



National Exploration of Emotional/Behavioral Detection in School Screening Project

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ISSUE BRIEF NO. 2

Social, Emotional, and Behavioral Health Screening Practices in U.S. Public School Districts

The NEEDs² Project

Schools have been identified as an ideal site for both identifying mental health issues and providing needed services, but research on nationwide social, emotional and behavioral (SEB) screening practices is limited.¹ In 2015-16, our NEEDs² team conducted a nationally-representative online survey of **1,330 public school district administrators** in the United States to better understand what was happening at the district level in terms of screening for social, emotional, and behavioral health screening.²

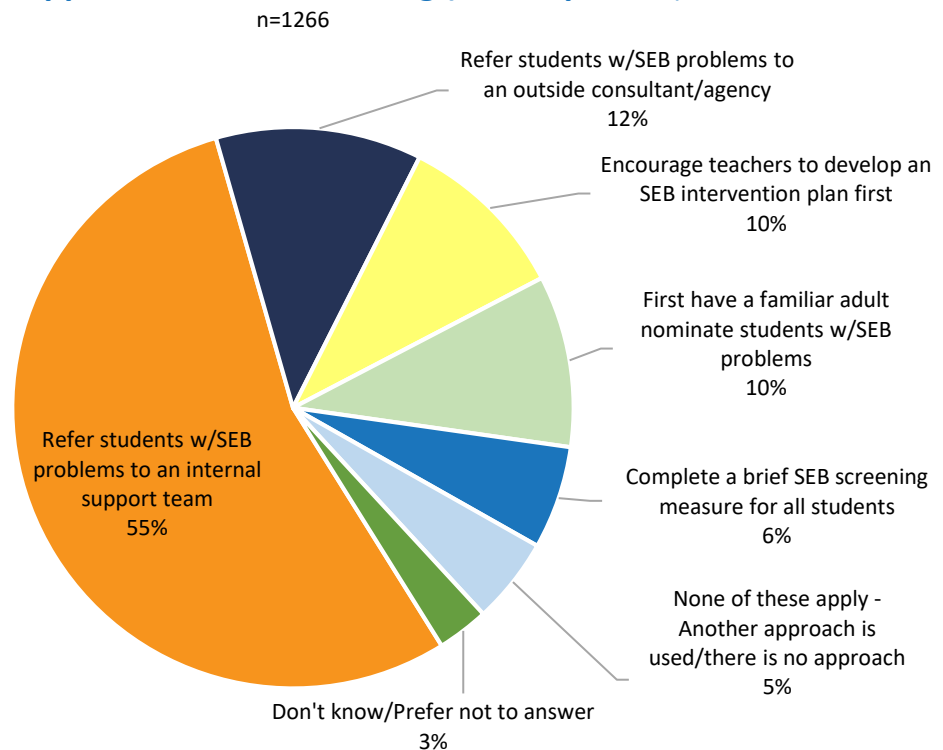
Key Findings

- District Administrators (DAs) **overwhelmingly agree that student SEB problems are a concern and should be a priority**, but few agree that SEB problems are sufficiently addressed.
- Fewer than one-in-ten districts (6%) complete brief SEB screeners for all students: **universal school-based SEB screening is the exception**, not the norm.
- By far the most common SEB screening approach employed by U.S. public school districts is to **refer students who exhibit SEB problems to an internal support team** that is responsible for an intervention plan (55%).
- Other approaches to SEB screening were endorsed at similar rates. About one-in-ten DAs report that their district (a) encourages **teachers to independently** develop and implement an intervention plan to address SEB problems, (b) **nominates students** exhibiting SEB problems for screening by a familiar adult, or (c) **refers students** exhibiting SEB problems to an outside consultant or agency.

¹ To date, the research focuses on whether or not screening takes place without also examining the extent to which assessment practices inform and influence intervention efforts; lacks information regarding what schools are doing in lieu of SEB screening; or uses convenience or small area samples which do not allow for generalization to the broader population of US public school districts.

² Marcy, H.M., Dineen, J.N., McCoach, B., Briesch, A.M., Chafouleas, S.M. (2018, December). The NEEDs2 Project: Project Methodology. Available at needs2.education.uconn.edu.

District Approach to SEB Screening (DA Responses)



District Administrator Perspectives on Student SEB Health

District administrators were asked to respond to a series of statements on a scale from 1, meaning do not agree at all, to 5, meaning completely agree (n=1292).

	Mean
Student social, emotional, and behavioral problems are a concern.	4.47
Addressing student social, emotional, and behavioral problems should be a priority.	4.45
Including social, emotional, and behavioral screening procedures is an important step toward addressing these problems at school.	4.17
Student social, emotional and behavioral problems are sufficiently addressed.	2.85

For Additional Information

Dineen, J. N., Chafouleas, S. M., Briesch, A. M., McCoach, D. B., & Newton, S. D. (2018). *Exploring Social, Emotional, and Behavioral Screening Practices in US Public School Districts: Current Policies, Practices, and Perceptions*. Manuscript under review.



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