

## Research Brief: Val Verde Unified School District, CA

Case study school: Rainbow Ridge Elementary. How ultra-engaging, ready-to-use lessons—paired with a school-wide implementation strategy—inspired teacher engagement and consistent classroom use.



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# Research Brief: Unleashing The Real ROI of SEL

## Tangible Impacts at Val Verde USD

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This research brief examines the immediate impact of moozoom’s Social and Emotional Learning (SEL) curriculum on various educational outcomes, including teacher engagement and implementation fidelity with SEL, student behavior, SEL competencies, attendance, reading, and conflict resolution skills. This report highlights the improvements observed in the 2024-2025 mid-year report with moozoom compared to the outcomes from the 2023-2024 mid-year report generated with other SEL programs. Such remarkable changes in such a short period of time are rare for SEL programs and the impact of moozoom appears to be significant and far-reaching in this regard.

### Val Verde Unified School District (Case study school: Rainbow Ridge Elementary)

Val Verde Unified School District contains 23 schools and 19,379 students. The student body at the schools served by the district is 79.8% Hispanic/Latino, 11% Black, 3.7% White and 2.6% Asian students.

Rainbow Ridge Elementary School, a public school located in Moreno Valley, CA, serves approximately 710 students in grade(s) K-5. The student body is diverse, with Hispanic students making up 79% of the student population, Black students 10%, and White students 5%. Other ethnicities make up the remaining student population. A significant portion of these students, around 91%, come from low-income families. The school is led by Principal Charles Downey, with support from a dedicated team of educators and staff who are committed to providing a supportive learning environment. Rainbow Ridge Elementary seeks to create a safe and inclusive environment for all students while adhering to the Val Verde Unified School District’s policies on non-discrimination and equal opportunity.

# Rainbow Ridge Elementary: moozoom Implementation

The implementation of moozoom has been efficient and impactful at Rainbow Ridge Elementary, thanks in part to a user-friendly pedagogical design that requires minimal planning from teachers. Initially skeptical due to past experiences with other SEL programs, teachers have quickly embraced moozoom’s engaging, ready-to-use and well-structured approach. A typical weekly schedule includes whole-group video sessions and discussions on Mondays, student-led exploration on Tuesdays, deeper discussions and role-playing on Wednesdays, and quizzes and journaling on Thursdays and Fridays. Beyond the core curriculum, moozoom’s restorative practices like **Zoom-Out**, **Zoom-In**, and breathing exercises have been effectively integrated into

Tier 2 and Tier 3 interventions, providing targeted support. The **Zen Zone** serves as a reliable space for de-escalation, with students finding comfort in the familiar content. This multifaceted approach not only fosters social-emotional growth, but it also enhances classroom dynamics and individual student well-being.

## Overcoming Obstacles to Successful SEL Implementation

The implementation of SEL in schools is often subject to a number of obstacles. Addressing these obstacles requires strategic planning, professional development, stakeholder engagement, and ongoing support to create a supportive environment.

Obstacles to SEL Implementation	moozoom's Impact
<p><b>Lack of time, resources and expertise:</b> Schools often face tight schedules and limited resources or expertise, making it difficult to incorporate SEL programs into the curriculum.</p>	<p><b>Reduced time and training:</b> Easy to use and requires very little to no implementation time or training; ongoing support from moozoom customer success team.</p>
<p><b>Insufficient training:</b> Teachers and staff may not receive adequate training to effectively implement SEL, creating inconsistencies in both application and outcome.</p>	<p><b>School-wide implementation:</b> Provides ultra-engaging, ready-to-use SEL lessons and a school-wide strategy to improve teacher engagement and consistent use over time.</p>
<p><b>Inconsistent implementation:</b> Without a clear, school-wide strategy, SEL may be implemented inconsistently, reducing its effectiveness.</p>	<p><b>Reducing teacher resistance:</b> Teachers are not intimidated by moozoom; they immediately notice greater student engagement; the impact is visible and teachers show a greater willingness to use the program consistently.</p>
<p><b>Resistance to change:</b> There may be resistance from educators, parents, or administrators who are unfamiliar with SEL or skeptical about its benefits.</p>	<p><b>High ROI:</b> moozoom enhances the return on investment (ROI) regarding SEL programs by delivering high teacher implementation fidelity, and measurable outcomes through an efficient, scalable, and effective platform.</p>
<p><b>Limited funding:</b> Financial constraints can hinder the adoption of SEL programs, especially when resources are needed for materials, training, and additional staff.</p>	<p><b>Measurement tools:</b> moozoom facilitates the assessment of ongoing changes regarding student behavior, relationships, and SEL; our daily wellness check-in and user-friendly dashboard displays student insights and progress on a daily, weekly, monthly, and yearly basis.</p>

Obstacles to SEL Implementation	moozoom's Impact
<p><b>Cultural and contextual challenges:</b> SEL programs must be adapted to fit the cultural and social context of the school community; generic programs may not address the specific needs of diverse student populations.</p>	<p><b>Cultural and contextual factors:</b> moozoom's modernized content targets a diverse group of students; our videos and activities resonate with students from various backgrounds and is subject to regular DEI assessments.</p>
<p><b>Focus on academic performance:</b> With an emphasis on standardized testing and academic performance, SEL may not be considered a priority.</p>	
<p><b>Integration with existing curriculum:</b> It may be difficult to seamlessly integrate SEL into existing academic curricula without disrupting other essential learning objectives.</p>	<p><b>Integration with existing curriculum:</b> moozoom aligns with core standards, including ELA, and provides academic suggestions that complement our SEL lesson plans, like reading recommendations.</p>
<p><b>Sustainability:</b> Ensuring that SEL programs are sustainable over the long term, beyond the initial implementation, can be difficult, particularly when considering staff turnover and school leadership changes.</p>	<p><b>Sustainability:</b> Due to its large content library and ease of use, along with its noticeable classroom results, teachers tend to use moozoom on an ongoing basis; such engagement from teachers is essential to any successful SEL implementation.</p>

## The Real ROI of SEL with moozoom

moozoom enhances the return on investment (ROI) for social-emotional learning (SEL) programs by delivering measurable outcomes through an efficient, scalable, and effective platform. Here's how.

**Cost-Effective implementation:** moozoom's user-friendly pedagogical design requires minimal planning and preparation from teachers, thus reducing time spent on lesson plans while increasing focus on student engagement. This leads to a significantly higher utilization rate, which fully leverages school investments in SEL programs.

**Measurable outcomes:** Schools that implement moozoom often report significant reductions in behavioral issues, like fewer low-level referrals, office referrals, and suspensions. These improvements demonstrate tangible progress, which helps justify continued funding and support for SEL initiatives. moozoom's user-friendly dashboard provides administrators and educators with a clear picture of student progress and risk insights on an ongoing basis, thus simplifying data-based decision-making.

**Scalability and versatility:** moozoom is designed to address the needs of all students, from whole-group instruction to targeted Tier 2 and Tier 3 interventions. By reusing user-friendly restorative practices tools like **Zoom-Out** and **Zoom-In**, along with breathing exercises, consistent support can be provided across different need levels without any additional investments in separate programs.

**Increased student engagement:** By incorporating interactive videos, real-world scenarios, and self-paced activities, moozoom resonates with students, fostering greater participation and internalization of SEL concepts. This leads to better classroom behavior, improved peer relationships, and enhanced academic focus, all of which contribute to long-term academic and social success.



**Teacher adoption and efficiency:** Teachers, even those who are initially skeptical, embrace moozoom due to its ease of use and effectiveness. The program’s well-structured weekly schedule supports consistent implementation, maximizing the impact of SEL with minimal disruption to existing routines. The videos not only model positive behaviors for students, but they also model good SEL teaching practices for educators.

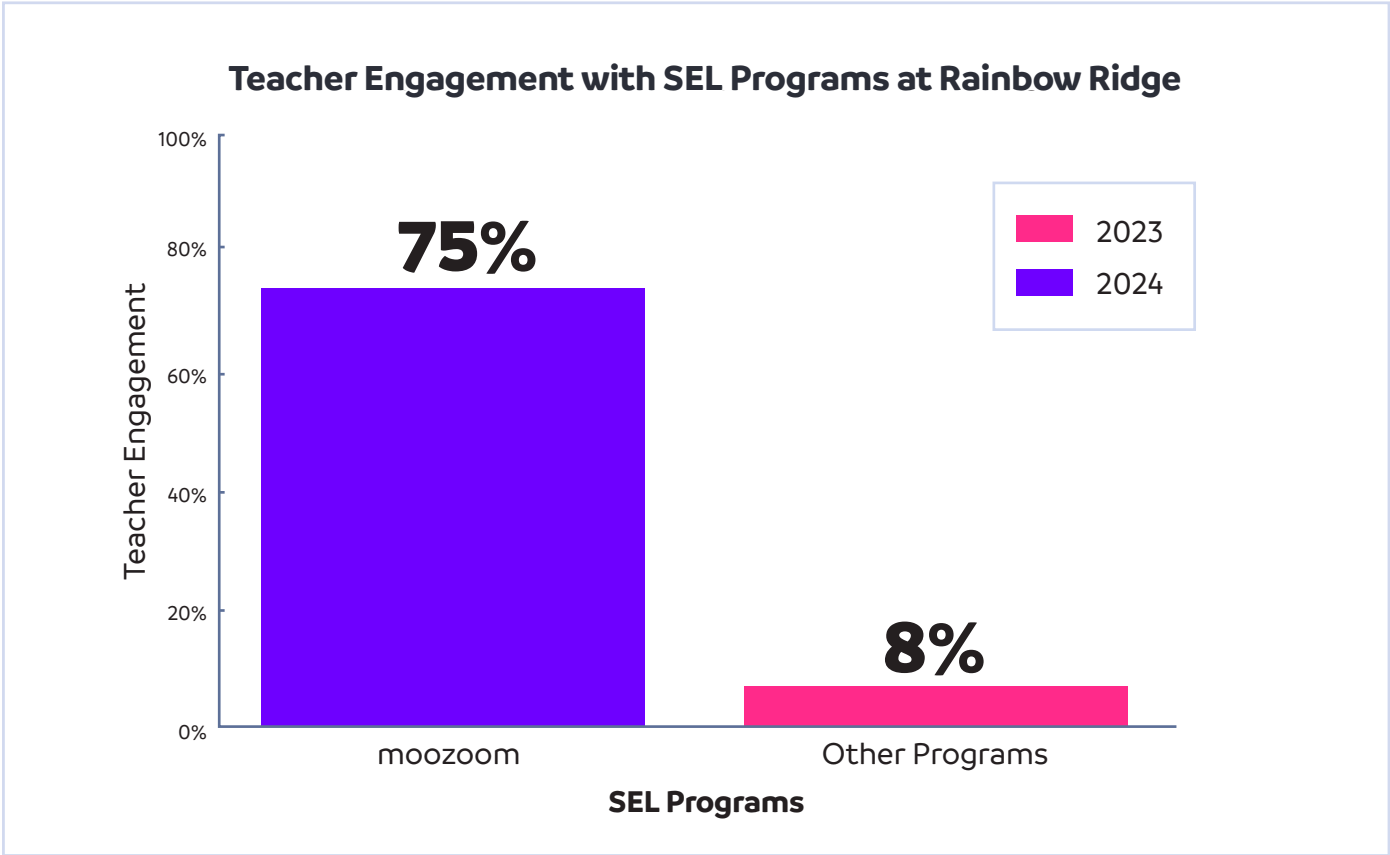
**Reduced disciplinary costs:** With de-escalation and stress management tools like the **Zen Zone**, moozoom helps prevent conflicts and suspensions, reducing the costs associated with managing behavioral issues and lost instructional time.

moozoom ensures that schools and districts achieve meaningful, long-lasting benefits from their SEL investments by combining efficiency, scalability, and evidence-based results.

# Reaping the Rewards of Meaningful Impact: Key Findings

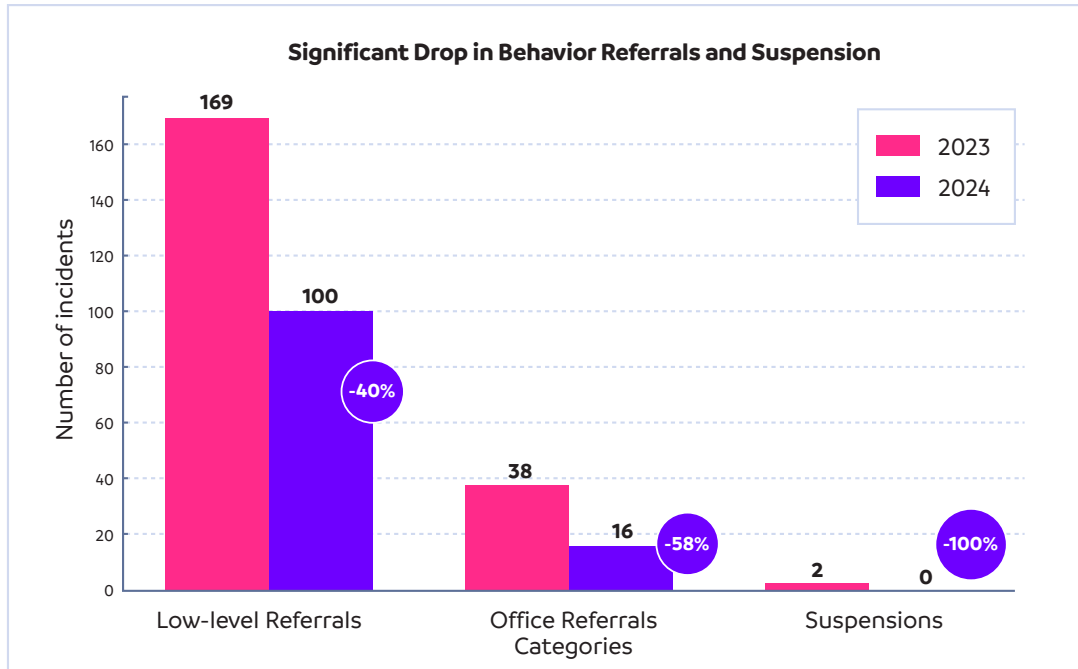
## Increased Teacher Engagement with SEL

moozoom’s intuitive and accessible platform significantly increases teacher engagement with SEL practices. As a result, Rainbow Ridge Elementary **increased its teacher engagement rate to 75%** this year, up from 8% with the previous SEL program the year before. This teacher engagement rate is higher than any other SEL engagement rate seen by Val Verde USD over the past 10 years. This remarkable increase in comfort and consistency regarding SEL can be attributed to moozoom’s well-structured yet flexible content.



## Improved Student Behavior

Since implementing moozoom, Rainbow Ridge Elementary has observed a **40% reduction in low-level behavioral referrals** and a **58% reduction in office referrals** when comparing this year's results with moozoom and last year results with other SEL programs. In addition, there have been **zero suspensions**, down from two in the fall of 2023. The platform's real-world scenarios and interactive modules help students internalize appropriate behavioral responses, creating a more positive classroom environment.



## Reduced Student Conflicts and Improved Attendance

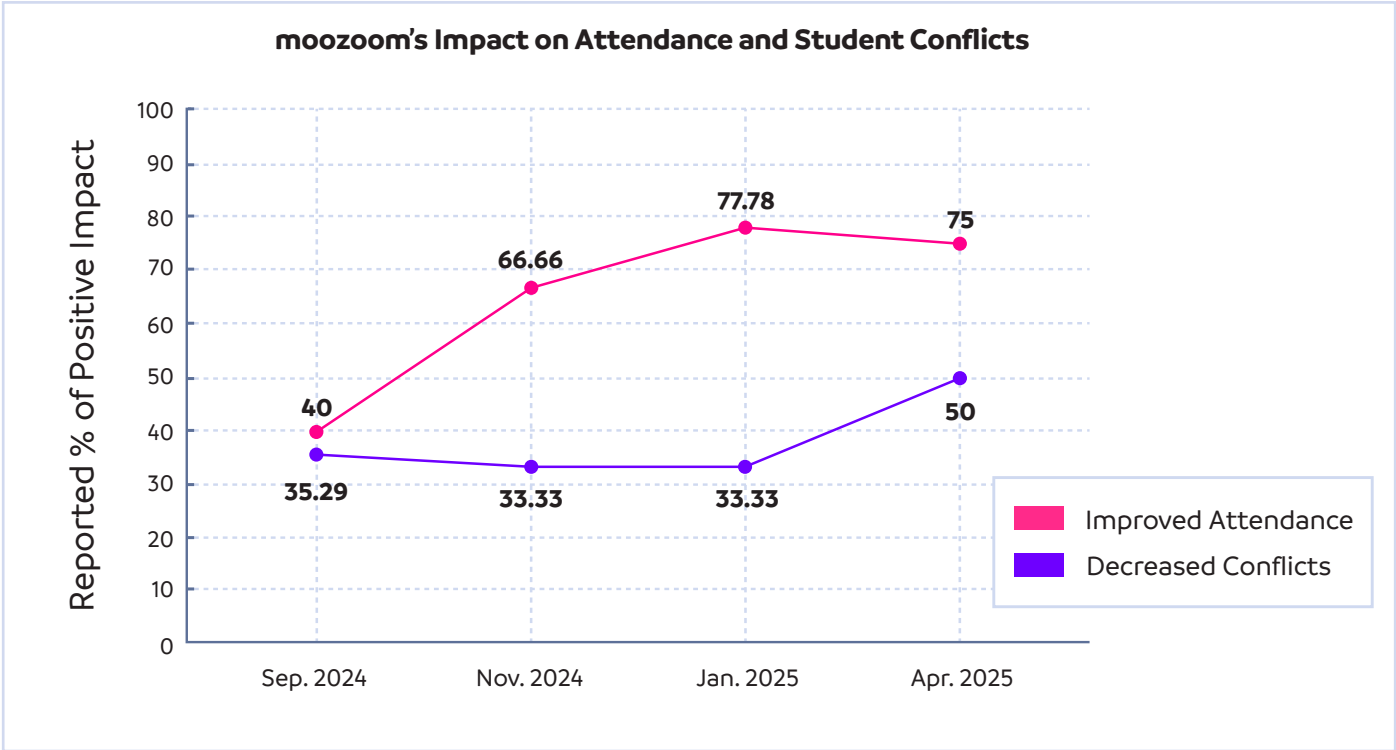
In the early stages of implementation, 35.29% of teachers reported a noticeable decrease in student conflicts by the end of September, suggesting an early positive impact on peer interactions. This trend held steady throughout the fall and winter months, indicating consistent outcomes as the program became integrated into daily routines. By April, however, **the percentage of teachers reporting fewer conflicts rose sharply to 50%**, reflecting a significant mid-year shift. This surge suggests not only increased effectiveness over time but also growing teacher confidence in recognizing and addressing social-emotional improvements within their classrooms.

Teachers' perceived impact of moozoom on student attendance grew significantly over the course of the school year. In September, 40% of teachers believed that the program positively influenced attendance. By November, this number had climbed to 66.66%, reflecting increased confidence as teachers

observed early shifts in student engagement. The upward trend continued into January, with **77.78% of teachers reporting improvement on student conflicts and attendance**—suggesting that sustained SEL integration was contributing to improved school connection and daily participation. By April, the percentage remained high at 75%, indicating that moozoom's influence on attendance was not only substantial but also sustained over time. These findings highlight the program's growing effectiveness in fostering a supportive school climate that encourages students to show up and stay engaged.

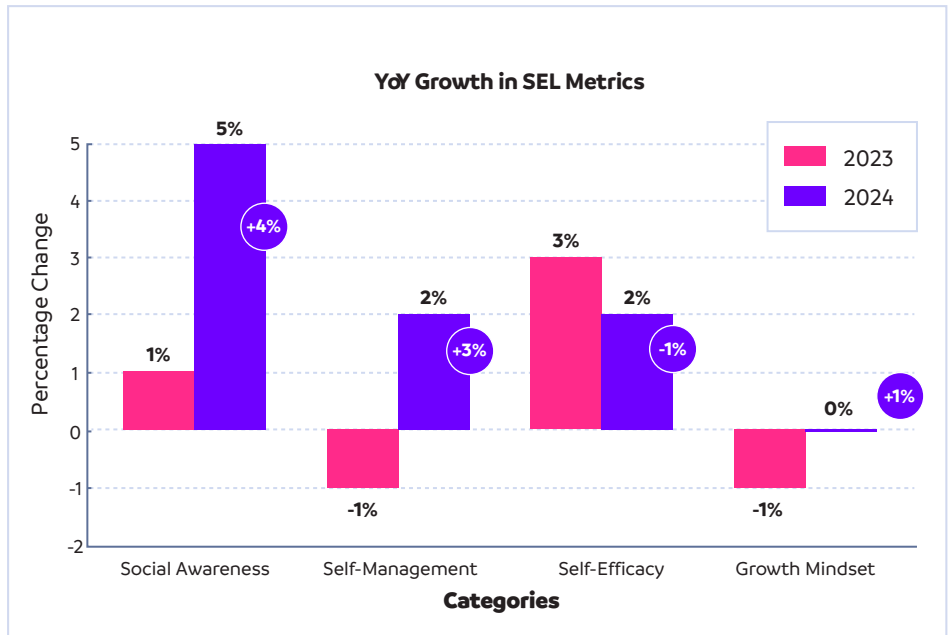
Rainbow Ridge Elementary reports a chronic absenteeism rate of 20% for the current school year—**an almost 3% decrease** from last year's rate of 20.53%. This level of change, especially in one year, improves the schools' accountability ratings, boosts funding eligibility, and reflects stronger student engagement and support systems.

Notably, the school has not implemented any significant staff changes or new attendance interventions this year aside from the adoption of moozoom’s SEL platform. School leaders attribute the drop in chronic absenteeism to the program’s positive impact on student engagement and emotional well-being. They are optimistic that this trend will continue into the next academic year, especially as students’ sense of belonging—which had declined by 6% last year—has rebounded with a 1% increase this year. With momentum building and stronger school connectedness taking root, Rainbow Ridge projects even greater improvements in chronic absenteeism and overall school climate moving forward.



## Enhanced SEL Competencies

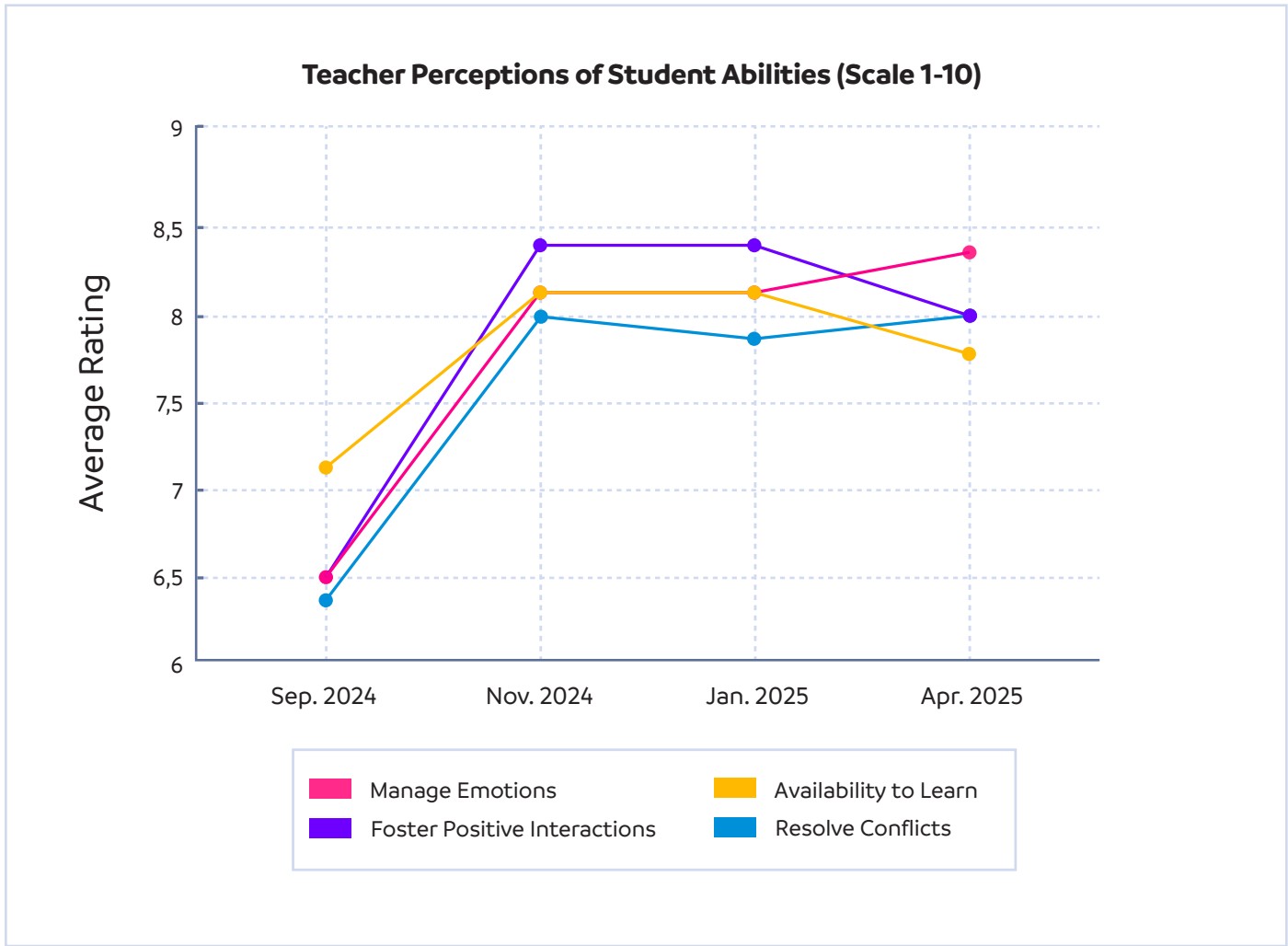
Using district-based SEL data, students using moozoom showed marked improvements in SEL competencies in the 2024-25 school year compared to last year, including greater **social awareness (4% increase)**, **self-management (3% increase)**, and **growth mindset (1% increase)**. A slight decrease was noted in self-efficacy (1% decrease).



# Improved Ease of Teaching and Student SEL Competencies

The results demonstrate significant improvements across all student abilities. Students showed notable growth in their **ability to manage emotions, with an increase of 25.4%** from September to November, maintaining in January and peaking at an additional 2.47%. Students' ability to foster positive interactions surged 30.5% from September to November and maintained in January with a small decrease of 4.76% in April but still significantly higher than September. **Students' availability to learn improved by 13.9%** from September to November, maintained in January, and decreased slightly in

April but still much improved from September. The most impressive change involves **students' ability to resolve conflicts, which rose by 26%** from September to November and maintained at around that same rating in January and April. These results highlight meaningful progress in students' social-emotional skills over a short period and maintaining or improving more throughout the school year. This data showcases the effectiveness of the targeted interventions and strategies, and demonstrates how outcomes are likely to maintain over time.



## Improved Reading Scores

Mid-year reading assessment data at Rainbow Ridge Elementary shows a global **increase of 11.25% in reading performance** across grade levels, marking a major milestone for the school. For the first time, Rainbow Ridge is able to report reading growth at the full grade level rather than by isolated demographic groups—a stark contrast to previous years where overall grade-level performance either declined or showed gains only within specific populations. From the beginning to the middle of the year, Transitional Kindergarten (TK) improved from 24% to 46% (+22%), 1st grade rose from 27% to 38% (+11%), 4th grade

remained steady at 44% (0% change), and 5th grade jumped from 48% to 60% (+12%). These outcomes are particularly promising given that 83% of students who meet reading benchmarks in TK–2 go on to achieve reading proficiency by 3rd grade (Ignite, 2024). This progress is significant when compared to 4th-grade national reading scores, which declined by 2% from 2023 to 2024—falling to an average of 31% nationwide (29% in California), according to NAEP (2025). Rainbow Ridge’s results further suggest that **sustained, schoolwide support, including SEL integration through programs like Moozoom**, may be a critical factor in accelerating early literacy and driving long-term academic success.

At or Above Grade Level (School year 2024-25)		
Grade	Beginning	Middle
TK	24%	46%
1	27%	38%
2	no data	no data
3	no data	no data
4	44%	44%
5	48%	60%

## Conclusions

The findings from this research brief underscore the transformative impact of moozoom regarding the implementation of SEL at Rainbow Ridge Elementary and across the Val Verde Unified School District. It is important to note that the changes discussed in this research can be attributed to moozoom, since no other factors—such as educational staff or school administration changes, or any changes to data collection and interpretation methods—were implemented during the comparison periods. This consistency supports the conclusion that the impact observed is directly tied to the implementation of moozoom.

Through its user-friendly pedagogical design, engaging content, and measurable outcomes, moozoom addresses common challenges in SEL adoption while delivering significant improvements in student behavior, teacher engagement, and SEL competencies. By fostering a culture of empathy, accountability, and resilience, moozoom not only enhances individual student outcomes, but it also strengthens the overall school community. As schools continue to prioritize SEL as an essential component of education, moozoom’s scalable and effective approach has positioned the software as a leading solution when seeking both short and long-term success, as well as fostering student well-being and academic achievement.

**Keywords:** social-emotional learning (SEL), teacher engagement, student engagement, behavior referrals, suspensions, social awareness, self-management, self-efficacy, growth mindset, conflict resolution, return on investment (ROI), Tier 2, Tier 3, de-escalation strategies, self-regulation, attendance, chronic absenteeism, literacy, reading.



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