

**EFFECTS OF A TARGETED ART PROGRAM ON SOCIAL EMOTIONAL  
LEARNING IN STUDENTS WITH EMOTIONAL BEHAVIORAL DISORDERS**

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**ABSTRACT**

*Effects of a Targeted Art Program on Social Emotional Learning in Students with Emotional Behavioral Disorders* will address the topics of Social Emotional Learning and Emotional Behavioral Disorder, as well as various structures for targeted arts programming. Using a qualitative research approach, the effects of one specific targeted art program focusing on social and emotional implemented for students with the classification of Emotional Behavioral Disorder (EBD) will be investigated. A Social Emotional Learning school-based art enrichment program was established at a private school for students meeting the criteria of EBD and studied throughout a 6-week period. Students were given independent artmaking prompts related to categories of Social Emotional Learning within an individualized student-centered curriculum. Data was collected through observational field notes and artifacts. Information on practices for incorporating Social Emotional Learning into art programming for students with EBD was revealed throughout the course of this research study.

*Keywords: Social Emotional Learning (SEL), Emotional Behavioral Disorder (EBD), Targeted Art Program*

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## CHAPTER I: INTRODUCTION

### **Background to the Problem**

I became interested in the ways art making could be a vehicle for acquiring social and emotional skills while working in community art education with adults effected by severe developmental disabilities. Working with individuals effected by behavioral and cognitive differences on art-based activities felt natural and brought out the strengths and attributes of the individual organically over time while their confidence increased. I found that working on art fostered a more developed sense of self and social relationships and provided more opportunities for them to engage in conversations about themselves.

This shift inevitability led to changes in their interactions with other people and created a group culture emphasizing collaboration and expression. This observation was significant because for many individuals effected by disabilities, having a “support team” made up of people responsible for care-taking roles substituted having a legitimate support network made up of equals who celebrated each other’s strengths and personalities. This social structure was a determinant to the formation and upkeep of the individual’s self-esteem and pride. It appeared to me that many people often only had opportunities to assert themselves as individuals and essential members of their immediate community when in opposition or reaction to others, resulting in socially problematic behavior and conflict.

Throughout my graduate coursework, I found similarities between the behavioral and social barriers described in students classified as having Emotional and Behavioral Disorders (EBD) with behaviors and social tendencies I observed in my previous work in community arts. I became interested in the idea of applying art-based programing to

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students with this classification as an intervention that teaches Social Emotional Learning (SEL) through individual and collaborative art making.

**Problem Statement and Research Questions**

There is powerful potential for targeted art programs to be a legitimate and widely used intervention for students with emotional and behavioral barriers and an opportunity to incorporate Social Emotional Learning themes into art curriculum. Students with Emotional and Behavioral Disorders (EBD) tend to have more difficulty achieving positive outcomes socially and academically both during school and after their academic tenure. This population often goes on to have lower rates of employment and higher rates of incarceration and poverty. A lack of school attachment and engagement found in students classified as having EBD combined with personal struggles and circumstances causes high rates of truancy and dropping out as compared to their general education peers. Students with EBD are often unprepared to participate in the workforce after leaving high school and therefore have fewer opportunities for success in their career. They may also struggle with persistent distress, depression and ongoing trauma related to their emotional behavioral differences and life circumstances (Bottome, 2015).

The act of artmaking is developmentally important for all children. Studies show that artmaking can help children reconcile emotional conflicts and improve their critical thinking, problem solving, and comprehension. In addition, art interventions that focus on expressiveness and decision-making cause more intrinsic motivation and school engagement in students (Cortina, 2015), which is a continuous barrier for students with EBD. Artmaking in a safe environment with peers affords students with EBD a venue for working out and exploring their own ideas about the world, as well as providing students

an opportunity to express hope (Wallace-DiGarbo, 2006). The opportunity for students to express ideas about their perceived barriers, as well as express idealized versions of themselves and the world around them offers a unique opportunity for growth and self-awareness.

Social Emotional Learning (SEL), which emphasizes communication, relationship skills, self-awareness, decision making, social awareness and self-management continues to gain popularity in the education community as studies prove it to be a successful tool in decreasing violence and crisis intervention referrals. Classroom and school-wide SEL programs report less students reporting emotional distress, including depression, anxiety, stress, and social problems (Bridgeland, 2013).

I will be researching the impact of a targeted arts program focusing on SEL on students with EBD in a school-based setting. My case study will consist of an enrichment art period being taught two days a week at a partially residential school for students with Emotional and Behavioral Disorder classifications. The program will consist of individual, partner, and group projects that are based on the five themes of SEL (Self-awareness, self-management, social awareness, relationship skills, and decision making). I will obtain data from observations, informal and formal discussion, and artifacts . This information will be analyzed to draw conclusions on the impact the program had on the student participants over the course of six weeks.

I believe in the potential for art programming to assist students in focusing their attention and energy to their interests, attributes, and preferences potentially causing changes in their social engagement and self-image, regardless of any specific diagnosis or

barriers to socialization and behavior. Through the creation of artwork made through prompts that emphasize the importance of self-reflection, students are able to express their own sense of self and ambition as well inherently challenge others' perceptions of them and reinforce social skills.

With the above in mind, I ask the following research questions:

*Given that there is a linkage between engagement in the arts and positive student outcomes in academics and interpersonal relationships, and students with emotional and behavioral differences have a difficult time achieving positive outcomes academically and socially, how might a targeted art program effect students with Emotional Behavioral Disorders?*

*Given that students effected by EBD have more difficulty finding positive outcomes in academics, interpersonal relationships, and social standing in adolescence and adulthood, and Bridgeland (2013) examines the link between Social Emotion Learning and positive outcomes, how might art teachers implement Social Emotional Learning in their classrooms to benefit students with EBD?*

### **Significance of the Study**

Students with EBD do not have innate barriers to learning and can be capable students. However, teachers and support teams continuously struggle to keep students with EBD engaged in school and extracurricular activities. This population often lacks the confidence or interest to attempt new skills, or to fully participate in a learning environment. Many may feel that they have been defined by their barriers or behavioral differences and receive little positive attention for their preferences and positive

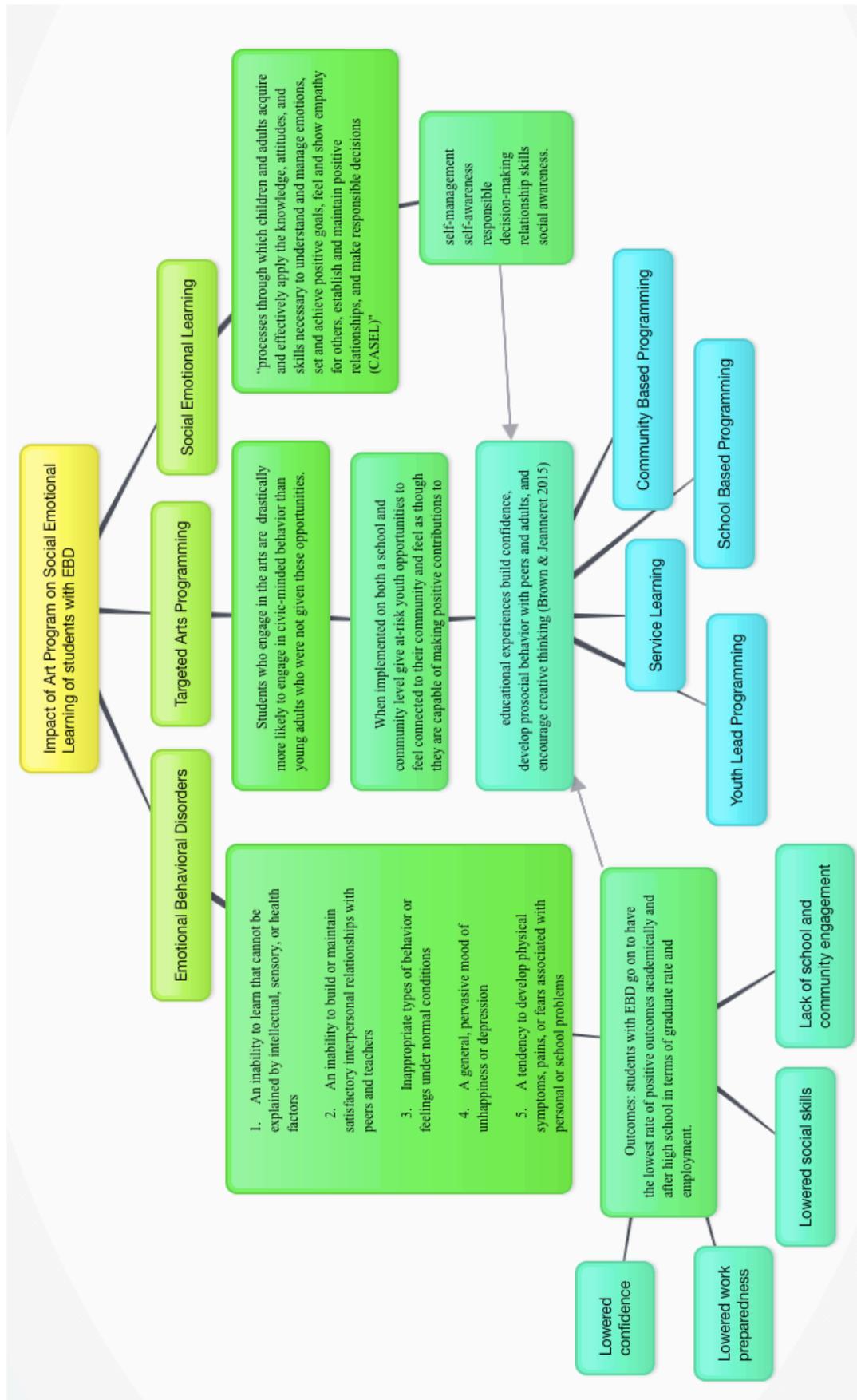
attributes. It is not hard to imagine these students being stuck in a cycle of failing academically and socially, and then losing interest and hope in themselves, teachers, school and mental health care systems.

These students have the potential to be gifted creatives and academics. As educators, it is imperative that we continuously find new ways to support students with this classification and afford them opportunities to foster self and social awareness so that they grow to have more control over the decisions that they are making, and also how others perceive them. This study will inform art teachers and community art educators on practices for fostering safe artmaking spaces for students with EBD.

### **Theoretical Framework**

The chart below organizes the topics and theories relevant to my study that I will be exploring in further detail as this study progresses. The chart is divided into three categories to be expanded upon: Emotional Behavioral Disorders, Social Emotional Learning, and Targeted Arts Programming. Each topic is expanded to display subtopics and outcomes. The chart illustrates that the characteristics and outcomes of EBD are in opposition to the core themes of SEL. Targeted Art programming innately encompasses the five themes of SEL and is proven to promote positive outcomes for students with EBD.

*Figure 1 Theoretical Framework Chart*



### **Limitations of the Study**

My research will be concerning the effects that a targeted arts program focusing on social and emotional learning has on a group of students with emotional behavioral disorders in a specific and limited capacity. I will be working with a group of nine students who will remain constant throughout the course of the six-week study. All of the participants will be students at the same school. We will be meeting consistently in the same classroom twice weekly for six weeks. Five of the participants will be in grade eight and four participants will be in grades four and five. Attendance within the program will vary from student to student, which will limit the study significantly.

Although students with EBD are often grouped into the same school or program, the individual student needs and motivations vary greatly. Therefore, the impact that a social emotional learning art program may have on one group of students with EBD may be drastically different in another group of students who have different individual learning needs, experiences and behavioral differences.

Research will be conducted at a site that educates students with severe EBD and trauma and there will be a specific protocol in the classroom for handling negative behavior and affirming prosocial behavior that will be enforced by an attending teacher. These types of protocols have potential to influence the program and study, therefore I will need to familiarize myself with and implement in my programming in order to provide consistency for the students involved.

### **Definition of Terms**

**Emotional Behavioral Difference:** “A condition exhibiting one or more of the following characteristics over a long period of time and to a marked degree that adversely affects a child’s educational performance:

(A) An inability to learn that cannot be explained by intellectual, sensory, or health factors.

(B) An inability to build or maintain satisfactory interpersonal relationships with peers and teachers.

(C) Inappropriate types of behavior or feelings under normal circumstances.

(D) A general pervasive mood of unhappiness or depression.

(E) A tendency to develop physical symptoms or fears associated with personal or school problems” (IDEA 2004).

**Characteristics/Behaviors seen in children classified as EBD:** “Hyperactivity (short attention span, impulsiveness); Aggression or self-injurious behavior (acting out, fighting); Withdrawal (not interacting socially with others, excessive fear or anxiety); Immaturity (inappropriate crying, temper tantrums, poor coping skills); and Learning difficulties (academically performing below grade level).

Children with the most serious emotional disturbances may exhibit distorted thinking, excessive anxiety, bizarre motor acts, and abnormal mood swings” (The National Alliance on Mental Illness).

**Social Emotional Learning:** “Social and emotional learning (SEL) involves the processes 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” (Bridgeland 2013).

**Selected/Indicated Programs, Targeted Program:** “Programs that are provided to students who are specifically selected to receive treatment because of conduct problems or some risk factor (typically identified by teachers for social problems or minor classroom disruptiveness). Most of these programs are delivered to the selected children outside of their regular classrooms (either individually or in groups), although some are used in the regular classrooms but targeted on the selected children “(Wilson and Lipsey 2007).

**Special schools or classes:** “Programs involve special schools or classrooms that serve as the usual educational setting for the students involved. Children are placed in these special schools or classrooms because of behavioral or academic difficulties that schools do not want to address in the context of mainstream classrooms. Included in this category are special education classrooms for behavior disordered children, alternative high schools, and schools- within- schools programs” (Wilson and Lipsey 2007).

**Assumptions to Be and Not to Be Debated**  
**Assumptions to Be Debated**

- Given that Social Emotional Learning has been proven to have a correlation to positive outcomes in classrooms in school and correlated to a decrease in violence, crisis, and interpersonal conflict (Bridgeland, 2013) and teachers can incorporate social and emotional skills into all school topics across all grades

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by using goal-setting instructions and focusing on problem solving and decision making (Bridgeland, 2013), how to apply social emotional learning to artmaking will be debated.

- Given that targeted art-based interventions have been shown, when implemented on both a school and community level give at-risk youth opportunities to feel connected to their community and feel capable of making positive contributions to their environments, whether or not targeted arts programming has positive effects on a specific group of students with EBD will be debated.

**Assumptions Not to Be Debated**

- Given that this study is limited to a small group of students within one targeted program, whether or not this study accurately represents all students with Emotional Behavioral Disorders will not be debated. Due to the wide range of specific circumstances and disorders that EBD covers, it is impossible to predict with any certainty what effect a similar program would have on any other group of students with specific needs.
- Given that I will be studying one targeted group of students with EBD between grades 4-8, whether or not the program can be applied to groups of students with EBD in grades k-3 or 9-12 will not be debated. Due to the small and limited nature of the student group being studied, the program's effect on other groups of students cannot be known.
- Given that this study will be limited to a targeted enrichment program for a small group of students who attend a specialized school for students effected

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by EBD, applying social emotional learning curricula to an art classroom in a public school will not be debated. Due to the nature of the study, the program's curriculum or structure will be not taking into consideration state or national art education standards.

- Given that the targeted art program aims to study effects of artmaking through social emotional learning, best practices for instructing principals of fine arts (material usage and techniques) to students with EBD will not be debated because the study is focused on emotional/behavioral effects as opposed to artistic improvement/ instructing artistic skills.
- Given that there are many behavioral interventions that have been proven to promote positive outcomes for students with EBD in a specialized school, interventions that may be beneficial overall in reducing behavioral and emotional barriers in students with EBD will not be debated. This study focuses specifically on the effects of one targeted art-based program on a limited group of students with EBD.

**Summary / Roadmap of Chapters**

Themes in Social Emotional Learning and art programming are connected and can be used to support and supplement each other. The process of fostering safe and supportive environments for students to pursue independent artmaking and group collaborations inherently also connects to lessons in self and social awareness. For students with Emotional Behavioral Disorders, targeted programming that emphasize SEL may be beneficial in influencing positive social and behavioral outcomes, while providing an outlet for expression, healthy assertion and decision making. In the chapters

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to come, I examine themes in Social Emotional Learning and targeted art programming in order to design a targeted art program for a group of students with EBD.

## **CHAPTER II: LITERATURE REVIEW**

### **Introduction**

Although there is a wide array of literature available on behavioral modification techniques and programming for students diagnosed with specific disorders which fall into category of Emotional Behavioral Disorders (EBD) as well as the effects of Social Emotional Learning in a classroom and school wide setting, there is a gap in relevant literature regarding the effects of Social Emotional Learning (SEL) programming on students classified as having EBD although literature does support that SEL is beneficial to all students. Because Social Emotional Learning is a broad term used to describe different themes and topics integrated into instruction, topics under the umbrella of SEL are prevalent in many examples of targeted arts programming that are relevant to this study and examined in this literature review. Emotional Behavioral Disorders is also a broad term that encompasses subcategories of externalizing and internalizing behaviors as well as low incidence disorders. Literature describing the effects of targeted arts programming on students with EBD is often categorized by the disorder or behavior that the student has been diagnosed with as opposed to using the blanket term EBD. Much of the literature on targeted arts programming describes student participants as at-risk due to an array of circumstances including but not limited conditions falling under the umbrella of EBD. This literature review consists of topics in which a basic understanding and background are needed in order to understand the research questions presented in this study.

**Emotional Behavioral Disorders (EBD)**

Emotional and Behavioral Disorders (EBD) is a category encompassing many different specific mental health diagnosis and behaviors. In order for students to receive special education for EBD, the student must have a condition that impedes their ability to perform academically, meeting a minimum of one of the following criteria set forth in the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA), 2004:

1. An inability to learn that cannot be explained by intellectual, sensory, or health factors
2. An inability to build or maintain satisfactory interpersonal relationships with peers and teachers
3. Inappropriate types of behavior or feelings under normal conditions
4. A general, pervasive mood of unhappiness or depression
5. A tendency to develop physical symptoms, pains, or fears associated with personal or school problems

Although students identified as having EBD may also meet the criteria for a learning disability, a classification of EBD does not discount students from being capable learners who can succeed academically when given the appropriate services and supports. Students with EBD are one of the most difficult groups of students to educate within a classroom due to antisocial and externalizing behaviors. Administrators and teachers are often hesitant to place students with severe EBD in inclusion classrooms for fear of

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disturbing or impeding the learning of other children. Students with severe EBD are often better educated in environments designed to meet their specific needs in small groups (Bottome, 2015). Because students with EBD have varying needs based on their unique symptoms and behavioral differences, there is a risk in treating all students with an EBD classification in one group or with the same behavioral modifications. However, there are best practices put forth by teachers and psychiatrists for minimizing and eliminating disruptive behaviors that are often adopted for and included in the IEP (Individualized Education Plan) of students with EBD (Landrum, Tankersley, Kauffman, 2003). Students with EBD go on to have the lowest rate of positive outcomes academically and after high school in terms of graduate rate and employment. In *Teaching Troubled Teens: A qualitative Case Study of Educating Students with Emotional and Behavioral Disorders in a Private Special Education School (2015)*, Bottome suggests that this statistic may be in part due to an inability for teachers within an inclusive classroom to provide the individualized supports students with EBD benefit from such as small class size, highly structured routines, and individualized instruction. He also suggests that students with EBD have a lower rate of school engagement and membership and often feel unable to achieve academic success. In turn, students with EBD often leave school and join a workforce in which they also feel inadequate and unable to succeed (Bottome, 2015).

**Social Emotional Learning**

Social and Emotional Learning, which is education that teaches self-awareness, self-management, social awareness, relationship skills, and responsible decision making has been proven to have a correlation to positive outcomes in classrooms and school-based programs. There is a clear correlation between the implementation of a Social

Emotional Learning curricula to a decrease in violence, bullying, and dropout rate, as well as individual student optimism and school culture (Bridgeland and Hariharan, 2013).

Social Emotional Learning is defined as “processes 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” by The Collaborative for Academic, Social, and Emotional Learning, or CASEL, the leading organization in the advocacy of and research on Social and Emotional Learning in classrooms and schools. In *The Missing Piece A report for CASEL: A National Teacher Survey on How Social and Emotional Learning Can Empower Children and Transform Schools*, authors Bridgeland and Hariharan categorize Social and Emotional Learning into the categories of self-management, self-awareness, responsible decision-making, relationship skills, and social awareness. Because the theme categories addressed in SEL correlate to the barriers that we see in the criteria for EBD, and according to CASEL students who receive SEL instruction, have been found to exhibit reduced emotional distress, including fewer reports of depression, anxiety, stress, and social withdrawal, these categories will inform the program completed by participants during this study.

Themes of self-management and self-awareness which includes recognizing one’s individual emotions and behaviors, as well as barriers and strengths will be addressed in using journal prompts in order to complete assignments, that will be used catalysts for group and individual discussion. As one example, students will be asked to complete individual assignments such as to illustrate and write about themselves as a comic book superhero as a way of addressing their own strengths and barriers. Social awareness and

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relationship skills will be addressed inherently through completing collaborative projects and partnerships. Responsible decision making will be addressed through the process of handling and usage of art materials. These themes are guidelines in planning the individual and group assignments and will be supported through discussion and group activities.

**Targeted Arts Programming**

Findings from studies done by The National Endowment for the Arts indicate that students who have opportunities to “engage deeply with the arts in and out of school” are drastically more likely to engage in civic-minded behavior than young adults who were not given these opportunities. The research also states that students who engaged in the arts were more likely to go on to attend college and earn advance degrees (Catterall, Dumais, Hampden-Thompson, 2012). It is common for students meeting the criteria for being at-risk to become disengaged with academic pursuits due to barriers to learning, as well as barriers socially that preset themselves in the school setting. Targeted art-based interventions when implemented on both a school and community level have been shown to give at-risk youth opportunities to feel connected to their community. This type of programming has resulted in youth feeling as though they are capable of making positive contributions to their environments. There is a potential to improve overall behavior and functioning academically and socially.

Art is an irreplaceable field of study for youth in that it presents an opportunity for students who have been made to feel marginalized socially and have underperformed academically to gain pride in an educational setting. Artmaking has been found to be developmentally important for children and adolescents. Studies show that making art

can help children reconcile emotional conflicts and improve their critical thinking, problem solving and comprehension. In addition, art interventions that focus students on their creativity and expressiveness have an effect of causing more intrinsic motivation and engagement in students (Cortina, 2015). Developmental psychologists confirm that organized activities have successful outcomes for youth considered at-risk and are proven to promote prosocial behaviors. This finding, in conjunction with the ability of arts education to provide enriching individual experiences, can be developmentally significant (Elpus, 2013). Artmaking in a safe space under the guidance of a skilled artist or teacher affords students with EBD a venue for safely exploring ideas about the world, as well as providing students an opportunity to express longing and hope (Wallace-DiGarbo, 2006). Students can express ideas about their perceived barriers, as well as express idealized versions of themselves and the world around them.

Research indicates that engaging at-risk youth, which includes but is not limited to students classified as having EBD, in community and school-based art programs have the potential to build confidence, develop prosocial behavior with peers and adults, and encourage creative thinking through educational experiences (Brown & Jeanneret, 2015). Community and school-based programs have been implemented employing various methods of using art to engage this population in an attempt to positively influence their social and academic outcomes and increase prosocial behavior.

Various models of targeted art programs have shown to be effective both when implemented in community settings, as well as implemented as a school-based activity supplementing the students' other curriculum. Programs have a variety of structures in terms of curriculum, frequency, group size and specific outcomes that the program is

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intended to achieve. Consistently, art programming is intended to engage at-risk students including students with EBD by emphasizing confidence building, social and community engagement, and the developing of creative problem-solving skills. These integral topics that naturally occur in the artmaking process fall under the category of Social Emotional Learning. Two examples of targeted art programs that have influenced this study and are relevant to the conversation on the effects of targeted art programs on youth that are considered at-risk are to follow. Both of the following programs identified participants based on multiple criteria for being considered “at-risk,” including the demonstration of destructive and anti-social behaviors in conflict with others, or through self-harm, aligning with criteria for being considered EBD.

**Youth-Led Programming**

The Evolution Project is a community-based art program in Melbourne, Australia targeting young people ages fifteen to twenty-two who demonstrate social and health barriers. Their mission stresses a youth-led practice model, in which participants’ individual interests and aesthetic preferences guided the projects that they worked on (Brown & Jeannette 2015). The program was formed in 2009 as collaboration between the Melbourne Graduate school of education and the city’s youth services mission. The evolution project emphasizes social engagement and youth participants worked in groups no larger than eight with one teaching artist, who helped all participants complete self-directed projects independently. Participants received instruction on art-making in areas of their interest, and were given individualized feedback and attention from the artist and social workers staffing the program throughout the process. The culmination of the eight week program was a public exhibition in which the artworks were for sale (Brown &

Jeannette, 2015).

Using a youth-led model, participants were encouraged to acknowledge their peers' unique studio practices. The relaxed model of learning also encouraged participants to engage in conversations with their peers about their experiences and staff in the program. Data indicated that as the program progressed week to week the participants started comfortably engaging with each other and were able to bond with their peers about art making as well as the shared experience of being considered "deviant or disengaged" (Brown & Jeanneret, 2015, 13).

During the first two years of the program, data was collected to determine the effectiveness of Evolution Project regarding engaging the at-risk population in their communities and encouraging pro-social behaviors. Data included participants' prior case histories in contrast to any education or training started in the month following the program, as well as interviews with the participants, artists, and families of participants. The researcher collecting data was present throughout the eight weeks and developed mutually beneficial relationships with the teaching artists and the youth.

Participants who were once hesitant or disengaged in the program expressed feeling pride in the work they had made. It was also noted that attendance in Evolution was high overall, as students completed pieces they become more engaged and motivated to create more (Brown & Jeanneret, 2015). Data on the effectiveness of Evolution considered the high rate of attendance and completion of the program a marked signifier of the program's success, as keeping at-risk youth engaged in a project and motivated to complete it was a signifier of positive effects on the participants' self-esteem and general motivation. Participants expressed in interviews following the program that they are

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interested in continuing to pursue art making, or to take additional training to gain skills that could open doors for employment (Brown & Jeanneret, 2015, 14).

Due to the younger age and varying skill sets and barriers of the participants in this study, the youth-lead model for programming may not lend itself to the consistency that is important to establish for participants who may have an array of specific learning and environmental needs. Also, because of this study is focused on Social Emotional Learning, more structured activities are needed in order to observe participant's social awareness and behavior over the course of the study.

### **School-Based Intervention Programming**

While the Evolution Project is an example of a model of a community-based youth-lead programming, school-based targeted interventions modeling various curriculums have also been implemented and studied for effectiveness in improving the lives of at-risk youth, including participants displaying criteria for EBD. The program The Art Room, based in the UK serves as a model of school-based art intervention with measurable results.

The Art Room is a targeted group intervention in schools throughout the UK for students affected by emotional disturbances, behavioral and social barriers (classifications for EBD). The program provides a comfortable environment for students to engage socially and complete art-based projects in small groups between 1-2 times weekly for at least 10 weeks (Cortina, 2015).

The Art Room programming is designed to achieve the following goals, which fall under the umbrella of Social Emotional Learning: To reduce emotional and behavioral problems, increase self-confidence, assist in building trusting relationships,

and increase appropriate social behavior (Cortina, 2015, 37). Each Art Room has a couch in which students gather at the beginning of each session to have a prompted group discussion. Students are encouraged to share and are highly praised for appropriate social interactions. Students also share a snack and have a discussion at the time, as the program mission states the importance of developing routine for positive socialization. Here we see a similarity with Evolution Program, in that healthy socialization is encouraged outside of art making practices and the program provides food to participants as a part of the daily regimen so there is space outside of art making for students to socially engage with peers. Staff praise participants in both programs for engaging in appropriate social interaction.

The curriculum in The Art Room is notably more structured than in Evolution. Students in this program participate in art projects that are typically implemented over several weeks, which often involve creating items for the students to take home or display at school such as decorations and furniture (Cortina, 2015). Although the structure is more group project -based than Evolution, there is a similarity in the curriculum. It stresses student ownership and pride in the work that is created and encourages students to use the program as a social outlet. In Evolution, the program culminated in a body of work displayed publicly and in The Art Room, the individual projects were designed to be displayed or used by the student, their family, or peers. The age group targeted by The Art Room is younger than Evolution, which could be in part a basis for the decision to design the curriculum around short-term successes as a means of engagement.

The Art Room was studied for effectiveness during the 2012-13 school year based on questionnaires, which assigned numerical values to the severity behaviors displayed at school and at home. The areas analyzed were emotional problems, conduct problems, hyperactivity, peer problems, and inappropriate social behavior. Analyses of the student questionnaires indicate “The Art Room also significantly improves students’ mood and feelings, with students reporting an 87.5% improvement following participation” (Cortina, 2015, pg. 39).

This study on the This Art Room program provides one framework of a targeted program for students with EBD. This study emphasized the importance of structure and routine for creating a safe and supportive environment. This program’s theme of personal ownership of decisions and the building of confidence of the participants through completing projects that enhanced their school environment also informed my study. In addition to student’s individual and partner projects, the program will culminate in a participant student-lead project will be benefit their school environment.

### **Service Learning Programming**

In *Promoting Social and Emotional Learning Through Service- Learning Art Projects*, authors Russell and Hutzler explore how service learning projects are one method to explore incorporating Social Emotional Learning (SEL) into targeted art programming. Service learning is a structure in which students work with each other and with their teacher to accomplish a service project such as a mural or project that benefits their community from planning to installing. Because of the social nature of service learning projects, students’ SEL is improved using the “collaborate and create” method. Collaborate and create method is implemented when students who are community

members and collaborators such as teaching artists take on simultaneous roles as students and teachers. Asset-based strategy is used to guide the art projects. Asset-based assessment is a team typically used on community arts, which identifies the resources of the community followed by efforts to build upon them (Russell and Hutzell, 2007). In this study, this is employed as a method of determining art projects and also has a method for students to assess themselves, their peers, and the community they are serving.

Student journals are used as tools in assessment of students' SEL skills. Journal prompts that indirectly relate to an area of SEL in order to collect data and assess the development and understanding of skills. Russell and Hutzell are suggesting that service-learning projects inherently instruct SEL because areas such as planning, self-control, interpersonal relationships, and recognizing their own strengths and the strengths of others are inherent parts of the service-learning structure. Russell and Hutzell outline how tenants of social emotional learning are involved at every step of the process in service-learning.

In *Art As Agency: Exploring Empowerment of At-Risk Youth*, Anne Wallace-DiGarbo observed and collected data on another school-based art program aimed to empower youth through the process of art making and community building. The program was based on "Project Self Discovery" model and was implemented in a community in the mid-Atlantic. Similar to the aforementioned models, this program operated within small groups of students facilitated by a local teaching artist and a supervising psychologist. Students identified as being at-risk due to the factors as outlined previously such as destructive and antisocial behaviors, participated in a series of workshops once

weekly culminating in a public reception at the end of the program (Wallace-DiGarbo, 2006).

This model had students begin each workshop with warm exercises such as scribble art, making a Mandela, making masks, or representing themselves in symbols. These exercises were completed in personal journals, which were called Creator Pages, and were also facilitated by a period of group discussion. Students were encouraged to participate in conversations with each other on topics outside of art making and the supervising artist and psychologist praised students for demonstrating support for one another and making positive comments about their peers (Wallace-DiGarbo, 2006). Similar to the models previously outlined, the structure of the program includes time designed for students to have discussions with their peers. Art-making begins as the topic for the conversations, but students are encouraged to continue dialogue and speak on topics that are not directly related to the projects to engage in positive social interactions.

As students grow more comfortable with each other and with the staff, they began working on projects as a group culminated in a mural at Community Center Skate Park. Community members paid respect to the group of artists at a public reception held at the culmination of the project. All participants were praised for being community leaders and contributing art and beauty to their community. A six month follow up assessment supported that participants showed improved function and reduced risk based on questionnaire results (Wallace-DiGarbo, 2006).

Service-learning projects inherently expand on topics in SEL because areas such as planning, self-control, interpersonal relationships, and recognizing one's areas of strength and weakness are natural parts of the service-learning structure. The

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literature outlined how tenants of social emotional learning are involved at every step of the process in service-learning. Although this study is not specifically focused on service projects, the study will involve service learning to the extent that students will work in a group and complete self and partner asset inventory and the collaborate and create method informs the program model.

### **CHAPTER III: METHODOLOGY**

#### **Design of the Study**

##### **Setting**

Martin Luther School at Silver Springs is a private special education school located in Plymouth Meeting, Pennsylvania, serving students with severe emotional and behavioral disturbances from kindergarten to eighth grade. Approximately half of students attending the school reside in a residential treatment program at Silver Springs, which utilizes a trauma-informed approach to teach coping skills and reinforcing socially appropriate behaviors. Silver Springs identifies the following as being issues that may cause a child age six through fourteen to be deemed unsafe in a household or community setting and reason for their placement into a residential care facility: physically aggressive behavior, reenactments of trauma, manic behavior, severe depression, severe anxiety, self-injury, oppositional behavior, and impulsivity (Silver Springs Martin Luther School, 2017). Family association and involvement varies; many children residing at Silver Springs are receiving guardianship services through the state and foster care system. Children residing at Silver Springs live in housing units where they receive individualized 24-hour support by child care and mental health specialists and participate in regular rehabilitation therapy and therapeutic recreation activities. Nature and foliage surround the residential, outpatient and education buildings on campus.

The Martin Luther School is an accredited private school on the Silver Springs campus providing students with support in emotional and behavioral challenges. Students who reside at the Silver Springs residential program are enrolled at The Martin Luther School, as well as students residing in the community who are in need of a more

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supportive out-of-district placement and are transported from Philadelphia and other surrounding districts. Upon entering the Hess building which houses the school's art room, visitors first notice the common spaces in the building's foyer and hallways are softly lit and silent. The art room is brightly painted, furnished and maximally decorated with posters and student artwork displayed on the walls and hanging from the ceiling. Stylized posters and signage explain classroom rules, goals, and protocols, which include a wall devoted to each student's assigned role within their class. Commonly used supplies are stored throughout the room in labeled containers. Shelves are color coded and store a variety of papers in a variety of colors and sizes. Supplies that are less frequently used or require teacher-lead instruction are stored in closed cabinets. The room contains two table stations that both seat approximately ten students in view of a smart board. The room has a sink station, bathroom, and exit to an outside walkway that connects buildings on campus.

**Participants**

Participants in this study consist of nine students attending The Martin Luther School. The group contains students who live at the school residentially and who live in the community. Five participants are in grade eight (13-14 years old) at the time of the program and four students are in grades four and five (10-11 years old). Students are selected for the program based on their interest in art. Because the program is scheduled during an enrichment period in which students can choose their activity, students selected for the program are those who have an interest in receiving additional art programming and willingly participate. All the students in the program are selected by their art teacher, Margo Wunder, who is to attend each program session. Students have varying behavioral

and emotional needs. The participants have no relationship to me as a teacher or researcher before the beginning of the program. The students attended the program two times weekly during a mid-day enrichment period (45 minutes) two times weekly for six weeks, for a total of 12 sessions.

### **Researcher Role**

As a researcher, I designed the study, gather information about the participants before, during and after the program and collect data. In my researcher role, I also facilitate informal discussions, collect and analyze journals and sketchbook assignments. As an art educator I implement lessons that emphasize social and emotional learning through art projects. In my role as a teacher, I instruct on art making techniques relevant to the projects and assist individuals and groups in implementing these techniques and carrying out the curriculum of the class each session. Because I do not have any contact with the students prior to this program, my relationships with the students and school administration is formed throughout the program and based solely around my role within the program.

### **Research Procedure**

The study is conducted over the course of six weeks with two 45-minute sessions each week. The program has a total of nine participants. On the onset of the program, students are placed into pairs that consist of one 5th grade student and one 8th grade student. Pairs of students will remain the same throughout the duration of the program. Student partners are intended to help each other as needed and work together as a partnership and also assist each other as needed within the context of the whole program. Student pairs will also share their independent work (such as journal/sketchbook entries)

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with each other. Student pairs will conduct asset assessments on themselves and their partners in order to gain an understanding of the ways in which their interests and skills may be most beneficial to their partnership and to the program. Students will receive a binder that will contain six dividers labeled by week. Each session, the students will receive the papers that fill each section of the binder. These documents will contain a sketchbook prompt or journal prompt, along with a handout explaining the goals of the session. The first 10 minutes of the class will be devoted to working on the journal/sketchbook prompt. After this time, the students will be introduced to the lesson of the session and work for 25 minutes. The last 10 minutes of the session will be 5 minutes of cleanup and 5 minutes of recap and closure. Student binders will be collected by the instructor and used to track progress and gain information on the students' feedback related to the Social Emotional Learning themes of the lesson. Each session will contain a lesson that involves one of the five themes of SEL (self-awareness, self-management, social awareness, relationship skills, and decision making). Students will work over the course of the program on both their independent and group projects. Student insight will guide the projects.

**Ethical Considerations**

All participants, guardians, and school faculty including teachers will receive a research description of the study that outlines the program goals and research methods before agreeing to participate in the study. After receiving the research description participants will also receive a participants' rights form that outlines their rights as research subjects and participants in the study. Participants are volunteering to participate in the study and may withdraw from the study at any time. Participants will also agree

that the researcher can withdraw a participant from the study at any time. No information that personally identifies any participants will be voluntarily released or disclosed except if specifically asked by law. The form will also include contact information for participants and their guardian to contact the researcher with questions or concerns at any time. Participants and their guardians will choose either to consent or not consent to be audio recorded during interviews. Participants and guardians will be informed that written documents, such as journal/sketchbook prompts, and student artwork will be documented through photography, cataloged, viewed and analyzed by the primary researcher and in an academic environment. Participants and guardians will have the option to consent or not consent to allowing these items to be viewed in an educational setting outside of the research, such as conferences, presentations, or publications. Teachers and paraprofessionals who work with participants will sign consent forms explaining the purpose and timeline of the study and they will have the opportunity to consent to being involved. All student names will be changed, and no details disclosed in the study will personally identify them. All participants, faculty and guardians will be made aware that no payment or tangible benefits will be given for participation in the study.

### **Research Methods**

This descriptive case study is a bounded system because it is confined to a single program implemented with a small group of students with EBD who attend a specific school. The program will consistently involves the same students week to week for the duration of the study and I will be the sole researcher in the study and art educator in the program. Utilizing action research and qualitative methods to collect and analyze data

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will allow me to obtain information on the effects that this particular targeted art program has on this group of students with EBD. My study will be informed by data obtained through various verbal and visual methods that allow me to assess student progress in the themes of Social Emotional Learning throughout the program.

**Student Observation**

Collaboration is an essential part of social emotional learning because it emphasizes team work and relationship building. The ways in which students conduct and express themselves socially will be important in the study as a gauge of the student's social strengths and barriers. Thus, observing students while collaborating or socializing is essential to assessing any changes to socialization throughout the program. Observation of students in group scenarios allows me to gain a better understanding of the social dynamics that exist between the students. Opportunity to assess how different combinations of students interact with each other and to document any progress that students make in terms of appropriate socialization, empathy, and building relationships throughout the duration of the program. If students work in partnership, observing collaboration between the partners will be an integral part of assessing how they respond to being put in pairs.

Observing students working independently allows me to see their particular work styles, preferences and ease with certain materials. Observing individual students within a group environment can also give insight into their triggers for positive and negative behaviors based on what is going on around them. Observation allows for a deeper understanding of each student individually—such preferences, topics or subjects they are interested in. Having access to this information and calling upon it in conversation and

lesson planning builds trust and respect between me as a researcher and educator, and the participants.

### **Sketchbook/Journal Analysis**

Analyzing student sketchbooks will provide information on the student's individual interests and preferences based on the subjects and topics that come up in their responses to prompts. Students may feel more comfortable drawing or writing responses to prompts in their sketchbooks rather than sharing their thoughts verbally for fear of being judged or difficulty with verbal communication. Journals and sketchbooks allow students to think about responses and topics and perhaps produce more thoughtful responses to prompts rather than in the moment of conversation/group discussion where there is the distraction and influence of other student's responses. Student are prompted weekly to write and draw responses in their sketchbooks that give insight into how they view themselves and people around them. Sketchbooks are collected by the researcher after each session, and participant responses are analyzed.

### **Informal Interviews**

Informal interviews with participants allow for a personalized experience, where I can get to know each participant initially on the onset of the program and throughout the program to inquire about their thoughts, opinions, and experiences. Individual conversations allow for students to have any accommodations met during in order to maximize opportunity for conversation in a more thorough way than may be possible in group discussions. Student conversations also have the potential to be a positive learning

experience in socialization and appropriate communication for participants who have barriers to appropriate communication.

Teachers spend an immense amount of time with their students and are able to observe even small changes in a student's behavior. Teachers often appreciate the chance to share their thoughts, opinions, and observations, as they have unique insight because of how closely they work with the student. Discussions with teachers and paraprofessionals are critical in gaining a deeper understanding into a participant's background and current supports if they are unable to articulate that information. Discussion and informal interview with the students' regular art teacher will occur at the onset of the program, as well as at the culmination of the program in order to document their notes on participant progress and in culmination.

## **Data Collection**

### **Context**

My research will be concerning the affects that a targeted arts program that focuses on social and emotional learning has on students with emotional behavioral disorders. As the sole art educator and researcher in this study, I will be responsible for cultivating an environment that the students feel comfortable in. This is perhaps the most crucial part of this research endeavor, as to build trusting relationships the students must feel safe, valued, and accepted in the program and in the space. As an educator and researcher, I will openly celebrate every participants' unique set of skills, attributes, and preferences in order to foster an environment, in which students expect to be praised for their contributions and ideas. It is a priority that participants feel comfortable talking about their opinions and ideas in this setting, as the project will ultimately be student guided through discussion. In my role as a researcher and an educator, I will be a consistent presence that is unaffected by the behavior or attitude of the students. I will continue to understand that in this role, my job is to be a consistently positive, structured, and encouraging presence that is not dependent or deterred on the actions of the students. Careful attention to my tone and body language is necessary to remain consistent and mirror calm attention behavior.

### **Literature Sources**

Common data collection methods utilized in studies on topics related to the effectiveness of art programming on at-risk and vulnerable populations are the

Strengths and Difficulties Questionnaires (SDQ), and the short Moods and Feelings Questionnaire (sMFQ). These surveys contain questions related to student's emotional behavioral problems and the impact on the school or home environment. Cortina (2014) utilized both of these data collection methods to measure the effects of a targeted arts program for at-risk youth in England. Because the study was larger scale than mine in nature and lasted for a longer duration, this method of collecting written data from participants and families was an appropriate method that allowed the researcher to collect information on participants in a streamlined efficient way. However, because my research revolves around a small group of individuals, collecting data through means such as informal interviews, observation and student journals and art continues to be the most appropriate method that allows for the most individualized platform for participants' progress to be analyzed.

### **Examples of Data Collection Methods**

#### **Observations**

Individual and group observation will be utilized in order to gain insight about individual students strengths, work styles, preferences, motivation and personalities throughout the study. Group observation will be utilized in order to gain a insight about how the student functions socially within a group. I will be documenting how the student seeks out interaction with peers and responds to social prompting by peers. I am also specifically documenting how the students views themselves within the whole of the group. Observation is an important aspect of assessing the impact that student

partnerships have. I will be noting if the students working together, if the student compares themselves to other students, if the student praise others, and note triggers for positive and negative social interactions. I will be observing student interactions, as well as independent work time throughout the study and documenting observations of significance that offer insight into individual and group dynamics in the program. Because students will be occupied by creating their art projects, documentation of the observation will be completed after program hours, therefore the study will not be interfered by my observing and documenting data.

### **Interviews**

Individual conversations with students should occur once prior to first group session with each student, throughout the program as appropriate, and once prior to the last group session with each student. Students displaying difficulty responding to prompts in sketchbooks may respond verbally to prompts in interviews as needed throughout the duration of the program. Conversation with Margo Wunder, the student's art teacher, will be conducted before and after the six-week program. Conversations will last no longer than ten minutes and will be done outside of program session during the school day to maximize time artmaking. After students are identified, a start date is set, and students and guardians return necessary permission, pre-program interviews will be scheduled to obtain individual student profiles and meet with students individually before working with them in a group. Initial informal interviews for students, art teacher, and support staff will last no longer than ten minutes and focus on perception of strengths, barriers, and value to the group.

### **Artifacts**

Students will be using individual binders that are divided into sections for each session and contain the goals and relevant information for the week. The week's prompts relate to themes of SELF such as self and social awareness. Each section includes blank or semi-blank paper that is intended for responses to prompts. Responses to the prompts can be drawn or written. The prompts will change each week and start with self-awareness that focus on introducing themselves and their strengths to the group. The week go on to have themes such as decision making and relationship skills. The prompts range from asking students to draw themselves in a super hero costume, to asking students to draw a person who needs help. These prompts serve to ask students to think about other people. Prompts will also ask students to think critically about other people. For example, a prompt may ask the student to make up super powers for their partner or design an outfit for someone else.

### **Limitations**

This study is limited to a specific group of 9 students ages 10-11 and 13-14. Although the students all have the classification are all classified as having EBD, their specific skill set and barriers may vary greatly. For this reason, the data collection methods that give the most insight into a student's beliefs, feelings, and opinions may vary from student to student. For example, a student whose specific disability involves language processing may express more meaningful insight in their sketchbooks and journals than in a group conversation. Students with learning disabilities in addition to

emotional behavioral differences may express the most meaningful insight through interview and discussion. Students in this study may live in a residential placement and may not have access to art supplies or writing utensils in their housing units so work in individual journals/sketchbooks must be done as part of each session, taking time away from project planning and artmaking. Because the program is limited to twice weekly for six weeks, time could potentially be a limitation to my study, given that I do not have a rapport with the students and students need time and familiarity to build trust and comfort with a teacher and with each other.

### **Data Analysis**

I will maintain an electronic file to contain all of the data collected through verbal and nonverbal data collection methods for each participating student. Notes taken during individual and group observation will be typed and saved under the participants name, the date of the observation and class session. Participant and staff interviews will be audio recorded and transcribed into word documents. Audio recordings will be erased after they are transcribed in order to protect the privacy of participants. Data collected from participant interviews will also be typed and saved in their respective folders. Verbal data collected from the participants' art teacher will be typed and any information that corresponds to individual students will be put into documents in their folders. Data collected from sketchbooks will be photographed and the photos will be put into the folders as well.

Once the verbal and nonverbal data is collected and organized, I will be able to analyze the data in order to find common themes between students and between students and staff. Once major themes emerge, I will be able to use these key themes as benchmarks to compare against as the program processes. The themes that emerge in the initial interviews and observation will influence the categories that I group data into. These will need to be broken down into sub themes as guided by the students' responses and work. These themes will emerge further into the study. Data will be analyzed using constant comparison, in which students will be compared to themselves over the course of the study in order to gain an understanding of any changes that have taken place in regard to the themes being analyzed.

### **Timeline for the Study**

In order to officially begin my case study, I will complete my qualifying review on December 9th, 2017. I have had conversations with Margo Wunder, who is the art teacher at The Martin Luther School at Silver Springs. I have observed her art classroom and discussed with her the programing that I have been planning. Margo Wunder has given input on the planning of the program and expects to meet with me after my qualifying review in order to observe her classroom and discuss programming. Students will be identified based on her recommendations. After the official permissions are given from the director of the school, students will be identified. Students and guardians will receive participants rights and permission slips to return before the study begins.

After the dates for the program are finalized, I will arrange to meet with individual students and staff prior to the first day of program. Binders for students and outlines of program rules and goals, and sketchbook assignments will be made. The program will meet twice weekly and last six weeks. Data will be collected, photographed and transcribed for the duration of the program term. Following the end of the program term, data will be coded and analyzed.

## **Chapter IV: Results of the Study**

### **Introduction and Research Questions**

This study was put forth as a response to the following questions: Given that there is a connection between arts engagement and positive student outcomes academically and socially and students with emotional and behavioral differences face barriers to achieving success academically and socially, how can a targeted art program effect this population of students? Further, given the barriers that students with EBD face socially and academically, and Social Emotional Learning has been linked to positive outcomes in these areas, how might applying Social Emotional Learning in such an art program effect students with EBD?

### **Process of Data Collection**

Each student was selected for the program by their art teacher based on their preexisting interest in art and desire for more art education. I interviewed the art teacher and each student briefly prior to the beginning of the program. These were informal interviews in which I was able to introduce myself, verbally explain the program, and ask students to speak on their experience at the school and in art class including favorite assignments and materials. The interviews were approximately five minutes in length. Interviews were recorded digitally, and information students shared about themselves was transcribed into a matrix organized by student and program date. These initial interviews served to give me information that I could use to guide the program and also so that the students recognized me and had begun their relationship with me prior to the program starting.

Students received binders that were divided into weekly sections. The weekly section had a weekly agenda divided by day, a journal worksheet that included a prompt based on SEL and blank drawing paper to use as they pleased. The binders were given to students for use and then returned to me each class. In addition to the journal worksheets and sketches, students also worked in large individualized projects for the duration of the program. Journal worksheets and art pieces were all photographed and entered into a digital file as visual data.

Immediately following each program session, an audio recording of my observational field notes of each student was recorded. This data included information about their interactions with me and their peers, as well as their responses to group activities and independent work. These audio recordings were later transcribed into the data matrix for each student. This data was also used through the course of the program in order to plan for individualized assignments. The figure below illustrates an example of a student’s daily observational data chart.

<b>John Observational Data</b>	
<b>3/12 Objectives: Introduction Personalize program binders with name and design "Self Asset Assessment" Journal worksheet</b>	Observations: J was reserved at first but more outgoing towards the end of the session. J displays socially inappropriate behavior by calling out provocative or insulting comments to his peers. For the most part this does not escalate and his peers do not engage. J is fast to redirect his own behavior when it is not addressed by teacher. He does not appear to participate in activities that don't initially interest in him. did not complete journal
<b>3/16 Objectives: Presentation on costuming with examples of Nick Cave sound suit and Alexander McQueen designs Students completed journal worksheets and sketched costume ideas</b>	When asked "why would someone wear a costume?" response that someone would want to hide their identity so their family wasn't killed. participated in group discussion spastically by calling out comments. interjected to speak on killer clowns. Interested in the scary costumes. Several instances of making inappropriate comments to peers regarding their work. During these instances, he was quickly redirected to work. Worked in journal sketching during discussion. fast worker. does not second guess or start over once he starts working, he focuses completely and will move to another table to work. expressed that a costume can be a way to keep your identity hidden to protect your safety. also mentioned that just because something looks like protection (armor) does not mean it can really protect you.
<b>3/20</b>	Closed due to weather
<b>3/22</b>	Absent
<b>3/27</b>	Spring Break
<b>3/29</b>	Spring Break
<b>4/3</b>	Absent
<b>4/6 Objectives: Complete journal on self and social awareness Continue to utilize materials of students choice to complete a piece based on a costume or clothing that serves an emotional purpose</b>	Observations: worked consistently throughout program on painting fashion piece. Did not respond when prompted with questions. I consistency praised his decisions. He shouted across the room statements such as "you're corny" at one of the older students who he had a preexisting relationship with approximately once every five minutes. The older student would respond and they would briefly banter before returning to their work.

Figure 2. Example of observational data chart, John

### **Changes from Original Methodology**

Upon the start of the program, several changes needed to be made from the study's original methodology. Due to the scheduling of the school, the enrichment period is often when students were pulled for sports activities and meetings. Also, because the student body was constantly in flux due to students being admitted, discharged, and subject to prolonged absences, attendance was inconsistent throughout the program. The study needed to be changed to accommodate participants inconsistently attending the program. Therefore, there was a shift from group activities to personalized, student-centered activities that allowed students to work at their own pace and enter and exit the program in conjunction with their specific schedule. Student's binders were individualized, and they were given prompts at the pace in which they were working. Student preferences also guided individualized instruction. A shift from partner-based activities to mostly independent activities occurred due to students verbally expressing that they wanted the program to be a time for them to work independently on their own art. In this way, the program changed to allow the curriculum to be guided by student choices and individualized workflow.

### **Entry into the Field**

The school's art teacher informed students of the study to be carried out during their enrichment period and asked if they would be interested. Students received permissions and then met with me for the first time during our initial interview. Students had no preexisting relationships with me before that time. I scheduled initial interviews before the beginning of the program in order for the students to be familiar with me before I began teaching the enrichment program. During this meeting, I was able to

introduce myself and learn some basic information about each student's personality and preferences in order to take them into account when designing the curriculum. It was also important to me to have basic information on each student prior to program in order to build a relationship with each of them and call back onto information that I learned about them during our individual meetings. My role within the school was as a guest art teacher with no other involvement in the school. The students only knew me as the enrichment art teacher. I functioned as a participant researcher while instructing the art program as a teacher concurrently with collecting data.

### **How the Data will be Presented**

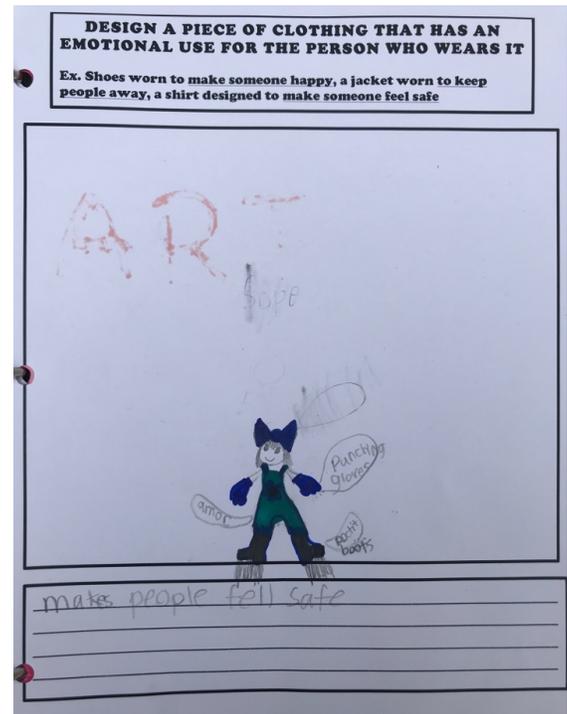
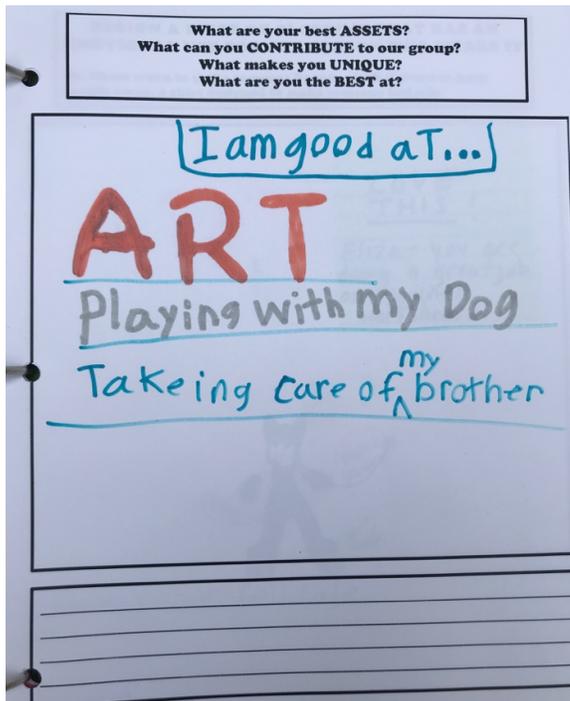
In the following chapter, data will be presented on each student involved in the study. For each student, a summary profile on the student will be followed by figures that include their visual data and artifacts. Examples of student observational data charts can be found in Appendix G. Each student's name has been changed for the purposes of this study.

### **Presentation of Data**

#### **Beth**

Beth is a fifth grade student who lives in residential placement. During our initial interview, she presented as reserved and spoke with me quietly, responded in short sentences about her preferences for 2d materials. Beth had only been residing on campus for a short time before the occurrence of the program and expressed feeling like she was not home there and often felt sad and lonely. Beth's art teacher regarded her as a pleasure to have a class, who is a kind, considerate, and sensitive child.

Beth's attendance in program was consistent. She prioritized attending the program over other enrichment activities and consistently was present for the entirety of the session, often staying after to have discussions with me and her art teacher. Beth presented as reserved and preferred not to socialize with other students. During the time of this study, Beth demonstrated more socialization with peers over time. Beth was interested in making artwork for and about her family and spoke of them frequently. During the time of this study, Beth had completed journal worksheets, and consistently worked on self-directed independent projects.



(Left to Right) Figure 3. Journal worksheet in which the students was prompted to do an asset assessment for themselves, Beth  
Figure 4. Journal worksheet in which the student was prompted to design a piece of clothing that has an emotional use, Beth

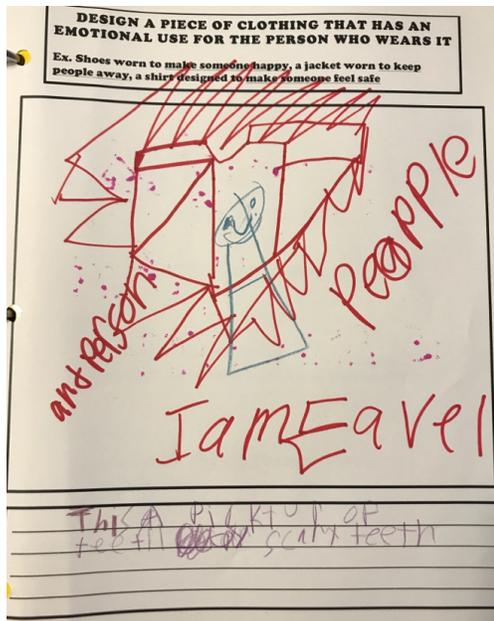


(Left to Right) Figure 5. First draft of emotional clothing assignment, Beth  
Figure 6. Final piece of emotional clothing assignment, Beth  
Figure 7. Self directed 3D piece, Trophy for Mom, Beth

### Kevin

Kevin is a fourth-grade student who lives in residential placement. During our initial meeting, he presented as eager to begin the program and very sociable. He spoke to me on his interests in elephants and his desire to make more art related to elephants. Kevin described elephants as being significant to him because “They are cute, smart and have feelings (Student interview, February 2018)” During our initial meeting, he took an interest in my life by asking me questions about my interests and background. He was described by his art teacher as being good natured and having an extremely pleasant disposition. This description was exemplified throughout his participation in this study. Kevin consistency presented as high energy, quickly completing projects and moving on to his next idea immediately.

Kevin’s attendance in the program was inconsistent. During the time of this study, he participated in group discussion, completed journal worksheets, and worked on self-directed independent projects.



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*(Left to Right) Figure 8. Journal worksheet in which the student was prompted to design a piece of clothing that has an emotional use, Kevin*

*Figure 9. Final Piece based on emotional clothing prompt, Kevin*



*(Left to Right) Figure 10. Self Directed 3D piece, Kevin*

*Figure 11. Self Directed Drawing, Kevin*

### **John**

John is a fourth-grade student who lives off campus. During his initial interview, he responded to questions about himself and his interests by simply shrugging his shoulders or stating, “I don’t know.” John was described by his teacher as being reserved upon first meeting new people, but quite outgoing in a classroom setting. He was also described as occasionally having severe behavioral episodes of verbal and physical aggression.

John attended the program inconsistently. He had a preexisting relationship with one of the older students in the program and enjoyed banter with him and appeared to feel comfortable in his friend’s presence. Occasionally, his commentary towards that student and other students would escalate to being inappropriate or antagonizing other students.

During the time of the study, John worked consistently on an independent project based on a prompt to design a piece of clothing that serves an emotional purpose.



*Figure 12. Final piece based on emotional clothing journal worksheet, John*

### **Kate**

Kate is a fourth grade student who lives off campus. She expressed upon first meeting me that she has an interest in all visual arts, especially using stencils. Kate was present for the first two sessions of program, before leaving to participate in other school activities taking place during enrichment period.

During these program sessions, Kate demonstrated the ability to work independently with minimal verbal prompting. Upon being given the instructions to personalize her binder and then complete her first journal assignment on her attributes to the group, she completed both within minutes and immediately expressed wanting to work on something else. Kate did not socialize with her peers but remained socially

appropriate and pleasant throughout the session. Kate worked quickly and did not demonstrate a tendency to second guess herself or demand perfection in her work. During the time of the study, Katie participated in a group discussion and completed two journal prompts using stencils.

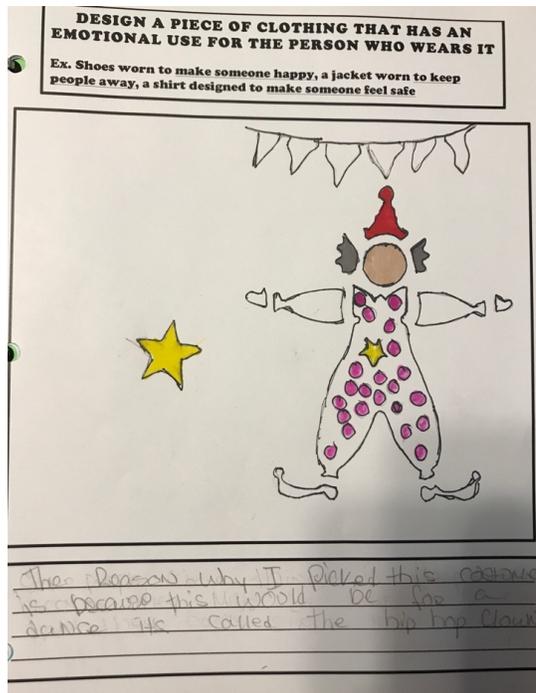


Figure 13. Journal worksheet in which the student was prompted to design a piece of clothing that has an emotional use, Kate

### Tyrell

Tyrell is a sixth-grade student who lives off campus. Previously being placed in a fifth grade class, Tyrell was transferred to a sixth grade class with the few months before the beginning of program. He was described by his art teacher as having ongoing behavioral programs while transitioning into his new classroom, and that art was his area of interest and pride. Upon meeting me, Tyrell asked me if I had heard about his artistic accomplishments, specifically in the areas of technology and sculpture. Tyrell was social

and eager to attend program. He had confidence in his art making ability and his innovative ideas involving costume design and anime.

Tyrell's attendance was inconsistent. The days that Tyrell attended, he displayed both eagerness to produce art and occasionally frustration as he worked through his ideas. During the time of the study, Tyrell completed journal and sketches briefly describing ideas for costume design, and worked independently on one large-scale drawing incorporating superheroes, and worked with clay.



*Figure 14. Independent ongoing drawing, Tyrell*

### **Michael**

Michael is an eighth grade student who lives off campus. During his initial interview, he presented as reserved and hesitant to answer questions. He spoke quickly without making eye contact. He described himself as funny, and a good friend, and expressed wanting to learn more art making techniques. Michael was described by his art teacher as generally easy going in his demeanor, and demonstrates incredible focus on projects with many details.

Michael's attendance was inconsistent. He was involved in other school enrichment activities, and also had broken his leg. Michael had preexisting relationships with several of the other participants in his grade. His participation in assignments varied, largely depending on other participants present. During the time of this study, he worked primarily on an independent large drawing of a hat that he designed.

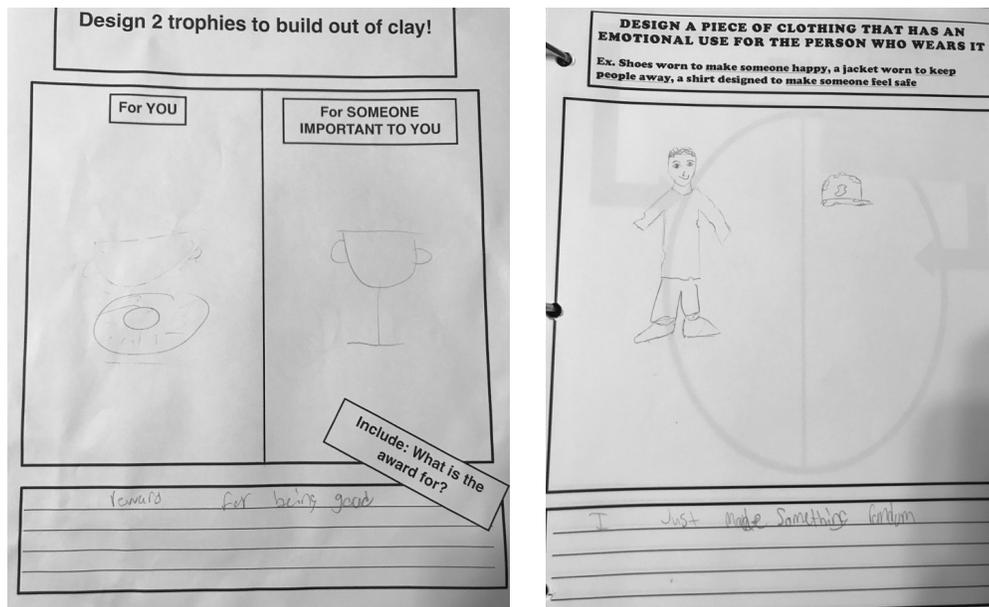


Figure 15. Journal worksheet in which the student was prompted to design a trophy, Michael  
Figure 16. Journal worksheet in which the student was prompted to design a piece of clothing that has an emotional use, Michael

### Jasmine

Jasmine is an eighth-grade student who lives off campus. She presents as socially outgoing, smiling and laughing frequently throughout conversation. During our initial interview, she told me about her passion for singing and her desire to pursue that professionally. Jasmine also disclosed to me that she struggled with her anger and would like to work on that aspect of her life. Her art teacher described her as having interest in patterning and design work.

Jasmine's attendance was inconsistent. She demonstrated a willingness to ask questions and participate in group discussions on the days that she attended program. Jasmine expressed eagerness to assist other students and to work collaboratively. She regularly expressed struggling with making creative decisions and displaying confidence in her decisions, but demonstrated a preference for working at 3D materials. During the time of this study, she worked on a small drawing independently, and worked in clay.

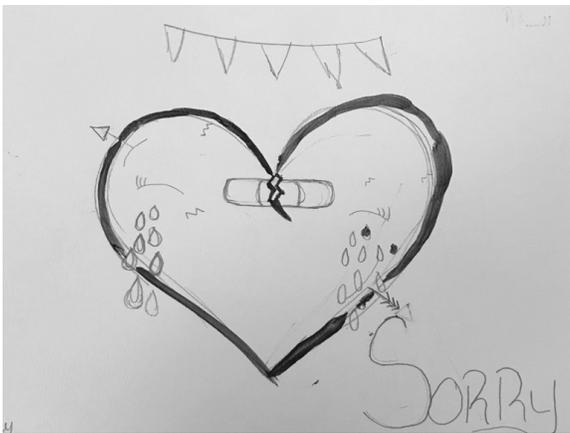


Figure 17. Final piece based on emotional clothing journal worksheet, Jasmine  
Figure 18. Independent work with clay, Jasmine

### **Kabir**

Kabir is in eight grade and lives off campus. Upon meeting me, he expressed that he was not aware of why he was invited to be in the program, because he is not an artist. He went on to explain that he did not feel confident with his drawing abilities but that he did enjoy art class. Kabir presented as confident and outgoing, often initiating conversations with his peers and freely expressing his opinions verbally during group and individual discussions.

Kabir's attendance was inconsistent. During the time of this study, Kabir consistently worked on a large scale mixed media piece based on a design for a pair of shoes.



*Figure 19. Final piece based on emotional clothing journal worksheet, Kabir*

### **Kyle**

Kyle is an eighth grade student who lives off campus. During our initial interview, he presented as self processed and confident, speaking about his accomplishments and popularity at school. He spoke about previously having anger problems, but since having learned the skills to reduce them. He described himself as influential and went on to explain that he takes pride in having an original style and being unique. In his spare time, he made tee shirts using bleach and a tie-dye technique and described himself as having his own clothing line.

Kyle's attendance was inconsistent. During the period of this study, he worked independently throughout on a large-scale drawing of a man wearing clothing from his clothing line.

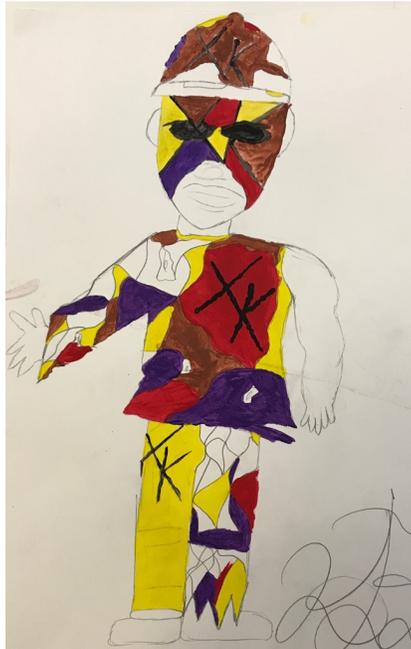


Figure 20. Final piece based on emotional clothing journal worksheet, Kyle

## Data Analysis

### Coding Strategies

All student's observational notes and information given verbally through student interviews and conversations with their art teacher were transcribed onto individual spread sheets. These spread sheets were organized by date and made all of the transcribed case notes information accessible at one time.

The data was first coded into two categories: Self and Social. Both categories were assigned a color and all observations were assigned to one or both of those categories using color coding. Self-data consisted of data that pertained to the student's self-awareness, self-management, making personal decisions for their artwork, and

working any information related to the student's time spent working independently.

Social data consisted of data that pertained to interactions that the student had with their peers and with myself, their art teacher, and members of their support team.

Visual data was also grouped into these two categories at this time. This includes finished pieces, journal worksheets, and sketches. The category under which it fell was dependent on themes the student displayed in the work. Any subject related to their self-image or interest was delegated self-related data and subjects related to their interpersonal relationships was categorized on social data.

After this initial categorization, all of the data in each category was placed in list formats. Each student had a list of data under Self Data and a list of data under Social Data. At this point, the data in both categories was reviewed for reoccurring themes. These themes then served as secondary categories under which data was able to be filed under.

### **Information Revealed Through Coding Strategies**

Viewing each student's data individually and grouped by simplified broad categories was helpful in finding patterns through the students' data. Using this coding strategy allowed for a student's individual recurring patterns to emerge through reviewing each instance of an observed behavior or visual data. For example, when looking at one student's social data in a list format, one can see if a specific prosocial or antisocial behavior repeats itself. These reoccurring instances create a pattern that provides a prevalent theme for that individual student. The figure below displays a segment of list of Self data for Case study of Tyrell, and corresponding themes in the column next to the observation.

## LEARNING IN STUDENTS WITH EMOTIONAL BEHAVIORAL DISORDERS

## TYRELL SELF DATA

Immediately introduced himself to me by telling me all of his strengths and his favorite types of art. proud of his abilities especially in term of art/technology. loves anime and superheroes. enthusiastic and excited for program. demonstrated the ability to follow directions with minimal verbal prompting.

Christine mazur  
PRIDE

Once costume making was mentioned, he become focused on the idea of creating a costume and learning how to sew. appeared to doubt himself with decorating the binder or writing his name. | expressed that he was making mistakes

Christine mazur  
DOUBT

came to program with artwork for the front and back of his binder which he had worked on throughout the week. also brought a rubric that he made for creating a costume.

Asked to use an iPad to look up 3d printing techniques. Very focused on making a cosplay costume instead of a drawing, appears to become minimally frustrated by needing to work during the program session.

Christine mazur  
COMMIMENT TO IDEA

changed his idea and asked for an iPod.

Christine mazur  
COMMIMENT TO IDEA

Made original idea for journal but wanted to copy something online for assignment. He became despondent when I tried to take away iPad putting his head down. wanted to work on this drawing because it was interesting to him but was resistant to working on a drawing related to the journal prompt. Eventually we had a discussion about his decision to do a drawing that was inspired by someone else's art. I asked him to change several things about it from his imagination and he complied. He was focused on his work independently for at least 20 minutes of interrupted work time. He demonstrated an eagerness to continue working on his drawing.

Christine mazur  
DOUBT

He demonstrated a commitment to his drawing even though it was not related to the journal prompt.

Christine mazur  
COMMIMENT TO IDEA

Christine mazur  
COMMIMENT TO IDEA

Figure 21. Example of Observational Coding

### Data Types

Written data including transcribed student interviews, informal conversations, and transcribed observations were all combined into collective data matrixes that were subject to the coding procedures described. The bulk of data collected during this study consisted of observational data. This data was the first to be coded into broad categories (self and social data). Visual data collected including photos of student worksheets and artwork

were categorized into these broad categories and then analyzed for recurrent themes that presented themselves in observations and interviews. The visual data connects to the observational data by reinforcing the reoccurring themes displayed throughout the individual student's experience. For example, a student who displayed reoccurring themes of importance of family will have artwork about their family, bridging the observational and visual data. The different types of data are categorized and analyzed together as one body of collected data.

Although each student's visual data may not reflect the reoccurring themes as subjects in the work, the themes present themselves in the visual data in terms of the student's approach to working. An example of this would be a student whose observational data displayed a presence of the theme of lack of commitment to ideas would visual data displaying work that is incomplete or went through a series of changes. In this way, the visual data connects and supports the written data.

### **Further Analysis**

Each student's collective body of data is analyzed individually to see the presence of recurring themes for each student. Once these themes have been established, information is revealed on the individual student's experience in this art enrichment program. While each student's data has been analyzed separately for reoccurring themes, there are instances of themes that are present in multiple students and can be analyzed for similarities in the themes, and how the presence and manifestation of specific themes can inform the social dynamic of the program.

The presence of overlapping reoccurring themes in multiple students in this program may also reveal how curriculum was applied effectively and ineffectively.

### **Summary of Findings**

#### **Initial Results**

Upon initially coding and observing themes that arose in student experience in both their personal artmaking, and socialization in the class, there has been several repeated themes. A connection between students who experience self-doubt or lack of commitment to peruse their ideas and a resistance to follow assignment prompts in both planning and executing projects is present. The students who had themes of self-doubt and lack of commitment also showed more willingness to participate and engage meaningfully in activities involving exploration and play. Several students verbally expressed a dislike of completing brain storming or sketching prompts and evidence of this is present in their participation and execution of the activities.

There is a presence of pride demonstrated by seeking out viewers for the artwork in students who had repeated themes of family and community belonging in their art. This was present in both students who live residentially at the school, as well as students who live in the community.

#### **Expansion on Initial Results**

It is possible that the connection between lack of commitment and resistance to completing planning or prompted assignments is related to the level of hesitance a student has due to fear of failing. This connection also is related to avoidance of work. Although all of the students in the program displayed widely varying needs, abilities,

backgrounds and personalities, there was undeniable overlap in this major connection present in the personal data category of the initial results. These themes span across age groups as well. However, the data reveals that although various students display the presence of these themes at least minimally, the behavior that demonstrates avoidance, frustration, or lack of commitment varied student to student. Student's whose social data reveal that they are influential to their peers displayed avoidance and lack of commitment through social behaviors. Students whose social data displayed that they socialize less with their peers (quiet, reserved) display this avoidance through behaviors such as declaring that they give up, negative self-talk, or seeking one on one attention from the instructor. This connection must be analyzed further and expanded upon.

For the students who displayed these themes, exploration or play gave them a relief from the expectation of failing and the pressure to formulate a good idea. Students engaging in exploration of materials appeared to display more joy, and verbalized self-doubt less in these instances. They also appeared to maintain focus for longer when they were not tied to one idea.

The connection between students demonstrating a sense of pride in their work and the occurrence of the theme of family is present. This connection is displayed through seeking classroom teachers, aides, and other support staff out to view the artwork. Students who made art related to their families did this at a higher frequency than students who made art about other themes. There is a possibility that this is related to the role and importance of family in an individual student's life or may speak to the value a student gives to positive reinforcement from authority figures.

### **Lessons learned**

The inconsistent program attendance created opportunities to engage in personal one on one conversations with students about their lives and interests. The program curriculum changed in order to accommodate each student's varying interests and passions and allow students to work at their own pace, without falling behind in a premade group curriculum. Once the individual students guided their own curriculum, the group as a whole functioned more efficiently, allowing students to anticipate and plan their flow of work from session to session.

Initially, the program curriculum was designed in order to promote social emotional learning through the project prompts. There was a shift when the curriculum became more individualized in which I began promoting SEL through a subtler prompting during individual conversations with students. Instead of assigning one specific project related to Self-awareness or self-management, I began making lists of vague ideas loosely related to the topic and students chose and expanded upon ones that felt most relevant to them. Social Emotional Learning is also being promoted through self-directed work, which encourages the students to pace themselves and make decisions about where their interests are and what they feel is worth their time perusing. This was a subtler approach to instruction than I anticipated, but the varying needs and workstyles of the students in this group called for a structure that allowed them to gain lessons through an individualized approach that was based on their interests.

## **Chapter V Discussion and Implications for the Field**

### **Introduction to findings**

After raw data was coded for themes, specific trends were observed in students across grade levels in both the personal and social spheres. The ways in which themes manifested and presented themselves in student behavioral observations, verbal data, and visual data varied. Within this chapter, the reoccurring themes will be presented and supported using examples in specific case studies. Themes will be identified, and then specific case studies will be presented to support findings.

### **Presentation of findings**

#### **In Context of Research Questions**

#### **How might a targeted arts program positively affect students with EBD?**

Students with Emotional and Behavioral Disorders consistently struggle in academic classes and often receive specialized support in order to achieve success during their academic tenure. Students with EBD may display a more pronounced frustration with being expected to complete tasks that they perceive as being difficult or beyond their area of expertise. This frustration manifests in various ways academically, behaviorally, and socially and often results in avoidance behaviors and a lack of commitment to their work. A targeted art program provides a structured space for students to participate in open-ended art programming where there is no wrong answer and they are receiving consistent praise and support for having an idea, expressing it, and following through, regardless of the final product. This type of praise and support is often not received in

academic classes but is crucial for students in order to develop trust in their ideas and abilities.

### **Fostering Pride in Artmaking**

A connection between pride and commitment to artmaking reoccurred throughout multiple student's data. The theme of pride presented itself across several student journal prompts and self directed projects. At the onset of programming, students were prompted to reflect on themselves and their strengths by completing a self-asset assessment as their initial task within the program. This assessment was given in the form of a graphic organizer and was intended to assess student's perceptions of themselves, as well as informally assess their ability to complete an independent objective with minimal prompting or assistance. Students who identified and expressed aspects of their personality that they liked about themselves in both this assessment as well as during their initial interview demonstrated higher levels of concentration and consistent attendance throughout program and completed more independent self-directed projects. Similarly, students who easily and independently identified positive attributes of themselves demonstrated increased independence throughout the program than their peers who struggled to identify positive attributes during these initial assessments.

6<sup>th</sup> grader Tyrell, who had been experiencing behavioral difficulties in his academic classes at the time of the program appeared to demonstrate a high level of self confidence in the beginning of the program. Upon introducing himself, he asked if I had spoken to his art teacher about his skills. I replied that I had spoken to her only briefly and would like to discuss his skills with him directly. He explained that he was artistically gifted in the areas of costume and character design, STEAM, and drawing

superheroes. It was apparent that Tyrell, despite having behavioral difficulty in his academic classes had found pride in his art making abilities prior to the program. This interest served as basis of engagement and interest in the program. Although his attendance in the program was inconsistent, his program sessions were spent consistently working on self-directed independent projects, including a largescale drawing that he completed throughout his time in program. Tyrell's observational data indicated that he was rarely influenced by outside social factors in terms of his behavior. These behaviors may include antagonizing peers, participating in inappropriate conversations, or engaging in disruptive behaviors. This correlation may illustrate a potential link between fostering pride in self and increased focus on self-directed artmaking.

Another case study that illustrates a potential correlation between pride in self and commitment to artmaking was 8<sup>th</sup> grader Jasmine. Observational and visual data for Jasmine indicates that during the self-asset assessment portion of the first program session, Jasmine expressed frustration in not knowing how to respond to the prompt about her positive qualities and engaged in avoidant behaviors such as asking to leave the room continuously, as well as asking me and her regular art teacher for individual assistance for small tasks such as tracing a stencil. Jasmine continued to display a lack of commitment to following through with her ideas throughout the first half of the program and often prematurely finished projects, expressing unhappiness with the way they were turning out. During this time, Jasmine's observational data also displayed that she was often preoccupied with socializing with peers during independent work time. It appeared that Jasmine's lack of confidence as indicated by her difficulty identifying her own positive qualities correlated to a decreased commitment to her ideas and self-directed

projects. However, during the midpoint of the program, Jasmine began working with clay and experienced an increase in the duration she was focusing on independent self-directed work and a decrease in improper socialization during program. Jasmine shared that she prefers working with clay and dislikes drawing. She went on to state that she dislikes planning activities such as sketching and worksheets because they make her feel pressured to make her final project look like the sketch. She expressed that planning also makes her fearful of changing her idea. After this discussion, she was encouraged to work primarily in 3D and spent little time on planning. With this change in individualized programming, Jasmine's focus and pride in her work increased. Toward the end of the program term, Jasmine decided to try 2D work once again, deciding to work independently on a drawing of an eye. This choice for a piece surprised me, as Jasmine had previously stated her discomfort in working in 2D. She completed this piece in small chunks, working one on one with me as needed and self-pacing. Jasmine also had two other projects accessible at the same time- clay and an older drawing that she had the option to paint. She rotated between these projects as needed. If she was unsure of how to proceed with her eye drawing or expressed disliking how it looked, she was prompted to work on one of her other pieces and return to the eye whenever she had the urge. Jasmine eventually completed the eye drawing and had learned several techniques such as realistic shading and use of different drawing pencils in the process. Jasmine's ability to commit to her project and learn new techniques appears to have been positively impacted by having the ability to work without planning and to first build confidence in herself through her work with clay, a medium that she felt comfortable in before deciding for herself to work in 2D after her self-confidence and pride in her own skills increased.

Students maintained heightened focus and commitment to work when they were working in a medium of their choice and when they were given the option to cycle through multiple projects in different mediums at one time. Students were given space to develop a basis of comfort and pride in their abilities before moving on to objectives that they felt challenged by.

### **Art as a Vehicle for Expressing Pride and Identity**

The theme of pride manifested itself within the students' visual data. Because the students were prompted to make work reflecting self and social awareness across several assignments, there were opportunities to reflect on their personal and social lives throughout. An example of a connection between artmaking and expressing pride was exemplified in Beth, a 4<sup>th</sup> grade student who lived in residential placement at the school. Beth, having recently been relocated across the state from her family, used self-directed projects as way of speaking on the importance of her family, her value within her family, and her identify.

In her first piece, Beth was asked to design a piece of clothing that had an emotional purpose. She designed an outfit that was intended to make her feel safe. It included boots with rockets on them and boxing gloves. While working on her piece after planning she became disappointed with it and engaged in behaviors that indicated avoidance and frustration, such as putting her head down and stating that the piece "looks horrible." With increasing frustration, she decided that she wanted to start over, having had a better idea. I allowed her to scrap her original work, seeing her confidence in her new idea. Her second piece, still a representation of a girl with boxing gloves and rocket shoes, included the names of her mother, brother, and dog. The new piece featured

signage indicating the girl in the drawing was from Pittsburg, where Beth had moved from in order to attend school. Beth displayed heightened confidence in the piece, showing it to staff and peers. She stated, “I hope that a lot of people ask questions about this (Student interview, 2018).” This simple statement indicated that Beth wanted to answer questions that allowed her to speak on her family and home. Beth went on to complete more pieces that centered around her family and home, and maintained increased focus and confidence while working on these pieces. It is possible that having been moved from her home and living residentially at a new school put Beth in a position where her surroundings were not reflecting or honoring her personal identity and background. Artmaking was a way for her to reflect on and maintain her personal history and identity and express pride in her background regardless of her current status as a residential student.

In this way, artmaking opportunities can work cyclically as both a source of pride in one’s abilities (such as in the case of Tyrell and Jasmine), and as a means to express pride in one’s history and identity (such as in the case of Beth). In either case, the connection between fostering or expressing pride enabled students to maintain improved higher levels of focus and commitment to their artmaking. On the contrary, lack of pride in one’s artmaking abilities resulted in an unwillingness to commit to artmaking, and resulted in a higher rate of avoidance and disruptive behavior.

### **Prevalence and Manifestations of Self Doubt**

Occurrences of lack of focus and disruptive behavior were often followed or was observed in conjunction with the student expressing that they did not know how to complete a task, or did not have any ideas. Students who expressed more confidence with

themselves and their ideas generally had lower occurrences of negative behavioral instances than students who were hesitant to commit to their ideas. Throughout grade levels, self-doubt manifested itself differently in each student. Tyrell, who believed and expressed that he was a gifted artist had momentary lapses in focus or avoidant behavior when he felt unsure about a creative problem that he encountered. However, these lapses were short and inconsequential, easy to work through with a conversation and reassurance from a teacher. Other students who did not possess the core belief of being an artist displayed more severe behaviors throughout the program duration.

Kabir was an 8<sup>th</sup>-grade student who entered the program late and introduced himself to me by stating “I don’t know why I’m here, I’m not good at art.” This sentiment continued in his conversations with peers, his art teacher, and in informal conversations with me. Kabir frequently made negative comments about his ability to make art despite reassurance from his teacher and I. During his first program session, Kabir maintained focus while tracing the outline of a boot to be used as a basis for his drawing. However, during the subsequent sessions that followed, he displayed a substantial increase in disruptive and work- avoidant behavior when asked to complete tasks that required him to make creative decisions. This behavior included provoking other students, participating in inappropriate conversations, and misusing materials. It is possible that the behavioral instances appeared at a higher rate when he was expected to commit to a decision or carry out a task that he did not feel confident in doing. On one occasion, after being redirected to work, Kabir declared to the class “I’m not coming back here, even though no one cares.” This statement speaks to the fact that Kabir did not

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feel that he was a valuable addition to the group. His belief in himself and his value to the program was reflective of his behavior and avoidance of participating in the program.

On the whole, students were more likely to display problematic behaviors and a lack of commitment to their own artistic practice if they consistently expressed self-doubting beliefs in their abilities and ideas. The types of behaviors ranged from verbally expressing frustration to causing disruptive within their group of peers. The latter manifestation was observed most frequently within the group of 8<sup>th</sup> grade boys within the program.

The social manifestations of avoidant behavior observed in the program appeared to be the most prevalent in a group of three 8<sup>th</sup> grade male students within the group. Kyle, Kabir, and Michael's observational and visual data all suggest that their behaviors within the program were connected to the feedback and influence that they had within their peer group. All three of these participants expressed possessing social qualities such as "funny, a good friend, influential" during informal conversations or journals when prompted to reflect on what they pride themselves on. This group of students similarly all possessed a noncommittal attitude towards artmaking within the program and were likely to be distracted by their friends behavior.

On program sessions when all three students were present, one student often set the behavioral norm for the others. For example, Kabir, who as stated earlier consistently expressed negative beliefs in his artmaking abilities, would begin provoking other program participants by making accusatory or inflammatory statements. During these instances, he demonstrated influence and leadership within his peer group, who would join him and provoke him to continue to act out. This social interaction was cyclical, in

that when Kabir was redirected back to work from inappropriate behavior, his belief that he was unfit to be in the group was reinforced despite consistent verbal reassurance in his artistic abilities. It is possible that because this peer group prided themselves on their ability participate socially with their peers, their need for value within the group was received through their ability to thrive socially within their group, rather than through artmaking. Between artmaking and connecting socially with their peers, they all felt more confident in achieving success in the latter.

These observations support that these students strived to be valued within the group and may have learned to achieve that through inappropriate means of social interaction. However, understanding that the root of this behavior may lie in avoidance of failure (i.e. not being confident in artmaking and creative decision making) and the desire to be valuable within the group is necessary for understanding that art programming may be used as means to assist in achieving these goals in more appropriate and positive ways. Overall, the group of students who displayed this cycle of negative behavior demonstrate that fostering pride and confidence is a proactive approach to preventing problematic behaviors in the program setting and must be focused on primarily before students are expected to work independently. This observation appears to be especially important for students who pride themselves on their social standing within their peer group, but have a negative belief in their abilities to operate independently and may fall back on their social influence as an avoidant behavior.

### **Structured Space for Individualized Instruction**

The art program provided a consistent and regular structured time for students to produce art at their own pace and exercise creative decision making. The potential for

individualized instruction may be limited in a tradition K-12 classroom setting due to the number of students, curriculum, and need for specific structures. For students with EBD, structure and consistency are paramount to their comfort within any academic environment. A targeted art program may provide the necessary structure while allowing more room for individualized instruction that may not be possible in their regular art classes.

Self-Pacing is not always possible in typical art classes due to the nature of school-based curriculum focused on a timeline of completing standards and group instruction. Students may benefit from the assignments and techniques instructed in their school-based art education but may not have the opportunity to develop their own artmaking practice outside of the classroom-paced structure. Students with EBD can significantly benefit from learning in a structured environment where they have the ability to see their own decisions come to fruition.

A targeted arts program introduces a basic framework within which students can make decisions based on their preferences and artistic intuition. Offering prompts that focus on self and social relationships, students can go in any desired direction with their work while still being confident that they are fulfilling the objectives. This type of programming potentially fuels a cycle of confidence in their ability to create work without assistance from a teacher, resulting in higher self-esteem. Without the need for specific standards and techniques to be fulfilled, a targeted art program is a space for art-making where students can focus on honest self-reflection and creative decision making at their own pace, rather than specific techniques or a classroom-wide curriculum.

### **How might art teachers implement SEL for students with EBD?**

Themes under Social Emotional Learning (self-awareness, self-management, social awareness, relationship skills, and decision making) must be instructed in a sensitive and individualized manner in order to successfully encourage self and social reflection in students with EBD. In order to implement SEL programming for their students, art teachers must focus on incorporating SEL into the fiber of their instruction in addition to a framework of classroom-wide assignments.

### **Modeling and Classroom Culture**

Art teachers may implement SEL into their classrooms by using the categories of SEL as guiding principles for instruction. In a SEL classroom, teachers are consistently observing their student's values and personalities and are committed to learning about their students on a personal level. Having regular affirming conversations with students is a way of modeling social awareness and relationship skills. When a positive or negative event occurs within the classroom, observing student reactions to it and recalling this in conversation is a way of cultivating the culture of SEL within a classroom and in individual relationships with students.

4<sup>th</sup> grade student Beth had been reserved amongst peers and preferred speaking to teachers and staff over other students. She rarely participated in informal group discussions but had begun to display more social outgoingness and playfulness with her peers by the middle of the program term. During one session, a group of 8<sup>th</sup> grade students began to make inappropriate and inflammatory comments about a classmate in Beth's presence. Before the group was able to be redirected, Beth began to appear visibly uncomfortable, lowering her eyes and positioning her body away from the group. After

## LEARNING IN STUDENTS WITH EMOTIONAL BEHAVIORAL DISORDERS

the program, Beth stayed to help clean up. I asked, “Does it make you feel shy when the older kids are behaving like that?” She replied that it did make her feel shy and that she worried that they were going to say something rude to her. I thanked her for sharing that with me and said “I could see that you felt uncomfortable. It was unfair for them to behave in a way that makes you uncomfortable and I’m sorry you had that experience today (Informal Student Interview, 2018).” Beth thanked me for acknowledging her discomfort and said “That’s really nice for you to say.” In this short conversation, both Beth and I recognized and affirmed each other in a supportive way. These types of conversations are a way to instruct SEL on an individual basis. As teachers, we should be modeling communication founded in observing emotions and behaviors, synthesizing what we are observing, and opening up an honest dialogue. Displaying an active interest and curiosity in the feelings and experiences of students and respecting their experiences as valid is possibly the simplest and most effective way to enact Social Emotional Learning in a classroom.

**SEL for Students with EBD**

The themes of SEL should serve as a basis for classroom wide discussions that allow students to familiarize themselves with a concept and share their ideas and opinions before an art-making objective is introduced. Students with EBD may display frustration when given a task that they do not feel comfortable or confident in and may engage in higher rates of avoidant behavior. Having group and individual discussions based on topics encompassed within self and social awareness before an assignment is introduced may increase student openness and willingness to participate. These conversations also give the teacher opportunities to observe student responses, which they can later recall in

one on one conversations to guide student's synthesis of a topic into of a concept for an individual project. Group discussion is the most appropriate place to engage in "bigger picture" discussions.

Teachers should instruct topics in SEL with sensitivity to their student's needs and experiences. Students with EBD may have experienced past and present trauma that shapes their view of the world and themselves. Topics in SEL are deeply meaningful and may force students to reflect on feelings and emotions that cause them pain, fear, and discomfort. These topics should be approached gently and in vague terms at first.

Students should be given freedom to interpret themes in Social Emotional Learning at their own pace. For example, if students are prompted to focus on the specific theme of family in regard to relationship skills, students from inconsistent or abusive homes may be uncomfortable exploring this theme in a group setting. However, exploring the theme of relationship skills from a broader lenses allows students to draw upon experiences outside of their own life, such as relationships they have observed in TV and movies. Students may be more comfortable expressing feelings and emotions through the use of characters, anecdotes, or objects. As a teacher implementing Social and Emotional Learning, our role is not to determine what is or is not meaningful to the individual student. It is to create a platform that shines a spotlight on a broad theme pertaining to self and allow the student freedom to personalize the meaning within that space.

Art teachers implementing SEL into their classrooms must accept that art programming is only a small part of each of their students' lives. For SEL to be the most beneficial for individual students, SEL assignments must be broad enough for students to synthesize through a wide range of different experiences that are relevant in their inner

and outside world at the time of artmaking. Teachers may use the themes in SEL to create lists of varying journal and sketchbook prompts within one category for SEL at a time for students to choose from as starting point for assignments.

Teachers should understand and encourage their students' need to stray from their original ideas. Verbal data indicated that multiple students expressed preliminary work, such as sketching and completing rough draft assignments, made them feel pressure to produce a specific final piece. Students who struggle with trusting themselves artistically may benefit from the reassurance that their work can shift and take different forms over time.

The themes in Social Emotional Learning are broad enough to apply to every meaningful art-making activity. Art teachers can implement an SEL curriculum by asking themselves the following questions in regard to their assignments: Does this assignment encourage self-reflection in my students? Does this assignment encourage my students to think critically about their inner world or outside world?" Teachers focusing on techniques and materials usage can use the themes in SEL as guiding principles for the content of their assignments, ensuring that their students are being given opportunities for self and social reflection in their art programming.

### **In Context of Literature Sources**

#### **Emotional Behavioral Disorders**

As students with EBD possess varying needs based on their specific abilities and barriers within the broad EBD classification and are therefore more challenging to instruct in a group setting due to the contrasting internalizing and externalizing behaviors that may be present within one peer group (Bottome, 2015). Within the program, this

polarization between students who had internalizing behaviors and external behaviors lent itself to the method of using individualized instruction as opposed to group assignments. The program was small enough to consistently accommodate all students working at their own pace on different assignments. This structure can rarely be coordinated in a typical art class due to the volume of students and the need for a rigid structure that benefits students with EBD. The art program provided both a consistent routine and structure and also the ability for students to focus on the area of their specific interest and make creative decisions.

### **Social Emotional Learning**

In “The Missing Piece A report for CASEL: A National Teacher Survey on How Social and Emotional Learning Can Empower Children and Transform Schools”, authors Bridgeland and Hariharan explore the concept that instruction in SEL can effectively teach students skills such as empathy and emotional management (Bridgeland and Hariharan, 2013). It is divided into five categories for instruction. Within the program, these categories were explored through broad assignment prompts and interweaved into the structure of the instruction itself. Due to the short duration of the program and the limited scope of this study, data is inclusive on how the student’s long-term synthesis and application of concepts in SEL was affected by art programming. However, the program did provide opportunity and space for the group of students to explore the concepts put forward by the CASEL rapport. Self and Social awareness were emphasized through artmaking prompts that students personalized and had ongoing discussions about with instructors and peers. Self-management was practiced and modeled through program expectations of material usage and behavior, and ongoing conversations. Relationship

## LEARNING IN STUDENTS WITH EMOTIONAL BEHAVIORAL DISORDERS

skills were modeled through student-instructor interactions and also touched upon in individual artmaking prompts and partnerships amongst students. Decision making was explored through a self-paced and self-directed model of learning in which students were developing their own practice. This program took the themes within SEL and incorporated them into its model of programming in a way that exposed students to them without directly instructing on specific core values within SEL.

### **Targeted Arts Programming**

Studies on the effects of targeted arts interventions on at-risk youth that focus on creativity and expression conclude that students involved in targeted arts program experience increased intrinsic motivation and engagement (Cortina, 2015). These findings were supported within this study, as individual students who were focused on projects emphasizing creative decision making and expression were observed to maintain focus for longer periods of time and showed motivation to pursue their ideas within independent assignments. However, due to the limited scope of the research, the effects on intrinsic motivation and engagement outside of the program itself was not reported or observed. The students within this art program were of varying ages and had a wide range of support needs. Therefore, a completely youth-led model, as discussed by Brown and Jeanneret (2015), was not appropriate for this specific group. However, the program was influenced by the youth-led model in its implementation of individualized programming that encouraged students to develop their own artmaking methods and projects. The fully youth led model of programming as discussed by Brown and Jeanneret benefited students by encouraging them to seek out peers for support and social interaction. During the short term of the targeted art program, students were observed making connections to other

students while choosing to work in the same material and working alongside other students and occasionally discussing their work. Students were also encouraged to watch other students working with unfamiliar materials in order to pick up new skills. Because of the age difference among students within the group, there was also some modeling and learning through interaction between students of different grade levels.

### **In Context of Research Environment**

The targeted arts program was implemented as an enrichment period in a private school for students with Emotional and Behavioral Disorders. It was a unique school setting because the structure of the school day included an enrichment period in which students participated in extracurricular activities including clubs and sports. Student participants displayed inconsistent attendance throughout the program term due to other obligations during the enrichment period. Student attendance was impacted by students' involvement in other activities resulting in a low rate of attendance for most participants. Attendance rates may have been higher if the program was offered afterschool or in a community setting that did not conflict with other school events and extracurriculars.

The school setting was different from a typical school-based setting in that it was comprised solely of students with EBD. Therefore, there were systems in place for behavior and discipline management that the program complied with. The students followed a system of points awarded and removed for positive or negative behavior. During the program, students were reminded of the points system when they displayed disruptive behaviors. It is possible that this system could have influenced participant behavior. Three of the participants were removed from program by their art teacher due to continuous problematic and disruptive behavior in alignment with school policy on

extracurricular activities. This event also had an impact on the data, limiting the amount available for those particular students.

The students' regular art teacher was present for and participated in the program sessions. Her presence appeared to have a positive effect on the program because participants each had a preexisting trusting relationship with her. Having a person present in the program who had preexisting relationships with students was helpful at times in redirecting students using a personalized approach. It gave students two options for adults to assist them as needed, making students more likely to seek out assistance. This was beneficial for students who have difficulty with trusting a new instructor, or experience anxiety in new situations.

### **In Context of Researcher as Self and Practitioner**

Throughout the process of completing this study, EBD has been discussed as an umbrella containing multitudes of specific symptoms and circumstances that a student could be experiencing. Despite this, the study was first designed as a uniform curriculum to be implemented for all of the student participants in the study, despite their individual preferences. Once the program started, the students involved possessed such a wide range of preferences and interests, and the study had to naturally shift in order to accommodate the students and most benefit them. The program shifted from a structure in which artmaking assignments were created based on a tenant of Social Emotional Learning to a structure in which the tenants of Social Emotional Learning in a broad context are incorporated into individual interactions and instructions for students to carry out self-paced assignments.

As the program began, the goal was to provide artmaking prompts that made students to reflect on and make art about deep questions triggering a cycle of self-recognition and pride. However, it quickly became apparent that I could not determine what would be meaningful for the students individually, as they each had a life experience and point of view all deserving of consideration into artmaking. Many students struggled to commit to an idea or to trust their own decision-making when prompted on group assignments. However, when students were working on individualized projects that had personal meaning to them, they demonstrated heightened ability to commit to their idea and maintain focus. The longer they remained committed to following through with their idea, the more pride in the work they displayed. Therefore, my methods of instruction had to change from choosing prompts and assignments that I thought would ignite pride in the students, to instead choose prompts that were broad enough to allow students space to find a topic within an overall theme that would maintain their attention and commitment long enough to result in pride.

My conversations with students who struggled to complete work due to the pressure they felt from preliminary sketching and planning made me rethink the ways that I assigned work. I shifted from finding it necessary for students to complete journals and sketches about their initial ideas to opening up my perception of brainstorming to include conversations, and material explorations. For students who struggle with confidence, they may see more productivity and successes if they are encouraged to let their vision change and be guided by the material and their changing ideas.

### **Implications for the Field**

Social Emotional Learning can be a valuable tool for art educators to employ in their classrooms in order to ensure their students receive the most beneficial experiences from artmaking. Using SEL to guide classroom culture allows teachers to instruct SEL through modeling, classroom discussion, and ongoing student-teacher communication. It provides a safe space for students to honestly reflect on themselves and their experiences through artmaking. In addition to classroom management and culture, art educators can utilize SEL education when shaping their curriculum to include themes in self and social awareness, regardless of the technique or standard that is being taught in any lesson. Within national and state standards, there is room for educators to use broad SEL prompts for artmaking when possible and to make the content of their art lessons focus on emotions, feelings, and navigating social situations. Art educators can easily adapt these themes into prompts for artmaking in order to encourage self-reflection in all of their students.

Art educators can utilize targeted arts programming as a means of fostering pride and creative decision making in all students outside of traditional school-based art education. Students with EBD are especially susceptible to lowered confidence and avoidant behaviors in school settings. Targeted arts programming may provide a structure in which students can gradually practice decision making and foster self-confidence in a setting that does not interfere with academic classes and is separate from their regular school-based art education. Students with EBD benefit from the additional art programming in a smaller setting that allows them to work alongside instructors as needed to work through frustrations that arise while being given the freedom to self-pace

and work on individualized assignments as is only possible with a small number of students.

### **Implications for Further Research: Next Questions**

Due to the limited scope of this research, the question still stands: Can students with EBD show significant improvement in social relationships and behavior through Art Based SEL programming? This collection of case studies suggests that a small group of students with EBD inside of an enrichment program in a private school setting demonstrated varying degrees of commitment to work, pride, and confidence over the course of their participation in the program. While fostering pride and confidence appears to be a benefit of the targeted program within the program itself, the question stands of how these successes may affect other facets of the student's life academically, personally, and socially.

Further, for students with EBD within an inclusive school setting, how can targeted SEL art programming be applied? This question must be answered in order to provide targeted SEL art programming as a resource for students with EBD in the general public school population. Research may need to be done on the effects of a similar art program which integrates students with EBD and without in a school or community setting.

For students with EBD who are observed to gain confidence and joy from the artmaking process, is it reasonable for additional art program to be a service guaranteed in their IEP? Although art education and art therapy provide distinct services, if there is a possibility for students with EBD to find joy and pride in artmaking in a classroom or

community setting, perhaps there a possibility that schools will recognize this as a service benefitting the student which it has an obligation to provide.

### **Further Research**

Investigation into different models of art programming for students with EBD must be done to learn more about how artmaking can be most beneficial for this population. Within EBD, students possess different diagnosis and symptoms and require vastly different supports. If art programming is to benefit students with EBD, further investigation must be done in order to distinguish the types of artmaking that are most beneficial to smaller more specialized groups of students within the umbrella of EBD.

Social Emotional Learning is also a vast area of study that should be studied more specifically to learn about how it best serve specific populations of students. In this case study, SEL defined the broad overarching themes set forth by the program and interpreted freely for students exploring the themes. The broad themes of SEL can trigger varied responses in students who struggle with their mental and behavioral health. Further, a high rate of students with EBD have experienced or currently experiencing trauma and may need special support in tackling personal and social issues in a meaningful way. So, how can we explore these topics more specifically in students with EBD as art teachers without encroaching on therapeutic methods?

More investigation should be done on combining various artforms into SEL programming. Theater and music could potentially be powerful components to explore in a targeted arts program. The potential for students to explore topics under the umbrella of self and social exploration can potentially be heightened for giving students the option to

incorporate artforms such as dance, theater, and music individually or in combination with other arts.

### **Reflections**

The role of art education is to provide safe spaces for students to create beauty and participate in honest self-reflection. Artistic techniques and usage of materials are valuable skills for students to learn and become comfortable with, but if we are teaching art as a tangible skillset and not as a broader, all-encompassing lenses in which to view the world and our roles within it, then we are doing our students a disservice. As art teachers we must provide children a structured setting in which to practice the skills of observation and synthesis of information. What am I observing? How does it make it make me feel? What is its impact on me and on the world at large? These are questions that students must consistently be asking in our classrooms until they have practiced enough to be able to take these questions into their lives outside of art class and feel confident doing so.

As art teachers, instructing on techniques and materials is frivolous unless they are taught as tools to be used for our students to express themselves and their ideas with greater freedom. We are living in a time where the political, societal, and media spheres are shifting rapidly. As adults, we cannot fully imagine navigating through the world as a child beyond our own specific experience. The highest respect that we can pay our students is to accept their feelings and experiences as valid, and worthy of exploring and expressing. For students with EBD, the journey to discover one's own voice and value within society is even more daunting and requires special attention and care from teachers to facilitate and encourage.

If we are not allowing room in our curriculum for students to reflect on their own experiences and values, we are not using art to the full potential of being a vehicle for developing self-agency and confidence. Using Social Emotional Learning is one possible option for teachers who are interested in facilitating a culture of communication, pride, and expression within their classroom, but there is more to be investigated and pursued in order to find the best possible ways in which to raise our student's voices and encourage growth through artmaking.

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## LEARNING IN STUDENTS WITH EMOTIONAL BEHAVIORAL DISORDERS

**APPENDIX A: Timeline for the Study**

<b>MONTH</b>	<b>PROCESS</b>	<b>STEPS TO ACCOMPLISH</b>
<b>DECEMBER</b>	<b>Proposal Hearing</b>	<b>Complete AEGR618 requirements and participate in proposal hearing on Dec 9th 2017</b>
	<b>Gain IRB Approval</b>	<b>Submit full proposal as requested no later than Dec 14th</b>
<b>JANUARY</b>	<b>Seek Site Approvals</b>	<b>After IRB approval, contact sites with initial letter and schedule interview with school administrators</b>
<b>FEBRUARY</b>	<b>Prepare materials for research and curriculum</b>	<b>Write lesson plans Write journal/sketchbook prompts</b>
	<b>Seek participants permissions Finalize dates and schedule</b>	<b>Put together student binders Work with site to arrange finalized dates and schedule (2 x weekly 10 weeks)</b>
	<b>Prepare to begin study</b>	<b>finalize all documents and lesson plans, gather any necessary materials, ensure all permissions have been collected, set up folders for audio and visual data collection</b>
<b>MARCH</b>	<b>Gather student information</b>	<b>Gather and document initial student data with information from Margo Wunder, school staff</b>
	<b>Initial participant interviews</b>	<b>Work with site to arrange for initial interviews with student participants</b>
<b>MID MARCH</b>	<b>Data collection/data analysis</b>	<b>collect data from observation at each session</b>
<b>APRIL</b>		<b>document all data organized by student folders</b>
<b>MAY</b>		<b>note observations and reoccurring themes</b>
<b>MAY</b>	<b>Final Interviews Program Ends</b>	<b>Work with site to arrange final interviews with students, staff and teachers Complete final group project</b>

**APPENDIX B: Informed Consent for Students**



**INFORMED CONSENT FOR STUDENTS**

**DESCRIPTION OF THE RESEARCH:** You are invited to participate in a research study that investigates ways targeted art programming focusing on social and emotional learning impacts students with the classification of Emotional Behavioral Disorders. It is hoped valuable information on how to best incorporate Social Emotional Learning into art programming for students with EBD will be revealed throughout the course of this research study.

For this study, you will participate in two weekly sessions over the course of ten weeks February through April. These sessions will be opportunities to make art beyond your existing art class alone and with other students in partnerships and as a group. Participation will in no way impact your regular school schedule, IEP programs, or extracurricular activities. I will not be asking to view any of your personal information such as IEPs, student records, or behavior programs. You will be asked to participate in two interviews during the course of this program. During these interviews, you will be audio recorded. These audio recordings will provide information that I will use in writing my thesis and the audio recordings will be destroyed upon the completion of my study. This study will take place at The Martin Luther School at Silver Springs in a classroom designated for the study and I, Christine Mazur, will conduct the research study.

**RISKS AND BENEFITS:** Participation in the study is completely voluntary. There will be no effect on your standing or grades should you decide not to participate in this study. The dialogues around your experiences making art and working with your peers for the study will be the same for all the students in study. Therefore, you will not be singled out or pulled out from any of the activities if you chose not to participate in the study and/or the art making experiences. The research has the same amount of risk you will encounter during a usual art or classroom activity. However, you may feel shy engaging with a new person or a new type of activity. If this occurs or if you feel uncomfortable at any point in this study, special arrangements can be made, and/or you can pull out of the study without penalty or repercussions. The benefits from the study include positively affecting students' participation in art and social activities in school. It is also hoped that I will learn through the study more about how to provide opportunities for students with EBD to enhance Social and Emotional Learning through art programming.

**PAYMENTS:** There will be no payments for you for participation in this study.

**DATA STORAGE TO PROTECT CONFIDENTIALITY:** Subject's confidentiality will be preserved. I am the sole researcher of this study. For the collation, analysis and reporting of all data, all of the participants will be assigned a pseudonym to prevent individuals from being identified. Any charts used in my thesis or presentations will be coded. The audio recordings will be destroyed upon the completion of my dissertation. I will reserve the right to use the data and photographs of student artwork but the students' identify will continue to remain confidential.

**TIME INVOLVEMENT:** Your participation in the study will take approximately 10 weeks, participating in 2 sessions a week.

**HOW WILL RESULTS BE USED:** The results of the study will be used in drawing conclusions from the investigation on how art programming can enhance Social and Emotional Learning in students with EBD. The study will be reported in the form of a thesis, which serves to fulfill my requirements for a masters degree in Art Education with an Emphasis on Special Populations.

**APPENDIX C: Informed Consent for Teachers and Paraprofessionals**



**INFORMED CONSENT FOR TEACHERS AND PARAPROFESSIONALS**

**DESCRIPTION OF THE RESEARCH:** You are invited to participate in a research study that investigates ways targeted art programming focusing on social and emotional learning impacts students with the classification of Emotional Behavioral Disorder. It is hoped valuable information on how to best incorporate Social Emotional Learning into art programming for students with EBD will be revealed throughout the course of this research study.

For this study, I will ask you to participate in two 15-20 minute interviews. One will take place before the study begins and one will take place at the completion of the study. You will be asked open-ended standardized interview questions, and basic demographic information such as your years of experience teaching, years at the school site, and types of populations served. You will also be asked general questions about your students participating in the study such as their likes and dislikes, current learning goals, art experience, and social / recreational interests. I will not be asking to view any personal information on students such as IEPs, student records, or behavior programs. During all research sessions, you will be audio recorded. These audio recordings will provide information that I will use in writing my thesis, and the audio recordings will be destroyed upon the completion of my study. This study will take place at the Martin Luther School at Silver Springs in a classroom designated for the study and I, Christine Mazur, will conduct the research study.

**RISKS AND BENEFITS:** Participation in the study is completely voluntary. There will be no effects or risks to you should you decide not to participate in this study. The interview questions will be the same for all teachers and paraprofessionals involved in the study. Therefore, you will not be singled out if you choose not to participate in the study. If you become uncomfortable at any time during the interview, you may address your concerns verbally or in writing. If this occurs at any point in this study, special arrangements can be made, and/or you can remove yourself from the study without penalty or repercussions. The benefits from the study include positively affecting students' participation in art and social activities in school. It is also hoped that I will learn through the study more about how to provide opportunities for students with EBD to enhance Social and Emotional Learning through art programming.

**PAYMENTS:** There will be no payments for you to participation in this study.

**DATA STORAGE TO PROTECT CONFIDENTIALITY:** Subject's confidentiality will be preserved. I am the sole researcher of this study. For the collation, analysis and reporting of all data, all of the participants will be assigned a pseudonym to prevent individuals from being identified. Any charts used in my thesis or presentations, will be coded. The audio recordings will be destroyed upon the completion of my thesis. I will reserve the right to use the data and photographs of student artwork in the future, but the students' identify will continue to remain confidential.

**TIME INVOLVEMENT:** Your participation in the study will take approximately 15-20 minutes two times during the course of the study for interviews.

**HOW WILL RESULTS BE USED:** The results of the study will be used in drawing conclusions from the investigation on how art programming can enhance Social and Emotional Learning in students with EBD. The study will be reported in the form of a thesis, which serves to fulfill my requirements for a masters degree in Art Education with an Emphasis on Special Populations.

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**APPENDIX D: Participants Rights**



**PARTICIPANT'S RIGHTS**

Principal Investigator: **Christine Mazur**

Research Title: **Effects of a Targeted Art Program on Social Emotional Learning in Students with Emotional Behavioral Disorder**

- I have read and discussed the Research Description with the researcher. I have had the opportunity to ask questions about the purposes and procedures regarding this study.
- My participation in this research is voluntary. I may refuse to participate or withdraw from participation at any time without jeopardy to future medical care, employment, student status or other entitlements.
- The researcher may withdraw me from the research at her professional discretion.
- If, during the course of the study, significant new information that has been developed becomes available which may relate to my willingness to continue to participate, the investigator will provide this information to me.
- Any information derived from the research project that personally identifies me will not be voluntarily released or disclosed without my separate consent, except as specifically required by law.
- If at any time I have any questions regarding the research or my participation, I can contact the investigator, who will answer my questions. The investigator's email is [cmazur@moore.edu](mailto:cmazur@moore.edu).
- I should receive a copy of the Informed Consent Document and this Participant's Rights document.
- **If audio recording is part of this research,**
  - I (  ) consent to being audio recorded.
  - I (  ) do NOT consent to being audio recorded.

The written, artwork and audio taped materials will be viewed only by the principal investigator, inter-rater scorers, and members of the program faculty.

- **Written, artwork, and audio taped materials,**
  - (  ) may be viewed in an educational setting outside the research.
  - (  ) may **NOT** be viewed in an educational setting outside the research.

**My signature means that I agree to participate in this study.**

**Participant's signature:** \_\_\_\_\_ **Date:**    /    /

**APPENDIX E: Investigators Verification of Explanation**



Name: \_\_\_\_\_

If necessary:

**Investigator's Verification of Explanation**

I certify that I have carefully explained the purpose and nature of this research to  
\_\_\_\_\_ (participant's name) in age-appropriate language.

He/She has had the opportunity to discuss it with me in detail. I have answered all his/her questions and  
he/she provided the affirmative agreement (i.e. assent) to participate in this research.

Investigator's Signature: \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

**APPENDIX F: Guardian Consent Form for Participant Research**



**GUARDIAN CONSENT FORM FOR PARTICIPATION IN RESEARCH**

I give consent for \_\_\_\_\_ to participate in the research study entitled, "**Effects of a Targeted Art Program on Social Emotional Learning in Students with Emotional Behavioral Disorder**" that is being conducted by **Christine Mazur**, a Graduate Student in Art Education at Moore College of Art & Design. I understand that this participation is entirely voluntary; I or my child can withdraw consent at any time without penalty, and have the results of the participation, to the extent that it can be identified as my child's, returned to me, removed from the records, or destroyed.

1. The reason for the research is to investigate ways targeted art programming focusing on social and emotional learning impacts students with the classification of Emotional Behavioral Disorder. It is hoped valuable information on how to best incorporate Social Emotional Learning into art programming for students with EBD will be revealed throughout the course of this research study.
2. The procedures are as follows: Students will meet 2x weekly to participate in art making activities individually and as a group that are based on the following themes: self-management, self-awareness, responsible decision-making, relationship skills, and social awareness.
3. The timeline for the research is as follows: Program will meet 2 times weekly for 10 weeks from February to April 2018.
4. No risks are foreseen. My child's participation is voluntary. Non-participating students will not be penalized in any way. Grades will not be affected if a student elects to not participate.
5. Participant's identities are strictly confidential. Results will not be personally identifiable. Data collected from the research will be kept secure, locked in a file cabinet off site. Pseudonyms will be used when quotes from individual children are transcribed into data.
6. If there are further questions now or during the research, I can be reached at (732)610-2210 or [cmazur@moore.edu](mailto:cmazur@moore.edu)
7. If you have any further questions, you may also reach out to my professor, Amanda Newman-Godfrey at [anewmangodfrey@moore.edu](mailto:anewmangodfrey@moore.edu) or my MA Program Director, Lauren Stichter at [lstichter@moore.edu](mailto:lstichter@moore.edu)

Please sign both copies of this form. A duplicate will be provided for you.

**Signature of Researcher:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Signature of Parent/Guardian:** \_\_\_\_\_

Research at Moore College of Art & Design, that involves human participants, is overseen by the Institutional Review Board. Questions regarding your rights as a participant should be addressed to:

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## LEARNING IN STUDENTS WITH EMOTIONAL BEHAVIORAL DISORDERS

## APPENDIX G: Example Student Observational Data Charts

**Tyrell Observational Data**

<b>3/12 Objectives: Introduction Personalize program binders with name and design "Self Asset Assessment" Journal worksheet</b>	Observations: Immediately introduced himself to me by telling me all of his strengths and his favorite types of art. proud of his abilities especially in term of art/technology. loves anime and superheroes. enthusiastic and excited for program. demonstrated the ability to follow directions with minimal verbal prompting. participated in individual and group discussion. Once costume making was mentioned, he become focused on the idea of creating a costume and learning how to sew. appeared to doubt himself with decorating the binder or writing his name. expressed that he was making mistakes wrote "Cosplay costume, replica costumes"
<b>3/16 Objectives: Presentation on costuming with examples of Nick Cave sound suit and Alexander McQueen designs Students completed journal worksheets and sketched costume ideas</b>	Observations: came to program with artwork for the front and back of his binder which he had worked on throughout the week. also brought a rubric that he made for creating a costume. participated somewhat in discussion but appeared to be distracted by the idea of making a costume by sewing instead of painting/drawing. Asked to use an iPad to look up 3d printing techniques. Very focused on making a cosplay costume instead of a drawing. appears to become minimally frustrated by needing to work during the program session. wrote "spiderman costume, (detailed list of spiderman costume attributes) no drawing
3/20	Closed due to weather
3/22	Absent
3/27	Spring Break
3/29	Spring Break
<b>4/3 Objectives: Continue to utilize materials of students choice to complete a piece based on a costume or clothing that serves an emotional purpose</b>	Observations: changed his idea and asked for an iPod. started to copy a cartoon drawing from another artist. Made original idea for journal but wanted to copy something online for assignment. became despondent when i tried to take away iPad putting his head down. wanted to work on this drawing because it was interesting to him but was resistant to working on a drawing related to the journal prompt. Eventually we had a discussion about his decision to do a drawing that was inspired by someone else's art. I asked him to change several things about it from his imagination and he complied. He was focused on his work independently for at least 20 minutes of interrupted work time. He demonstrated an eagerness to continue working on his drawing. Socially, he had a brief interaction with another student who gave him unwarranted advice. He quickly redirected back to his work. He demonstrated a commitment to his drawing even though it was not related to the journal prompt.
4/6	Absent
4/10	Absent
4/12	Absent
4/17	Absent
4/19	Absent
4/24	Absent
<b>4/26 Objectives: Continue to utilize clay to complete a piece based on either a trophy design or an action figure</b>	T attended program and said that because he hadnt been there, he would prefer to start working in clay rather than continue his last drawing. He did some sketches on a journal prompt for designing an action figure. His initial sketch was based on black panther, but he explained that he would change features so that it would be his original work. After sketching, I worked with him on one kneading the clay and discussing way to make the clay softer and more workable. He was reminded of techniques that he learned in his art class. He continuously asked how to make specific shapes and asked for help on getting the clay to be in the shape of a head. I worked next to him, using separate clay and modeling some techniques. He noticed that a pieces of clay resembled a witch's nose in a cartoon and became excited about the idea of making a witch. he stated he no longer wanted to make his original idea. He appeared to be excited about the new idea and proudly showed off the head shape to MW and I. He became frustrated and pulled off the nose when he was having difficulty keeping it attached. Before it was able to be reattached, he was dismissed for the day. Despite the nose breaking and his minor frustration, he said goodbye to me and his peers and left unbothered by the broken sculpture.

## LEARNING IN STUDENTS WITH EMOTIONAL BEHAVIORAL DISORDERS

<u>Jasmine Observational Data</u>	
<b>3/12 Objectives: Introduction Personalize program binders with name and design "Self Asset Assessment" Journal worksheet</b>	Observations: Presented as eager and excited to begin program. socialized appropriately with peers and teacher. Consistently asked to leave the group to walk people to class or get drinks, complained of stomach ache. demonstrated frustration related to decorating her binder. Felt more comfortable using stencils. Asked me and margo for 1:1 assistance throughout session. Did not complete journal
<b>3/16 Objectives: Presentation on costuming with examples of Nick Cave sound suit and Alexander McQueen designs Students completed journal worksheets and sketched costume ideas</b>	Observations: J participated in the group discussion and answered questions related to wearing a costume. she expressed that people may like to wear a costume so that people don't know anything about them. She said that she relates to this, as when people know about you they might bully you or risk you safety in some way. She reacted strongly to the photos of alexander mcqueen designs that looked like cages exclaiming that they were scary. She said that she loved the designed that looked like a football uniform and noted that the model looked confident and also stated "and i like her color". struggled with started her project due to starting over and expressing not having ideas. drew "red ink and black shirt" that has a heart and says "im sorry"
<b>3/20</b>	Closed due to weather
<b>3/22</b>	Absent
<b>3/27</b>	Spring Break
<b>3/29</b>	Spring Break
<b>4/3 Objectives: Continue to utilize materials of students choice to complete a piece based on a costume or clothing that serves an emotional purpose</b>	Observations: J began several pieces today and quickly threw each one away, expressing that they were not good and that she did not have any ideas. MW and I both took time to individually counsel her on her initial ideas and each time she expressed that she didn't know how to proceed and would need more help. it was difficult to provide J with the level of help that she desired while also assessing and engaging with other students. I discussed with her options for making her sketch (a shirt that said I'm sorry and has a heart with a bandaid) on a larger piece of paper using different materials. She demonstrated a lack of confidence in following through with her idea and eventually began to make comments about other students work, or ask if she could help younger students instead of working on her piece. She then began asking to escort students to get water or back to their classrooms. She was demonstrating avoidant behaviors for most of the class. After other students went back to their classrooms, J was the last student and was cleaning up her paint which had not been used. She had an idea to work on a "splatter painting" beginning about 5 minutes after the program was over. I told her that I loved the idea but not to begin painting as she was
<b>4/6</b>	Absent
<b>4/10</b>	Absent
<b>4/12</b>	Absent
<b>4/17</b>	Absent
<b>4/19 Objectives: utilize clay for independent project on relationship skills (trophies)</b>	Observation: J repeatedly was being provoked throughout the first half of the class by K, who was making inappropriate comments. J was redirected back to her work. She chose to work on clay and expressed excitement about using a 3d material. She sketched a drawing of a heart and said she wanted to figure out the rest using the clay. J remained focused on using the clay and exploring various ways to work with it for the entirety of the class and DID NOT ASK TO LEAVE FOR ANY REASON for approximately 25 minutes. She also bonded with b, who was also using the clay and talking about her mother's birthday. J offered to work with b on making decorative hearts to be used on charms, j went on to make a charm for b's mom. She expressed being "more into" using clay and expressed wanting to continue using it next week.
<b>4/24 Objectives: Continue to utilize clay to complete a piece based on either a trophy design or an action figure</b>	J entered program with Kyle, Kabir, and Michael who were engaging in inappropriate conversations and being continuously redirected by me and MW. This group began directing comments at J, who engaged minimally and stated that she wanted to continue to work with clay. J stayed focused on her work despite the provocation from the other students. J was continuously praised for her work with clay. She continued to make heart shaped charms and a plaque that said "love". J stated that she needs to get her nails done this week, but that she wants to continue to work with clay even if it could potentially damage her manicure. She went on to state "This should be one of my coping skills." When encouraged to elaborate on that statement, she expressed feeling calm and less likely to become frustrated while working with clay as opposed to 2d materials, where she feels that she her mistakes are less changeable. J worked independently while engaging in conversation with me and Beth for the duration of class, and demonstrated focus and confidence until the dismissal.
<b>4/26 Objectives: Continue to utilize clay to complete a piece based on either a trophy design or an action figure</b>	J appeared to be less focused overall today compared to her last two previous program sessions. She stated she was unable to focus. For example, when pouring out paint to paint her dry sculptures, she overpoured the colors and said "See, look what im doing". Once she started to begin work, she was immediately distracted by the sensation of the table moving due to other students working with clay on the table. I encouraged her to move to our other table where only one other student was working on a drawing. She stated that she did not want to move and that the moving of the table already damaged her work. At this point, J mixed all of the wet paint which had been in intricate designs onto her sculpture into one gray color covering the piece and stated "im done". After this, she began to ask if she could leave the room. I encouraged her to help another student using clay if she did not want to continue her independent work. She stated that she did not want to do that, and that she was bored. I encouraged her to either continue painting her dry sculptures or to have a conversation with me planning her next piece. J took a short break to get

## LEARNING IN STUDENTS WITH EMOTIONAL BEHAVIORAL DISORDERS

<b>Beth Observational Data</b>	
<b>3/12</b> <b>Objectives: Introduction Personalize program binders with name and design "Self Asset Assessment" Journal worksheet</b>	Observations: B was quiet and reserved throughout the session. She interacted with K who she had a preexisting relationship with but did not interact with other students. She demonstrated frustration when asked to write down program rules as we discussed outlaid due to not being able to keep up and asked if she could make her own rules. I told her that she could also make some of her own. She added "be happy" to her rules. She was focused on working independently. Enjoys using stencils. Wrote her name and "art". Did not show interest in other students work. Begins working immediately after assignment is introduced
<b>3/16 Objectives: Presentation on costuming with examples of Nick Cave sound suit and Alexander McQueen designs Students completed journal worksheets and sketched costume ideas</b>	Observations: was attentive and focused during the presentation. She did not verbally participate in discussion. stayed working until it was time for her to go home. After other students left, she said that john made a mean comment about her drawing and appeared to be upset. Neither me or Margo overheard the comment that was made. Margo told Eliza that she loves working with her and b appeared to happy with that feedback and gave margo a hug goodbye. I thanked her for coming to program and she also gave me a hug goodbye. b appears to enjoy having time before and after class to talk privately with me and margo. Shared that she is teased for having scars on her arms due to picking her skin. Discussed with us the idea of wearing armbands. Also discussed the new home her family was moving into and her plans of joining her mom there. Drawing of a girl wearing amor and boxing gloves to protect herself "makes people feel safe"(defense)
<b>3/20</b>	Closed due to weather
<b>3/22 Objectives: Complete journal on self and social awareness Continue to utilize materials of students choice to complete a piece based on a costume or clothing that serves an emotional purpose</b>	Observations: b was one of 2 students in program today and stayed before and after to work independently. visibly enjoyed looking through her binder and reading the notes that I left for her. She smiled and said thank you and that it was nice of me to leave notes. b had the option of working on a new journal and getting a head start or continuing her fashion project. She worked on a new journal. b was the only younger student today with two 8th graders who were outgoing. She did not socialize with them but did introduce herself and appeared comfortable working independently. drew one side angel and one side devil (people think I'm nice). indicated that people viewed her as "sweet and innocent" but that she felt she had darker side and anger that strangers could not perceive. "sometimes i can be mean especially when I am mad so I drew a devil and people think I'm nice most of the time."
<b>3/27</b>	Spring Break
<b>3/29</b>	Spring Break
<b>4/3 Objectives: Continue to utilize materials of students choice to complete a piece based on a costume or clothing that serves an emotional purpose</b>	Observations: b restarted her fashion project after beginning painting. became upset cried, said nothing was coming out good, mentioned PSSA testing, put her head down. given option to stop for the day and rest. was reassured that she was ahead and could take time to get her thoughts together. left program upset just came back from home visit— missed home pittsburg

## LEARNING IN STUDENTS WITH EMOTIONAL BEHAVIORAL DISORDERS

<b>Kyle Observational Data</b>	
3/12	Absent
3/16	Absent
3/20	Closed due to weather
3/22/2018 4/6 Objectives: Complete journal on self and social awareness Continue to utilize materials of students choice to complete a piece based on a costume or clothing that serves an emotional purpose	Observations: Expressed being in a rush and needing to leave program early to speak to another teacher. stayed briefly. completed journal entries from previous week minimally and said that he was done. Talked about his clothing line. discussed issue with friend related to people "wanting to fight him" wrote "I have my own clothing brand" (drawing of a logo).
3/27	Spring Break
3/29	Spring Break
4/3 Objectives: Continue to utilize materials of students choice to complete a piece based on a costume or clothing that serves an emotional purpose	Observations: had preexisting relationship to M and this is the first program session the were in together. took approximately 10 minutes to focus into working into their journals on sketches. very outgoing and makes comments and poses questions thought class. program participants appear to be affected by his behavior. For example, if his tone becomes louder or if stands up, 2-3 peers will do the same. He and M redirected back to their work approx every 5-10 minutes for the duration of program due to them becoming loud (disruptive) or the nature of their conversation becoming inappropriate for school. Expressed disliking sketching and wanted to begin working on the big paper. i complied and he began a drawing of a man wearing clothing with patterns and designs on
4/6 Objectives: Continue to utilize materials of students choice to complete a piece based on a costume or clothing that serves an emotional purpose	Observations: continued to work on his fashion drawing. Today KL used paint to begin filling in the patterned clothing that he was working on drawing. He was less distracted by conversation today. Possible because he already had a piece in the making that he immediately jumped into. He worked indecently without the need for any redirection for approximately 30-35 minutes. He was occasionally prompted to keep his conversation appropriate for school.  KL continues to be an influential person in the group, and he seems to be escalate his peers energy and at other times calm them when he is focusing on work. Especially the male students in his age group (M and KU). He consistency speaks aloud throughout the class about any ideas he may have, or his opinions on teachers, trends, music and movies. Occasionally, this leads to banter between him and the participants in his age group. KE and EL seem to ignore him.
4/10 Objectives: Continue to utilize materials of students choice to complete a piece based on a costume or clothing that serves an emotional purpose	Observations: worked throughout the majority of the class period on his fashion piece independently. Because his peers M and KU were in program, he was occasionally distracted by their conversations and redirected back to work. At one point, he M and KU were chasing each other around the room. At this point, they were all easily redirected to work. KH continues to speak throughout the class on any topic that comes o his mind. Today he spoke about his grandmother and included other participants in the conversation saying that he wanted to take them home to visit. He also provoked participants in the program by casually accusing them of stealing his ideas. When JO, M, and KU responded negatively to this, he began laughing and redirected back to work. when asked, he said he wanted to continue his current project next class.