The Effects of the Second Step Curriculum on Challenging Behavior in First Grade

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The Effects of the Second Step Curriculum on Challenging Behavior in First Grade

A Quantitative Research Methods Proposal
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ED 696
Action Research
Masters of Special Education Degree

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Abstract

The Second Step curriculum is used to teach students the necessary social/emotional learning skill set to be successful in any future environment/setting. In this study, the Second Step curriculum’s effectiveness was measured based on student responsiveness and utilization of the skills taught. The research question for this study is: What is the impact of the Second Step curriculum on social/emotional development on first graders? The Second Step curriculum was taught four times to the whole class throughout the duration of the study. Observational notes were taken on five students who were strategically chosen based on previous observations. The observational notes were taken once every morning and once every afternoon throughout the duration of the study. The results were consistent with the literature. As more Second Step lessons were taught, the students’ challenging behavior decreased, while the amount of time they followed school expectations increased. The results of this study match the overall consensus of the Second Step curriculum: it is beneficial.
CHAPTER 1
INTRODUCTION

Introduction

In the educational field, there are a large number of conversations regarding the mental health and challenging behaviors of students and how these impact the students’ abilities to learn. An educator’s number one priority is student success, but this becomes challenging when the students are not equipped with the proper skill set to achieve academic goals. When the students are not prepared with the skills for simple life events, challenging behaviors arise when there is an issue placed upon a student. Whether it be evacuating the classroom or helping a student self-regulate, academic skills of other students are interrupted when there are challenging behaviors in the classroom because it takes the teacher away from the whole class. It is important to get the challenging behaviors under control, so that all of the students are able to learn and be successful.

Brief Literature Review

Social/emotional learning and behavioral challenges in children go together, which makes an educator’s job challenging. Learning the function of each students’ behavior and how to better help them complete their challenges through self-regulation is a rewarding task. Problem behavior at a young age and low social/emotional development can lead to a life of potential struggle. An article written about student behavior states, “Social and emotional skills give children resources they need to avoid drugs, delinquent behaviors and violence, high-risk sexual behaviors, depression, and school drop-out” (Frey & Sylvester, 1997). School is a place to meet the needs of large quantities of children, so what better place than to implement a social/emotional curriculum to foster schoolwide improvement. The Second Step curriculum
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helps students learn friendship skills, relationship skills, empathy, anger management strategies, self-regulation techniques, and problem-solving approaches. Essentially, the curriculum aides students in becoming prosocial learners. “Prosocial children have emotional responses- pride, happiness, security, feeling love with further encourage appropriate behavior” (Committee for Children, 1989, p. 12). Increasing prosocial behavior and social/emotional learning, while simultaneously decreasing problem behavior can lead to overall student and school-wide success.

Statement of the Problem

Many students struggle with challenging behaviors in the classroom. I will be researching the effectiveness of a social/emotional curriculum (Second Step) in improving social/emotional learning, but more specifically challenging behaviors.

Purpose of the Study

I had a very behaviorally challenging class last school year (2018-2019), so I want to find the cause and meaning behind the behaviors. Although the students’ needs and behaviors were different, some of them were observed to stem from similar events. My students’ social/emotional learning was very low, so I am interested to see if that is a trend. I want to figure out how I can help the students work through situations in their lives.

Research Question

What is the impact of the Second Step curriculum on social/emotional development on first graders?

Definition of Variables.

Independent Variable: Second Step curriculum

Constitutive Definition: A universal, school-based, prevention curriculum for children in K-5 grades designed to promote social competence, reduce social/emotional
problems, and prevent aggression over time by initially focusing on increasing prosocial behaviors (Committee for Children, 2019).

Operational Definition: Participation in the Second Step curriculum sessions.

Dependent Variable: Social/emotional learning

Constitutive Definition: The process through which children and adults acquire and effectively apply the knowledge, attitudes, and skills necessary to 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, 2019).

Operational Definition: Social/emotional learning (SEL) recording sheet (See Appendix A).

Significance of the Study

This study examines the effectiveness of the Second Step curriculum on decreasing problem behavior. The participants in this study exhibit challenging behaviors, so learning how to deal with the strong feelings and emotions, as well as regulating themselves will help the students be more effective. Learning self-regulation skills at a young age can help the students be more successful in the long run (Bowles, Montroy, & et al., 2016). The implementation of the Second Step curriculum will help the students be better at developing and maintaining friendships, problem solving, and de-escalation. It is important for the students to learn about themselves and their feelings to help them manage their strong emotions.

As an educator, this will help me dig deeper into figuring out the root of the problem behavior and learn different strategies on how to help the students. In teaching the Second Step curriculum throughout a prior school year, I will be able to dig deeper into the curriculum and
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spend more time teaching the skills and concepts that the students are struggling to grasp. Spending less time being interrupted while teaching can help all students be successful. Any further research that can be done on diminishing problem behavior can help other education professionals.

Research Ethics

Permission and IRB Approval. In order to conduct this study, the researcher will seek MSUM’s Institutional Review Board (IRB) approval to ensure the ethical conduct of research involving human subjects (Mills & Gay, 2019). Likewise, authorization to conduct this study will be sought from the school district where the research project will take place (See Appendix B and C).

Informed Consent. Protection of human subjects participating in research will be assured. Participant minors will be informed of the purpose of the study via the Method of Assent (See Appendix D) that the researcher will read to participants before the beginning of the study. Participants will be aware that this study is conducted as part of the researcher’s Masters Degree Program and that it will benefit her teaching practice. Informed consent means that the parents of participants have been fully informed of the purpose and procedures of the study for which consent is sought and that parents understand and agree, in writing, to their child participating in the study (Rothstein & Johnson, 2014). Confidentiality will be protected through the use of pseudonyms (e.g., Student 1) without the utilization of any identifying information. The choice to participate or withdraw at any time will be outlined, both, verbally and in writing.

Limitations. In this study, there may be predisposed items (home life, past experiences, etc.) that may affect challenging behaviors. There may be behavioral outbursts due to those items rather than because the curriculum is not effective. The attitudes of the students may also pose a threat to internal validity. The student could just be having an off/bad day rather than the curriculum is not effective.
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Conclusions

Whether it be socioeconomics, family dynamics, or social/emotional development, many items play factors into challenging, student behavior. Many students lack the skills to know how to deal with strong emotions, so learning how to self-regulate can help combat problem behaviors in the classroom. Through the use of a social/emotional curriculum, called Second Step, students are exposed to problem solving strategies, self-regulation skills, relationship skills, and recognizing and responding to feelings and emotions.

The next chapter discusses the research behind the Second Step curriculum and its effectiveness.
CHAPTER 2

LITERATURE REVIEW

Introduction

This study looks at the effectiveness of the Second Step curriculum on helping with challenging behaviors in the classroom by improving social/emotional development. In the educational field, there are a large number of conversations regarding the mental health and challenging behaviors of students and how it impacts the students’ ability to learn. An educator’s number one priority is student success, but this becomes challenging when the students are not equipped with the proper skill set to achieve academic goals. When the students are not prepared with the skills for simple life events, challenging behaviors come out when there is an issue placed upon a student. Whether it be evacuating the classroom or helping a student self-regulate, academic skills of other students are interrupted when there are challenging behaviors in the classroom. It is important to get the challenging behaviors under control, so that all of the students are able to learn and be successful.

Body of the Review

Context. The development of social/emotional competence is critical to a child’s development because of the large number of children that are at-risk for experiencing hardships from lack of social/emotional skills. “25%-30% of school-aged children exhibit general behavior problems, while community studies have shown that between 4% and 17% of children in the general population meet criteria for serious emotional disturbance” (Taub, 2001, p. 186). Not only do lack of social/emotional competence cause behavior problems in children, they can also cause more minor concerns in children like interfering with the ability to follow classroom directions and routines (Heyman, Rhoads, Swaosik, Upshur, & et al., 2019, p. 146). Although it
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plays a large role in a child’s life, social/emotional development can be challenging to learn and regulate. Schools are an outlet for social/emotional skills to be taught to all students. Through the development and implementation of social/emotional curricula, it makes teaching social/emotional skills more intentional and age appropriate. “These programs are often comprehensive, attempt to bolster youths’ positive behaviors, and have been shown to improve multiple indicators of social/emotional and character development, and reduce negative behaviors when implemented comprehensively with fidelity” (Acock, Beets, Flay, & et al., 2013, p. 51). The Second Step curriculum provides direct instruction to help all students develop emotion management, friendship skills, problem solving skills, and empathy. The Second Step was created by the Committee for Children in the 1970s. The curriculum is based on current research in the field of education. The curriculum is broken into different units of study in which all of the lessons in the unit revolve around on single topic. There are interactive brain builders and games for the students to apply their skills. Once the lessons are taught in the Second Step curriculum, the teacher helps the students utilize the strategies when a situation arises throughout the entire school year. For example, when two students are having a challenging time deciding who gets to cross the monkey bars, the teacher may step in and help “coach” the students on how to use problem solving skills to come up with a solution. Essentially, the students are exposed to social/emotional learning throughout the duration of the school year. From safe and positive learning to success in school and careers, social-emotional learning provides a foundation for the rest of the child’s life. The Second Step curriculum, when it is implemented with fidelity, helps promote social/emotional learning skills to help students be more successful with building relationships, increased social awareness, decision making, and self-management.
Incorporation of a social/emotional learning program has many benefits: promote academic achievement, reduce emotional distress, improvement of student attitudes, and much more. According to the study conducted by Heyman, Upshur, and Wenz-Gross (2017), “Current thinking is that moving beyond a focus on specific academic skills to promote school readiness by instead taking a developmental/psychobiological approach encompassing more fundamental regulatory processes will better promote children’s capacity to learn, especially in the face of adverse sociodemographic stress” (p. 15). The Second Step curriculum was created as a developmentally appropriate curriculum for young children to develop the necessary skills to be successful or strengthen skills that some students already possess. The curriculum is designed in themes that include different activities, theme-related songs, and brain builder games. Although this curriculum is scripted and is taught whole group, it is important for teachers to remember to continue to implement and remind students of the strategies. The curriculum is meant to be continuously taught and practiced in all aspects of school. Depending on the age of the students, there are four or five major units within the Second Step curriculum: skills for learning, empathy, emotion management, friendships skills and problem solving, and possibly transition to kindergarten.

When a social/emotional curriculum is implemented, it is important to not only constantly reflect on teaching procedures, but also analyze the effectiveness and benefits for the students. In a study conducted by Heyman, Upshur, and Wenz-Gross (2017), the efficacy of the Second Step curriculum was analyzed through a series of assessments. The study was a classroom randomized efficacy trial conducted in Head Start and community preschools. These facilities had state-subsidized slots, and served low income families, families that were involved with protective services, or families that were homeless. The classrooms participated for two
years. The Second Step curriculum was implemented by the teachers for the students. All of the students participated in an executive functioning skills assessment. These assessments were done in the fall and in the spring to check for progress. Parent income and education were found to be associated with the outcome measures, so family income was entered into the models. There were not any significant differences between intervention and control children in the outcome measures or demographics at baseline. The substantial portion of the curriculum was covered in the classrooms. The observations revealed large differences between curricular activities in intervention versus control classrooms. Attention and engagement, thinking ahead and thinking back, think time, encouraging participation, specific reinforcement, and overall attentiveness were all favoring intervention classrooms. Although the purpose of this study was to evaluate the efficacy of the Second Step Early Learning curriculum, the study revealed that home life characteristics (parental education, income, and minority ethnicity) played a large role in social/emotional learning.

When a social/emotional curriculum is not implemented nor are social/emotional skills taught at school, students lack the necessary skill set to regulate themselves, which causes negative, problem behaviors to arise. Negative behaviors are continuing to be a notable public health concern in the United States (Acock, Beets, Flay, & et al., 2013). Problem behavior and aggression can both be predictors of future outcomes. Aggressive children have the tendency to not understand the effects that the behavior may have on another person. Essentially, these children lack empathy (Bridges, Hastings, Robinson, & et al., 2000). Children that are consistently aggressive and withdrawn may be at risk for “peer rejection, delinquency, criminality, mental illness, underachievement, and dropping out of school” (Ladd & Profilet, 1996, p. 1008). There are huge benefits when the cycle of childhood aggression to future risk-

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taking behavior is interrupted because research has shown that “approximately 65% of children who enter elementary school exhibiting elevated levels of aggression experience significant behavioral difficulties and associated educational problems in school 2 years later” (Bierman, Powers, Thomas, & Thompson, 2008).

The implementation of the Second Step curriculum can depend on the professional that is administering the lesson. Ableser conducted a study on teachers’ attitudes and perceptions toward the implementation of the Second Step curriculum, “Factors such as prior training, background and experience of teachers, their commitment and belief in a curriculum, their attitudes and perceptions towards non-violence curriculum in general and towards the specific program in particular may influence how any given program is going to be implemented, and ultimately, its overall effectiveness” (2003). Throughout this study, there were three particular central questions that were examined: How was the program implemented?, What were the teachers’ attitudes and perceptions towards non-violence curriculum in general?, and What were the teachers’ practices relating to non-violence curriculum and to this program? All of the questions were answered in terms of how did the perceptions and attitudes change over the course of the school year. The intent of the study was to examine particular teachers’ attitudes, perceptions and practices and how they evolved as the program was implemented in their classrooms over one school year. The participants of this study were kindergarten through third grade teachers from three schools in a large urban public-school district who were part of a year-long Second Step project. The schools served a large number of low-income African American students. A different consultant was used at each school to implement the Second Step curriculum. In addition, there was a separate consultant expected to provide training for parents and staff at each school. The consultants implemented the curriculum lessons from the Second
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step kit for a half hour, two times a week. Pre- and post-test questionnaires were filled out by twenty-six teachers. Eleven teachers were observed and interviewed six times each, throughout the school year. Observation and interview protocols were developed and used based on the conceptual framework to guide and focus the investigators research. At the end of the program, nearly two-thirds of the teachers felt that the program had some positive effect. However, the teachers felt that they were not very knowledgeable about the Second Step curriculum. It was determined that the problem with violence that is in the schools, families, communities and society is very complex and cannot be solved by a curriculum. Although, with the use of an effective program that is implemented in an effective way, it can be a small puzzle piece to help make the world a better place.

Teachers play a large role in the effectiveness of the Second Step curriculum. Modeling for students appropriate, socially and emotionally sound behavior can help create a more well-rounded classroom full of students with a strong skill set. Teachers can model specific skills that were taught from lessons in the Second Step curriculum. For example, in one of the lessons, students are taught coping mechanisms (belly breathing, counting to 10, deep breaths, etc.) when they have strong feelings of anger. Teachers can model the strategies to help him/her calm down during a time of frustration or anger. Teachers can also provide students with coaching and positive feedback as students practice the skills. Finally, teachers can allow students the opportunity to participate in decision making, minor problems and/or large conflicts, throughout the school year. “Students view teachers who use democratic practices as caring, and children who view their teacher as caring tend to place greater value on social responsibility and prosocial goals” (Frey, Guzzo, & Hirschstein, 2000). Teachers can also create specific learning activities to help students develop the necessary social/emotional skills. “Engaging children in learning
new and appropriate social skills can provide more opportunities for young children to positively interact with peers, which can increase children’s ability to benefit from learning activities” (Cheatham & Classen, 2015, p. 30).

When implemented in its entirety, the Second Step curriculum provides education on a wide variety of topics and skills. However, there are instances when teachers do not have time to implement the entire curriculum over the course of a school year, so the instructor may pick and choose the lessons that are taught based on the needs in the classroom. The study conducted by Dowdy, Earhart, and Ekland examined the effectiveness of one unit of the Second Step curriculum: Impulse Control and Problem Solving. The purpose of this study was to examine the effectiveness of one unit of the Second Step curriculum on students’ social/emotional outcomes. There were two research questions that guided this study: Will students who were provided the Impulse Control and Problem-Solving Unit of the Second Step curriculum demonstrate an increase in knowledge of social/emotional skills? Will students who were provided the Impulse Control and Problem-Solving Unit of the Second Step curriculum demonstrate an increase in knowledge of social/emotional skills when compared to students not provided the intervention?

Data were collected from two elementary schools during the 2008-2009 school year. The total enrollment of one school was 421 students, while the other was 286 students. The demographics were comparable with 73% of students identifying as Hispanic or Latino, 18% as White, and 9% as other or multiple ethnic groups. The demographics of the participants were comparable to the general demographics of the schools. The participants in the intervention group have both pre- and post-test data, include 32 third graders and 43 fourth graders. Participants in the control group include 42 third graders and 32 fourth graders. Two paired-samples t-tests were conducted and two analyses of covariance, with pre-test scores as the covariate, were conducted. The Unit
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on Impulse Control and Problem Solving in the Second Step curriculum was taught to all of the students. The results from the third graders indicated a significant difference on social skills knowledge between the control and intervention groups while controlling for initial scores on the pretest measure, thus supporting the second hypothesis. In contrast, the fourth graders did not indicate significant difference between the intervention and control groups after controlling for the pre-test, thus not support the hypothesis.

In a similar study the Violence Prevention Unit was examined for effectiveness. The study included the staff and students at Primo School. There were many concerns about students’ misbehavior at Primo School, which led to the development of a process for collecting student data. The Second Step curriculum was evaluated in this study. The evaluation process was established to: monitor actual student behavior to assess whether the Second Step curriculum resulted in a reduction of student misbehavior, conducting a pre-post teacher survey, and obtain teacher comments about each unit and lesson. Staff had access to behavioral cards, surveys, and checklists to help with data collection. It was determined that there was an increase in student misbehavior after the implementation of the Second Step curriculum. However, this can be explained in part because in starting the evaluation process it sensitized the staff members to student misbehavior. The staff reported more incidents because it was on their radar. There was also a fluctuation of the student population between school years.

The use of the Second Step curriculum in schools helps students of all ages and abilities develop necessary skills for the rest of their lives. Students with underlying, unique needs also see benefits from the use of the Second Step curriculum. Research has shown that students with special needs are at a higher risk for lacking in social/emotional skills that can lead to mental
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health deficits (Machado, 2017). Through inclusion, special education students are given the opportunity to learn from their peers and model their appropriate behavior.

Social/emotional learning in students has become increasingly more challenging due to diverse social and economic backgrounds. Many schools have started to implement a social/emotional curriculum to help students become more equipped to handle situations that may arise. The Second Step curriculum is a series of lessons, brain builders, and games to help the students learn the necessary social-emotional skills. The teachers that have implemented the curriculum have found it to be effective if it is executed properly and continuously resurfaced. As schools embrace the difficulties with social/emotional learning, it is beneficial to implement the Second Step curriculum to help all students be successful.

**Second Step Curriculum.** Equipping students with the skills they need to succeed is an educator’s ultimate goal. However, more and more students are coming to school without the necessary skill set to manage their own emotions, form relationships, and cope with everyday social and academic challenges. Developing the necessary skills at a young age will help students in the long run. In an article written by faculty from the University of California, the authors explain the possible outcomes from the lack of development of social-emotional skills, “Pervasive challenges with social competence and friendships are associated with higher rates of mental illness, incarceration, family conflict, unemployment or underemployment, and other deleterious outcomes” (Dowdy, Earhart, Eklund, & et al. 2009, p. 105). In order to help combat the chronic lack of social/emotional skills among students and help with the future, teachers need to be equipped with the necessary skills and materials to help students be successful. The Second Step curriculum is a tool used by educators to improve school readiness by building executive functioning skills and social/emotional skills (Gambino, Upshur, Wenz-Gross, & Yoo, 2018).
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The Second Step curriculum was developed by the Committee for Children, which is a non-profit organization in Seattle, Washington. It is a series of scripted lessons that are taught under four larger units of study: skills for learning, empathy training, emotion management, and problem solving. The curriculum can be used for students from preschool to middle school, but each age level has a separate, developmentally appropriate kit to help them learn the skills to be more successful in forming relationships, recognizing emotions and how to deal with them, and solving problems. Along with the lessons, the students participate in a series of games, brain builders, and activities to practice the skills. There are home links that are sent home with the students to practice the skills. Teachers implement the lessons, which take between 25-40 minutes, in the general education classroom one time a week (Buntain-Ricklefs, Cook, Low, & Smolkowski, 2015).

The skills for learning unit focuses on school readiness and exhibiting appropriate behavior for school. The students learn how to be ready to learn by sitting with a quiet mouth, ears listening, and eyes watching. The empathy section of the curriculum not only focuses on recognizing emotions, but also responding to the emotions of others. The emotion management unit assists the students in learning how to effectively use positive self-talk and calming down strategies. The problem-solving unit helps students learn strategies to solve problems by themselves (Committee for Children, 1989) When the units are taught and the skills are practiced and reinforced throughout the school year, it is a recipe for success.

In doing the research, the Second Step curriculum has proven to be successful in assisting students in social/emotional competence. In a study where the Second Step curriculum was evaluated, physical aggression decreased and positive social behavior increased at a 6-month follow-up assessment (Buntain-Ricklefs, Cook, Low, & Smolkowski, 2015). Frey and Sylvester
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also completed a study on the effectiveness of the Second Step curriculum. Students’ behaviors and attitudes were analyzed for improvement. It was determined that the students that participated in the Second Step program showed significant improvements in aggression and positive social behavior (1997). Munoz observed similar results in his study regarding aggressive behavior. His study used the Second Step curriculum as a tool to help prevent aggressive behavior and increased prosocial behavior. “The Second Step curriculum appears to lead to a moderate observed decreased in physically aggressive behavior and an increase in neutral and prosocial behavior in school” (Munoz, 2002, p. 11).

Although the implementation of another curriculum may seem like a tall task, teachers have reportedly seen positive results. Many educators would like the program more integrated, infused, and mainstreamed into schools. The important item to remember is that the Second Step curriculum needs to be reinforced and extended in the general education classroom on an ongoing basis. Upon completion of the study, the teachers “felt that the students enjoyed the lessons, and could recall and recite the steps” (Ableser, 2003, p. 86)

The Second Step curriculum helps students in other areas of their school and personal lives. “Social/emotional and academic competencies go hand-in-hand” (Namik, Liew, Wen, 2016, p. 25). The curriculum benefits all around character development, which helps students flourish into productive members of society. The Second Step curriculum has positive impacts on classroom management, classroom learning and the school climate as a whole. It can also be integrated into many other subject areas (Bravi & Madak, 1992). Several of the skills that are taught throughout the curriculum would be considered essential to healthy development. The skills may also help reduce violence (Pedraza, 2009).
Social/Emotional Learning. Social/emotional competence is essential to a child’s development. “There are indicators that future success and positive life outcomes are dependent on the development of children’s social and emotional competencies” (Gill & Jenny, 2018, p. 472). Duncan, Korucu, Lewis, & et al. also stated, “The development of strong social/emotional competence in preschool is necessary for successful interactions with peers and adults, and such interactions may lead to better school adjustment and academic success (p. 4). Although social development and emotional development have two different meanings, they are often grouped together and include five areas: self-awareness, self-management, social awareness, relationship skills, and responsible decision making (Miller, Wanless & Weissberg, 2018, p. 14).

Whether it be through intervention or direct teaching instruction, any teaching or modeling of social/emotional competence is beneficial for children (Humphrey, Panayiotou, & Wigelsworth, 2019). Social/emotional learning is the foundation for many other skills: relationship building, responsible decision-making, self-management, resolving conflicts, and persisting when faced with challenges. The environment in which the student is placed to learn social/emotional skills can positively or negatively impact the child. “Social and emotional development is best fostered by placing children in carefully tailored, caring environments with adults who respond in particular ways” (Ashdown & Bernard, 2011, p. 398).

Teachers play a large role in helping students develop social/emotional learning. “Teachers’ behavior in reference to creating a more positive social and emotional environment can be a pathway to enhancing young children’s social/emotional competence” (Kirk & Jay, 2018, p. 475). Teachers can also promote positive school climate and relationships by greeting students by name and shaking hands at the beginning of class, support positive behavior through positive reinforcement, and promote engagement and relationships by using the first few weeks
of school two intentionally build relationships (Allbright, Hough, Kennedy, & et al., 2019). A teachers’ relationship with students can play a large role in a student’s self-esteem, self-confidence, and overall success. High-quality teacher-child relationships during early elementary can lead to higher academic achievement and a decrease in internalizing and externalizing problems. Relationships have long-lasting effects on the student (Brown, Downer, & Rucinski, 2018).

Just like teachers, parents have a large influence on social/emotional development of a child. Most parents recognize the importance of social/emotional development in a child, but some do not know how to adequately teach their children the skills. Essentially, some parents have reported not having the skill set to properly teach their children the appropriate social/emotional skills. Parenting style, permissive, authoritarian, or authoritative, can also affect a child’s development. Allowing parents opportunities to learn about social/emotional development and different strategies to use with their children can be an effective way to provide children with more school readiness. “Children who are more competent in social and emotional skills also enjoy greater happiness, confidence, and capacity to sustain and grow relationships (Miller, Wanless & Weissberg, 2018, p. 10). Parents are involved at home, but being involved in the school setting helps bridge the connection between the two environments. There is a significant amount of research that discusses the positive impact that parental involvement has on academic success (Bachman, Nokali, & Votruba-Drzal, 2011). Parental involvement with teachers may enhance social functioning and address problem behaviors. In a study conducted by Bachman, Nokali, & Votruba-Drzal, significant connections were found between parent involvement, social skills, and behavior problems (2011). Socioeconomic status can affect a student’s school readiness, social/emotional competence, and academic skills. Low income
families are at a greater risk for poor social/emotional development, which can lead to problem behaviors and classroom difficulties. These deficits can cause a significant achievement gap upon entering Kindergarten (Domitrovich, Greenberg, Rhoades, & Warren, 2008).

Play is a common time where many skills, specifically social and emotional skills, are learned by children. However, play should have appropriate and proper guidance, so children do not turn to violence as a problem-solving technique. Typically, during play, a child’s imagination is used, which requires children to take the perspective of others and learn social norms and expectations. Through imaginative play, children have opportunities to engage in play of their own choosing and practice rules of behavior. In environments, such as the classroom, children are compliant and regulated by adults. It may appear as though the children are self-regulated, but they are regulated by the teacher. Play allows children to make their own decisions, control their emotions, work together with friends, and problem solve (Kirk & Jay, 2018).

**Challenging Behavior.** Due to many different factors, from family dynamics to mental health to parenting style, disruptive behavior has become more prevalent in schools. Disruptive behaviors can lead to children missing out on foundational academic skills needed for future educational success. Disruptive behaviors can be detected at a young age, which can lead to many referrals of preschool age children. Although, this can be very challenging because of the age of the children. Most children at this age tend to have some problematic behavior because of the developmental phase (Briggs-Gowan, Carter, Cicchetti, & et al., 2005).

A concern that goes along with a pattern of disruptive behaviors is that early conduct problems may lead to persistent, defiant, and aggressive behaviors in the long run. Strong, aggressive behaviors can be linked to a mental health disorder, called conduct disorder. “Approximately 40% of children with early behavioral problems such as aggression and
noncompliance, go on to develop conduct disorder” (Croce, Crofts, Plath, & Stuart, 2015, p. 9). The development of conduct disorder, as well as early conduct problems are strong predictors of future outcomes. The outcomes may be criminal activity and antisocial behaviors. However, early intervention may combat the challenging behavior before it turns into a larger challenge (Croce, Crofts, Plath, & Stuart, 2015).

There is a connection between problem behaviors and academic achievement. Low academic achievement is correlated with poor behavioral outcomes. There is a reciprocal effect between academic achievement and behavioral outcomes. However, other conditions may affect behavior: attention deficit disorder, depression, anxiety, and autism. All of the conditions listed have been linked to underachievement and challenging behavior (Barbetti, Barriga, Doran, & et al, 2002). The challenging behavior that can be exhibited is not always violent, it can also be self-harming or destruction of property. The use of an intervention or positive behavior support can help diminish the disruptive behavior (Geromette, Sharma, & Singh, 2008).

Targeting preschool classrooms with interventions is a way to reach a large number of students at a young age to help diminish behavior challenges. “67% of young children in the United States are enrolled in center-based or non-relative care prior to enrollment in kindergarten” (Jones, Li-Grining, Metzger, & et al, 2008, p. 3). Targeting classroom processes is a way to reduce children’s behavioral problems. Academic success is a large goal, but without diminishing challenging behaviors it may be challenging for some children to achieve. Not only can disruptive behavior cause future concerns for the child, but it also impedes the learning of the other students in the classroom.

**Self-Regulation.** Self-regulation, which is the ability to regulate or modulate one’s behavior, can be considered a critical life skill for children to learn. Hrbackova and Vavrova add,
Second Step on Challenging Behavior

“Self-regulation refers to the capacity of the self to alter one’s behavior” (p. 129). Learning self-regulation skills can be linked to a child’s future social competence, as well as the emergence of problem behaviors (Arbona, Baker, Blacher, & et al, 2011). It is especially common for children to learn self-regulation skills during early childhood rather than when the child gets older.

“Between ages three and seven a qualitative shift in self-regulation may take place when children typically progress from reactive or co-regulated behavior to more advanced, cognitive behavioral forms of self-regulation that likely require the integration of many skills such as executive functions and language skills” (Bowles, McClelland, Montroy, & et al., 2016).

The development of self-regulation skills can be a predictor for future short-term and long-term goals and outcomes such as academic achievement, feelings of higher self-worth, a better ability to cope with stress, and adult educational attainment. At school, self-regulation is constantly used through attention, working memory, and inhibitory control. “Self-regulatory abilities prior to kindergarten predict math and literacy achievement throughout the school years, as well as college completion” (Fisher, Healey, Kim, & et al., 2015, p. 222). Negative emotionality can be associated with internalizing (social withdrawal, anxiety, and depression) and externalizing problems (delinquency and aggressive behavior). “It has been argued that children with externalizing problems are undercontrolled, whereas those with internalizing problems are overly controlled or constrained in their behavior” (Cumberland, Eisenberg, Fabes, & et al., 2001, p. 1113). There is consistent research that indicates that externalizing problems can be linked to inadequate regulation.

Parental behaviors are a huge influence on their children in promoting self-regulation and school readiness skills. Consistent disciplinary techniques can also play a role in appropriate self-regulation skills. Having suitable limit-setting and follow-through strategies allows students a
better transition into kindergarten as well as better performance overall (Fisher, Healey, Kim, & et al. 2015).

**Theoretical Framework**

Emotional intelligence is the capacity to be aware of, control, and express one’s emotions, and to handle interpersonal relationships judiciously and empathetically. Emotional intelligence is a theory created by Daniel Goleman that includes three skills: the ability to identify and name one’s own emotions, the ability to harness those emotions and apply them to tasks like thinking and problem solving, and the ability to manage emotions. There are many correlations from the emotional intelligence theory to real-life instances: higher job performance, greater mental health, improved academic success, and less likely to be involved in criminal activity. The ability to recognize others’ feelings and sympathize with them is empathy that is associated with emotional intelligence. Empathy is a skill that a lot of children lack, which can cause problems down the road such as problem behaviors and lower academic success. In an interview with Daniel Goleman, he discussed the importance of developing social/emotional competence during childhood to help with the future. Throughout the interview, Golman put emphasis on implementing a social/emotional curriculum in the schools for children to learn the skills needed for future success (O’Neil, 1996).

**Research Question(s)**

What is the impact of the Second Step curriculum on social/emotional development on first graders?

**Conclusions**

There is a lot of research behind the link between social/emotional competence and problem behaviors in young children. This connection is a predictor of future life outcomes for
these children. The implementation of a social/emotional curriculum, like Second Step can be a game changer for these students. However, developing social/emotional competence before entering kindergarten is ideal. Parental involvement, family dynamics, and socioeconomic status can play a role in the development of the proper social/emotional skill set. Students are more successful when they learn self-regulation skills to help with the strong emotions. Through modeling and positive reinforcement, teachers play a large role in helping the students develop social/emotional skills. The lessons included in the Second Step curriculum incorporate many of the essential social/emotional skills needed for the future.

The next chapter discusses the methods used for data collection and data analysis. Information regarding the setting and the participants is also included.
CHAPTER 3

METHODS

Introduction

This study looks at the effectiveness of the Second Step curriculum on helping with challenging behaviors in the classroom by improving social/emotional development. In the educational field, there are a large number of conversations regarding the mental health and challenging behaviors of students and how they impact the students’ ability to learn. An educator’s number one priority is student success, but this becomes challenging when the students are not equipped with the proper skill set to achieve academic goals. When students are not prepared with the skills for simple life events, challenging behaviors come out when there is an issue placed upon a student. Whether it be evacuating the classroom or helping a student self-regulate, academic skills of other students are interrupted when there are challenging behaviors in the classroom. It is important to get the challenging behaviors under control, so that all of the students are able to learn and be successful.

Research Question

What is the impact of the Second Step curriculum on social/emotional development on first graders?

Research Design

The research design that was selected was experimental, but specifically single-subject. This was chosen because in this study the independent variable (i.e. Second Step curriculum) has an effect on the dependent variable (i.e. social/emotional learning). The participants were strategically selected from the students in the classroom. There is a cause and effect relationship between the variables in this study.
Setting

This study will be conducted in a rural school in a town with a population of 2,500 residents. This small town is always on the grow and in the process of development. The town is known for its farming industry. The school houses the Pre-K-12 students and the elementary has 437 students, with 2% of Hispanic descent, 1% of Native American descent, and 96% of Caucasian descent. Eleven percent of the elementary student population is eligible for free/reduced lunch.

Participants

The participants in this study are 5 students out of 14 students who were strategically chosen for the purpose of the study. All of the participants are Caucasian and from middle class families. Student one is identified as Special Education.

Sampling. The students were chosen based on a week of observational notes. The sample of students varies in their behavioral needs. The goal with the sample is to get a wide range of data collected to have a varied representation of the effectiveness of the Second Step curriculum.

Instrumentation

The data instrument that will be used is a social/emotional learning recording sheet (See Appendix A). Each student is listed at the top of the document and the observational notes, which will be taken one time in the morning and one time in the afternoon, during the school day, will be written underneath the student’s number. The research question looks at the effectiveness of the Second Step curriculum on social/emotional learning and challenging behavior, so the observational notes will serve as a reference tool to see if the behaviors increased, decreased, or remained stagnant.
Second Step on Challenging Behavior

**Data Collection.** Data collection will be done strictly through observations and recording notes. The students will be strategically observed once every morning and once every afternoon of the school day throughout the duration of the study. The observations will look at student behavior, social skills, emotional learning, interactions with other students, and friendship skills (See Appendix E).

**Data Analysis.** The data will be collected on the basis of increased or decreased social/emotional learning. Initial data will be taken to use as comparison for future numbers. Through my action research, I hope to find that with the use of the Second Step curriculum, the frequency of challenging behaviors in the classroom decreases.

**Research Question and System Alignment.** The table below provides a description of the alignment between the study Research Question and the methods used in this study to ensure that all variables of study have been accounted for adequately.

Table 1.1

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Research Question</th>
<th>Variables</th>
<th>Design</th>
<th>Instrument</th>
<th>Validity &amp; Reliability</th>
<th>Technique (e.g., interview)</th>
<th>Source</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>What is the impact of the Second Step curriculum on social/emotional development on first graders?</td>
<td>IV: Second Step Curriculum</td>
<td>Quasi-Experimental</td>
<td>Observational Notes</td>
<td>Observational Notes</td>
<td>First Grade Participants</td>
<td>Sample</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>DV: Social-Emotional Development</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Size: 5 students</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Procedures

The Second Step curriculum lessons will be taught in a whole group manner in the general education classroom for all of the students. One large group lesson will be taught each week throughout the duration of the study, which is from the end of August to the end of October. The lessons that will be taught during this time frame will focus on skills for learning and ways for students to calm down. The skills that are taught during the whole group lessons will be constantly retaught throughout the school year. This may occur when a situation arises that requires the particular skill set that was taught or the educator may reteach to a smaller group of students if it is evident, through observations, that the students need additional assistance. Social/emotional learning will be constantly praised and recognized to help the students retain the skills. Observational notes will be taken one time in the morning and one time in the afternoon throughout the school day on each of the five participants. Data will be collected from the end of August to the end of October. Upon collecting all of the data, it will be analyzed to determine the impact of the Second Step curriculum on social-emotional learning.

Ethical Considerations

Permission and IRB Approval. In order to conduct this study, the researcher will seek MSUM’s Institutional Review Board (IRB) approval to ensure the ethical conduct of research involving human subjects (Mills & Gay, 2019). Likewise, authorization to conduct this study will be sought from the school district where the research project will take place (See Appendix B and Appendix C).

Informed Consent. Protection of human subjects participating in research will be assured. Participant minors will be informed of the purpose of the study via the Method of Assent (See Appendix D) that the researcher will read to participants before the beginning of the
study. Participants will be aware that this study is conducted as part of the researcher’s Masters Degree Program and that it will benefit her teaching practice. Informed consent means that the parents of participants have been fully informed of the purpose and procedures of the study for which consent is sought and that parents understand and agree, in writing, to their child participating in the study (Rothstein & Johnson, 2014). Confidentiality will be protected through the use of pseudonyms (e.g., Student 1) without the utilization of any identifying information. The choice to participate or withdraw at any time will be outlined, both, verbally and in writing.

Conclusions

The single-subject, experimental research design was selected for this study. There are five participants who will be strategically chosen for this study based on behavioral and social/emotional needs. The participants will be chosen based on a week of observation at the beginning of the school year. Data will be collected on the students twice per day: once in the morning and once in the afternoon. The data will be recorded on the social/emotional learning recording sheet. The data will be analyzed on the basis of increased or decreased social/emotional development. The ultimate goal is to find that challenging behaviors decreased through the use of the second step curriculum.

The next chapter will include the results of this study on the effectiveness of the Second Step curriculum in helping improve social/emotional development in first-graders.
CHAPTER 4
RESULTS AND FINDINGS

Purpose of the Study

I had a very behaviorally challenging class last school year (2018-2019), so I want to find the cause and meaning behind the behaviors. Although the students’ needs and behaviors were different, some of them were observed to stem from similar events. My students’ social/emotional learning was very low, so I am interested to see if that is a trend. I want to figure out how I can help the students work through situations in their lives.

What is the impact of the Second Step curriculum on social/emotional development on first graders?

The Second Step curriculum was taught four times throughout the duration of the study to the entire class. Five students were chosen to participate further in the study. Observational notes were taken two times each day on each of the five students for a three-week period. The observational notes included three components: number of times students followed expectations prior to Second Step lesson, number of times students followed after a Second Step lesson, and number of challenging behaviors. Table 1.2 represents the data taken from week one of the study. During the first week, one Second Step lesson was taught. The central message of the lesson was recognizing feelings in others. All of the students’ scores increased in the number of times the expectations were followed after a Second Step lesson was taught. However, three of the students had a large number of challenging behaviors. The challenging behaviors included crawling under desks, throwing items, and speaking disrespectfully.

Week two, represented by Table 1.3, shows an overall decreased number of challenging behaviors. This week the challenging behaviors included: ripping up work, speaking
Second Step on Challenging Behavior

disrespectfully, and throwing pencils. There was one Second Step lesson taught during week two. The central focus was utilizing the strategy of self-talk to assist with problems. The number of times students followed expectations before and after a Second Step lesson was taught fluctuated for each student. Students 2, 3, and 4 increased the number of times they followed expectations after a Second Step lesson was taught. Student 1 decreased the amount of times expectations were followed after a Second Step lesson was taught. Student 5 stayed the same.

Table 1.4 represents week 3’s data. The challenging behaviors continued to decrease. Speaking disrespectfully and refusal to work were the challenging behaviors exhibited this week. The number of times the students followed expectations prior to the Second Step curriculum, as well after the Second Step curriculum increased. There were two Second Step lessons taught during this week. The focus of each of the lessons was being assertive and looking at body language to help identify feelings and how to respond/help.

Table 1.5 represents that data for the duration of the study. Each student’s gap between following expectations prior to a Second Step lesson and following expectations after a Second Step lesson is different. The number of challenging behaviors fluctuated between all of the students. Overall, there was an upward trend of increased times students followed expectations after a Second Step lesson was taught. The number of challenging behaviors decreased throughout the duration of the study.
Table 1.2

*Week 1*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Student</th>
<th>Number of Times Following Expectations Prior to Second Step Lesson</th>
<th>Number of Times Following Expectations After a Second Step Lesson</th>
<th>Number of Challenging Behaviors</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Student 1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Student 2</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Student 3</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Student 4</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Student 5</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>9</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 1.3

*Week 2*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Student</th>
<th>Number of Times Following Expectations Prior to Second Step Lesson</th>
<th>Number of Times Following Expectations After a Second Step Lesson</th>
<th>Number of Challenging Behaviors</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Student 1</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Student 2</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Student 3</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Student 4</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Student 5</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
# Second Step on Challenging Behavior

## Table 1.4

### Week 3

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Student</th>
<th>Number of Times Following Expectations Prior to Second Step Lesson</th>
<th>Number of Times Following Expectations After a Second Step Lesson</th>
<th>Number of Challenging Behaviors</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Student 1</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Student 2</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Student 3</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Student 4</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Student 5</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

## Table 1.5

### Overview

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Student</th>
<th>Number of Times Following Expectations Prior to Second Step Lesson</th>
<th>Number of Times Following Expectations After a Second Step Lesson</th>
<th>Number of Challenging Behaviors</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Student 1</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Student 2</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Student 3</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>14</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Student 4</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Student 5</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>22</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Second Step on Challenging Behavior

### Student 1 Challenging Behavior

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Week</th>
<th>Number of Challenging Behaviors</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Week 1</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Week 2</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Week 3</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### Student 2 Challenging Behavior

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Week</th>
<th>Number of Challenging Behaviors</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Week 1</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Week 2</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Week 3</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Interpretations

The results of the beginning of the study were consistent with personal predications and previous experience with this group of students. The students that were pegged as “high-flyers” throughout the first few months of the school year, proved to continue to be “high-flyers” near the beginning of the study. However, near the end of the study, all of the participants’ behavior become more consistent and leveled out. This was a shocking component that was not predicted. The behavior switch followed all four of the Second Step lessons being taught to the whole class. The students began to develop the calm down strategies that the Second Step curriculum focuses on. Multiple times throughout the study, the students were caught practicing belly breathing and the counting strategy to calm their bodies.

The study as a whole provided clear data results based on personal experiences with this group of students. Student 1, 3, and 5 constantly feed off of each other in the classroom. This was evident in the observational notes taken because the three students’ notes and specific behaviors were consistent with one another. When one of the students had a rough time, the other
two joined in. This happened no matter which student (1, 3, or 5) was the leader. Throughout the
duration of the study, the students were more likely to stay on task and divert from disruptive
behavior the day after a Second Step lesson.

Near the beginning of the study, the students were engaging in behaviors such as:
crawling under tables, throwing items, and speaking disrespectfully, while near the end of the
study, the challenging behaviors were very minimal. The challenging behaviors near the end of
the study included: speaking disrespectfully and refusal to work. The students were making
better choices and practicing the calm down strategies.

The results of this study confirm what the literature provides regarding social/emotional
learning in young children. Many articles mention that with the lack of social/emotional skills,
students do not have the ability to regulate themselves, causing challenging/negative behaviors.
This study showed that through learning skills from the Second Step curriculum, the students’
challenging behaviors decreased, which follows the literature. The development of self-
regulation skills in young children is often a predictor of future goals and success. The bottom
line is social/emotional learning is essential to all other learning.
CHAPTER 5

ACTION PLAN AND PLAN FOR SHARING

The information gathered from this study will be used to help inform my future teaching. Social-emotional learning skills are essential to a child’s development. The Second Step curriculum encompasses many facets of social/emotional learning to help children learn and grow in all environments. Through decreased challenging behavior and increased number of times students followed school expectations, students that participated in this study responded positively to the Second Step curriculum. The Second Step curriculum will continue to be used in my first-grade classroom to directly impact the students.

While the Second Step curriculum will be taught throughout the entire school year, the skills will be reinforced and practiced in every situation at school. When a conflict arises, I will continue to use the same language as the Second Step curriculum uses to correlate the curriculum with real-life situations. Through calming yoga and breathing exercises, the students will have opportunities to practice their new skills throughout the school year. The students that will learn the skills, have the opportunity to showcase them in all environments: lunchroom, recess, in the community, etc. As the students’ skill level increases, the students may be able to model and teach other students the skills.

The results from this study will be shared directly with colleagues and administrators in the school district. The Second Step curriculum was recently purchased for all elementary teachers in the school district. It will be proposed that the Second Step curriculum continues to remain a large part of the focus in the school. Social/emotional skills come before academics, so emotional regulation is essential for academic growth.
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http://web.a.ebscohost.com.trmproxy.mnpals.net/ehost/pdfviewer/pdfviewer?vid=28&sid=5c8c5e6c-61b0-42e1-924b-05873510d717%40sessionmgr4008


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Second Step on Challenging Behavior


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[http://web.a.ebscohost.com.trmproxy.mnpals.net/ehost/pdfviewer/pdfviewer?vid=82&sid=5c8c5e6c-61b0-42e1-924b-05873510d717%40sessionmgr4008](http://web.a.ebscohost.com.trmproxy.mnpals.net/ehost/pdfviewer/pdfviewer?vid=82&sid=5c8c5e6c-61b0-42e1-924b-05873510d717%40sessionmgr4008)


Second Step on Challenging Behavior


http://web.a.ebscohost.com.trmproxy.mnpals.net/ehost/pdfviewer/pdfviewer?vid=74&sid=5c8c5e6c-61b0-42e1-924b-05873510d717%40sessionmgr4008


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Second Step on Challenging Behavior


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https://eric.ed.gov/?id=ED426143

Second Step on Challenging Behavior


http://web.a.ebscohost.com.trmproxy.mnpals.net/ehost/pdfviewer/pdfviewer?vid=75&sid=5c8c5e6c-61b0-42e1-924b-05873510d717%40sessionmgr4008


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https://repository.library.fresnostate.edu/bitstream/handle/10211.3/190345/Machado_csu_6050D_10320.pdf?sequence=1
http://web.a.ebscohost.com.trmproxy.mnpals.net/ehost/pdfviewer/pdfviewer?vid=86&sid=5c8c5e6c-61b0-42e1-924b-05873510d717%40sessionmgr4008


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Pedraza, L. (2009). An examination of the implementation of the second step program in a public school system.  
https://scholarcommons.usf.edu/cgi/viewcontent.cgi?referer=https://www.google.com/&httpsredir=1&article=3135&context=etd

http://web.b.ebscohost.com.trmproxy.mnpals.net/ehost/pdfviewer/pdfviewer?vid=19&sid=ca60ec31-f602-4878-8bd3-4bc988a6302f%40sessionmgr102
APPENDIX A

Social/Emotional Learning Recording Sheet

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date/Behavior</th>
<th>Student 1</th>
<th>Student 2</th>
<th>Student 3</th>
<th>Student 4</th>
<th>Student 5</th>
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</tbody>
</table>
APPENDIX B

Institutional Review Board

DATE: October 30, 2019
TO: Donna Brown, Principal Investigator
    Haley Weber, Co-Investigator
FROM: Lisa Karch, Chair
       Minnesota State University Moorhead IRB
ACTION: DETERMINATION OF EXEMPT STATUS

PROJECT TITLE: [1493826-1] The Effects of the Second Step Curriculum on Challenging Behavior in First Grade
SUBMISSION TYPE: New Project
DECISION DATE: October 30, 2019

Thank you for your submission of New Project materials for this project. The Minnesota State University Moorhead IRB has determined this project is EXEMPT FROM IRB REVIEW according to federal regulations under 45 CFR 46.104.

We will retain a copy of this correspondence within our records.

If you have any questions, please contact the Minnesota State University Moorhead IRB. Please include your project title and reference number in all correspondence with this committee.

This letter has been issued in accordance with all applicable regulations, and a copy is retained within Minnesota State University Moorhead's records.
Institutional Review Board Approval

APPENDIX C

Permission

September 5, 2019

To Whom it May Concern,

This letter is to grant Haley Weber permission to conduct an action research study at Central Cass School District during the 2019-2020 academic year. I understand that this study poses no risk to those persons involved or to the Central Cass School District. I also understand that all information received will be kept confidential and will only be used for purposes of this study.

Sincerely,

Lyndsy Lynch
Elementary Principal, Central Cass School District

Phone: 701-347-5353 Elementary
Phone: 701-347-5352 Middle & High School
Website: www.central-cass.k12.nd.us
Fax: 701-347-5354
802 5th Street North, Casselton, ND 58012
I will explain to the first-grade students, “your parents have given permission for you to participate in a research project that I am working on to be a better teacher. You do not have to participate if you do not want to. Once you start the project with me, you may stop participating at any time without penalty from me, this class, or this school. The only thing you need to do is continue to participate in the Second Step activities with snail and puppy. Throughout the study, I will be writing notes about how you follow expectations in the school, how you listen, and how you interact with your classmates. Are there any questions?”
### APPENDIX E

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date/Behavior</th>
<th>Student 1</th>
<th>Student 2</th>
<th>Student 3</th>
<th>Student 4</th>
<th>Student 5</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>10/1/19</td>
<td>fe</td>
<td>fe</td>
<td>following expectations</td>
<td>fe</td>
<td>loud ringing leader</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11/1/19</td>
<td>shut down, crawling under desks</td>
<td>fe</td>
<td>ring leader</td>
<td>laughing loud</td>
<td>fe</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11/4/19</td>
<td>break, tired</td>
<td>fe</td>
<td>fe</td>
<td>fe</td>
<td>reminders</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11/4/19</td>
<td>laughing, prompted calm down</td>
<td>fe</td>
<td>laughing, prompted calm down</td>
<td>fe</td>
<td>fe</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11/5/19</td>
<td>spot on</td>
<td>fe</td>
<td>fe</td>
<td>fe</td>
<td>fe</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11/5/19</td>
<td>spot on</td>
<td>fe</td>
<td>hard afternoon</td>
<td>fe</td>
<td>hard afternoon, throwing things</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>