

## ***Internship in Social-Emotional Learning***

Every summer Rockbrook Camp makes available 4 paid internships designed for students actively pursuing careers in Elementary Education. Focused on social-emotional learning (SEL), this program provides student interns training and direct experience applying a whole-child approach to supporting learners' emotional needs in a group setting.

Set in the residential community of Rockbrook Camp for Girls, in Brevard, NC, interns live with a small group of children serving as their teacher and leader, interacting with them continuously, and helping them navigate the social and emotional landscape of a small community. Specifically, interns learn how to empower children to respond to emotional triggers, engage with diversity, manage conflict, and make responsible decisions.

The internship begins with a week-long, practitioner-focused training that introduces interns to a range of strategies for meeting the social and emotional needs of children. Interns devote their second, third, and fourth program weeks to helping improve children's self-awareness, self-management, social-awareness, and relationship skills. Interns focus on an on-site case study in their fifth week, and spend their final program week preparing a formal presentation to peers and program leaders.

Throughout the internship, interns meet weekly with on-site education directors and mentors to review their week's work, discuss issues, and share ideas that will grow their developing identities as teachers.

### **Roles and Responsibilities**

#### ***Week One: Overview and Training Assumptions and Expectations***

The internship begins with a week of training before being placed with children. This training introduces student interns to the core principles and concepts of socio-emotional learning in the context of a residential camp community. It asks interns to reflect upon their personal points of entry into the professional field of education, and includes self-examination of personal assumptions, expectations, and beliefs about a social-emotional approach to working with children.

This week of training progresses by:

1. Utilizing a series of readings, role-plays, lectures, and discussions, to expand understanding of emotional literacy from a theoretical and empirical perspective.

2. Introducing a range of strategies and considerations for meeting the social and emotional needs of children. Training topics include: *How to Help Children Modulate Their Emotional Experiences*, *Effective Communication With Children*, and *Teaching Friendship: Leading Children to Form Cooperative and Respectful Relationships*.

3. Expanding aptitudes in group and team dynamics. Interns learn how to support collaboration between children given a group's diverse life experiences, personalities, preferences, and conflict-engagement styles.

***Week Two: Self-Awareness, Self-Management: Responding to Emotional Triggers  
Observation - Part I: Internal Emotional Agency***

Interns begin their first week of observation by immersing themselves into children's daily routines, activity schedule, meal times, and cabin life. Interns record social processes in a daily journal as they unfold throughout the day. Records will pay special attention to children's anxieties, as well as children's emotional triggers and responses to these triggers.

This week ends with a meeting between the interns and their on-site advisor to discuss initial responses to the role of emotions in teaching and learning. Interns use their observations and interactions as a contextual framework to answer the following questions:

1. Are students with a fine-tuned emotional concept more likely to find success in other areas of their life? Are they more adaptive to nuanced and unclear situations? How could this translate into these students' academic capacities?
2. Is emotional regulation a natural ability or is it developed? What are our professional obligations to children in this regard?
3. Did any patterns emerge this week? Do trends exist to indicate where children's anxieties typically originate? How can teachers best help children manage their anxieties?
4. What were your *own* emotional responses to the children's interactions? Can you identify your own personal triggers or biases? How can you further develop your *own* capacity to take responsibility for *your* thoughts and emotions while working with an anxious child? How will this practice further grow your ability to understand, engage, and support your future students?

***Week Three: Social Awareness, Relationship Skills: Responding to Diversity and Engaging with Conflict  
Observation - Part II, External Emotional Agency***

Interns spend their second week of observation by continuing to immerse themselves into children's' daily routines and recording social processes in a daily journal. This week's records should pay special attention to social interactions between children and the functioning capacity of the group.

This week ends with a meeting between the interns and their on-site advisors to reflect upon the methods, dialogues, and resources utilized to create a mutually caring environment among children. Interns should use their experiences as a foundation to answer the following questions:

1. Which strategies best support the creation of safe, caring classrooms? Name the best practices for educators seeking to prevent bullying and discrimination. How can you best support students' moral and emotional capacities as they respond to diversity?
2. How should teachers create the conditions for effective team development and learning? How can teachers best empower young people to act as agents in building a caring space? How will a classroom absent of combative or exclusive behaviors affect students' academic trajectories?

#### ***Week Four: Responsible Decision Making Shadowing and Interviewing***

As interns continue to employ social-emotional learning strategies founded in the first three weeks of program work, they now expand the scope of their investigations beyond their immediate group of children and into the community at large. Interns use this week to shadow and interview several educational leaders on site. Interns should inquire about the range of professional techniques used to motivate children to make responsible decisions.

Interns write a written reflection on their experiences that include:

1. An outline of how educators in the community teach children to make constructive and respectful choices based on the consideration of ethical standards, safety concerns, and the realistic evaluations of consequences that stem from actions.
2. A discussion of the merits, successes, and potential blindspots of at least two of the strategies employed.

#### ***Week Five: Case Study Research and Classroom Application***

Interns spend their fifth program week exploring a specific child's emotional and self-regulatory experience within the community. Interns should consider the child's baseline emotional needs upon entry into the community and any resulting progressions from previously employed and

current social-emotional supports. After critical synthesis, should consider possible supports that will benefit the child in the future.

Interns couple their case-study consideration with exploratory research focused on current educational trends. Through a series of readings (see further reading), interns should expand their understanding of how non-cognitive skills are already being cultivated in schools. Interns utilize this week to consider how these practices may transpire in their own classrooms.

### ***Week Six: Evaluation***

#### ***Presentation of Culminating Portfolio***

Interns devote their final program week to a two-part reflective practice: an open presentation to peers and educational leaders and a final formal evaluation.

#### Presentation:

Presentations will include:

1. The resolution of any dissonance between an intern's initial assumptions and expectations about a social-emotional approach to teaching and their current belief system.
2. The role emotional literacy plays within the classroom. Are emotionally-centered teaching practices integral to students' learning potential? Does an ability to consider the whole child, a student's cognitive, social, and emotional development, expand a teacher's ability to connect with students? Does this connection equate to students accessing academic information at a higher capacity?
3. A citation of research and a summary of experience. What does current research and your experience indicate will help children fine tune their emotional self-concept?
4. An outline of practical professional behaviors that will enhance a teacher's ability to meet the social and emotional needs of her students.

#### Evaluation:

A formal evaluation to assess an intern's overall growth and effectiveness. Intern advisors consider interns' strengths, preferences, blindspots, limitations, and progressions in the following professional areas:

1. Mastery of SEL concepts. A clear understanding of how to support children's social and emotional development.
2. Professional motivation, engagement, and self-efficacy. An ability to make decisions, build new knowledge, and engage in quality interactions with children.

3. A capacity to resolve challenges and learn quickly from mistakes.
4. The knowledge, attitudes, skills, and vision needed to collaborate effectively with peers and supervisors.

### **Internship Parameters**

- This internship will take place at Rockbrook Camp for Girls, a residential summer camp located in Brevard, North Carolina.
- Interns will live on-site, immersed in the lives of children, 24 hours per day, six days per week for a total of six weeks.
- Interns will have daily opportunities to teach a skill activity.
- This internship is paid. Interns will receive payment at the end of the internship term.
- Rockbrook will provide interns both food and lodging.
- Training will be provided on-site.
- A contract, agreed upon by the intern, the intern's academic advisor, and Rockbrook's hiring and executive directors, will be signed before the commencement of the internship.

### **Eligibility**

- Minimum 18 years of age.
- At least one year of participation within an education major or educational leadership program.
- Previous classroom practicum experience preferred but not required with prior approval from an academic advisor.

### **Application Process**

Internship candidates must complete an online Internship Application located at [www.rockbrookcamp.com](http://www.rockbrookcamp.com). The application includes a series of essay questions and four professional references. A recommendation from the candidate's academic advisor is required.

Internship candidates will participate in two rounds of interviews; the first with Rockbrook's Hiring Director and the final with Rockbrook's Internship Advisor.

For more information, please contact:

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## **Advisors:**

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## **Further Reading**

### *Books:*

The Other Side of the Report Card: Assessing Students' Social, Emotional, and Character Development (2016)

Grounded in research and in the authors' work with teachers and administrators, this book offers guidance on retooling report cards to better reflect the whole child, integrating SEL and character development into any schoolwide or districtwide grading system.

Resources include guided exercises for analyzing existing report cards, samples and suggested report card designs, tips on improving communication with parents, case studies highlighting common challenges, and testimonials from teachers and students.

Elias, M. J., Ferrito, J. J., & Mocerri, D. C. (2016). *The Other Side of the Report Card: Assessing Students' Social, Emotional, and Character Development*. Newbury Park, CA: Corwin Press.

Handbook of Social and Emotional Learning: Research and Practice (2015)

This comprehensive and definitive handbook covers all aspects of research, practice, and policy related to social and emotional learning. The editors and contributors describe

state-of-the-art intervention and prevention programs designed to build students' skills for managing emotions, showing concern for others, making responsible decisions, and forming positive relationships. The Handbook explores the conceptual and scientific underpinnings of SEL and its relationship to children's and adolescents' academic success, mental health, and overall well-being, including the roles of school- and district-level leadership, teacher training, and school-family partnerships.

Durlak, J. A., Domitrovich, C. E., Weissberg, R. P., & Gullotta, T. P. (Eds.). (2015). *Handbook of Social and Emotional Learning: Research and Practice*. New York: Guilford Press.

### *Articles:*

#### Academic Learning + Social-Emotional Learning = National Priority (2013)

This article appeared in the October 2013 issue of Phi Delta Kappan. The theme of the issue was social and emotional learning.

Weissberg, R. P. & Cascarino, J. (2013). Academic learning + social-emotional learning = national priority. *Phi Delta Kappan*, 95(2): 8-13.

#### Educators' Social and Emotional Skills Vital to Learning (2013)

This article focuses on social and emotional learning as it relates to teachers. It describes promising interventions for promoting teacher competencies and strategies educators can use to help their students master social and emotional skills, attitudes, and behaviors.

Jones, S. M., Bouffard, S. M., & Weissboard, R. (2013). Educators' social and emotional skills vital to learning. *Phi Delta Kappan*, 94(8), 62-65.

### *Research:*

#### The Economic Value of Social and Emotional Learning (2015)

This report reviews the available evidence on the economic value of social and emotional learning (SEL). The most important empirical finding is that each of the six interventions under consideration for improving SEL shows measurable benefits that exceed its costs, often by considerable amounts. The aggregate result also shows an average benefit-cost ratio of about 11 to 1 among the six interventions.

Belfield, C., Bowden, B., Klapp, A., Levin, H., Shand, R., & Zander, S. (2015). *The Economic Value of Social and Emotional Learning*. New York: Center for Benefit-Cost Studies in Education.

#### Social Emotional Learning in High School: How Three Urban High Schools Engage, Educate, and Empower Youth (2014)

This brief summarizes three case studies, a cross-case report, a research brief, and a technical report about the experience of high schools in Boston, New York City, and San Antonio. Among the key findings: (1) schools focused on social and emotional learning

(SEL) provide students with key psychological resources they need to thrive in school; (2) leveraging a whole-school approach to SEL supports students' social, emotional, and academic needs.

Hamedani, M. G. & Darling-Hammond, L. (2014). *Social Emotional Learning in High School: How Three Urban High Schools Engage, Educate, and Empower Youth*. Palo Alto: Stanford Center for Opportunity Policy in Education (SCOPE).

*Issue Brief:*

Teaching the Whole Child: Instructional Practices that Support Social and Emotional Learning in Three Teacher Evaluation Frameworks (2014)

This Research-to-Practice Brief identifies 10 teaching practices that promote social and emotional learning (SEL), which in turn strengthen students' academic learning. The brief highlights how three popular professional teaching frameworks (CLASS, Danielson, and Marzano) embed practices that influence not only student academic learning but also student social and emotional competencies. Yoder, N. (2014). *Teaching the Whole Child: Instructional Practices that Support Social and Emotional Learning in Three Teacher Evaluation Frameworks*. Washington, DC: American Institutes for Research Center on Great Teachers & Leaders.