University of Alberta

How Social and Emotional Learning Beliefs Predict Efficacy and Engagement Beliefs in Practicing and Preservice Teachers

by

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A thesis submitted to the Faculty of Graduate Studies and Research
in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of

Master of Education
in
Psychological Studies in Education

Educational Psychology

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Fall 2013
Edmonton, Alberta

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"Teachers teach not only a curriculum of study, they also become part of it. The subject matter they teach is mixed with the content of their personalities. We remember our teachers, not so much for what they taught, but for who they were and are. We remember their substance as persons, their style and manner as individuals. Students may be attracted to a teacher's mind, but it is the essence of a teacher's self-hood that is remembered."
Hamachek, 1999, p. 208

Abstract

The Prosocial Classroom Model posits teachers' social emotional competence (SEC) at the forefront of the path that impacts healthy teacher/student relationships, effective classroom management, and effective social-emotional learning (SEL) implementation. Two studies, each using a predictive correlation design examined how teachers' comfort with and commitment to SEL predicted their teaching efficacy and engagement, two factors conceptualized to contribute to effective classroom management. Study 1 examined practicing teachers and Study 2 focused on preservice teachers. Regression analyses revealed that comfort with SEL was a significant predictor for teaching efficacy and engagement for practicing teachers and predicted efficacy for preservice teachers. Commitment to SEL was a significant predictor for teaching engagement with practicing teachers. Independent samples *t*-tests revealed the two groups as significantly different with regards to their comfort with and commitment to SEL. Methods to increase teachers' SEL beliefs, implications for practice, and suggestions for future research are discussed.

Acknowledgements

I would like to acknowledge Drs. Christina Rinaldi and Larry Prochner for agreeing to be a part of my defense committee. They challenged my understandings of constructs within the classroom and helped me consider how the research process informs both theory and practice. My committee generously gave this document their time, care and attention and engaged with me most thoughtfully. Dr. Prochner remarked that my energy and passion for teaching came across in my document, at which point I confirmed that I was successful in completing what I intended to do.

I am most grateful to my thesis supervisor and mentor Dr. Lia Daniels who has supported me throughout my entry and completion of graduate school, letting me cry both in her office and at her kitchen table. Lia has always believed that I can do anything, and reminds me to never cry alone. In my time as a teacher, I always told my students that what I wanted from them was that they always work hard and be nice. Lia is the model of this motto: she is a genuine person who exists as an accomplished academic without sacrificing the needs and hearts of her students.

It is with warmth and admiration that I thank all the teachers who contributed to my work by offering their honest thoughts and feedback. In the often isolating research process, I am lucky to have seen and spoken to teachers who were and are my mentors, my colleagues, and friends, and to know that they have had a part in this document that is so close to my heart.

To the friends in and outside of school, who have always reminded me that I am "good enough" including my roommates, partners, fellow ACME members, members of Ed Tech (actual and honorary) and all the friends I've made down the halls of Education North. These past two years have challenged me to accept and embrace the choices that I make and have taught me how to be where I am.

Thank you to my family, who may not always know what it means when I say "I'm working on my thesis", but are proud of me and read it anyways.

Lastly, thank you to my sister Alecia, who reminds me that I am pretty fabulous and has infamously remarked "if you think I'm nice, you should meet my sister", a compliment that reminds me of the type of person I am and want to be.

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How Social and Emotional Learning Beliefs Predict Efficacy and Engagement in Practicing and Preservice Teachers

Consciously, we teach what we know; unconsciously, we teach who we are.”

Hamachek, 1999, p. 209

Academic excellence is not necessarily synonymous with personal excellence and success. Job postings, including those for University positions, are starting to include not only academic and administrative qualifications, but also request that applicants have high social and emotional intelligence; employers are looking beyond what applicants know towards who they are as people and how they interact with others. The people who qualify are those who excel in what has become known as social-emotional competence (SEC). This concept is often operationalized as five competencies including self-awareness, social awareness, responsible decision-making, self-management, and relationship management (CASEL, 2013). In an education context, students who possess and display these competencies have higher social functioning, leading to more friends and positive relationships with adults (Frey, Bobbitt Nolen, Van Schoiack Edstrom, & Hirschstein, 2005). These positive interactions have been shown to contribute to lower absenteeism, decreased dropout rates, and greater commitment to group goals and personal responsibility (Johnson & Johnson, 2004, Frey et al., 2005). To develop these skills in students, schools have begun to focus on embedding regular classes with formal SEL curriculum and taking advantage of informal “teachable moments” (Buchanan, Gueldner, Tran, & Merrell, 2009; Zins, Bloodworth, Weissberg, & Walberg, 2004; Greenberg, et al., 2003). As is often

the case, these changes are sometimes made with little consideration as to teachers' preparedness to support this type of curriculum (Brackett, Reyes, Rivers, Elbertson, & Salovey, 2011). In short, there is a gap in the research on how teachers' beliefs about SEL impact their own teaching beliefs and behaviours. As will be discussed later in the literature review, there are many benefits for teachers who have high social emotional competencies and positive beliefs about social and emotional learning in the classroom.

Hamachek's (1999) statement above gives rise to a sliver of my purpose in conducting this research. My hope with the two studies I conducted was to acknowledge the potential disconnect between the expectation that teachers implement SEL curriculum in their classrooms and personal beliefs and practices with regards to SEL. Specifically, I examined teachers' beliefs about SEC and how these personal beliefs predicted some of their beliefs about their own teaching practice. This research uses the Prosocial Classroom Model (Jennings & Greenberg, 2009) as a framework from which to examine teachers' SEL beliefs and how these beliefs predicted their teaching efficacy and engagement – factors that were chosen to represent effective classroom management.

This thesis is composed of two research studies, one focused on the beliefs and practices of practicing teachers, and the other on preservice teachers. Each study used regression equations with teachers' comfort with SEL and commitment to SEL as independent variables, predicting teaching efficacy and engagement. As well, in the second study, independent samples *t*-tests were used to compare the two samples with regards to their SEL beliefs.

Ironically, to move research on SEL implementation forward, my research looks backward to teachers as primary and crucial sources for research that explores ways to encourage teachers to support SEL in the classroom and model SEC skills for their students. Through contributing to this field by exploring the SEL beliefs of teachers, it is my hope that teachers' social and emotional beliefs can be supported such that they are confident in their capacity to shape the social and emotional work of teaching and learning.

Literature Review

Social Emotional Competence

Social emotional competence (SEC) is considered as five separate factors, all contributing to the overall social and emotional functioning of the individual. Specifically, the five factors I based my research on are: "recognizing and managing emotions, developing care and concern for others, establishing positive relationships, making responsible decisions, and handling challenging situations constructively and ethically" (CASEL, 2013, p.1). These five factors, established by the Collaborative for Academic, Social and Emotional Learning, are widely accepted within social and emotional literature and have been used as the basis in research and intervention development. SEC has been shown to be a valuable construct for teachers and students (Zins et al., 2004) and one that needs more empirical exploration. Before moving into a review of the relevant empirical work that does exist, it is advantageous to consider the theoretical origins of SEC as stemming from the two separate constructs of social competence and emotional competence.

Social competence, in general terms, is considered to be a person's effectiveness in interaction (Rose-Krasnor, 1997) and has over time, by different researchers, both maintained its generality as well as provided more specific focus to particular contexts. By examining the roots of SEC as existing in the discussion of social competence, the classroom provides a social environment from which to assess the competencies of students and teachers.

In Rose-Krasnor's (1997) significant work on the study of social competence, she offers three components to the explanation of social competence: the base represented by individual social skills, the middle layer representing the interactions between self and other in a social context, and the uppermost portion reflecting the theoretical component, specifying that the interactions and skills are context dependent and relative to specific personal social goals. Furthermore, Calkins and Mackler (2011) agree that social competence does not simply refer to social skills, but rather encompasses the development and maintenance of relationships with others. The inherently social environment of a classroom involves interactions with others and a specific context from which to study the players in this context; particularly, the role of the teacher insofar as their beliefs about SEL as they relate to their other beliefs about their personal teaching practice. The discussion of social-competence, while offering advances from "effectiveness in interaction" to include context-dependency, acknowledgement of the challenges that come with developmental stages from infancy to adulthood, as well as the motivational factors that influence displays of behavior, neglects to explicitly acknowledge how social interactions are inherently emotional.

While at times framed as a separate entity, the presentation and assessment of emotional competence inevitably involves a social context, whether implicitly or explicitly stated. Saarni (2000) notes that emotions are not experienced in a vacuum, and that emotional experience is embedded within the context and conditions under which it occurs. The school and classroom setting is a part of a larger system and as such, studying the social and emotional beliefs of teachers may help to provide insight into broader teacher beliefs and practices.

Denham et al. (2011), explicitly discuss the interdependency of social and emotional competencies: Emotions are central to the experience of any social interaction, and conversely, social interactions are driven by emotional transactions. It is through these emotional and social transactions that relationships to others and perhaps roles (i.e. position in the family, occupation title) can be established, maintained, and altered over time and in different contexts. Similarly, in her discussion of social competence as it relates to social relationships between children and caregivers and children and their peers, Rose-Krasnor (1997) acknowledges that the skills that contribute to social competence play a role in the execution of smooth social and emotional transactions. In discussing transactions between the self and other, the classroom setting offers a look at a variety of unique partnerships. The relationship between a teacher and their students is one significant example of the social and emotional transactions that take place in a school. Teachers are also partners in the interaction between themselves and colleagues, administration, as well as parents of students. The school setting offers an ideal place from which to explore social emotional

learning in action as teachers model and students observe and replicate positive social and emotional competencies because the players are involved in a variety of different social emotional relationships. Specifically, teachers' work requires personal SEC because they are not only partners and facilitators in social emotional interactions with colleagues and students, but also model appropriate behavior for students and may be responsible for formally teaching SEL curriculum.

Social emotional competence is considered an outcome of the broad construct of social and emotional learning (SEL). The philosophy of SEL in the context of a classroom is defined as the development of caring and supportive environments for students to find success in core social and emotional competencies (CASEL, 2013). The specific social and emotional competencies refer to the skills in areas such as communication, conflict resolution and goal setting, among others. These competencies are reportedly established and developed by both the formal and informal instruction that links academics to social and emotional development (Buchanan et al., 2009; Zins, et al., 2004; Greenberg et al., 2003). Because these competencies affect students in school and life beyond school (Zins et al., 2004), it is essential that schools and teachers find a balance between concern for academic competence and concern for the development of social-emotional competence (Bernard, 2006). The process through which these competencies are developed and enhanced is through what is referred to as social emotional learning. Each of these terms will be used

throughout this paper with beliefs about SEL being the primary focus for the groups being examined.

When SEC is discussed in the context of teaching and learning, it is essential to acknowledge that schools are inherently social places and learning is a social process (Zins et al., 2004). As mentioned above, emotional interactions are inseparable from the context in which they occur (Denham, 2006) and the social setting of the classroom provides an environment from which to explore the social emotional beliefs of the teachers who establish the classroom setting and maintain interactions and relationships with students, colleagues and administration. In an effort to consider how it social emotional competencies and learning applies to teachers, the only relevant model found was Jennings and Greenberg's (2009) Prosocial Classroom Model, discussed in detail below.

The Prosocial Classroom Model

Jennings and Greenberg's (2009) Prosocial Classroom Model outlines links between teachers' SEC, that is, their own social emotional skills, and well-being and follows with specific classroom and student outcomes. The model, pictured below, frames the teachers' SEC and well-being at the forefront of the figure; and as Jennings, Snowberg, Coccia, and Greenberg (2011) point out, when teachers lack SEC as a personal resource, the classroom factors that follow in the model may suffer. This model offers a theoretical foundation from which to examine how the teachers' own SEC beliefs may serve to influence their beliefs and skills with regards to the practice of teaching and their personal role as a teacher.

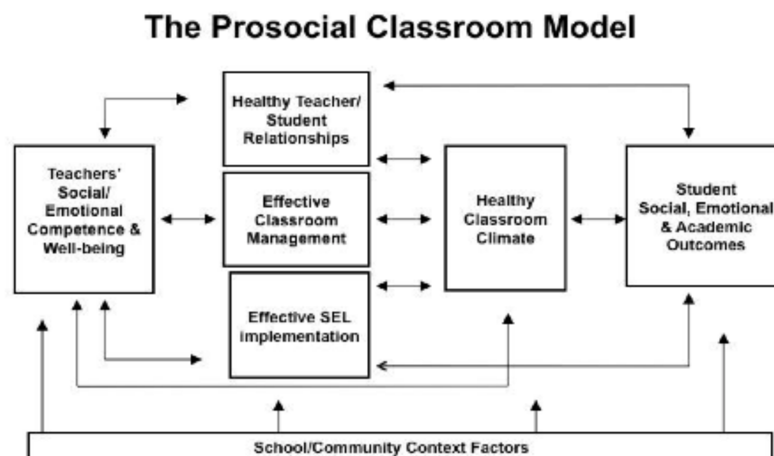

Figure 1. A Model of Teacher Well Being and Social and Emotional Competence, Support and Classroom and Student Outcomes

Figure 1

From: Jennings and Greenberg, 2009, p. 494

In presenting teachers' SEC and well-being at the forefront of this model, this model provides direction for further exploration into classroom and student outcomes that may result from the teacher's competence. Similarly, this model establishes boundaries to my studies and the three research questions focus only on certain pieces of the model. As I am not interested in teachers' own skill levels, but rather in their beliefs about social emotional learning in the classroom, the research questions address the relationship between teachers' beliefs about SEL and effective classroom management as measured by teaching efficacy and teaching engagement.

Examining this model from a component based lens, it becomes clear by looking left to right that the model begins, or has its roots in, the SEC and well-being of the teacher. Despite the abundance of important variables following teachers' own SEC, Jennings and colleagues (2011) admit that little research has been done in the area of SEC development for teachers. Similarly, they concede

that little research has been done to explore teachers' social-emotional skills and how these personal skills translate to the capability of providing quality support for students' social-emotional needs. So, while little is known about teachers' SEC, the placement of this variable emphasizes it's overall importance in achieving both the outcomes displayed in the middle of the model, healthy student teacher relationships, effective classroom management, effective SEL implementation for students and a healthy classroom climate, as well as the final outcome, students' social, emotional, and academic outcomes. It is imperative that we examine teachers and how they can potentially affect the other factors presented in the model. Additionally, there is a range of positive outcomes for teachers with SEC that do not necessarily involve the students they teach. In essence, I am saying that teachers need not only academic skills and content expertise, but also social emotional skills. These positive outcomes are discussed below.

Positive Outcomes for Teachers with SEC

This research on teacher SEC comes at a critical time as more interventions and professional development activities are being introduced to practicing teachers to increase their own SEC as well as their beliefs about SEL. While few studies have considered distinct links between the origin of teachers' SEC and then how these competencies impact classroom outcomes, some research has detailed the positive outcomes for teachers with higher levels of SEC. In detailing these benefits, I continue to emphasize the importance of this research for practicing teachers and perhaps even more so, why teacher SEC and SEL

beliefs should be considered at a preservice teacher level before these teacher candidates enter the classroom. Teachers who are considered to be socially-emotionally competent tend to have the following characteristics: high self-awareness (i.e., recognize their own emotions, have a realistic understanding of their capabilities, are aware of their personal emotional strengths and weaknesses) and high social awareness (i.e., recognize and understand the emotions of their colleagues and students, are culturally sensitive, are able to support and negotiate relationships through empathy and understanding). Similarly, these teachers exhibit prosocial values (i.e., respect others, are responsible and accountable for their own actions), know how to manage their own emotions (especially during times of high emotion or in challenging situations), and monitor their behaviours and relationships with others (Jennings & Greenberg, 2009). Teachers who are considered to have high SEC are reported to have a greater sense of well-being, enjoy teaching, feel more efficacious, (Jennings & Greenberg, 2009) and are more likely to be committed to the teaching profession (Collie, Shapka & Perry, 2012).

Contrastingly, teachers who do not exhibit these prosocial behaviours and social-emotional competencies are less likely to create and foster a classroom environment characterized by reduced conflict, classroom operations that run smoothly and without disruption, regulated expression of appropriate emotions, and among others, respectful communication between parties (Jennings & Greenberg, 2009). If teachers do not exhibit prosocial values and social emotional competencies, it is unlikely that they will be able to maintain an optimally functioning classroom. The students in classrooms that are not considered to be

functioning at an optimal level may suffer as they have been shown to spend less time on task and have lower levels of performance (Marzano, Marzano, & Pickering, 2003). As considered above in the discussion of the Prosocial Classroom Model, while teacher SEC may eventually impact student outcomes, the primary focus of this research is on teachers and how teacher's SEL beliefs may impact their professional thoughts and behaviours with regard to classroom management.

Notably, Collie and her colleagues (Collie, Shapka, & Perry, 2011) acknowledge that limited research has been done in the area of SEL in the classroom and the potential positive outcomes for teachers. In their study, Collie et al. (2011) examined school climate and an approach to teaching and learning that incorporates social-emotional values and skills into general education (SEL) as predictors for teacher commitment. The regression results, based on the self-report from practicing teachers in British Columbia and Ontario (n = 664), revealed that SEL was a significant predictor of teachers' commitment both to the profession as well as to the school itself. Overall, this study suggests that teachers' positive relationships with students as well as a healthy school climate with the presence of SEL has a large impact on teachers' commitment to the profession, at least in the short term.

In another paper, Collie and colleagues (Collie, Shapka, & Perry, 2012) continued to explore SEL as related to outcomes for teachers, specifically, how teachers' beliefs about SEL serve as determinants for three main outcomes: teachers' sense of stress, teaching efficacy, and job satisfaction. The results of this

study revealed that practicing teachers' (*n* = 664) comfort with SEL was negatively associated with stress related to student behavior and positively associated with teaching efficacy and job satisfaction. These results suggest that a teacher's comfort with SEL, as also suggested by Jennings and Greenberg (2009), may have a positive impact on the overall classroom character and thus, foster positive outcomes for both themselves and their students. Collie et al., (2012) suggest the possibility that teachers who are comfortable implementing SEL curriculum in their classrooms may have higher social-emotional competence themselves.

A few existing studies have looked at how a practicing teacher's own SEC may impact teacher commitment (Collie et al., 2012), job satisfaction (Collie et al., 2012) and their overall beliefs about social emotional learning and the associated outcomes in their classroom (Brackett et al., 2011). However, no research has been found on how preservice teachers may navigate their classroom management strategies via their personal SEC. Preservice teachers, those who are studying to obtain a teaching degree either at an undergraduate or post graduate level, are an interesting sample to consider with regard to SEC because they must be considered differently from their practicing counterparts. This sample is at an "in-between" stage – holding the roles of both university students and teachers because they are in a faculty that challenges them to think as teachers as well as complete coursework as students. Furthermore, because of expanding research in the area of social emotional development and learning as it relates to classroom practice, this is a particularly interesting sample, as some of the participants may

have been exposed to social-emotional learning, certainly through implicit means and potentially through formal curriculum. Because of the uniqueness of this population, I have included a brief overview of the benefits for students who are considered to be socially-emotionally competent.

Many of the research contributions so far have examined teachers' SEC and beliefs about SEL as they relate to three aspects of the Prosocial Classroom Model: healthy student teacher relationships, effective SEL implementation and an overall healthy classroom climate (Collie et al., 2011). Another factor, effective classroom management is also important in the model and deserving of exploration; thus, it is the focus of my research. In my studies, I am concerned with how practicing and preservice teachers' SEL beliefs may serve to predict effective classroom management, which I have operationalized as teaching efficacy and teaching engagement. Additionally, as there is no research as to how SEL beliefs may impact the intentions and practices of preservice teachers, my second study examining this group provides further insight into how the beliefs about SEL play a role for those transitioning from student to teacher.

The Prosocial Classroom Model provides boundaries for my studies and helps focus the research questions presented following this review. My research focuses on the variables of teachers' SEC and effective classroom management of the Prosocial Classroom Model for three reasons. First, the model positions teachers' SEC beliefs at the forefront of the model, and simply the position of this variable indicates its' overall importance. While my studies do not measure teachers' SEC skills, they do assess teachers' beliefs about SEL. By studying

teachers' SEL beliefs and linking these beliefs to another piece of the model, I offer new evidence to advance the understanding of how teachers' SEL beliefs impact one relationship proposed in the model. The links between teacher SEC and healthy student teacher relationships and effective SEL curriculum implementation assume that the teacher has had experience in establishing relationships with students and that they have had an opportunity to implement some type of SEL curriculum. This assumption neglects to consider teachers who have not yet experienced long-term teaching and SEL curriculum. Second, I chose to focus on the effective classroom management variable because it is a top concern listed by both preservice teachers (Daniels, Mandzuk, Perry, & Moore, 2011) and practicing teachers (Marzano, Marzano, & Pickering, 2003). Thus, a relationship between SEL beliefs and classroom management would provide empirical evidence that supporting SEL beliefs and personal SEC is a viable way to enhance classroom management. I chose to operationalize classroom management as efficacy and engagement because there exist validated scales and they are concepts with which both practicing and preservice teachers are likely familiar. Teaching efficacy is considered an important factor because teachers who are more efficacious are more likely to try new things in the classroom and remain in the teaching profession (Coladarci, 1992). Teaching engagement is considered to be mediated by the teacher themselves and does not necessarily involve particular students, thus, keeping the focus of my studies on the teacher. Each of these variables are discussed in further detail below. Third, the model links teachers' SEC with classroom management with a double-headed arrow,

indicating bidirectionality. Because this model combines many teacher, classroom and student factors, by choosing only two elements in the model from two perspectives, I am able to examine how the relationships may function differently between practicing and preservice teachers. Each group of teachers may have different SEC beliefs as they relate to teaching and may need different supports to effectively increase their efficacy and engagement. By studying the predictive relationship with these two samples, I am able to consider ways to support the SEC and SEL beliefs of each of these two groups such that they are can experience the potential benefits of having high social and emotional competence as well as socially emotionally literate classrooms. Some positive outcomes for teachers with high levels of SEC were discussed above and the constructs of teaching efficacy and teaching engagement are discussed in further detail below.

Teaching Efficacy

Self-efficacy research has shown that one's beliefs about their capacity to perform certain tasks can serve to influence how much effort they put forth, how long they will persist when faced with challenges, their resilience in dealing with failure and obstacles, and the level of stress they experience when coping with challenging situations (Bandura, 1997). It should be noted that self-efficacy is different than other conceptions of self, including: self-worth, self-concept and self-esteem, in that it is bound by a specific task; in the case of this research, the specific domain of interest is teaching.

Bandura (1999) states that perceived self-efficacy is concerned with people's beliefs in their capabilities to perform in ways that give them a degree of

control over events that affect their lives. In the context of education, teachers' self-efficacy refers to teachers' beliefs about their capabilities to influence students' classroom successes through teaching and instructional behaviors (Bandura, 1997). Bandura (1999) describes a person with high efficacy as someone who: approaches difficult tasks as challenges to be mastered, finds interest in what they do, sets challenges for themselves, concentrates on how to perform successfully, makes adaptive and positive attributions that are internal, controllable and unstable, and, recovers self-assurance after experiencing set-backs. People with high self-efficacy beliefs are also reported to have sustained motivation, reduced stress levels and a lower vulnerability to depression (Bandura, 1999).

A teacher's sense of self-efficacy has been defined as a teacher's "judgment of his or her capabilities to bring about desired outcomes of student engagement and learning, even among those students who may be difficult or unmotivated" (Tschannen-Moran & Woolfolk Hoy, 2001, p. 783). Teaching efficacy, or one's perception of their level of confidence in the area of teaching, is identified as a type of self-efficacy. In the context of this research, teaching efficacy is considered under the umbrella of effective classroom management as presented in the Prosocial Classroom Model. The characteristics presented above of the efficacious person lend themselves to the image of a teacher who can effectively manage a classroom; this teacher is capable of handling challenging situations, is consistently motivated, and is confident in his or her abilities. Below, more benefits of teacher efficacy are detailed as this variable is considered

as a positive outcome following teachers' SEL beliefs and is a factor that contributes to classroom management.

Early studies of teaching efficacy (i.e. RAND, 1976) measured teaching efficacy on response to two items ("When it comes right down to it, a teacher really can't do much because most of a student's motivation and performance depends on his or her home environment." [reverse scored] and "If I really try hard, I can get through to even the most difficult or unmotivated students."). Teachers who were considered to be most efficacious were found to have a strong positive effect on student performance and were instrumental in the completion of projects and continued adoption of methods presented in professional learning contexts (Berman et al., 1977, cited in Tschannen-Moran, Woolfolk Hoy, & Hoy, 1998). Using the same two measurement items from the RAND study, researchers in the 1980's (cited in Tschannen-Moran, Woolfolk Hoy, & Hoy, 1998) found more benefits for teachers who were more efficacious including that they: implemented activities discussed in professional learning activities following an inservice (Smylie, 1988), had reduced stress levels (Parkay et al., 1988) and were less likely to leave the profession (Glickman & Tamashiro, 1982). Teachers who are more efficacious are found to be more engaged in the classroom and school environment and are able to manage their classrooms better. Additionally, these teachers are linked to having a higher level of commitment to the profession and have greater personal well-being (Coladarci, 1992). In summary, teaching efficacy is included as a measure of overall classroom management in these studies because the reported benefits of high teaching efficacy impact classroom

interactions directly as well as indirectly through the overall well being of the efficacious person. Examining how beliefs about SEL may predict teacher efficacy offers researchers another avenue from which to explore the broader classroom benefits of supporting teachers' own social and emotional beliefs.

Teaching Efficacy as it Relates to Preservice Teachers. Examining teaching efficacy in preservice teachers presents several challenges. Firstly, mastery experiences with regards to teaching are said to act as a source of efficacy beliefs (Mulholland & Wallace, 2001) and naturally, in the program at the University from which these preservice teachers are drawn, they will have had few of these apart from student teaching experiences which occur late into their degree programs. Secondly, as suggested by Tschannen-Moran, Woolfolk Hoy and Hoy (1998), teachers' judgments of their own efficacy are at least in part made by their assessment of available resources and constraints within specific teaching contexts and environments. Each of these factors pose challenges to researchers investigating preservice teachers as this demographic has had limited experiences in a teaching context, especially in a long-term situation. Overall, it seems unlikely that preservice teachers have had enough time immersed in a school context in the role of a teacher to have established a sense of teaching efficacy. Coladarci (1992) notes that there is a significant quadratic trend for general teaching efficacy with preservice teachers: their efficacy increased linearly for the first few years of their undergraduate experience, but then declined slightly after student teaching. However, it is noted that research related to efficacy is significant even in the early years of teacher training as efficacy beliefs

appear to be relatively stable once they are established (Woolfolk Hoy & Spero, 2005). On a technical note, and as will be discussed in more detail later, measures were adapted to suit preservice teachers by modifying individual items to acknowledge and reflect the fact that this sample will not have been in a classroom for a period of time beyond any practicum experience.

So while understandings of teaching efficacy may be difficult to conceptualize early into a teacher education program, by gathering results with a sample of preservice teachers, there is space from which to explore the beliefs of teachers at different points in their careers.

As evidence that teaching efficacy beliefs are one factor that contributes to teachers' abilities to effectively manage a classroom, it has been reported that teachers who are efficacious tend to be skilled at organizing and planning (Allinder, 1994, cited in Tschannen Moran & Woolfolk-Hoy, 2001) and are more willing to invest in experimenting with different teaching methods to best meet the needs of their students (Guskey, 1988, cited in Tschannen Moran & Woolfolk-Hoy, 2001). Additionally, teaching efficacy is a strong predictor of commitment to teaching (Coladarci, 1992). Some of these outcomes, coupled with those listed in the section above, are positive outcomes that are also related to teachers' engagement in the profession. Discussed below, engagement is another factor that can be considered to contribute to effective classroom management.

Teaching Engagement

Work engagement is a work-related motivation state positively characterized by vigor, dedication and absorption (Bakker & Bal, 2010) in one's

work. This aligns with Macey and Schneider's (2008) conclusion that most definitions of engagement contain both attitudinal components (e.g. engagement is desirable and has purpose) and behavioural components (e.g. those who are engaged show focused energy and effort). Considered by some researchers to be the "antipode of burnout" (Schaufeli, Bakker & Salanova, 2006, p.701), a person with high levels of work engagement is considered to have energy and connect with their work activities as well as be equipped to manage the job demands and challenges in the work environment.

Research has found that generally, work engagement is relatively stable following the promise that the specific job and organizational characteristics are not dramatically changed. In the case of practicing teachers, while the content being taught may change and the students inevitably change, there exists stability in the profession and the larger system of education. While some research studies (e.g. Durksen & Klassen, 2012) consider the inevitable day-to-day fluctuations in teaching, general engagement is considered to be stable as the teaching profession offers structure and routine to a typical day and school calendar year. Despite minor changes in the teaching day, overall teaching engagement contributes to effective classroom management. Teachers who are engaged are more equipped to meet the challenges of tasks at work and are likely to be interested in and absorbed in their work. Additionally, engaged teachers are more likely to work harder to make classroom activities meaningful, introduce new ways of learning and ensure that their presentation materials are current, relevant and engage students (Seashore Louis & Smith, 1991). It is unsurprising that these

characteristics would impact the way a teacher engages with students and maintains a functioning classroom environment.

Notably, teaching engagement is not easily defined within one aspect of the teaching role, and can be discussed in regards to the interactions between teachers, students, and the curriculum. Because there are multiple factors that contribute to overall teaching engagement, my studies feature a measure of engagement that assesses multiple factors of teaching engagement including social engagement with colleagues, social engagement with students, emotional engagement and cognitive engagement (Klassen, Yerdelen, & Durksen, 2013). While I am not formally addressing each of these four components in my analysis, it is relevant that this scale considers these factors to contribute to overall engagement. I consider teachers' self-report of their overall engagement more meaningful than their report on each of the individual factors. It is important to think about how these factors may also be considered with regards to preservice teachers, because even though they are in a teacher education program, they will have expectations for their engagement in the profession. My research with both practicing and preservice teachers can examine how their anticipated engagement, and as discussed above, perceived teaching efficacy, may be impacted by their comfort with and commitment to social-emotional competence.

In summary, the Prosocial Classroom Model (Jennings & Greenberg, 2009) provides a valuable theoretical framework for my research study as I examined practicing and preservice teachers' a) personal beliefs about and strengths with regards to SEL, b) beliefs about their role and responsibilities in

providing SEL instruction to students, and c) personal teaching efficacy and teaching engagement with regards to their SEL beliefs. In particular, I'm interested in the piece of the model that links teachers' personal SEC, which I have chosen to measure as their SEL beliefs with effective classroom management so as to better understand this one connection in the model.

Although my research addresses only two primary areas in the Prosocial Classroom Model and does not consider students' academic, social and emotional outcomes, I have included a section below discussing the positive outcomes for students with SEC. This literature was explored for two purposes. First, preservice teachers are acting as both students in their degree program as well as teachers as they prepare for their field experience and future careers in the classroom. Second, the final piece in the model is "student social, emotional and academic outcomes", indicating that following teachers' own SEC and well-being, which serves to enhance effective classroom management and other classroom variables, the ultimate outcome should be the enhancement of students' own SEC as well as academic outcomes. While it is beyond the scope of these studies to investigate the positive outcomes of SEC for students, literature is reviewed below so as to present a well-rounded look at why studying SEC and SEL beliefs is important for a variety of players in the classroom.

Positive Outcomes for Students with SEC.

Much of the research on SEC focuses on outcomes for students who are engaging with social and emotional learning curriculum in their classrooms. While student outcomes are not relevant to my studies, it is important to note that

there are indeed benefits for students who are in a socially-emotionally supportive classroom. Johnson and Johnson (2004) found students with high SEC to be more motivated to achieve goals, willing to take on challenging tasks, and committed to productivity. Additionally, they were found to attend school more often, had lower rates of dropping out and were more responsible for their own actions. In a social context, it is reported that children and young adolescents who endorse prosocial skills, like those included in the definition of social emotional competence, have higher levels of social functioning and have more friends than those children who are aggressive and retaliate (Frey et al., 2005). The literature on the benefits of SEC is primarily focused on research conducted within a school setting with children and young adolescents and is often used to determine school readiness (Denham, 2006). Considering the importance of and documented benefits for children with SEC, the lacking research in the area of teacher SEC leaves an entire resource of potential SEC enhancing professionals untapped.

In their analysis of the implementation results of the SEC intervention program, the *Second Step* program, Frey et al. (2005) found that grade four and five students who received explicit SEC instruction over a period of two years displayed decreased aggression, had a reduced need for adult intervention and had overall better school adjustment. Most importantly, this study suggests that student learning of SEC-related skills is developed through three strategies: explicit and direct instruction of SEC values and goals, positive modeling by teachers, and reinforcement in instruction during informal and ‘in the moment’ conflicts and situations.

It is crucial to note that while all three strategies mentioned above involve the teacher, only one of them requires a special curriculum - the other two call on the requisite expertise and confidence of the teacher. With regards to the special curriculum, it should be mentioned that teachers who experience high levels of stress and are at risk of burning out are considered to be less likely to have the psychological energy to effectively implement any type of SEL curriculum (Ransford, Greenberg, Domitrovich, Small, & Jacobson, 2009). As far as the strategies that demand requisite skills and expertise in the area of SEC, the teacher must be able to model the positive strategies of someone who is socially emotionally competent as well as be able to access these inner resources in informal and impromptu situations. Teachers are important to consider for the benefit of their students as well as other positive outcomes that might arise for their personal and professional growth as adults. There remains limited research on teachers' own SEC and associated outcomes despite evidence that teachers make important contributions to desirable classroom and student outcomes (Jennings & Greenberg, 2009).

Present Study

To explore the relationship presented in the Prosocial Classroom Model between teachers' SEC, considered in this research by measuring SEL beliefs, and effective classroom management, measured by teaching efficacy and engagement, I am using two studies to answer three research questions. The first research question is presented in Study 1, using a sample of practicing teachers. The

following two research questions are addressed in Study 2, which includes a sample of preservice teachers.

Research Questions:

1. a) Does practicing teachers' comfort with and commitment to SEL predict their sense of teaching efficacy?

b) Does practicing teachers' comfort with and commitment to SEL predict their sense of teacher engagement?

2. a) Does preservice teachers' comfort with and commitment to SEL predict their sense of teaching efficacy?

b) Does preservice teachers' comfort with and commitment to SEL predict their sense of teacher engagement?

3. Does a difference exist between practicing and preservice teachers' comfort with and commitment to SEL?

STUDY 1

Method

This study was conducted in the Winter 2013 semester with a convenience sample of practicing teachers (*n* = 276) recruited to participate in a survey at the citywide Teachers Convention hosted by GETCA, the Greater Edmonton Teachers Convention Association. A predictive correlational design was used (Creswell, 2012) to measure practicing teachers' beliefs with regards to both their personal comfort with and commitment to social emotional competence as well as their beliefs about teaching efficacy and teaching engagement. These variables will be used to discuss how social emotional learning beliefs may serve to impact teaching efficacy and engagement for teachers who are currently practicing in the classroom.

Participants and Procedure

The GETCA convention is a mandatory two-day professional development convention featuring a variety of sessions focused on specific content or specialty areas as well as sessions about overall educational trends and developments. The teachers who attended came from all different school districts within and around the Edmonton area and varied by way of their years of experience teaching as well as their job contract, (i.e. full time, part time, substitute, retired) grades, and subjects taught. The team of researchers was set up at a registered booth in the main hall of the convention where teachers were free to explore all booths when they were not attending sessions. Participants completed a 112-item survey (109 closed ended, 3 open ended) including items on

SEL, teaching efficacy and teaching engagement as well as items on self-determination theory of motivation, boredom, professional learning and emotions for other researchers collecting data from this sample. Participants were offered an information letter detailing the purpose of the study and to inform him or her that their completion of the survey served as implied consent. Participants were reminded to exclude any identifying information from their responses on the survey (i.e. name, school name, school district). Ethics approval was sought and obtained from the Human Ethics Research Office at the University of Alberta.

Participants were mostly female (72%) as is representative of the general population of teachers in the province (Alberta Education, 2012), and 50% indicated that they taught elementary school. Eleven participants (5%) indicated that they were administrators or school guidance counselors and if they reported that they were not currently teaching in the classroom, their data was excluded from further analysis. Participants were between the age range of 21-67 and were broken into the following age ranges: 21-25 (19%), 26-35 (32%), 36-45 (19%), 46-55 (19%), and 55-67 (11%). The mean age of participants was 37.5. One hundred and forty six (64%) participants classified their ethnicity as part or entirely Canadian; participants who included multiple ethnicities (e.g. Ukrainian Canadian) were coded as Canadian. Teachers reported their major teaching areas for the 2012-2013 school year by checking off the subjects that they are currently teaching. Participants were encouraged to check all content areas that apply. The breakdown was as follows: English/Language Arts (24%), Social Studies (19%), Science (includes physical and biological sciences as well as technology) (26%)

and Mathematics (26%). Courses that are considered electives were also measured, and the frequencies were examined for these content areas as well: Physical Education (14%), Second Languages (9%), Arts (including performing arts) (15%), Special Education (8%) and CTS (Career and Technology studies) (7%). The range of years of teaching experience was from less than one full year (11%) (indicating student teaching or less than one complete year of teaching experience) to 41 years (0.4%). The mean level of years of experience was 11 years.

Measures

Teacher SEL beliefs. Eight out of 12 original items published by Brackett et al. (2011), were used to assess SEL beliefs by measuring teachers' comfort with and commitment to SEL. The 4 items from their comfort subscale were used to measure the extent to which practicing teachers that feel comfortable with and committed to providing formal and informal SEL instruction (i.e. "Informal lessons in social and emotional learning are part of my regular teaching practice"). The internal consistency (Cronbach's alpha) for the four items used was 0.84.

The four-item commitment subscale from the scale for assessing SEL beliefs (Brackett et al., 2011) was included to assess practicing teachers' interest in professional development to improve their own social emotional skills as well as to learn about effective methods for teaching SEL skills to students (i.e. "I want to improve my ability to teach social and emotional skills to students"). Cronbach's alpha for the items of the subscale was 0.86. The scales can be seen in their entirety in Appendix A.

The other four items address the “culture” factor that relates specifically to the school environment and support from administration and colleagues for implementing SEL in the classroom. These items were excluded from this survey because they ask participants specific questions about the school environment and willingness to implement and support social and emotional curriculum in the class. While data on school district and policy with regards to SEC curriculum implementation could have been gathered, it was an oversight on the part of the researchers developing the survey to include these questions. However, the research questions lend themselves more specifically to the teacher themselves, and are less concerned with the culture and school environment. Because I am not interested in comparing specific school districts or learning about the culture of schools, the inclusion of the two subscales suffice for exploring these teachers’ personal beliefs and commitment to SEL.

Teacher efficacy. Teacher efficacy was measured using 11 items from the 12-item Tschannen-Moran and Woolfolk Hoy (2001) short form of the Teachers’ Sense of Efficacy Scale (TSES). Although the scale can be considered as subscales examining three dimensions of teacher efficacy, instructional strategies, student engagement, and classroom management, I used the 11 items as one complete scale. The scale was used in its entirety because at the early stage of exploring teachers’ SEL beliefs and how they impact efficacy, it seems more important to address overall teaching efficacy beliefs than individual aspects of teaching efficacy (e.g. how comfort with and commitment to SEL impact efficacy with regards to instructional strategies). Additionally, because of the moderate

correlations between the three subscales, the scale as a whole has been reported to measure the underlying construct of efficacy (Tschannen-Moran & Woolfolk Hoy, 2001). The item that was excluded in the construction of the survey was "How much can you assist families in helping their children do well in school?" This item was excluded on the advice of a supervisor involved in the survey development and data collection. It was excluded on that basis that the teachers who would be responding to these items would be from such a wide variety of school districts and demographics that it would be challenging to assess responses to this item considering how little we know about their school environment. These items assess (on a 9-point likert like scale from *nothing* (1) to *a great deal* (9)) how much teachers believe they can do in each scenario. The reliability of this 11-item measure was found to be high as indicated by Cronbach's alpha of 0.91 (Johnson & Christensen, 2012). The scale can be seen in its entirety in Appendix A.

Teaching engagement. Practicing teachers' work engagement was measured using the16-item Klassen, Yerdelen and Durksen (2013) Engaged Teacher Scale (ETS). This scale reflects teachers' beliefs about teaching and the classroom (e.g. "I am excited about teaching"), personal performance within the classroom (e.g. "I try my hardest to perform well while teaching"), and relations with students and colleagues (e.g. "At school, I value the relationships I build with my colleagues"). The 16 items were analyzed as a complete scale because I am concerned with the teachers' overall understanding of engagement and how it is predicted by teachers' SEL beliefs and less so with the individual subscale

scores. The reliability was high as indicated by a Cronbach's alpha of 0.90. The scale can be seen in its entirety in Appendix A.

Rationale for Analyses

As a preliminary analysis, descriptive statistics were run and results are presented in Table 1. I correlated all variables and examined the correlations between the four variables of interest for the sample of practicing teachers. Additional variables considered in the correlations were: age, gender, stream (elementary or secondary), and years of teaching experience.

Multiple regression analysis was used to test the main purpose of this study; namely, to determine if practicing teachers' comfort with and commitment to SEL in the classroom predicted their teaching efficacy and engagement in the profession. Two separate regression equations were conducted with comfort with SEL and commitment to SEL as predictors and efficacy and engagement as each of the outcomes while controlling for age, gender, stream (present teaching level elementary or secondary) and years of teaching experience such that the effect of comfort with and commitment to SEL would be isolated in the second step of the regression.

Table 1
Descriptive Statistics for Practicing Teachers

Variable	N	α	Mean	SD	Skewness	Kurtosis	Min	Max
Gender[a]	276		1.28				1	2
Age	274		38.00	11.92			21	67
Stream[b]	272		3.04				1	6
Years of Experience	273		11.76				0	41
SEL_comfort	266	.84	22.81	3.67	-.40	-.58	13	28
SEL_committment	268	.86	20.70	5.09	-.61	.10	4	28
Teaching Efficacy	259	.91	81.89	9.38	-.71	1.45	42	99
Engagement	261	.90	98.10	8.89	-.63	.16	69	112

[a] Note: 1= female, 2=male
[b] Note: 1= elementary, 2=secondary

Results

Correlations

In this sample of practicing teachers, comfort with and commitment to SEL were not correlated. Comfort with SEL was positively correlated with both efficacy ($r = .44$, $p < .01$) and engagement ($r = .42$, $p < .01$), reflecting the association between a teachers' comfort with SEC and their beliefs about their capability and engagement in teaching. Commitment to SEL was not correlated with efficacy but was significantly correlated with engagement ($r = .22$, $p < .01$). Teaching efficacy and teaching engagement were positively correlated ($r = .47$, $p < .01$), reflecting that teachers who hold more efficacious beliefs are also more engaged in the profession. See Table 2 for full results.

Table 2
Correlations for Teaching Factors for Practicing Teachers

	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8
1. Age								
2. Gender[a]	-.01							
3. Stream[b]	-.05	.27**						
4. Years of teaching	.85**	.02	-.09					
5. SEL_comfort	.19**	-.13	-.06	.22**				
6. SEL_committment	-.05	-.11	.00	-.10	.11			
7. Teaching efficacy	.25**	.06	.06	.32**	.44**	-.03		
8. Teaching engagement	.20**	-.11	.00	.19**	.42**	.22*	.47**	

* $p < .05$, ** $p < .01$

[a] Note:1=female, 2=male
[b] Note: 1=elementary, 2=secondary

Regression Analyses

Predicting teaching efficacy. The first regression analysis revealed years of teaching experience as a significant predictor of teaching efficacy at Step 1, which included only demographic variables as predictors, such that as years of experience increased, teachers reported that they felt more efficacious. This finding is not surprising as existing literature reports that as teachers move beyond their initial three to five years of teaching experience, they report feeling increasingly competent and experience autonomous success (Berliner, 2001). This finding remained significant at Step 2 of the model with the addition of the SEL comfort and SEL commitment variables, suggesting that years of experience prevails as an important variable for considering teaching efficacy. In Step 2, SEL comfort emerged as a significant predictor ($p < .01$), such that as teachers' comfort with SEL increased, their efficacy increased as well. Commitment to SEL did not emerge as a significant predictor. In total, the model explained 26% of the variance, F (6, 206) = 12.85, $p < .001$. See Table 3 for full regression results.

Predicting teacher engagement. The second regression examined comfort with and commitment to SEL as predictors for overall teaching engagement as the outcome. None of the demographic information considered in Step 1, including years of teaching experience, emerged as significant. At Step 2 of the model, both comfort with SEL and commitment to SEL predicted teaching engagement. Specifically, as teachers' comfort with SEL and their commitment to SEL increased, the level of engagement increased as well ($p < .01$). In total, the

model explained 21% of the variance, F (6, 204) = 10.20, $p < .01$. See Table 3 for full regression results.

Table 3
Standardized Beta Weights from Regression Analyses Predicting Practicing Teaching Efficacy and Engagement

Predictor Variable	Teaching Efficacy		Teaching Engagement	
	Step 1	Step 2	Step 1	Step 2
Gender[a]	.02	.06	-.13	-.06
Age	-.07	-.10	.14	.14
Stream[b]	.09	.10	.05	.06
Years of Teaching Experience	.39**	.31*	.07	.06
SEL_comfort		.42**		.37**
SEL_committment		-.04		.17**
Adjusted R^2	.10	.26	.04	.21

* $p < .05$, ** $p < .01$

[a] Note: 1= female, 2=male
[b] Note: 1=elementary, 2=secondary

Discussion

The purpose of this study was to examine whether or not practicing teachers' comfort with and commitment to social-emotional learning predicted their beliefs with regards to personal teaching efficacy and teaching engagement. This is important because as more programs are developed to support students' social emotional needs, teachers' beliefs about SEL inevitably filter through as they formally teach curriculum, as well as model social emotional skills (Jordan, 2007). Similarly, as is seen in the Prosocial Classroom Model developed by Jennings and Greenberg (2009), teachers' SEC and SEL beliefs are considered to be one impetus from which stem a variety of classroom factors. By asking teachers about their comfort with SEL as well as their interest in committing to learning more about SEL for themselves and their students, my research revealed that each of these factors in some way played a role in contributing to the efficacy and engagement of practicing teachers.

Three findings from this study are important to highlight. First, the results showed that efficacy beliefs are supported by teachers' comfort with SEL, suggesting that increasing teachers' comfort with SEL is one way to enhance their efficacy. Second, teaching engagement was supported by both teachers' comfort with and commitment to SEL. This finding suggests that teachers who are both comfortable with SEL and have a willingness to learn more about SEL for both personal growth and growth within the classroom may be more engaged, and thus, this discussion focuses on possible ways to increase commitment to SEL. Finally, I discuss possible reasons why commitment to SEL only emerged as a significant

predictor of teaching engagement (not efficacy) and only for practicing teachers (not preservice). Each of these findings is discussed in more detail below with attention to implications as well as the limitations of this study.

Increasing Comfort with SEL to Improve Efficacy and Engagement

This survey was designed to look at one relationship that exists within the larger context of the Prosocial Classroom Model (Jennings & Greenberg, 2009) and considered "effective classroom management" as made up of two constructs: teaching efficacy and teaching engagement. In considering teaching efficacy and engagement as factors that impact overall classroom management, my goal was to test if practicing teachers' beliefs about SEL impacted their personal efficacy and engagement. Comfort with SEL emerged as a significant predictor of both efficacy and engagement. Simply stated, these results say that as teachers' comfort with SEC increases, so does their teaching efficacy and engagement. Thus, it is important to consider ways in which comfort with SEL can be increased such that both teaching efficacy and engagement can also be increased.

Recall that having positive efficacy beliefs has been found, among other positive outcomes, to influence a teachers' personal sustained motivation (Bandura, 1999) as well as their ability to see themselves as capable of positively influencing their students' overall engagement and learning, even for students who may be unmotivated or present challenges in the classroom (Tschannen-Moran & Woolfolk Hoy, 2001). As stated previously, teachers who are more efficacious were found to remain in the teaching profession (Glickman & Tamashiro, 1982, cited in Tschannen-Moran & Woolfolk Hoy, 2001) and have

reduced stress levels as compared with their less efficacious colleagues (Parkay et al., 1988, cited in Tschannen-Moran & Woolfolk Hoy, 2001). Thus, it is imperative that research move towards finding ways to increase teachers' comfort with SEL to provide another way to enhance teachers' efficacy beliefs.

As presented earlier with regards to the Prosocial Classroom Model (Jennings & Greenberg, 2009), I consider both teaching efficacy and teaching engagement to make up the "effective classroom management" outcome. As I have recapped the benefits of being efficacious in teaching, it is important to look at what it means to be engaged in teaching. To have high teaching engagement means that the teacher considers himself or herself to have high energy and connect well with their work activities (Schaufeli, Bakker, & Salanova, 2006). Additionally, this teacher often sees him or herself as more equipped to face challenges in the classroom and manage the demands of the job. Like in the case of teaching efficacy, comfort with SEL was also found to predict teaching engagement.

The result that comfort with SEL predicts teaching efficacy and engagement emphasizes the importance of teacher comfort with SEL. Understanding that comfort with SEL is one factor that influences efficacy and engagement provides a place for not only future research, but for assessing practicing teachers' current needs and considering resources that may positively influence teachers' comfort with SEL. Interestingly, this result presents a challenge in considering *how* to increase teachers' comfort with SEL because commitment to SEL, a scale made up largely of items asking about interest and

commitment to professional development, was an insignificant predictor of efficacy. To clarify, the items from the SEL commitment subscale asked teachers to consider their likeliness to attend professional development activities to support their own, as well as their students', beliefs about SEL and by association, their SEC, and asked them to what extent they agree that all teachers should receive training on how to teach social emotional skills to students. This result is important to note at this point because comfort with SEL is predictive of both efficacy and engagement, and thus, finding ways to support teachers' comfort with SEL increases in importance. However, as will be detailed in a further discussion of commitment to SEL, these teachers responded less positively to the commitment items and were not as interested in taking part in additional professional development activities. This interesting result calls into question: if teachers are not committed to SEL through professional development activities, in what other ways can researchers and practitioners increase teachers' comfort with SEL to further increase their efficacy beliefs?

While commitment to SEL was not a significant factor in increasing teaching efficacy beliefs for practicing teachers, it appears that it is not the learning activity itself that teachers are concerned with, but perhaps the opportunity to practice SEC skills in the classroom so as to model and teach these skills informally and formally to students.

These results indicate that introducing more formal training and profession learning in the area of SEC and beliefs about SEL is not the most appropriate solution to increasing teachers' comfort with SEL, but that comfort with SEL

should be supported in other ways. Historically, traditional in-service programming for teachers consists of “outside experts with little knowledge of local conditions who present irrelevant, sometimes amusing, often boring, prepackaged information” (Wilson & Berne, 1999). This understanding may help explain why practicing teachers are less committed to professional development, considering their previous experience with PD. While there is less commitment to learning about SEC in the sense of attending a workshop or professional learning seminar, this does not mean that opportunity is lost; instead, it points to the need to find solutions that teachers may have more interest in, have access to resources to support these solutions, and that may be informal and ongoing, so as to increase opportunities for ongoing feedback, growth and improvement. In the interest of making teachers comfortable with providing feedback and focusing on growth, I propose that researchers and school administrators and authorities consider the possibility of learning within the school itself and involve internal resources, the teachers themselves, as both experts and learners.

In an effort to get teachers to truly understand what social-emotional competencies and learning look like within the classroom, teachers should be encouraged to step out of the walls of their own classrooms and be given the opportunity to engage in guided observation of their colleagues in practice. It is important that these observations are guided and are not simply one teacher watching another. The teacher who is active in the classroom would at first be expected to operate within the classroom as they typically do, and provide the observer with an opportunity to note their classroom and teaching style. Through

mini-lessons on SEC and SEL in the classroom and school setting to be discussed in formal staff meetings (discussed below), active teachers would be given more ideas of how to communicate in their classroom and observers would be able to provide constructive feedback about how these techniques are working in the classroom.

I recommend the implementation of classroom observation within schools for three main reasons. Firstly, by encouraging and scheduling classroom observation time for teachers, schools and districts eliminate the barriers of needing additional time outside of school hours and financial resources to support personal growth. Lord (1994) states that there are opportunities for teacher learning that may be more authentic, but these opportunities are typically more happenstance and unpredictable (e.g. consider a walk to the photocopier, or tips exchanged in the staff room). As much of teacher learning has traditionally been enforced without a real system or, it takes place both formally and informally, can be mandatory or voluntary, and may or may not be planned with advance notice, making classroom observation a consistent and celebrated mode of professional learning may help to make these authentic incidents of teacher exchange and learning less random, more consistent, and a part of regular reflective practice for teachers.

Second, encouraging teachers to be observers in a colleagues' classroom can undoubtedly be an intimidating practice and may create some fear and anxiety for the teacher who is on display. However, over time, the benefits of observing other teachers far outweigh the risks. In their review of literature on effective

professional development, Wilson and Berne (1999) note that for teaching learning to be effective, professional learning "ought not be bound and *delivered*, but rather *activated*" (italics from original) (p. 194). Ongoing classroom observation encourages teachers to activate their personal learning and reflection and the observation process moves beyond a simple activity in dissemination that is packaged attractively for quick, and surface level consumption by teachers. Wilson and Berne (1999) note that it is only in giving teachers opportunities and guidance to understand their own knowledge that changes in classrooms occur. By encouraging teachers to observe their colleagues, there is an opportunity for teachers to engage in what Lord (1994) terms "critical colleagueship", where teachers provide their colleagues with constructive feedback such that they can reflect on their practice.

Finally, when observing a teachers' practice, the observer has an opportunity to consider someone else's practice as well as their own, especially when given specific elements to examine and reflect on. Smylie (1989) notes that in ranking their preferred professional development experiences, practicing teachers ranked district-sponsored workshops as least preferable, and ranked their classroom experience as the most important site for learning. The experience in the classroom as both the teacher and observer set up a place for teacher learning and reflection on personal practice as well as providing feedback to a colleague. Seeing another teacher with a group of students that they themselves teach, the teacher has an opportunity to examine someone else's classroom demeanor and strategies for working with students.

It is my expectation that in typical classroom practice, teachers would be able to observe the interactions between the students and the teacher in the classroom and pay particular attention to the way the teacher is responding to questions, addressing the class and conducting their classroom. As well, simply through the classroom environment itself, the observing teacher can consider the décor (e.g. posters on the wall, presence of student work and relevant materials) and structure (placement of desks, accessibility of the teacher) and in making notes about this context, brainstorm the messages that are communicated in this environment. Because of the close proximity between the model and observer, this relationship between two teachers provides a place for ongoing feedback and development; teachers can begin to work as a team to model for each other ways to work with students and create a safe and trusting environment from which to improve their own practice (Bandura, 1971).

By considering classroom observation as professional development and providing teachers with the adequate time to be a part of another teachers' classroom, I believe that the first step to ensure this time is used effectively would be to ensure that teachers are given guidance for their observation (i.e. what should they be looking for in the other teachers' practice). I believe that if classroom observation is ongoing, there can be specific elements of SEL as well as social emotional competencies as they relate to classroom observation provided through regular staff meetings that typically occur on a consistent basis. Again, as I aim to generate a solution that is feasible and elicits a positive response from teachers, I believe that integrating information about SEC (e.g. components of

SEL as outlined by CASEL (2013), what does it look like to be a socially-emotionally competent teacher, as outlined by Jennings and Greenberg (2009)) in regular meetings and having teachers practice what they have learned both by engaging in the practice and noticing others fulfills the requirement of being a realistic option. The observation time can be used effectively to not only help them be more personally comfortable with what it means to be socially-emotionally competent and practice their own skills as well as how to translate this to students, but also to help all teachers recognize the ways that their colleagues formally and informally support students' SEC and engage in SEL in the classroom. As stated earlier, by increasing teachers' comfort with SEL using strategies that are feasible and supported by teachers, overall teaching efficacy and engagement could increase as well.

Addressing Commitment to SEL to Increase Teaching Engagement

With both teaching efficacy and engagement discussed in more detail above, this section turns to discuss commitment to SEL as it emerged as a significant predictor of only teaching engagement, not teaching efficacy. This result is important for two reasons: first, the correlation results indicates that these teachers do not see comfort with SEL and commitment to SEL as related, second, the only place that commitment to SEL emerges as significant is when it is predicting engagement, and the reasons for its emergence here must be considered.

When examining the correlations, it is important to note the lack of correlation between comfort with SEL and commitment to SEL (see Table 2). The

lack of significant correlation reveals that practicing teachers do not see comfort with and commitment to SEL as related. This is relevant because these two subscales are both part of a larger task of measuring teachers' overall beliefs with regards to SEL. For this correlation to be non-significant tells me that practicing teachers' see these two factors as different from each other. Finally, not only was commitment not considered a significant predictor of efficacy, and did not have a relationship to comfort with SEL, but also, as can be seen from the descriptive statistics (see Table 1), the mean score for all four items in the commitment subscale ($M = 20.70$) is lower than the mean score for the four items for comfort ($M = 22.81$). This reveals that for this sample of practicing teachers, their comfort with SEL is higher than their level of commitment. The mean differences further support that teachers are less committed to SEL, and based on the items, I can assert that these practicing teachers are not interested in more professional development activities aimed at increasing their own SEC or supporting the SEC needs of students. Thus, I direct my attention to the exploration of ways to increase commitment to SEL.

To consider the ways to increase teachers' commitment to SEL, it is important to consider some of the potential barriers. First, there is research to suggest that as teachers gain more experience in the classroom and become comfortable own repertoire of skills, it is difficult to inspire change in these teachers. Wilson and Berne (1999) note that teachers who sign up for or attend mandatory professional development do not expect to have their knowledge and understanding of content and pedagogy held suspect or have their practice

questioned; yet, oftentimes, formal professional development does just that. Pajares (1992) suggests that once teachers find their pace in the classroom and school environment, it is a challenge to change not only their teaching practice, but also their beliefs and attitudes towards new ideas. This research is important to consider because it can be seen that practicing teachers may have responded more positively to items regarding comfort because they do not suggest any additional tasks or learning to be taken on. Contrastingly, the commitment items all demand teachers' active involvement in changing either their own beliefs (i.e. "I would like to attend a workshop to develop my own social emotional skills") or to consider their practice and how they might work differently with students or in the classroom (i.e. "I would like to attend a workshop to develop my students' social and emotional skills"), and practicing teachers' resources, primarily energy and time, are already in high demand in the classroom as well as planning for the day-to-day operations.

Secondly, in considering possible reasons for teachers' commitment to SEL being lower than that of their comfort, I wondered if teachers saw this type of personal and professional development as additional work that would require more time beyond their already busy schedules. In this survey, I included an additional item out of personal curiosity; I asked practicing teachers to rate the extent to which they agree with the statement "I have time to incorporate social and emotional learning into my classroom". This item was important for me to include because it considers the potential that there is a difference between having good intentions (e.g. "I would love to do all of these things for myself and my

students") and what is actually realistic (e.g. "Even though I would love to participate, I just cannot commit and likely would not attend a workshop out of class time"). This item, ranked on a 7-point scale (1=strongly disagree to 7=strongly agree), had the second lowest mean score (M = 4.86) for all SEC items. Interestingly, the item with the lowest mean score (M = 4.60) was "I would like to attend a workshop to develop my own social and emotional skills". This information emphasizes that teachers are least interested in the development of their own SEC skills, which further to the point presented above, may indicate how challenging it can be to encourage teachers' own shift in attitude and beliefs. Alternatively, this could signify that they believe they are already sufficiently socially-emotionally competent, or perhaps that they do not think these skills are essential or require development for work within the classroom. Commitment to SEL is therefore a challenging element to discuss with regards to these practicing teachers; it emerges solely as a predictor for engagement and is not regarded as the highest priority.

Secondly, these mean scores indicate that not only are these teachers not interested in attending a workshop to develop their own skills, a potential reason for this response may be due to the poor reputation of traditional professional development (Wilson & Berne, 1999). Classrooms are busy places; there are demands in class time set by curriculum guidelines and students who require assistance, not to mention administrative tasks and extra curricular demands. Wilson and Berne (1999) note that teachers "loathe to participate in anything that smacks of a 1-day workshop offered by outside "experts" who know (and care)

little about the particular and specific contexts of a given school" (p. 197). They also assert that there is no professional development "system" and that the fragmented and seemingly unpredictable style and content of professional development activities does not persuade activities to approach professional development with an open and engaged mind.

The overall mean score for the four items that make up the commitment to SEL subscale, established earlier as lower than the mean score for the comfort subscale, is significant because from this result, I interpret that to increase teachers' commitment to the profession, shown to increase teaching engagement, methods beyond a workshop of specific skills need to be considered. Researchers may want to consider alternative structure and delivery methods to promote SEL and SEC skill development such that it can be valued by practicing teachers. The challenge of finding ways to provide teachers with informal and ongoing support is addressed in the previous section through the suggestion of ongoing, guided classroom observation. Additionally, the responses to the item regarding having time to incorporate SEL into the classroom indicates that time is in fact a factor that may be preventing teachers' commitment to professional development in the area of social and emotional competencies. If the time commitment to developing and refining skills is too demanding, it is not surprising that teachers are not interested in participating in additional workshops, regardless of the content delivered.

Importantly, having commitment to SEL predict overall teaching engagement requires that researchers and practitioners consider ways to increase

commitment in ways beyond a professional development session. Because engaged teachers are more likely to include classroom topics and activities that are relevant and of intrinsic interest to students, thereby stimulating student engagement (Seashore Louis & Smith, 1991), examining commitment to SEL may again help promote teachers' engagement.

Study Limitations

These results should be interpreted in light of three limitations, two of which have to do with the context in which the survey was completed and the third with regards to the participants responses to the SEL items. Firstly, participants who completed the survey were attending the annual Teachers' Convention, a mandatory professional development convention, taking place over two full days. As can be cautiously inferred from the results of this study, the practicing teachers who responded to the survey items indicated that professional development was not the key to development of skills and understandings of concepts, at least in terms of SEC and SEL. Thus, because the survey was completed during a convention focused on professional development, it is possible that the mindset of these teachers may have been skewed in the way of being displeased simply because of the mandatory attendance policy. However, participation in the survey itself was not mandatory, only those teachers who were interested completed the survey. As well, participants were informed both verbally through research assistants recruiting participants as well as in writing, via an information letter that was offered to all participants, that their participation

was voluntary and they could withdraw their responses partway through the survey if they decided to not complete the whole document.

The second limitation presented in this study is the length of the survey combined with the environment in which participants were asked to complete it. The 112-item survey (109 closed ended, selected response items, 3 open ended free response items) was printed on three doubled sided pages, and participants were given a clipboard and a pen to complete all the items. Because of the set up within the convention, our space allowed for a maximum of three people to sit and complete the survey more comfortably. Some participants verbalized their dislike for the length of the survey and expressed that they were tired of answering all the items. A document released by Survey Sampling International (Cape, 2010) discusses the challenges that can be associated with long surveys, primarily fatigue effects, which can also be affected by asking participants to complete a paper and pencil survey, as opposed to something that can be offered online and completed at the convenience of the participant.

Furthermore, Cape (2010) discusses *satisficing*, a behavioural outcome of cognitive fatigue, which means that participants would get to a point where they do just enough work to satisfy the task. This could mean that participants would skip items or entire sections, or neglect to read individual items and instead provide an identical response down the entire column of items. Cape asserts that the “critical point” in an online survey where fatigue effects become more pronounced is at the 20-minute mark. While our survey was not completed online, it was certainly shorter than 20 minutes of focused work time. Before we provided

the survey to participants, we piloted the complete survey with four people to see how long they took to read and respond to each question, including filling in the optional open-ended items at the end, and response time was between 10 and 12 minutes. Additionally, the SEL items that were included in the survey were arranged near the beginning of the survey, starting at item 27 out of 112, and thus, it is unlikely that the majority of participants experienced fatigue by this point in the survey.

The third limitation is that the responses to SEL items may be subject to a ceiling effect, that is, when a large concentration of participants scores near or at the maximum limit for the entire scale (SAGE Research Methods, 2004). The ceiling effect is a challenge to research because it can threaten the validity of results by means of restricting the variance. This can be especially troublesome for correlational research as a normal distribution of the variables is often assumed. There are several ways to assess the normality of variables, including looking at values of skewness and kurtosis, creating and examining histograms from these values and, computing z-scores for the skewness and kurtosis values such that the values can be compared between scales. However, my sample size is considered large ($N > 200$) (Field, 2009), and thus, the significance tests of skewness and kurtosis should not be used because they are likely to be significant even when the results are not too different than normal (Field, 2009). In the case of this survey, the ceiling effect is less of a concern for two reasons. For the 8 items concerned with SEL, all but two items had responses from the entire range of possibilities (1-strongly disagree to 7-strongly agree) and the remaining two

items were answered from two to seven and three to seven, indicating that there were indeed respondents who answered with the full range of options.

STUDY 2

Method

Preservice teachers enrolled in the Bachelor of Education program completed an online survey, estimated to take approximately one to two hours, at their own convenience during the semester. To assess the two parts of the second research question presented, a predictive correlation design (Creswell, 2012) was used to assess preservice teachers' beliefs about SEC as well as their beliefs about their teaching efficacy and engagement. To address the third research question, this sample was compared to the sample of practicing teachers from Study 1 with regards to their comfort and commitment to social emotional learning. The items used in this study were nearly identical to the items used with the sample of practicing teachers; minor changes for questions were made so as to reflect future teaching practice (i.e. "In my classroom, I…" was reworded as "In my classroom, I *will*…").

Participants and Procedure

Data were collected from a non-probability convenience sample of preservice teachers at the University of Alberta. These students were recruited via the Educational Psychology department's Participant Pool. This research pool provides students with an opportunity to be involved in a variety of research projects and receive course credit (5%) for their participation while enabling researchers to collect data on this group of students. Ethics approval for this study was sought and obtained from the Human Ethics Research Office at the University of Alberta.

Quantitative data was collected from students (n = 137) via an online survey hosted by Survey Monkey©. Upon confirming their interest in the study by recording their student ID in the recruitment binder, students were to email the survey administrator, a researcher on the team collecting data from the same survey, and were sent the link to the electronic survey. Before students responded to any questions, they were informed about the purpose of the survey and were prompted to confirm their consent as well as to acknowledge their right as a participant to withdraw from the survey at anytime and remove their collected data until March 20, 2013. In addition to answering items related to SEL beliefs, efficacy, and engagement, other graduate student researchers collected data on a variety of other topics from the same group using the same survey. Other items included focused on autonomy support strategies in the classroom as well as beliefs about student motivation. Participants were asked to complete the survey within one month of receiving the link.

Demographic information collected indicated that 114 (83%) of the participants were female. Fifty-eight participants (42%) indicated that they were enrolled in the elementary stream of the program. For students in the secondary stream, the students indicated both their major and minor subject area specializations. Because these participants do not move within a cohort in the program, they may be at different stages in the program. Typically, the first teaching practicum is completed in the third year of the Education degree program; however, one of the courses that participants were recruited from must be completed before entering a practicum semester. Of the 138 participants, 88

(64%) reported that they were from the course that must be completed before the practicum. It must be acknowledged that this sample may include some students who have completed a five-week teaching practicum and others who may have completed the 5-week practicum as well as the nine-week practicum, however, as stated above, this is a minority.

Measures

Teacher SEC / SEL beliefs. Eight out of twelve original items published by Brackett, et al. (2011), were used to assess SEL beliefs scale measuring teachers' comfort with and commitment to SEL. Some of the items were adapted to reflect the future practice of the participants (e.g. "Informal lessons in social and emotional learning are part of my regular teaching practice" is reworded to "informal lessons in social and emotional learning *will be part of* my regular teaching practice"). The four items from their comfort subscale were used to measure the extent to which preservice teachers (*strongly disagree* (1) to *strongly agree* (5)) that they feel competent in providing formal and informal SEL instruction (i.e. "I feel confident in my ability to provide instruction on social and emotional learning"). The internal consistency (Cronbach's alpha) for the four items used was 0.83. This scale can be seen in its entirety as part of the complete survey presented in Appendix B.

The four-item commitment subscale, also from the scale for assessing SEL beliefs (Brackett et al., 2011), were included to assess preservice teachers' interest in and commitment to professional development to develop their own social emotional skills as well as learning about effective methods for teaching SEL

skills to students. Items reflected teachers' desire to participate in professional learning activities focused on SEL (i.e. "I want to improve my ability to teach social and emotional skills to students"). Cronbach's alpha for the items of the subscale was 0.85. This scale can be seen in Appendix B.

The remaining four items from the scale that were excluded were from the subscale titled "culture". These items were excluded because they ask about participant's experiences with their administration and school environment with regards to supporting SEL implementation. Because this is a sample of preservice teachers, they do not yet belong to a school district or have a formal teaching position, so these items are irrelevant.

Teacher efficacy. Teacher efficacy was measured using 11 items of the 12-item Tschannen-Moran and Woolfolk Hoy (2001) short form of the Teachers' Sense of Efficacy Scale (TSES). The scale can be used as a measure of three subscales examining dimensions of teacher efficacy including instructional strategies, student engagement, and classroom management; however, for this study, the 11 items were considered as one complete scale and assessed (on a 9-point likert like scale from *nothing* (1) to *a great deal* (9)) the general teaching efficacy beliefs of this sample of preservice teachers.

One item, "to what extent can you provide an alternative explanation or example when students are confused?" was excluded on the basis that it could not be easily adapted for preservice teachers who, in the majority of cases, can be assumed to not have yet completed a teaching practicum, and thus, would have no classroom experience to draw on. Similarly, some of the items had to be adapted

to be more applicable to preservice teachers; six of the items were rephrased to include the stem "how confident are you that *you will be able to…*" in order to still measure their efficacy beliefs as related to teaching, but not such that the items are contingent on having actual teaching experience. The reliability of this 11-item measure indicated by Cronbach's alpha was 0.87. This scale can be seen in Appendix B.

Teacher engagement. Preservice teachers' work engagement was measured by adapting the16-item Klassen, Yerdelen and Durksen (2013) engaged teacher scale (ETS). While the scale was designed to assess practicing teachers' engagement, I altered the wording of individual items to reflect the future intent of participants, as they likely have not yet had experience in the classroom. For example, the item "I try my hardest to perform well while teaching" was rewritten as "I *will* try my hardest to perform well while teaching". The reliability for this scale was high, as indicated by the Cronbach's alpha of 0.92 (Johnson & Christensen, 2012). This scale can be seen in Appendix B.

Rationale for Analyses

Descriptive statistics for the variables of age, gender and education stream (elementary or secondary) were run and are presented in the results. Secondly, I correlated all variables and considered the four main variables of interest as well as the demographic variables of age, gender, and stream the participants are enrolled in and these correlations are presented in the results.

Regression analyses were used to examine the two parts of the first research question of this study: Does preservice teachers' comfort with and

commitment to SEL predict their sense of teaching efficacy? Does preservice teachers' comfort with and commitment to SEL predict their sense of teacher engagement? Two separate regression equations were run with comfort with SEL and commitment to SEL serving as predictors and teaching efficacy and teaching engagement as outcomes while controlling for age, gender and teaching stream.

Finally, the second research question was answered using an independent samples *t*-test with the preservice teachers and practicing teachers. They were compared on the factors of comfort with SEL and commitment to SEL. The results of the *t*-tests, including the mean scores for each variable are presented in the results.

Table 4
Descriptive Statistics for Preservice Teachers

Variable	N	α	Mean	SD	Skewness	Kurtosis	Min	Max
Gender[a]	138		1.17				1	2
Age	137		21.15	3.36			18	36
Stream[b]	138		1.62				1	3
SEL_comfort	136	.83	21.71	3.73	-.63	.32	10	28
SEL_committment	135	.85	23.54	4.31	-1.39	2.45	6	28
Teaching Efficacy	132	.87	71.60	10.14	-.36	-.00	43	96
Engagement	133	.92	101.61	8.40	-1.12	3.38	60	112

[a] Note: 1= female, 2=male
[b] Note: 1= elementary, 2=secondary

Results

Correlations

In this sample of preservice teachers, comfort with SEL was significantly positively correlated with commitment to SEC ($r = .23$, $p < .01$), teaching efficacy ($r = .32$, $p < .01$) and teaching engagement ($r = .19$, $p < .05$). The positive correlation between comfort with SEL and teaching efficacy and teaching engagement indicates that higher comfort with SEL would indicate higher efficacy beliefs and engagement with teaching (though no causation or directionality can be inferred from the correlation). Commitment to SEL positively correlated with teaching engagement ($r = .21$, $p < .05$). Teaching efficacy was positively correlated with teaching engagement ($r = .20$, $p < .05$).

Table 5
Correlations for Teaching Factors with Preservice Teachers

	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
1. Age							
2. Gender[a]	.18*						
3. Stream[b]	.03	.20*					
4. SEL_comfort	.05	-.05	-.12				
5. SEL_committment	.07	-.13	-.18*	.23**			
6. Teaching efficacy	.07	.13	-.04	.32**	-.03		
7. Teaching engagement	-.07	-.22*	-.14	.19*	.21*	.20*	

* $p < .05$, ** $p < .01$

[a] Note:1=female, 2=male
[b] Note: 1=elementary, 2=secondary

Regression Analyses

Predicting teaching efficacy. The first regression equation examined comfort with and commitment to SEL as predictors for the outcome variable of teaching efficacy. Step 1 of the regression used only gender, age, and teaching

stream as predictors and produced no significant results. Step 2 of the regression revealed comfort with SEL to be a significant predictor of teaching efficacy, suggesting that for preservice teachers, their comfort with SEL positively impacts their efficacy beliefs ($p < .01$). Commitment to SEL did not emerge as a significant predictor. In total, the model at Step 2 explained 12% of the variance, F (5, 116) = 4.35, p =.001. Results of the full regressions are presented in Table 6.

Table 6
Standardized Beta Weights from Regression Analyses Predicting Preservice Teaching Efficacy and Engagement

Predictor Variable	Teaching Efficacy		Teaching Engagement	
	Step 1	Step 2	Step 1	Step 2
Gender[a]	.15	.14	-.14	-.13
Age	.06	.04	-.06	-.08
Stream[b]	-.13	-.11	-.05	-.01
SEL_comfort		.35**		.12
SEL_committment		-.15		.13
Adjusted R^2	.01	.12	.00	.02

* $p < .05$, ** $p < .01$

[a] Note: 1= female, 2=male
[b] Note: 1=elementary, 2=secondary

Predicting teacher engagement. The second regression analysis considered comfort with and commitment to SEL as predictors for the overall outcome of teaching engagement. In Step 1, of three predictors: age, gender and teaching stream, none significantly predicted commitment to SEC. In Step 2 of the regression, variables comfort with SEL and commitment to SEL were introduced and the variables themselves did not emerge significant, nor did they affect the significance of any variables considered in Step 1. The model did not explain a significant amount of the variance, 2%, F (5, 119) = 1.61, p >.05. Results of the full regressions are presented in Table 6.

Mean differences. An independent-samples *t*-test was conducted to compare comfort with SEL and commitment to SEL in samples of preservice and practicing teachers. There was a significant difference for comfort with SEL for preservice teachers (*M* = 21.72, *SD* = 3.73) and practicing teachers (*M* = 22.74, SD = 3.63); *t*(357) = 2.56, *p* < .01. These results suggest that these groups are different with regards to comfort with SEL. Specifically; this result suggests that practicing teachers are more comfortable with SEL than preservice teachers. Similarly, there was a significant difference for commitment to SEL for preservice teachers (*M* = 23.54, SD = 4.31) and practicing teachers (*M* = 20.58, SD = 5.15), *t*(355) = -5.83, *p* < .000. These results reveal that preservice and practicing teachers are different in their commitment to SEL; preservice teachers are more committed to SEL than their practicing counterparts. See table 7 for full results.

Table 7

Independent Samples t-test for Comparing Practicing and Preservice Teachers' Beliefs about SEL

Variable	Group	N	Mean (SD)	*t*	df	Sig.	Mean Diff	95% CI
Comfort with SEL	Practicing	223	22.74 (3.63)	2.56	357	0.01	1.02	[0.24, 1.81]
	Preservice	136	21.71 (3.73)					
Commitment to SEL	Practicing	222	20.58 (5.15)	-5.83	321	0.00	-2.96	[-3.96, -1.96]
	Preservice	135	23.54 (4.31)					

Discussion

The purpose of this study was to examine preservice teachers' beliefs regarding their comfort with and commitment to social emotional learning and how these beliefs predict their teaching efficacy and engagement. Three findings that emerged from this research are important to highlight. First, unlike in Study 1 with practicing teachers, teaching efficacy was the only outcome that had any significant predictors. Specifically, comfort with SEL positively predicted teaching efficacy. This result highlights that increasing comfort with SEL may positively impact pre-service teachers' teaching efficacy and invites a discussion about ways in which teacher education may help preservice teachers become more comfortable with SEL. Secondly, the null results for engagement warrant some attention. This area requires further speculation as to why SEL does not impact teaching engagement for these preservice teachers. Finally, the results from the *t*-tests highlight some important differences between practicing teachers' inclination to be more comfortable with SEL and preservice teachers' higher levels of commitment to SEL. I believe these results speak to the difference in expectations and realistic understandings of what occurs in the classroom and what the role of a teacher is for the samples of practicing and preservice teachers.

Teacher Efficacy Beliefs

As discussed in the literature review, a major challenge emerges when considering preservice teachers' efficacy beliefs. Because preservice teachers have had little to no experience in the classroom in the role of a teacher, they have not had time to have the mastery experiences that underpin teaching efficacy, and

when they are first immersed in teaching and experience the sink-or-swim approach to teaching, they may struggle to balance the ways they interact with students and may find their classes out of control (Woolfolk Hoy, 2000). However, teaching efficacy is important because it appears relatively stable and resistant to change once established and is significant even in early years of teaching training (Woolfolk Hoy, 2000, Woolfolk Hoy & Spero, 2005).

While commitment to SEL was a non-significant predictor, comfort with SEL was found to significantly positively predict preservice teachers' efficacy beliefs. Thus, insomuch as preservice teachers understand teaching efficacy, this factor is positively supported by comfort with SEL. This result is important because this sample is still in their teacher education program, which allows for relevant training and development in areas of SEL before these teachers even enter the classroom beyond student teaching. As was seen in Study 1, a similar result emerged with practicing teachers: practicing teachers' comfort with SEL positively predicted their efficacy beliefs. Because this result can be seen in both practicing (Study 1) and preservice teachers, it further emphasizes the importance of education for both groups in the areas of social emotional competencies and how social emotional learning plays a significant role in the classroom.. Specifically, this sample of preservice teachers requires not only development in the area of SEL beliefs, but may also benefit from specific opportunities to explore the differences they will face as they move from student to teacher (Ingersoll & Strong, 2011). While the argument can be made that preservice teachers have already spent at least 12 years in a classroom before entering the

teaching profession, the shift in identity from student to teacher presents its own challenges. Pajares (1992) states that preservice teachers have an "unrealistic optimism and self-serving bias" (p. 323), assuming that their own beliefs about teaching are the most important and that they will be better teachers than their peers. These strong beliefs about their capabilities may be troublesome as these preservice teachers enter the classroom and find it to be different than what they anticipated throughout teacher training.

Studies have shown that the retention of beginning teachers is a challenge, with approximately 28% of teachers in Alberta leaving the profession within the first four years, and 16% of those after only the first year (Alberta Education, 2012). Reports have documented some reasons for why these teachers are leaving, and included in these reasons are factors such as experiencing challenges in the classroom, having a lack of willingness to move to a new community, feeling personally unsuited to the job, and changing their career direction (Alberta Education, 2012). There is a possibility that these teachers, who may have once been inclined to leave the profession, with increased teaching efficacy, may feel more equipped to deal with classroom challenges and be more prepared to self-motivate and overcome stressful factors. In the teacher education program at the University of Alberta, preservice teachers are required to take a course on classroom management. As "effective classroom management" is positioned in the Prosocial Classroom Model (Jennings & Greenberg, 2009), following teachers' personal SEC and well-being, this suggests that content about personal SEC development and SEL beliefs as well as development of students' SEC skills

be included in this course. By incorporating specific concepts about the social emotional aspects of the classroom, it is possible that these preservice teachers may also begin to see the classroom as a place where they need not only content knowledge, but also an understanding of social emotional competencies and instruction. Thus, making them feel capable of positively influencing social emotional dynamics of the classroom.

This study reveals that comfort with SEL predicts teaching efficacy, and as such, if increasing teacher efficacy can help to retain teachers in the profession, then supporting preservice teachers' personal comfort with SEL and its associated competencies is useful. As discussed above, being explicit in teacher training about some of the challenges that may be faced regarding classroom management that involve social emotional factors is one way that preservice teachers may begin to see their role in the classroom as multifaceted (Ingersoll & Strong, 2011).

Similar to the suggestions offered in Study 1, I believe that preservice teachers would also benefit from having increased time dedicated to the observation of practicing teachers. By having specific time in a classroom to consider the role of the teacher, witness social and emotional conflicts that inevitably arise in the classroom, and to reflect on the ways in which the teachers' social and emotional skills are present both formally and informally, preservice teachers may develop an understanding of the range of social and emotional dynamics in the classroom. Thus, these preservice teachers have the opportunity to narrow the gap between their expectations of what happens in a classroom and what actually occurs, which is often a challenge for students entering teacher

education programs with their beliefs about teaching already established (Pajaraes, 1992). With the overall goal of increasing preservice teachers' comfort with SEL, as this factor predicts teaching efficacy, providing this population with the opportunity to further understand the shift in role from student to teacher and have increased opportunities for observation and reflection may serve to support their comfort with social emotional classroom factors before they enter their student teaching practicum as well as their formal teaching practice.

Teacher Engagement Beliefs

The results of the regression equations suggest that for preservice teachers, comfort with SEL and commitment to SEL are not significantly relevant to the establishment of their teaching engagement. This may be explained by three factors, one theoretical, one empirical, and one logical.

Theoretically, the Engaged Teacher Scale (ETS) (Klassen, Yerdelen, & Durksen, 2013) was piloted and validated using samples of practicing teachers, and has not yet been expanded to explore the engagement of preservice teachers. As such, I adjusted the items to reflect future intentions and do not have data on the effect of these alterations. However, the reliability for this scale with the sample of preservice teachers is considered high (Cronbach's alpha = .92), and as such, it can be interpreted that the ETS is measuring what it is intended to measure, even with this sample of preservice teachers (Johnson & Christensen, 2012). Additionally, this scale was also developed with the consideration of four factors of engagement: social engagement with colleagues, social engagement with students, emotional engagement, and cognitive engagement. For the purpose

of this study, I chose to focus on the overall understanding of engagement and did not look at individual subscale scores. For this sample of preservice teachers, I did not feel it was relevant to examine the four factors separately, especially considering the purpose of the research (to understand how SEL beliefs predict overall engagement) and their limited classroom experience. Because my main concern was about SEL beliefs predicting overall engagement, I was not as concerned with the specific types of engagement that may have been predicted, but rather, interested primarily in the presence of a relationship. The inclusion of the scale as a whole suggests that preservice teachers' comfort with and commitment to SEL are not factors that predict overall engagement, and thus, engagement may either a) not be a factor that can be influenced by SEL beliefs, or b) not be conceptualized by these preservice teachers yet. The second point, that preservice teachers may not have conceptualized what teaching engagement looks like, is not surprising and I do not think it requires immediate intervention. Preservice teachers, still in the role of a student and with little teaching experience, would likely not have an understanding of the ways in which they might be engaged in the classroom.

Empirically, it is important to note that changes needed to be made to the engagement scale so as to make the items relevant to preservice teachers. Because the items can be considered largely hypothetical to preservice teachers, especially considering the lack of classroom experience, I speculate that participants responded to the items based more on intention, and thus, might not have a full understanding of what is means to be engaged as a teacher. Undoubtedly, the

changes affect the overall way the scale is read; however, it must also be noted that the reliability for the scale, as stated above, was high, and so this appears to be a small issue. That said, it is still important to consider that preservice teachers may be lacking an understanding of teaching engagement and that with more experience, their understanding of engagement might change and they might report different opinions. Because preservice teachers may not have a clear understanding of teaching engagement, it may not be surprising that there were no significant SEL predictors for this outcome. This result is ambiguous and leaves room for multiple interpretations: as mentioned above, preservice teachers may have an understanding of engagement and SEL beliefs are simply not relevant predictors. Alternatively, posing such hypothetical items to preservice teachers with limited experience may ask more about their intentions and coupled with the lack of teaching experience, may not really be tapping into teaching engagement.

Logically, engagement is a difficult construct to consider with preservice teachers: As mentioned, they have limited classroom experience, but also they might focus on other classroom issues before considering social and emotional needs as well as they own engagement in the profession. For example, Daniels, Radil, and Wagner (submitted, 2013), found that preservice teachers felt most responsible for their teaching, followed by feeling responsible for relationships with students, student achievement and then student motivation. These results indicate that preservice teachers' consider themselves first responsible for their own teaching performance, and thus, are likely to want to increase their understanding of content and be able to develop effective lessons and create

meaningful assessment (Graham, 2005). If preservice teachers feel most responsible for their teaching, it is not surprising that they may not be focused on ways to be engaged in the classroom or they have not have even considered engagement as an area for development. Similarly, their concern for increasing their social and emotional understandings of the classroom may fall to the background as they aim to increase the, perhaps more tangible, aspects of teaching, such as lesson planning and assessment development. This factor is not unexpected and as preservice teachers move in to the role of a professional, it is important that they do take lesson and assessment planning seriously, as these factors are direct requirements the teacher qualification standards (Alberta Education, 2012).

Additionally, participants in this sample have had a maximum of fourteen weeks in the classroom in a student teaching practicum (if they completed both the five-week and nine-week practicums); these participants may not have a clear understanding of their engagement with teaching as they have such limited experience in a classroom in the role of a teacher. The factors discussed above that characterize preservice teachers as novices in the classroom may help to explain the null results. These three avenues of discussion, theoretical, empirical and logical, point to the fact that it may simply have been too early to consider preservice teachers' beliefs about their own teaching engagement. This is not to say that beliefs about SEL should not be supported in teacher education programs, but rather that efficacy and engagement may not have presented themselves as conceptually and practically important without teaching experience. Because

these preservice teachers are so engrossed in the act of being a student, it is not surprising that I have been able to establish several reasons why these outcomes did not emerge as having significant predictors.

Nonetheless, as stated above, SEL beliefs should not be discounted for the potential of increasing engagement for two reasons: first, comfort with SEL predicted efficacy, and thus comfort with SEL has at least one positive outcome, and, second, in Study 1, comfort with and commitment to SEL were both found to impact practicing teachers' engagement. These results emphasize that despite the fact that this particular regression was not significant, SEL beliefs should not be ignored with preservice teachers. In fact, these beliefs may have a positive impact on their efficacy and engagement when they move into formal practice, as SEL factors were deemed significant predictors for practicing teachers. While null results emerged from the regression with commitment to SEL as a predictor, it does not mean that teaching engagement should be written off as unimportant either. Rather, teaching engagement should be considered with preservice teachers: when does teaching engagement emerge as a significant construct to this group? After how much teaching experience do teachers get a better idea of what it means to be engaged? While these questions are beyond the scope of my study, they present themselves as areas for future research, as at this point in their education programs, teaching engagement is not yet considered a major factor affecting this sample of preservice teachers.

A Comparison of Practicing and Preservice Teachers

In comparing the samples from each of the two studies, I found differences between practicing and preservice teachers' comfort with SEL and commitment to SEL. The differences between these groups are important because they further emphasize that practicing and preservice teachers cannot be consider as the same groups and have different needs in areas of social emotional development.

With regards to comfort with SEL, practicing teachers were found to be more comfortable with SEL, as reflected by a significant *t*-test and a higher mean score (see Table 7). This result is interesting because I can see two possible interpretations of the meaning. Firstly, it may appear obvious that teachers are more comfortable with SEL: with more experience in the classroom, practicing teachers not only establish a more realistic understanding of what the day-to-day happenings are in a classroom with experience, but also have developed an understanding of some of the social emotional needs are within the classroom. Preservice teachers are typically optimistic about their beliefs about the role of a teacher as they enter their undergraduate programs; however, during student teaching, these optimistic apprentices may find their beliefs compromised when they are confronted with the "realities and complexities of the teaching task" (Woolfolk, 2000, p. 5). Secondly, as teachers gain more experience and likely a more solid understanding of curriculum content as well as an established breadth of lesson plans and assessment tools, their focus may shift from simply being prepared for daily lessons to developing other areas of their practice (Graham, 2005). Contrastingly, this result can also be seen as surprising, especially considering that teachers responded that they did not feel they had time to

incorporate SEL into their classes. If practicing teachers say that they do not have time to incorporate SEL and view it as something separate from their regular practice, I can suspect that they may be less comfortable with it, as it would put pressure on them beyond teaching the curriculum. Likewise, preservice teachers have been shown to infamously inflate their beliefs (Ingersoll & Strong, 2011) and as such, it is interesting that in this case, preservice teachers were found to be less comfortable with SEL than their practicing counterparts. Each of these interpretations helps to explain why in this study, practicing teachers' comfort with SEL may have been higher, and how this result is relevant to the understanding of who these teachers are in the classroom and how best to support their needs.

There was also a significant difference between practicing and preservice teachers' commitment to SEL, with preservice teachers reporting more commitment to SEC (t (355) = -5.83, p = .000). While I have discussed how preservice teachers may be concerned with their overall teaching performance, these results indicate that for this sample of preservice teachers, they are willing to participate in workshops to learn more about SEL and specific competencies. This may indicate that for this group, committing to professional development may be considered as a way to increase their teaching performance. This result makes sense considering that early in a teacher education program, preservice teachers are eager to participate in additional professional development they can so as to best prepare them for working with students, developing their own teaching identity and develop procedural routines that include classroom

management and appropriate content instruction (Kagan, 1992). Additionally, as they are still in a University degree program, the idea of learning more about a concept through formal training may be seen as second nature, as opposed to practicing teachers, who may believe that the best development comes from more experience in the classroom (Smylie, 1989). Finally, it may also be considered that the difference between these groups comes from the potential gaps in understanding the day-to-day operations in a classroom. It is not surprising that practicing teachers would have a solid understanding of the time that preparation for lessons, teaching, assessment as well as administrative duties and extra curricular activities may consume within a day, never mind balancing personal lives outside of the classroom. Preservice teachers, having little to no experience in a classroom as a full time teacher may not be aware of the expectations of them as a teacher and may have unrealistic ideas of the amount of time and resources that are provided within a school. While it may sound as though preservice teachers' commitment to SEL is unrealistic, it is important to see this result as an opportunity for teacher education programs to take advantage of this level of commitment. While preservice teachers are committed to professional development in the areas of SEL and SEC, it is important to find ways to offer this development to this population through coursework or additional information sessions.

The differences between these groups give rise to understanding the gap between these two related populations. Practicing teachers are more comfortable with SEL; preservice teachers are less comfortable with SEL but are more

committed to learning more about their own SEL development and SEC skills as well as that of their students. These results emphasize the importance of understanding these groups such that their needs can be supported. Practicing teachers (as discussed in Study 1) can be given opportunities to increase their commitment to SEC development if techniques beyond structured professional development are offered. Preservice teachers' comfort with SEL may be increased if teacher education programs can see their commitment to SEL as advantageous and offer opportunities for growth before they enter the classroom.

Study Limitations

There are three primary limitations to this study, each of which relates to the survey used to assess preservice teachers. First, we did not collect information about the participants' intentions with regards to completing the education program and entering the teaching profession. For some students, completing an Education degree is a gateway to another program, faculty, or career interest. Similarly to how we do not know their intentions, we do not know their rationale for entering the education program. For example, some students may enter the education program because of their interest in a content area, passion for working with children, a desire to act as a mentor, or because the lifestyle of a teacher supports their personal needs better than other careers. I am not suggesting that students entering the program must belong to one of these camps, or that these are the only reasons for entering the program, but rather that there is a wide range of reasons for entering and staying in the education program and our data does not provide insight into the rationale of each participant. This is a limitation because it

may influence the responses of participants. Specifically, if a respondent does not intend to pursue teaching beyond this year or beyond the degree, their responses about their commitment to learning more about SEL and social emotional competencies may be different than those who intend to finish the degree and wish to pursue a long-term career in teaching. A report released by Alberta Education (2012) states that typically, of the approximate 2000 graduates from a teacher education program, approximately 1500 continue into the education workforce sector, and 500 pursue alternative paths including further education or other occupations. Again, for those who do not intend to pursue teaching, they may not have considered all of the classroom factors (SEL beliefs and transmission of SEC, efficacy and engagement) before reading these items, and thus, have given them little consideration, which may be reflected in the overall data.

Another limitation that stems from our data collection is that we did not ask participants directly if they had completed a teaching practicum prior to completing this survey. While I am unable to report on the percentage of students who have completed either one five-week practicum or both the five-week and nine-week practicums, I can confirm that at least 64% of participants have no formal teaching experience, based on their enrollment in an entry-level prerequisite Educational Psychology course. However, the second class from which students were recruited, while it is an entry level course, it can be taken anytime throughout the degree program, even after having completed one or both teaching practicum, as it is a prerequisite for only select, specific courses that are

not mandatory. This is a limitation because the data from the preservice teachers cannot be sorted to examine those who have acted as a student teacher versus those with no classroom experience with regards to their beliefs about SEL and teaching efficacy and engagement. Even though the items were phrased with an orientation to the future (i.e. "In my classroom, I will…"), some of the participants may have answered based solely on intention whereas other may have evidence of what worked for them in the classroom. The possible experience might be reflected in the responses, as these teachers will have started to establish a clearer understanding of the happenings in a classroom and their role as a teacher. The exclusion of a variable determining the amount of teaching experience was an oversight on the part of the researchers involved in the survey development; however, with 88 participants (64%) being from an entry level class, this factor may not significantly alter my results.

Finally, as with Study 1, participant fatigue is a possible limitation of this study. The survey compiled items for multiple researchers and was considered by the participant pool as a two-credit study, indicating that participants may take up to two hours to complete it. After piloting the survey with three participants, the survey was found to take just under an hour, but there was no time limit on completing it. While fatigue is noted to set in after approximately 20 minutes for an online survey (SAGE Research Methods, 2004), two factors are important to note for why this issue is unlikely to affect my data. First, my items were presented mid-way through the survey, so participants would not be responding to my items at the very end of the survey. Second, the survey link was provided to

them via email, and they were given plenty of opportunity to email the research assistant for the link to the survey. From the time that they received the link, they had a maximum of approximately seven weeks to complete the survey. This means that after initially accessing the link, participants could pause during the survey and return to complete their responses later. By administering the survey online, informing participants that the survey would likely take approximately an hour and allowing participants to complete the survey at their own convenience, this limitation likely does not present significant challenges to the data collected.

Conclusion

The two studies in this thesis provide support for the importance of examining teachers' beliefs about social-emotional competence and learning so as to find effective ways to support their comfort with and commitment to SEL. As found in the results, if teachers' SEL beliefs are supported, they may, in some cases, feel more efficacious and engaged in the profession, thus, contributing to their overall effectiveness in terms of classroom management.

Exploring social and emotional beliefs with samples of both practicing (Study 1) and preservice (Study 2) teachers provides three important areas for further research. First, practicing teachers' lowered commitment to SEL presents the challenge of exploring ways to encourage their professional learning in ways beyond typical professional development sessions. Future research may wish to explore what factors contribute to practicing teachers' low commitment to learning more about SEL, especially considering that they report high comfort levels with it. Second, as practicing and preservice teachers' comfort with SEL increased their efficacy, yet preservice teachers' comfort level was still lower, more research may be dedicated to exploring the transition from practicing to preservice teacher with the intent of supporting SEL beliefs throughout. With high attrition rates in the first few years of teaching, preservice and new teachers' require support such that they feel efficacious in the classroom, and supporting their comfort with SEL may play an important role. Third, my studies used convenience samples of teachers and as such, did not provide information about the specific school culture and classroom environment. Future research may want

to explore more specific teachers' comfort and commitment to SEL and link the results with the policies and culture of specific school environments. This research may help schools whose teachers report low comfort and commitment to SEL find ways to support their teachers and students in the areas of SEC.

Finally, from a theoretical standpoint, an additional avenue of future research would be to refine the Prosocial Classroom Model. The model could be simplified and thus it may be easier to support teachers' and classrooms if the directionality between variables were to be tested and confirmed. In my research, I read the variables from left to right, but many of the arrows indicate bi-directionality, making the implementation of support for these variables challenging on a practical level.

In sum, my research supports not only that both practicing and preservice teachers have considered SEL and report some degree of comfort and commitment to SEL, but that these variables impact teaching factors of efficacy and engagement. Because efficacy and engagement have both been shown as positive outcomes for teachers in the sense that they stay in the profession beyond the first few years and can face classroom challenges effectively without burning out, support for SEL and personal SEC at all stages of teaching should not be ignored. As stated in the introduction, teachers teach not only what they know, but also who they are (Hamachek, 1999). Supporting teachers SEL beliefs not only supports classroom outcomes, but also contributes to who these teachers are as they communicate, set goals and effectively negotiate relationships. It is my hope that the results of this research will help those who design and implement

social and emotional curriculum for students begin to include the teacher as an essential player in considering the "how" and "why" for successful implementation. This is a timely and important goal as the study of social and emotional competence is emerging in more and more research on studies of classrooms, motivation practices, and specific curriculum. In an effort to create optimally functioning classroom environments and support students' outcomes, it is imperative that we explore teachers as an essential resource; their ability to influence change should not be ignored.

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Appendix A

Exploring Practicing Teachers' Feelings and Emotions within the School Environment

Thank you very much for volunteering **10-15 minutes** of your time today to complete the attached 5-page survey of items that address you as a teacher.

Your answers to this survey are **confidential** and will not be revealed to anyone outside of the research team. By completing and returning the attached survey during this convention you are consenting to having your survey data included in our study.

Our research assistants are available for your questions. Thank you in advance and enjoy the convention!

Background Information. Before you begin, please tell us about yourself. **(**please select ALL that apply):

1. **Gender:** ________
2. **Your Age**: _______
3. **Your ethnic/cultural heritage (e.g., French Canadian, Aboriginal)**: ___________________________
4. **Years of teaching experience**: __________
5. **Years at current school:** __________
6. **Current teaching status:** ○ student-teacher ○ temporary or substitute ○ part-time ○ full-time
   ○ administration ○ other: ___________
7. **Current teaching level(s):**
   ○ Preschool ○ Elementary (K-6) ○ Middle/Junior (7-9) ○ Range of levels ○ Other: _________
8. **Current teaching area(s):**
   ○ All (Grade level specialist) ○ English/LA ○ Science ○ Math ○ Phys. Ed. ○Social Studies ○ Technology ○ EAL ○ Other languages ○ Arts (Fine/Performance) ○ French Immersion ○ Special Ed. ○ CTS ○ Religious Studies ○ Other(s):___________
9. **Average number of students in your class(es):** ________
10. **Socio-economic status of most students in your school (estimated family income compared to most in your school location)**

① Low ② Low-Average ③ Average ④ High-Average ⑤ High ⑥ Unknown

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A. Please check the number that best represents your answer to each of the following items.
1 = Not at all confident 5 = Moderately confident 9 = Extremely confident

How confident are you that teachers in YOUR SCHOOL can…	Not at all				Moderately				Extremely
1. work collectively to develop or implement new curricula/ interventions that increase student engagement?	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9
2. work together to effectively work with parents?	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9
3. collaborate with other public and social agencies that are in the community?	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9
4. work together to maximize your effectiveness, even when facing unexpected challenges and problems?	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9
5. work together to overcome various difficulties that may arise?	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9

How confident are you that YOU can…	Not at all			Moderately			Extremely		
1. control disruptive behaviour in the classroom?	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9
2. motivate students who show low interest in school work?	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9
3. get students to believe they can do well in school work?	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9
4. help your students value learning?	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9
5. craft good questions for your students?	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9
6. get children to follow classroom rules?	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9
7. calm a student who is disruptive or noisy?	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9
8. establish a classroom management system with each group of students?	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9
9. use a variety of assessment strategies?	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9
10. provide an alternative explanation or example when students are confused?	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9
11. implement alternative strategies in your classroom?	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9

B. Researchers use the term “social and emotional learning” to describe a process for developing skills and competencies related to: recognizing and managing emotions, establishing positive relationships involving care, concern, empathy, and understanding for others, making responsible and constructive decisions, and managing conflict ethically and effectively.

1. Are you familiar with the term ‘social and emotional learning’ as defined above?	Yes	No
2. As a student (K12 or University), I received explicit instruction on skills related to social emotional learning.	Yes	No

C. Thinking about yourself as a teacher, please click the circle that best describes your personal response to each of the following statements.

	Strongly Disagree			**Neutral**			**Strongly Agree**
1. Based on the skills listed above, I consider myself to be socially emotionally competent.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
2. I feel confident in my ability to provide instruction on social and emotional learning.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
3. I am comfortable providing instruction on social and emotional skills to students.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
4. Taking care of students' social and emotional needs comes naturally to me.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
5. Informal lessons in social and emotional learning will be part of my regular teaching practice.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
6. Social emotional skills should be addressed by teachers in ALL GRADE levels.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
7. Social emotional skills should be addressed by teachers in ALL SUBJECT areas.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
8. I would like to attend a workshop to develop my own social and emotional skills.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7

9.	I would like to attend a workshop to develop my students' social and emotional skills.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
10	I want to improve my ability to teach social and emotional skills to students	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
11	All teachers should receive training on how to teach social and emotional skills to students.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
12	I will have time to incorporate social emotional learning into my classroom.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7

D. Instructors have different styles in dealing with students, and we would like to know more about how you interact with your students. Please indicate how much you agree or disagree with the following statements.

	Strongly Disagree			**Neutral**			**Strongly Agree**
1. I provide my students with choices and options.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
2. My students feel understood in the classroom.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
3. My students are open with me during class.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
4. I convey confidence in my students' abilities to do well in my class.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
5. My students feel that I accept them.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
6. I make sure that my students understand the goals of my teaching and what they need to do.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
7. I encourage my students to ask questions.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
8. My students feel trust in me.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
9. I answer my students' questions fully and carefully.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
10. I listen to how my students would like to do things.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
11. I handle my students' emotions well.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
12. I make sure that my students' know that I care about them as people.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
13. My students feel good about the way that I talk to them.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
14. I try to understand how my students see things before suggesting new ways to do things.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
15. My students feel that they are able to share their feelings with me.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7

E. Below you will find a list of statements describing your experiences as a teacher. Please indicate your personal response to each of these statements by clicking the number that best represents your answer.

	Strongly Disagree			**Neutral**			**Strongly Agree**
1. At school, I connect well with my colleagues.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
2. I am excited about teaching.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
3. In class, I show warmth to my students.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
4. I try my hardest to perform well while teaching.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7

5. I feel happy while teaching.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
6. In class, I am aware of my students' feelings.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
7. At school, I am committed to helping my colleagues.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
8. While teaching, I really "throw" myself into my work.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
9. At school, I value the relationship I build with my colleagues.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
10. I love teaching.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
11. While teaching, I pay a lot of attention to my work.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
12. At school, I care about the problems of my colleagues.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
13. I find teaching fun.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
14. In class, I care about the problems of my students.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
15. While teaching, I work with intensity.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
16. In class, I am empathetic towards my students.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7

F. When your student is bored in class, you would like him/her to…

	Strongly Disagree		**Neutral**		**Strongly Agree**
1. try to pay attention to the lesson more.	1	2	3	4	5
2. tell him/herself to concentrate again.	1	2	3	4	5
3. make him/herself aware of the importance of the issue.	1	2	3	4	5
4. try to make him/herself aware that this class is important.	1	2	3	4	5
5. make him/herself focus again because the issue is important.	1	2	3	4	5
6. ask you if they can do something else.	1	2	3	4	5
7. ask you for more interesting tasks.	1	2	3	4	5
8. suggest that you add variety to the lessons.	1	2	3	4	5
9. try to get you off topic so that they discuss an issue that interests him/her.	1	2	3	4	5
10. bring up an issue that he/she thinks the class is more interested in.	1	2	3	4	5
11. prepare for his/her next class.	1	2	3	4	5
12. do his/her homework.	1	2	3	4	5
13. study for another subject.	1	2	3	4	5
14. think about his/her homework or something he/she has to study.	1	2	3	4	5
15. copy the homework for his/her next class.	1	2	3	4	5
16. talk to the person sitting next to him/her.	1	2	3	4	5

17. start talking to his/her classmate sitting next to him/her.	1	2	3	4	5
18. distract him/herself by interacting with his/her classmate.	1	2	3	4	5
19. try to contact other classmates who are feeling also bored.	1	2	3	4	5
20. occupy him/herself with his/her classroom neighbour or someone who is sitting close to him/her.	1	2	3	4	5

G. We are investigating teachers' ideas about students' academic potential and behaviour. There are **no right or wrong answers**. For each item, please select the number that best represents your opinion.

	Strongly Disagree		Neutral			Strongly Agree
1. Students have a certain amount of academic potential and they can't really do much to change it.	1	2	3	4	5	6
2. Students' academic potential is something about them that they can't change very much.	1	2	3	4	5	6
3. To be honest, students can't really change how intelligent they are.	1	2	3	4	5	6
4. Students can learn new things, but they can't really change their basic academic potential.	1	2	3	4	5	6
5. Students can't really do much to change their behaviour.	1	2	3	4	5	6
6. Students' behaviour is a part of them that they can't change very much.	1	2	3	4	5	6
7. A student can do things to get people to like them, but they can't change their behaviour permanently.	1	2	3	4	5	6

H. Below you find a list of statements describing your experiences as a teacher. Please indicate your personal response to each of these statements in the context of the current school year (2012-2013).

	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Agree	Strongly Agree
1. I generally have so much fun teaching that I gladly prepare and teach my lessons.	1	2	3	4
2. I generally teach with enthusiasm.	1	2	3	4
3. I often have reason to be happy while I teach.	1	2	3	4
4. I generally feel tense and nervous while teaching.	1	2	3	4
5. I am often worried that my teaching isn't going so well	1	2	3	4
6. Preparing to teach often causes me to worry.	1	2	3	4
7. I generally enjoy teaching.	1	2	3	4
8. I feel uneasy when I think about teaching.	1	2	3	4
9. I often have reason to be angry while I teach.	1	2	3	4
10. I often feel annoyed while teaching.	1	2	3	4
11. Sometimes I get really mad while I teach.	1	2	3	4
12. Teaching generally frustrates me.	1	2	3	4

I. Please consider the following questions and write your responses on this page. Thank you.

1. What professional learning activity has most boosted your confidence in your ability to enhance student learning? Why?
2. What professional learning activity has most boosted your confidence in your school's ability to enhance student learning? Why?

Thank you for completing our survey! Feel free to write general comments:

Appendix B

Participant Pool Survey – Winter 2013

Section A: Demographic Information

1. Student ID number
2. Age
3. Gender
4. Citizenship
5. Ethnicity
6. Currently enrolled in: Year 1, Year 2, Year 3, Year 4, Year 5 or beyond, After degree, Graduate Studies
7. Stream – Elementary, Secondary
8. Major
9. Minor
10. Expected Graduation Date: Month and Year

Section B: Survey Items (Total number=150)

A1) Instructors have different styles in dealing with students, and we would like to know more about how you have felt about your encounters with your instructors.
(1 = Strongly disagree / 5 = neutral / 7 = Strongly Agree)

1. I feel that my instructor provides me choices and options.
2. I feel understood by my instructors.
3. I am able to be open with my instructors during class.
4. My instructors conveyed confidence in my ability to do well in the course.
5. I feel that my instructors accept me.
6. My instructors made sure I really understood the goals of the courses and what I need to do.
7. My instructors encouraged me to ask questions
8. I feel a lot of trust in my instructors
9. My instructors answer my questions fully and carefully.
10. My instructors listen to how I would like to do things
11. My instructors handle people's emotions very well
12. I feel that my instructors care about me as a person
13. I don't feel very good about the way my instructors talk to me
14. My instructors try to understand how I see things before suggesting a new way to do things
15. I feel able to share my feelings with my instructors.
16. I feel confident in my ability to learn this material.
17. I am capable of learning the material in my courses.
18. I am able to achieve my goals in my courses.
19. I feel able to meet the challenge of performing well in this program.

B1) This section is designed to help us gain a better understanding of the kinds of things that create difficulties for pre-service teachers in their school activities.
1 = Not at all / 3 = very little / 5 = somewhat / 7 = quite a bit / 9 = A great deal

1. How confident are you that you will be able to control disruptive behavior in the classroom?
2. How confident are you that you will be able to motivate students who show low interest in school work?
3. How much will you be able to do to get students to believe they can do well in school work?

1. How confident are you that you will be able to help your students value learning?
2. To what extent will you be able to craft good questions for your students?
3. How confident are you that you will be able to get children to follow classroom rules?
4. How confident are you that you will be able to calm a student who is disruptive or noisy?
5. How well will you be able to establish a classroom management system with each group of students?
6. How confident are you that you will be able to use a variety of assessment strategies?
7. How confident are you that you will be able to assist families in helping their children do well in school?
8. How confident are you that you will be able to implement alternative strategies in your classroom

A2) As a future teacher, please indicate how much you agree or disagree with the following statements while considering intentions.
(1 = Strongly disagree / 5 = neutral / 7 = Strongly Agree)

1. I intend to provide my students with choices and options.
2. I want my students to feel understood in the classroom.
3. I want my students to be open with me during class.
4. I will convey confidence in my students' abilities to do well in my class.
5. I intend for my students to feel that I accept them.
6. I will make sure that my students understand the goals of my teaching and what they need to do.
7. I will encourage my student to ask questions.
8. I want my students to feel trust in me.
9. I intend to answer my students' questions fully and carefully.
10. I will listen to how my students would like to do things.
11. I intend to handle my students' emotions well.
12. I will make sure that my students' know that I care about them as people.
13. I want my students to feel good about the way that I talk to them.
14. I will try to understand how my students see things before suggesting new ways to do things.
15. I want my student to feel that they are able to share their feelings with me.

C1) Please click the circle that best describes your personal response to each of the following statements.
(1 = Strongly disagree / 5 = neutral / 7 = Strongly Agree)

Researchers use the term "social and emotional learning" to describe a process for developing skills and competencies related to: recognizing and managing emotions, establishing positive relationships involving care and concern for others, making responsible decisions, and managing conflict.
Thinking about yourself as a preservice teacher, please click the circle that best describes your personal response to each of the following statements about the quality and types of social and emotional interactions in the classroom.

1. As a student (either in K12 or University), I received explicit instruction on skills related to social emotional learning.
2. Based on the skills listed above, I consider myself to be socially emotionally competent.
3. I feel confident in my ability to provide instruction on social and emotional learning.
4. I am comfortable providing instruction on social and emotional skills to students.
5. Taking care of students' social and emotional needs comes naturally to me.
6. Informal lessons in social and emotional learning will be part of my regular teaching practice.
7. Social emotional skills should be addressed by teachers in ALL GRADE levels.
8. Social emotional skills should be addressed by teachers in ALL SUBJECT areas.
9. I would like to attend a workshop to develop my own social and emotional skills.

1. I want to improve my ability to teach social and emotional skills to students.
2. I will have time to incorporate social emotional learning into my classroom.
3. ALL teachers should receive training on how to teach social and emotional skills to students.

A3) Autonomy Vignettes

On the following pages you will find a series of vignettes. Each one describes an incident and then lists four ways of responding to the situation. Please read each vignette and then consider each response in turn. Think about each response option in terms of how appropriate you consider it to be as a means of dealing with the problem described in the vignette. You may might the option to be "perfect," in other words, "extremely appropriate" in which case you would respond with the number 7. You might consider the response highly inappropriate, in which case would respond with the number 1. If you find the option reasonable you would select some number between 1 and 7. So think about each option and rate it on the scale shown below. Please rate each of the four options for each vignette. There are eight vignettes with four options for each.

There are no right or wrong ratings on these items. People's styles differ, and we are simply interested in what you consider appropriate given your own style.

Some of the stories ask what you would do as a teacher. Others ask you to respond as if you were giving advice to another teacher or to a parent. Some ask you to respond as if you were the parent. If you are ot a parent, simply imagine what it would be like for you in that situation.

Please respond to each of the 32 items using the following scale.

1	2	3	4	5	6	7
very inappropriate			moderately appropriate			very appropriate

1. Jim is an average student who has been working at grade level. During the past two weeks he has appeared listless and has not been participating during reading group. The work he does is accurate but he has not been completing assignments. A phone conversation with his mother revealed no useful information. The most appropriate thing for Jim's teacher to do is:
    a. She should impress upon him the importance of finishing his assignments since he needs to learn this material for his own good.
    b. Let him know that he doesn't have to finish all of his work now and see if she can help him work out the cause of the listlessness.
    c. Make him stay after school until that day's assignments are done.
    d. Let him see how he compares with the other children in terms of his assignments and encourage him to catch up with the others.

At a parent conference last night, Mr. and Mrs. Greene were told that their daughter Sarah has made more progress than expected since the time of the last conference. All agree that they hope she continues to improve so that she does not have to repeat the grade (which the Greene's have

1. been kind of expecting since the last report card). As a result of the conference, the Greenes decide to:
    a. Increase her allowance and promise her a ten-speed if she continues to improve.
    b. Tell her that she's now doing as well as many of the other children in her class.
    c. Tell her about the report, letting her know that they're aware of her increased independence in school and at home.
    d. Continue to emphasize that she has to work hard to get better grades.
2. Donny loses his temper a lot and has a way of agitating other children. He doesn't respond well to what you tell him to do and you're concerned that he won't learn the social skills he needs. The best thing for you to do with him is:
    a. Emphasize how important it is for him to "control himself" in order to succeed in school and in other situations.
    b. Put him in a special class which has the structure and reward contingencies which he needs.
    c. Help him see how other children behave in these various situations and praise him for doing the same.
    d. Realize that Donny is probably not getting the attention he needs and start being more responsive to him.
3. Your son is one of the better players on his junior soccer team which has been winning most of its games. However, you are concerned because he just told you he failed his unit spelling test and will have to retake it the day after tomorrow. You decide that the best thing to do is:
    a. Ask him to talk about how he plans to handle the situation.
    b. Tell him he probably ought to decide to forego tomorrow's game so he can catch up in spelling.
    c. See if others are in the same predicament and suggest he do as much preparation as the others.
    d. Make him miss tomorrow's game to study; soccer has been interfering too much with his school work.
4. The Rangers spelling group has been having trouble all year. How could Miss Wilson best help the Rangers?
    a. Have regular spelling bees so that Rangers will be motivated to do as well as the other groups.
    b. Make them drill more and give them special privileges for improvements.
    c. Have each child keep a spelling chart and emphasize how important it is to have a good chart.
    d. Help the group devise ways of learning the words together (skits, games, and so on).
5. In your class is a girl named Margy who has been the butt of jokes for years. She is quiet and usually alone. In spite of the efforts of previous teachers, Margy has not been accepted by the other children. Your wisdom would guide you to:
    a. Prod her into interactions and provide her with much praise for any social initiative.
    b. Talk to her and emphasize that she should make friends so she'll be happier.
    c. Invite her to talk about her relations with the other kids, and encourage her to take small steps when she's ready.
    d. Encourage her to observe how other children relate and to join in with them.

1. For the past few weeks things have been disappearing from the teacher's desk and lunch money has been taken from some of the children's desks. Today, Marvin was seen by the teacher taking a silver dollar paperweight from her desk. The teacher phoned Marvin's mother and spoke to her about this incident. Although the teacher suspects that Marvin has been responsible for the other thefts, she mentioned only the one and assured the mother that she'll keep a close eye on Marvin. The best thing for the mother to do is:
    a. Talk to him about the consequences of stealing and what it would mean in relation to the other kids.
    b. Talk to him about it, expressing her confidence in him and attempting to understand why he did it.
    c. Give him a good scolding; stealing is something which cannot be tolerated and he has to learn that.
    d. Emphasize that it was wrong and have him apologize to the teacher and promise not to do it again.
2. Your child has been getting average grades, and you'd like to see her improve. A useful approach might be to:
    a. Encourage her to talk about her report card and what it means for her.
    b. Go over the report card with her; point out where she stands in the class.
    c. Stress that she should do better; she'll never get into college with grades like these.
    d. Offer her a dollar for every A and 50 cents for every B on future report cards.

D1)Relatedness

Here is a list of statements about what you may feel towards your school colleagues. Please indicate to what extent you agree with each of the following items.

1=Do not agree at all; 4=Agree; 7=Strongly Agree

In my relationships with my school colleagues, I feel ...

1. ... supported.
2. ... close to them
3. ... understood.
4. ... attached to them.
5. ... listened to.
6. ... bonded to them.
7. ... valued.
8. ... close-knit.
9. ... safe.
10. ... like a friend.

E1) Classroom Practices – Responsibility

Imagine that you have classes of your own. To what extent would you feel PERSONALLY responsible that you should have prevented each of the following?

To what extent would you feel personally if . . . 1=Not at all; 7=Completely

1. a student of mine was not interested in the subject I teach.
2. a student of mine did not think that he/she could trust me with his/her problems in or outside of school.
3. a student of mine had very low achievement.
4. a lesson I taught was not as effective for student learning as I could have possibly made it.
5. a student of mine disliked the subject I teach.
6. a student of mine failed to learn the required material.
7. a student of mine did not value learning the subject I teach.
8. a lesson I taught was not as engaging for students as I could possibly have made it.
9. a student of mine thought he/she could not count on me when he/she needed help.
10. a student of mine did not believe that I truly cared about him/her.
11. a student of mine failed to make excellent progress throughout the school year.
12. a student of mine failed my class.
13. a lesson I taught failed to reflect my highest ability as a teacher.
14. a student of mine did not care about the subject I teach.

E2) Classroom Practices – Mastery and Performance

The following items are about what type of classroom you intend to establish once teaching. Please think about things you plan to do when you have your own classroom.

When I am a teacher I plan on . . . (1=Strongly Disagree, 5=Strongly Agree)

1. giving special privileges to students who do the best work.
2. providing several different activities during class so that students can choose among them
3. encouraging students to compete with each other.
4. giving a wide range of assignments, matched to students' needs and skill level.
5. pointing out those students who do well as a model for the other students.
6. making a special effort to recognize students' individual progress, even if they are below grade level.
7. helping students to understand how their performance compares to others.
8. considering how much students have improved when I give them report card grades.
9. displaying the work of the highest achieving students as an example.

F1) Intended Motivation Practices (Open-ended Questions)

1. Take a few minutes and describe a motivated student
2. What do you intend to do to motivate your future students?
3. Where did you learn how to motivate your future students?
4. What are the top three threats to student motivation?

G1) Life Satisfaction Scale

Below are five statements with which you may agree or disagree. Using the 1-7 scale below, indicate your agreement with each item. Please be open and honest in your responding.

The 7-point scale is: 1 =strongly disagree, 2 = disagree, 3 = slightly disagree, 4 = neither agree nor disagree, 5 =slightly agree, 6 =agree, 7 =strongly agree.

1. In most ways, my life is close to my ideal
2. The conditions of my life are excellent
3. I am satisfied with my life
4. So far I have gotten the important things I want in life
5. If I could live my life over, I would change almost nothing

G2) Positive Affect and Negative Affect Scale

This scale consists of a number of words that describe different feelings and emotions. Read each item and then list the number from the scale below next to each word. Indicate to what extent you feel this way in your life in general.

1=Not at all, 3= Moderately, 5=Extremely

1. Interested
2. Distressed
3. Excited
4. Upset
5. Strong
6. Guilty
7. Scared
8. Hostile
9. Enthusiastic
10. Proud
11. Irritable
12. Alert
13. Ashamed
14. Inspired
15. Nervous
16. Determined
17. Attentive
18. Jittery
19. Active
20. Afraid