

**Project Title:** Enhancing Outcomes of an Evidence-Based Social-Emotional Program with a School Support Model

**Type of Grant Requested:** Development  
**Absolute Priority and Subpart:** AP2(b)

**Project Description, including Project Activities**

Non-cognitive skills promote engagement in learning, relationships with teachers and peers, and long-term academic success. Nurturing these skills in students is a pathway to higher academic achievement, especially for low-performing schools. Evidence-based social-emotional learning (SEL) programs such as PATHS promote these skills in students but are often implemented poorly and without planning or integration with other school activities. The CASEL *SchoolKit* is a school-wide support intervention that includes multiple strategies to build capacity and support for SEL programs such as PATHS and to integrate and coordinate them into all aspects of the school's functioning.

**Summary of Project Objectives and Expected Outcomes**

This project seeks to improve student SEL skills, engagement, and academic performance by combining PATHS and the CASEL *SchoolKit*. A randomized clinical trial will test the effectiveness of the combination of the *SchoolKit* against PATHS implemented under standard conditions. In combining *SchoolKit* with PATHS, we expect high-quality PATHS implementation, more positive classroom and school climates, and improvements in student SEL and achievement. The project will be conducted in Chicago, one of the lowest-performing districts in the nation. All 28 participating schools will implement the PATHS curriculum for two years; fourteen schools will be randomized to receive the standard PATHS training and support model while 14 will be randomized to receive a combination of PATHS and the *SchoolKit* intervention. Students in grades K–3 will participate in the project but outcomes will be assessed for students in grades 1 & 2 after each year of PATHS exposure and at one-year follow-up.

**Target Number of Students to be Served in the Project:** 8,400

**Any Special Project Features:** None

**List of Official and Other Partners:**

- The Pennsylvania State University, Prevention Research Center, official partner
- CASEL, official partner
- American Institutes for Research, official partner
- Chicago Public Schools, other partner
- NoVo Foundation, other partner