owner, Artist, Shop Foreman	Indianapolis, IN
2016 – 2017	Indianapolis Public Schools Elementary School Art Teacher for CFI 70 and IPS 43	Indianapolis, IN
2015	Anderson's Alternatives Furniture Design Apprentice	Mendocino, CA
2008 – 2015	Jessamine County Schools High School Art Teacher	Nicholasville, KY
2009 – 2012	East Jessamine Women's Soccer 2011-2012 EJMS Head Coach 2010 EJMS Assistant Coach 2009-2012 EJHS Assistant Coach	Nicholasville, KY
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