What we wonder: an iterative exploration of teachers' perceptions of social-emotional learning

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Abstract

Purpose – The paper aims to examine how a professional development school-district (PDS-D) partnership, enacting an improvement science stance, collectively explored social-emotional learning (SEL) during collaboratively designed professional learning experiences.

Design/methodology/approach – This qualitative study, guided by an improvement science orientation, enacted an iterative research design. Data sources consisted of anecdotal field notes and artifacts from 12 professional learning sessions. Using a constant comparative method, the authors applied an inductive thematic analysis to identify salient themes across data related to teacher wonderings and identified goals.

Findings – The paper illuminates teachers' voices while highlighting information gleaned from participant wonderings, their identified goals and how this information informed the iterative development of future professional learning experiences within a district-university partnership.

Research limitations/implications – Due to the chosen research approaches and limited number of participants, the research results may lack generalizability.

Originality/value – This paper provides original insight into collaborative development of recursive professional learning experiences within partnership spaces.

Keywords Social-emotional learning, Professional learning, Partnership

Paper type Research paper

As the Holmes partnership originally posited (2007), and the National Association of Professional Development Schools Nine Essentials has since re-articulated, the mission of a professional development school (PDS) partnership should be grounded in the "construction of knowledge through intentional, synergistic research endeavors" (NAPDS, 2021, p. 15). Thus, when seeking mechanisms to enhance social-emotional learning (SEL) for all stakeholders, a professional development school-district (PDS-D) partnership enacted the

NAPDS Essentials Addressed:

Essential #1 – A professional development school (PDS) is a learning community guided by a comprehensive, articulated mission that is broader than the goals of any single partner, and that aims to advance equity, antiracism and social justice within and among schools, colleges/universities and their respective community and professional partners.

Essential #3 – A PDS is a context for continuous professional learning and leading for all participants, guided by need and a spirit and practice of inquiry.

Essential #4 – A PDS makes a shared commitment to reflective practice, responsive innovation and generative knowledge.

tenets of improvement science (Byrk, Gomez, Grunow, & LeMahieu, 2015) to engage in collective inquiry, support teachers' professional growth and improve PK-12 learning. Our PDS-D, situated in the southeastern USA, began in 2018 with a mission to systematically improve social, emotional and physical health for all stakeholders – which would ultimately yield academic gains. As a member of a long-standing PDS network, our goal was to collectively seek out solutions to systemic issues influencing teaching and learning across the entire district.

Professional Development School partnerships have been identified as spaces that promote "simultaneous renewal" (Goodlad, 1994, p. 632) of schooling and teacher preparation. Coupled with this knowledge, collaborative partnerships have been lauded as vehicles for sustained, systemic school improvement (Fullan, 2011; Senge, 2006). The purpose of this article is to share how a PDS-D partnership served as a space for collective exploration of SEL, and how this collaborative examination influenced future professional learning. This article shares our journey and the knowledge gained from iterative professional learning experiences designed using an improvement science stance. Specifically, we asked the following questions to guide our work: (1) What are teachers' perceptions of SEL? and (2) How might incorporating collective data analysis into professional learning experiences inform our PDS-D work?

Literature review
Our work is conceptually grounded in the essentials of professional development schools (PDSs) and quality professional learning. Below we describe the essentials of PDS that underpin our work and the tenets of quality professional learning that informed our ongoing professional learning experiences. Additionally, we provide a brief overview of the SEL and positive behavior supports literature that guided our collective inquiry.

Professional development schools' essentials
Goodlad (1994) identified PDS partnerships as spaces to promote "simultaneous renewal" (p. 632) of schooling and teacher preparation. Recently, AACTE's Clinical Practice Commission (2018) expanded upon Goodlad's work when stating that school-university partnerships provide a platform for mutually beneficial outcomes for all stakeholders, and that "partnerships are central to high-quality teacher preparation" (p. 9). Moreover, coupled with this information, school improvement literature (Fullan, 2011; Senge, 2006) has lauded collaborative partnerships as vehicles for sustained school improvement solutions.

PDSs emerged out of a collaboration between universities and schools in an effort to recruit, prepare and retain our nation's teaching force. In the 1980s the Holmes Group named *professional development schools* as a school-university partnership committed to more than collaboration centered on teacher preparation. Specifically, the Holmes Group (2007) identified four pillars of PDS that included foci on the following: (1) Pk-12 student learning, (2) collaborative teacher preparation, (3) promotion of professional learning for all stakeholders and (4) collective inquiry.

Recently, in the revised Nine Essentials 2nd Edition (2021) NAPDS named PDS as a "living, learning community intended to close conceptual and practical separations that tend to exist between teacher education programs and the nation's schools" (pg. 10). Additionally, when discussing the role of research in PDS, the Nine Essentials 2nd Edition (2021) noted that "PDSs are guided by a culture of inquiry and continuous improvement" (p. 15). These essentials stated that members of a PDS should engage in ongoing collaborative inquiry aimed at improving teaching and learning in a manner that influences all stakeholders. Moreover, when illustrating the core ingredients of PDS, Burns, Jacobs, Baker, and Denise (2016) noted the importance of the

"intentional and explicit commitment to the professional learning of all stakeholders (p. 88)." Thus, embracing the innovative culture of PDS we sought to design professional learning experiences that encouraged university and school-based partners to collaborate and collectively identify areas for growth and systematic professional learning (del Prado Hill, Maheady, Henry, & Garas-York, 2021; NAPDS, 2021).

Quality professional learning

Over time, educational researchers (Desimone, 2009; Desimone & Garet, 2015) have identified the core features of high-quality professional learning that should be considered when designing and implementing professional development frameworks. Specifically, the core features of high-quality professional learning include content focus, coherence, active learning, sustained duration, collective participation (Desimone, 2009) and context (Guskey, 2002). PDSs provide rich spaces to design professional learning that encompasses these core features. Specifically, through engagement in collective inquiry PDSs are "uniquely positioned to work towards the creation of more authentic experiences" (Dana, 2017, p. 9). Professional learning that encapsulates inquiry provides sustained opportunities for explore day-to-day problems of practice often occurring within PDS contexts. Inquiry becomes a "mechanism for re-inventing school as learning organizations" (Dana & Yendol-Hoppey, 2020, p. 19) focused on issues coherent with individual PDS contexts. Within our specific context, our content consisted of a collective focus on areas related to SEL. This content was identified as a need from the district and school leadership. To elaborate on the definition and role of SEL in our context, we refer to the literature below.

Social-emotional learning and schools

Across diverse research fields, SEL skills in early childhood have been linked to vital academic, social and physical and mental health outcomes across the lifespan. Large scale longitudinal research suggests SEL skills in early life, such as young children's emotional, attentional and behavioral regulation skills, are predictive of a wide range of outcomes that extend well into adulthood, including physical and financial health, criminal behavior and substance dependence (Moffitt et al., 2011). In addition to these distal outcomes, SEL skills also predict proximal outcomes including math and literacy scores (Schmitt, Pratt, & McClelland, 2014), high school graduation rates (Vitaro, Brendgen, Larose, & Trembaly, 2005), as well as problem behaviors in the classroom (Rimm-Kaufman, La Paro, Downer, & Pianta, 2005). Given the myriad of student skills and outcomes related to SEL it is not surprising that schools have sought guidance on how to best support the social, emotional and academic development of students. One of the most widely implemented evidence-based frameworks is School-Wide Positive Behavior Interventions and Supports (SWPBIS) currently being implemented in over 27,000 US schools (Kittelman, Mercer, McIntosh, & Hoselton, 2021).

Positive behavior supports

Little is known regarding teachers' and students' perceptions of prevention and promotion practices as implemented through a multi-tiered system of support (MTSS) that aims to address both academic and social, emotional and behavioral challenges in the classroom. Current studies have explored teachers' perceptions of School-wide Positive Behavior Interventions and Supports (SWPBIS) in an alternative school setting (Farkas et al., 2012) or as part of Response to Intervention strategies (RtI; Castro-Villarreal, Rodriguez, & Moore, 2014; Greenfield, Rinaldi, Proctor, & Cardarelli, 2010; Swanson, Solis, Ciullo, & McKenna, 2012). Understanding teachers' and students' perspectives regarding their values, beliefs and

readiness related to utilizing/receiving these types of supports (i.e., SWPBIS) aimed at student SEL is critical and was a key component of the professional learning experiences in our PDS-D context.

Methods

When considering the design of PDS research, it is imperative to adhere to the "core ingredients" of school-university partnerships (Burns *et al.*, 2016, p. 83). One of the core ingredients is stakeholders' "shared commitment to research and innovation" (Burns *et al.*, 2016, p. 91). Thus, a key "ingredient" to PDS research design is the inclusion of collaborative research teams that represent varied stakeholders - university professors, graduate students, classroom teachers, administration and district staff. With this shared commitment to research, our research design was informed conceptually by an improvement science stance.

Inspired by principles of design-based research and school improvement processes, improvement science enables PDS research to focus on participants' learning-while-doing through iterative cycles of redesign, evaluation and change (Byrk *et al.*, 2015). Additionally, improvement science encourages sustained participant involvement through the incorporation of networked improvement communities (NIC), which, over time, provide a space to value and learn from teacher voices, cultivate capacity and generate new collective knowledge (Byrk *et al.*, 2015). Aligned with professional learning communities (PLCs), NICs aim to transform learning through systematic collective inquiry. Ultimately the goal is to notice and learn from practice to enhance teaching and learning outcomes across classrooms, schools and school districts (Lewis, 2015).

This qualitative study was guided by an improvement science orientation that enabled us to create an iterative research design aimed at enhancing teaching and learning processes that directly influenced day-to-day systems. With this in mind, we designed our study to identify teachers' perceptions of SEL, while also exploring how the incorporation of collective data analysis alongside our PDS partners into our professional learning experiences may inform the recursive cycles of our PDS work.

Our professional development school-district context

This research was conducted within a larger initiative couched in our PDS-D context. Our PDS-D is located in the southeastern USA in collaboration with a research-one intensive university. Our school district is home to 23 schools, encompasses three distinctly different attendance zones and spans two counties. In 2017, the district's superintendent reached out to the college of education with the vision of creating a professional development school district model that encapsulated the essence of "what it means to be a PDS." Thus, in 2018 our PDS-D partnership launched with a comprehensive mission broadly focused on enhancing the social, emotional and physical well-being of all stakeholders. When establishing the work, we collaboratively developed goals and measurable action items centered on teacher preparation, teacher professional learning and PK-12 student learning. One aspect of our PDS-D's initiatives included iterative cycles of professional learning experiences (PLEs) aimed at cultivating capacity across faculty to better support SEL. This article shares the story of one component of our PDS-D journey.

Participants

Our story attends to the relationship established with four Title I schools - two elementary, one intermediate, one middle school - residing in the same attendance zone. This partnership supported the implementation of *PDS-D Goal #2: Enhance the social, emotional and physical well-being of students and staff to ultimately yield academic gains.* Specifically, our focus was

SEL within the 4th-6th grade band and a major component was the collaborative development of ongoing iterative PLEs. PLEs represented a Professional Learning Community (PLC) structure and were named PLCs for this work and for this article. It should be noted that this district has used the SWPBIS framework for over a decade; they have well-established SWPBIS school- and district-level teams that regularly meet to discuss supporting students within the SWPBIS framework. Within this study, we focused on 12 PLC sessions, occurring with 31 classroom teachers, that spanned from November 2019 to March 2020. See Table 1 for participant data.

Data sources
Data sources consisted of anecdotal field notes and artifacts from 12 PLC sessions. Each PLC session, occurring in team-level groups, was structured similarly and took place either during a 45-min planning session (PLC I) or during district-sponsored half-day release time (PLC II). Two members of the research team were present to record field notes. Field notes consisted of pure researcher observations and direct quotes. Additionally, artifacts from PLC sessions were gathered. At the conclusion of the PLC sessions, the research team transcribed anecdotal notes. See Table 2 for specific data collection information.

Initial PLCs were structured to lay a foundation, develop relationships and gather insight to inform future work. Data from these sessions assisted in the design of a comprehensive

4th grade teachers	5th grade teachers	6th grade teachers
10	11	10

Total n = 31
Note(s): *The fourth school in the PDS partnership is not included, as their PLC sessions did not occur fully due to Covid-19
Source(s): Authors own work

Table 1.
Participants by grade across 3 PDS-D schools

Data collection period	Data source	Purpose
PLC I	Anecdotal Field Notes	To capture teachers' ideas and insight to inform survey development and future work
PLC II		Anecdotal Field Notes
	Anecdotal field notes - PLCs' norm and mission development	To capture pure observations and participants' conversations
	Anecdotal field notes - *Willing to Be Disturbed* conversations	To capture pure observations and participants' conversations
		To record direct quotes
	Anecdotal field notes - collaborative data analysis	To capture participants' conversations, wonderings, and pure observations
		To record direct quotes
		PLC Artifacts
	Norm and Mission Charts	To connect back to the PLC norms and mission during data analysis
	PLC Goals	To identify next steps and make connections to expressed wonderings during collaborative data analysis

Source(s): Authors own work

Table 2.
Data collection and data source information

survey focused on gathering school-wide data related to SEL attitudes, beliefs, practices and strategies. This survey was administered in January 2020 with all four focus schools ($n = 114$). Follow-up PLCs began in February 2020. A large component of follow-up PLCs was the collective analysis of survey results - the main focus of this article.

PLC II began with the review of PDS-D goals, the establishment of meeting norms, the creation of a PLC mission, and a discussion of a common reading, *Willing to Be Disturbed* (Wheatley, 2002). Following these activities, a modified *School Reform Initiative Atlas: Looking at Data* (School Reform Initiative, 2017) protocol was carried out to analyze and unpack survey data. During this experience participants engaged in discussions to describe, interpret and wonder about the survey data (see Table 3 for survey information). Per the tenets of improvement science (Bryk, 2014), collective data analysis was enacted to cultivate discussions focused on the complex intersections occurring between teacher instructional practices and the existing organizational structures within the schools and district. Following collective analysis, conversations ensued related to implications for the classroom, and at the conclusion of PLC II each participant identified a personal goal to ascribe to prior to PLC III.

Of note, is the role the Covid-19 global pandemic played in our journey. Our final PLC II session occurred on Thursday, March 12, 2020. Amid our conversations, teachers were informed they needed to prepare ten days of materials in the event that school was closed for a short period of time. Then on Sunday, March 15, 2020, it was announced we would not be returning to school; hence, our PLC structures were altered, and it was decided to pause data

Question	Response type
How do you define social emotional learning (SEL)?	Open-ended
What current SEL tools and strategies have you attended training for? (Select as many as apply)	Multiple choice; choose all that apply (15 options)
What current SEL tools and strategies have influenced your practice in your classroom/school? (Select as many as apply)	Multiple choice; choose all that apply (15 options)
Describe Tier 1 supports related to SEL that you observe in your classroom/school	Open-ended
Describe Tier 2 supports related to SEL that you observe in your classroom/school	Open-ended
Select the types of professional development experiences you would be interested in to learn more about SEL topics	Multiple choice; choose all that apply (8 options)
Who, do you think, might provide future professional development experiences related to SEL for your school/district?	Multiple choice; choose all that apply (7 options)
How much time, across the academic year, do you think should be dedicated professional development activities related to SEL?	6 options (weekly; bi-weekly; monthly; quarterly; at least 20 hours per year; other)
Please select the school you work in	4 options
Please identify your role in District 5	5 options (lead teacher; assistant teacher/ paraprofessional; administration; guidance counselor; other)
How long have you been teaching?	7 options (<1 year; 1-3 years; 4-6 years; 7-8 years; 9-10 years; 10+ years; N/A- not a teacher)
What is the highest level of school you have completed or the highest degree you have received?	8 options (less than high school diploma; high school diploma or GED; some college but no degree; Associate degree; Bachelor's degree; Master's degree; Doctoral degree; professional degree (JD or MD))

Source(s): Authors own work

Table 3. Social emotional learning practices and strategies survey questions

collection for the purposes of this study. Informed by our improvement science stance, informal data were still collected to inform our ongoing professional learning and consisted of anecdotal notes and forms to gather teachers' insight. However, while these data were not formally analyzed they are discussed when describing how we used all data to design PLC structures.

Data analysis
Members of our PDS-D team independently, then collectively, read and compared all anecdotal notes. Following these conversations, data were separated into two salient categories: (1) participant wonderings about survey data and (2) participant goals. Aligning with improvement science methods, these data were selected for deeper analysis as they emerged as sources of information to guide our iterative PLC design process (Lewis, 2015).

Using a constant comparative method, we applied an inductive thematic analysis that incorporated a process of first- and second-cycle coding (Miles, Huberman, & Saldana, 2014). First, we coded independently and then compared collaboratively, altering codes and developing themes by compiling and making connections across codes (Braun & Clarke, 2006). We then narrowed to salient themes and color-coded and sorted for broader themes. After multiple read-throughs and coding of the data, we identified four themes from the wonderings data: (a) teachers' sense of awareness; (b) perceptions on district influence; (c) eagerness to learn; and (d) self-care strategies. Table 4 illustrates wonderings theme development. Similarly, this process was applied to goal setting data. These data evolved into three categories: (1) specific classroom goals; (2) dispositional goals; and (3) self-care goals.

Findings
Our findings reflected that teachers overwhelmingly perceived their role as one that supports SEL; however, teachers explicitly expressed a need to gain more knowledge regarding the implementation of SEL tools and strategies. The findings below illustrate the themes that emerged from our PLC conversations and in turn the wonderings posed by teachers. In sharing our findings, we summarized information gleaned from participant wonderings (see Table 4), their identified goals, and how this information informed the iterative development of future professional learning within our PDS-D partnership.

Teacher wonderings
Teachers' sense of awareness. Throughout PLC conversations, teachers communicated a sense of awareness that they were unclear and unsure of items related to SEL. Teachers openly wondered about SEL tools, strategies and professional development offered within the district, asking questions such as: "I wonder what some of these are?" and "I wonder if people understand SEL?" Specifically, when discussing Positive Behavior Intervention Supports (PBIS), teachers expressed confusion regarding the three tiers of supports embedded in the PBIS model. Transparently, teachers shared they were "unsure of tier 2 and tier 3" supports and they wondered if stakeholders "understand 'the why' of PBIS." Teachers recognized "there is more to PBIS" than they thought and wondered about the authentic application in the classroom when wondering if other colleagues truly understand the various aspects of PBIS as implemented within their schools.

Perceptions on district influence. When discussing various items related to SEL, teachers wondered about the influence of district initiatives on survey data. For example, teachers wondered if "people just said they are using [the tools and strategies] because the district supports them." In particular, teachers noticed that survey responses indicated a high usage of PBIS and mindfulness. As one teacher stated, "I notice people are attending PBIS and

Themes	Examples
Teachers' sense of awareness	I am unaware of where to look for more PBIS strategies, in any tier
	There are so many tiers, which tier is which? I am confused
	Regarding the staff resources for SEL supports, do they have the time to support us? How do they support us?
	I am unsure of tier 2 and tier 3
	There is a lot more to PBIS than I thought
	I wonder if people understand SEL.
	Do we understand the why of PBIS?
Perceptions on district influence	I see PBIS and "mindfulness" are mentioned a lot in the SEL strategies, but is that just because they are the most talked about right now?
	Are the professional developments with the highest attendance because the district promotes these initiatives?
	I wonder if people just said they are using these SEL strategies because they are district initiatives?
	Some survey respondents mention not using PBIS strategies; I thought we had to do this
	Does this mean survey respondents understand these strategies, or do they just think they are supposed to understand?
Eagerness to learn	How can we advocate for our students?
	I want more supports from the district to implement these strategies
	I would love to know more about each tier
	We need and want more time to collaborate
	This all makes me wonder if we are using PBIS effectively? Is it working?
	I would love a bank of ideas for each tier
	How do some of these ideas connect? Can they be condensed?
	What is keeping us from implementing these strategies?
Self-care strategies	We know our students depend on us, and that is a lot to carry
	These SEL strategies have a student focus, not a staff focus. We need to worry about our own self-care
	If our emotional needs aren't met, then we can't give to our students
	We are everything to everyone
	I see myself as a mother and mental health counselor

Source(s): Authors own work

mindfulness [PDs]. Is this because they are distinct initiatives and things we have heard of?" Additionally, when stating comments such as, "Does this mean they understand, or do they just think they are supposed to?" teachers questioned the depth of comprehension of these items and openly wondered if survey participants felt influenced to indicate use of these items since they are promoted within the district.

Eagerness to learn. Overwhelmingly, teachers expressed their willingness to learn new strategies and to do whatever it takes for their students. Teachers shared they want to know "how [we] can advocate for our students" relative to SEL. A sincere desire for the information discussed in the survey led teachers to comment "I would love to know more about each tier," and "I would love a bank of ideas for each tier." While earnest in their eagerness to learn more, teachers were also candid about effective ways to implement these strategies. Specifically, teachers noted a need for more support, and expressed that they "need and want more time to collaborate" in an effort to expand their knowledge and support their learners.

Self-care strategies. Not surprisingly, teachers expressed concerns for their own social emotional needs. Many communicated their need and desire for self-care strategies; illustrated when a teacher stated, "These SEL strategies have a student focus, not a staff focus. We need to worry about our own self-care." One teacher expressed that she sees herself

"as a mother and a mental health counselor," while another lamented that "we [teachers] are everything to everyone." In summary, and as an important contribution to the overall theme, one teacher noted that "If our emotional needs aren't met, then we can't give to our students." This theme of self-care became important data in the development of our continued professional learning and continued to be a thread in teachers' professional development goals.

Professional development goals
At the conclusion of each PLC, teachers created and verbalized SEL-related goals. The original intent was for these goals to begin to cultivate spaces for inquiry that would be elaborated on during PLC III. When naming goals, some participants created specific goals for their work in the classroom with students, such as "I will ask my students: 'What makes you feel respected?'" Other participants created broader goals that encompassed general ideas and dispositions related to SEL, such as "I will have a positive attitude, and I will look into restorative practices," and "I will assume good will and flip my mindset." Finally, several teachers created goals surrounding self-care. Illustrated by one teacher's goal to "draw on the strength of others" when she had none left for herself. Of interest when analyzing these goals, there was a noted overlap between goals that could be identified as dispositional and self-care. For example, when sharing goals, one participant stated they would "keep a smile on my face and connect to the human element." This statement illuminates the recognition of dispositional elements while also connecting with others, which could be deemed self-care. Similarly, another teacher set a goal to "write notes of gratitude to others." This goal may serve one purpose for the goal setter; however, it might serve a different purpose for the receivers of the gratitude notes. See Table 5 for examples of stated teacher goals.

Our next steps
Guided by our improvement science stance - information gleaned from our analysis informed the design of our ongoing collective inquiry into SEL (Byrk *et al.*, 2015). Knowing that our teachers were "in a little bit of shock" and "not sure what to do" with the information gained, and then recognizing they were feeling exasperated due to a global pandemic, we developed plans to continue jointly exploring and assessing problems of practice focused on teacher self-care. Data indicated that teacher self-care was an area of need prior to the global pandemic; thus, we designed PLCs to honor our teachers' voices, while also providing support in a time of crisis. In April and May 2020, we supported teachers through virtual PLCs focused on their needs and their mental health. Our goal was to be a risk-free space for teachers to ask questions and collaborate across schools to share ideas connected to emergency remote learning. During this time, we gathered additional informal data to gauge teachers' perceptions and well-being, specifically related to teacher self-care.

After analysis of our entire data set, we developed a plan for the 2020–2021 school year that continued to center teacher self-care. Our teachers' message was clear throughout all data - if we want to attend to the social and emotional well-being of our PK-12 learners, then we first must ensure our teachers are equipped with the knowledge and skills to care for themselves. Content for the year connected to Cornelius Minor's (2018) text, *We Got This!* Minor's text was selected as it provided knowledge and strategies we could apply toward teachers' self-care that were also directly applicable to a classroom setting. For example, *We Got This!* initially focused on the need to listen to our learners and states that, "our journey starts with an understanding that no great good can be done for a people if we do not listen to them first. Powerful teaching is rooted in powerful listening" (Minor, 2018, p. xi). Thus, we began with a listening ear and used our initial sessions of the 2020–2021 school year to listen to our teachers, while also providing strategies for them to better listen to their students.

Specific classroom goals	Talk with my students about being open-minded and respectful
	Conduct a blended morning meeting that incorporates SEL. I will conduct a status of the day question and ask "what do you want your teacher to know about you?"
	I will collaborate more with my co-teachers
	I will ask my students: "what makes you feel respected?"
	I will continue to develop my skills with restorative practices
	I will use the problem box sheet. *(a strategy shared during resource mapping)*
	I will use self-reflection with my students
	We will continue to have collaborative conversations about all aspects of our teaching
	I will learn more about the resources available to me: school, district, team
	I will more intentionally collaborate and work together
	I will try to incorporate collaborative, engaging strategies in my class
	I will tease out choice vs. habit with my students
Dispositional Goals	Keep trying to show up and do what I joined the profession to do. Show up. Be present
	Let go of the other things and move forward. Do what is right for the kids
	Do what is right for my kids
	Recognize that integrating change is confusing. I will embrace the confusion
	I will understand that our students' childhoods are not like ours. I will recognize who our students are
	I will assume good will and flip my mindset
	I will work to figure out strategies as opposed to place blame
	I will positively promote our work. I will think of a #hashtag for us
	I will write notes of gratitude to others
	I will have a positive attitude and I will look into restorative practices
	I will intentionally collaborate within our SEL PLC
	I will remind myself why I am here, and I will make time for SEL
	Save our school. *(One of the participants stated this first, and then changed her goal. Facilitator later followed up with her. This teacher has been at the school for several years and genuinely wants to make school a better place for teachers and students)*
Self-Care Goals	Draw on the strength of others when none is left for myself
	I will detach more; self-care and sleep more
	I will work on being kind to myself
	I will keep a smile on my face and connect to the human element

Source(s): Authors own work

When crafting our professional learning we also intentionally considered the design of the PLC structures. Our PLCs structures incorporated varied delivery models – individual school sessions, whole group sessions, and an informal coffee conversation. The variance of sessions was strategic to create spaces for conversations within contexts, across school contexts and within an informal setting during the coffee conversations. For the coffee conversation, a local coffee shop donated coffee and all participants were encouraged to grab a cup and join us virtually to "just chat." Finally, our year concluded with a whole group session in which Cornelius Minor joined us and presented to all four schools. This session made continued connections to his text and honed in on the role of equity and access in our classrooms. Further information on our professional learning design is found in Figure 1.

Discussion and implications
This research illustrates how a PDS-D's enactment of improvement science may bridge the research–practice divide often present in day-to-day PDS work. Additionally, as a more recent framework to educational change, there is a need to research how improvement science methods guide teacher development, and more specifically, teacher development within PDS contexts (Hannan, Russel, Takahashi, & Park, 2015) – spaces already committed to simultaneous renewal and sustained school improvement. Furthermore, our research illuminates the potential for the collaborative design of professional learning experiences, as
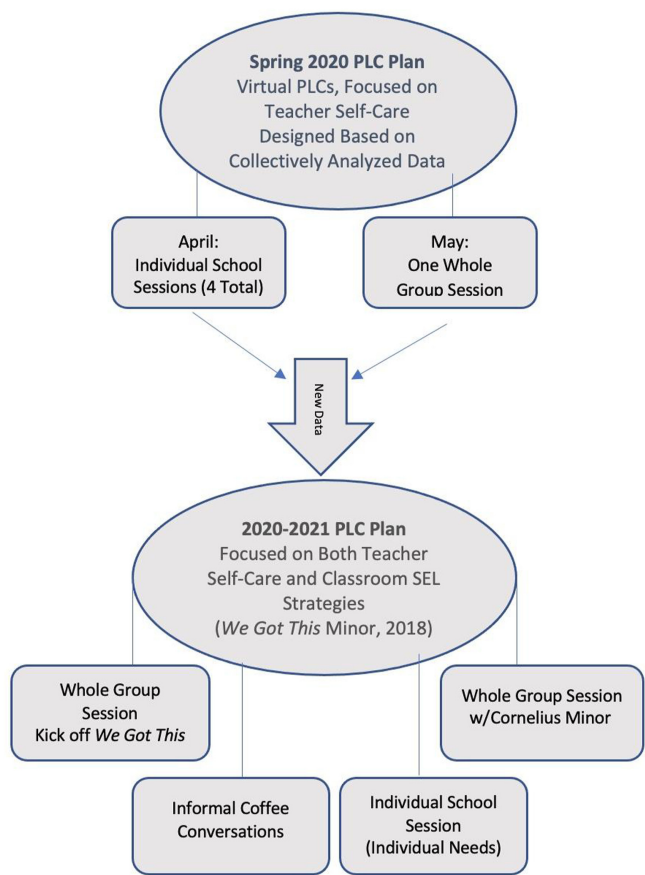
Spring 2020 PLC Plan
Virtual PLCs, Focused on
Teacher Self-Care
Designed Based on
Collectively Analyzed Data

April:
Individual School
Sessions (4 Total)

May:
One Whole
Group Session

New Data

2020-2021 PLC Plan
Focused on Both Teacher
Self-Care and Classroom SEL
Strategies
(*We Got This* Minor, 2018)

Whole Group
Session
Kick off *We Got This*

Whole Group Session
w/Cornelius Minor

Informal Coffee
Conversations

Individual School
Session
(Individual Needs)

Figure 1.
PLC Design map

Source(s): Authors own work

our collective data analysis revealed essential information to guide future learning in a manner that valued and illuminated teachers' voices. Had we not engaged in collective unpacking of our data, we may not have uncovered the teachers' need for self-care support, as these data evolved from our conversations related to the survey data. They did not directly come from the survey data. This "aha moment" for our PDS-D led us to the continued use of collective data analysis into PLE design.

Moreover, as acknowledged by Schonert-Reichl (2017), our research has further illuminated the fact that if we do not accurately understand teachers' own wellbeing and how teachers influence students' SEL, we will not be able to fully promote SEL in the classroom. The *self-care strategies* theme speaks to the well-documented fact that teachers' lives are stressful, among the most stressful professions in the human service industry (Gallup, 2013). Schonert-Reichl's (2017) 3-component framework for social emotional learning (SEL) includes three distinct and inter-related dimensions: the learning context, SEL of teachers and SEL of students. All three components are of equal importance and interconnected. All three components are addressed in the themes uncovered in our qualitative data analysis. The *teachers' sense of awareness* and *perceptions of district influence* themes speak to the learning context component of this SEL framework: both address the

environment within which the teachers and students are operating. The *self-care strategies* theme clearly correlates to the teachers' SEL component of the framework. And the *eagerness to learn* theme we uncovered illuminates the teachers' desire to enhance student SEL through improved knowledge. Thus, we will continue to be mindful of Schonert-Reichl's (2017) framework and we recognize the role that our dialogic conversations regarding our data had in guiding us to connecting with this framework.

Conclusion

Overall, our work together as a PDS-D created space for intentional collaboration aimed at meeting the needs of all PDS-D stakeholders. Specifically, our work highlights the power of creating purposeful spaces for school- and university-based partners to collectively explore data, identify problems of practice and engage in collaborative inquiry. Specifically, in our PDS-D partnership, we cultivated spaces to collectively explore the influence and role of SEL, and how we can use these data to design future professional learning experiences. Finally, our incorporation of an improvement science stance encompassed the recognition that our work is never done. With this, we will continue to refine our work and identify synergistic spaces for inquiry in an effort to support all teachers' professional growth and ultimately improve PK-12 learning.

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