

**Early-Phase Competition Absolute Priority 4 (SEL)  
Educational Testing Service  
S411C230179**

**Developing Middle Grade Students' Social Emotional Learning Skill through Technology  
Enhanced Collaborative Learning**

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**Applicant Name:** Educational Testing Service (ETS)

**Project Title:** Developing Middle Grade Students' Social Emotional Learning Skill through Technology  
Enhanced Collaborative Learning

**Type of Grant Requested:**  Early-Phase

**Absolute Priorities the Project Addresses:**

Absolute Priority 1-- Demonstrate a Rationale (Early), Moderate (Mid), Strong (Expansion)

Absolute Priority 4-- Meeting Student Social, Emotional, and Academic Needs

**Total number of students to be served by the project:** 800

**Grade level(s) to be served by the project:** 5th, 6th grades

**Definition of high-need students:** Poverty, teacher shortages, and graduation rates. In the target  
ISD, Northwest Education Services (North Ed), approximately half of 4th and 8th graders were eligible  
for the National School Lunch Program; 80% of superintendents reported that teacher recruitment and  
retention is very or extremely difficult for their districts; Many rural districts within North Ed are  
underfunded, often significantly, rural students do not go to college at the same rates as urban and  
suburban students, and the gap between rural and urban higher education participation is growing.

**Brief description of project activities:** We will identify key lessons from the SSIS CIP SEL set and  
implement those on the ETS Platform for Collaborative Assessment and Learning (EPCAL), conducting  
cognitive labs and pilot tests with students and teachers. We will develop preprogram teacher training  
materials, technical assistance, and a website to facilitate implementation. We will identify field study  
sites, administer pre and posttests to 800 5th and 6th graders (80 classrooms, 10 schools), and  
administer the intervention to half these (400 students), then evaluate implementation fidelity and  
program impact. We will sustain impact by recruiting additional sites, preparing a business plan, and  
preparing a mid-phase proposal.

**Summary of project objectives and expected outcomes:** Building on an existing, evidencebased  
(Tier 1 strong), social-emotional learning intervention, we will host the intervention on the EPCAL  
platform, develop professional development support, evaluate implementation and impact, and sustain  
impact through follow-up planning. We expect the intervention to increase positive social behavior,  
prosocial social skills, emotional management and understanding, student engagement and motivation,  
academic outcomes (English Language Art and mathematics achievement, grade promotion) and  
decrease disciplinary infractions.

**Summary of how the project is innovative:** We implement SSIS CIP SEL course materials on the  
ETS Platform for Collaborative Assessment and Learning (EPCAL). This (a) increases students' practice  
opportunities, (b) provides feedback related to disengagement, time off task, and incorrect answers, and  
(c) assists teachers with classroom management with features such as screen share, hand-raising, and  
student record keeping.

**Other studies related to the proposed project:** DiPerna et al (2018) "A cluster randomized trial of  
the Social Skills Improvement System Classwide Intervention Program (SSIS-CIP) in first grade;" DiPerna  
et al (2015) "Efficacy of the Social Skills Improvement System Classwide Intervention Program (SSIS-CIP)  
primary version;" Koedinger et al (2023) "An astonishing regularity in student learning rate;" Wisniewski  
et al. (2020) "The power of feedback revisited: A meta-analysis of educational feedback research;"  
Herman et al. (2022) "Can effective classroom behavior management increase student achievement in  
middle school? Findings from a group randomized trial."

**Proposed implementation sites:** Northwest Education Services (North Ed), Michigan