The REACH Framework:
A Tool for Strengthening Academic Motivation

Poll #1

At what point does research show that students’ interest, enthusiasm, and intrinsic motivation to learn decline the most?

1. Between 3rd and 4th grade
2. Between elementary school and middle school
3. Between middle school and high school
4. Between 10th and 11th grade
5. Between high school and postsecondary education or the workforce
A Continual Decline

“Research reveals that children’s interest, enthusiasm, and intrinsic motivation for learning in school deteriorate continuously from their entry into kindergarten until they complete high school (or drop out), with striking losses during the transitions to middle school and high school. The erosion of motivation is especially severe for boys and for students from low socioeconomic, minority, and immigrant backgrounds.”


A Low Priority

“No major reform has prioritized students’ psychological experience in school or motivation to succeed, despite the fact that it is ultimately students themselves who must capitalize on learning opportunities.”

Research Changes the Discussion

“Recent randomized experiments have found that seemingly ‘small’ social-psychological interventions in education—that is, brief exercises that target students’ thoughts, feelings, and beliefs in and about school—can lead to large gains in student achievement and sharply reduce achievement gaps even months and years later.”


The REACH Process
The REACH Process

RELATIONSHIPS
EFFORT
ASPIRATIONS
COGNITION
HEART

Relationships
Effort

Aspirations
Poll #2

Which category of the REACH Framework would you be most eager to work on with your students?

1. Relationships
2. Effort
3. Aspirations
4. Cognition
5. Heart

Going Beyond Description

Photo Credit: Robert Cohen, Saint Louis Post-Dispatch
The REACH Resources

1. The REACH Survey
2. The REACH Strategies Guidebook
   - Summary of Research
   - Reflection Questions
   - Anchor Activities
   - REACH Techniques
3. REACH Workshops
4. The REACH Process
   - 13 schools in 2016-2017

The REACH Survey

[Diagram showing survey results]

REACH Survey Pilot test with 602 students in one Midwestern high school
The REACH Survey

Table 20

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Connecting Sparks to Learning</th>
<th>Not at all</th>
<th>A little</th>
<th>Somewhat</th>
<th>Mostly</th>
<th>Very much</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>How well do each of the following describe your teachers?</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>*My teachers try to find out what I am interested in</td>
<td>15%</td>
<td>28%</td>
<td>32%</td>
<td>21%</td>
<td>4%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>My teachers try to connect what we're learning in class to my interests and talents</td>
<td>24%</td>
<td>26%</td>
<td>29%</td>
<td>18%</td>
<td>3%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>My teachers help me see how my class work relates to my spark(s)</td>
<td>26%</td>
<td>27%</td>
<td>27%</td>
<td>17%</td>
<td>3%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

REACH Survey Pilot test with 602 students in one Midwestern high school

Other Factors That Influence Motivation

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The REACH Strategies

- **Anchor Activity**: A lesson, project, or experience through which students develop an attitude or practice a behavior that has been shown to strengthen academic motivation.

- **REACH Technique**: An approach that educators integrate into their work with students that reinforces the attitudes and behaviors that students encounter while participating in an Anchor Activity.
Anchor Activities and REACH Techniques: Aspirations

- The Importance of Education Anchor Activity
  - REACH Technique: Highlight the long-term benefits of success in school

- Envisioning Possible Self Anchor Activity
  - REACH Technique: Ask about—and remember—students’ aspirations

- Roadmap to the Future Anchor Activity
  - REACH Technique: Help students think forward, act now

- Articulating a Purpose for Learning Anchor Activity
  - REACH Technique: Help students find their own reasons for working hard in school

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REACH Workshop Series -
October 4-6, 2016

• **Time:** 9:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m.
• **Location:** University of Minnesota Continuing Education and Conference Center, St. Paul, MN
• **The workshops are:**
  - **Day 1:** REACH: Introduction to Academic Motivation Workshop and Building Developmental Relationships Workshop
  - **Day 2:** Increasing Effort Workshop and Raising Aspirations Workshop
  - **Day 3:** Strengthening Cognition Workshop and Leveraging Heart Workshop

Go to www.search-institute.org to register

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   - 13 schools in 2016-2017
The REACH Process 2016-17

Region 5: 6 schools
Twin Cities: 5 schools
Austin: 2 schools

A Final Point: What doesn’t work
Reframing

Reframing and Mindsets

- Growth Mindset
  - Increased Effort
  - Better Outcome

- Fixed Mindset
  - Reduced Effort
  - Worse Outcome

Source: Project for Education Reform that Scales
Stanford University
An Example

7th graders wrote essays on their personal heroes

Source: “Breaking the Cycle of Mistrust: Wise Interventions to Provide Critical Feedback Across the Racial Divide,” David Scott Yeager, PhD, University of Texas at Austin; Geoffrey L. Cohen, PhD, Stanford University; Valerie Purdie-Vaughns, PhD, and Patti Brzustoski, Columbia University; Julio Garcia, PhD, University of Colorado at Boulder; Nancy Apfel, Yale University; Allison Master, PhD, University of Washington; William T. Hessert, MA, University of Chicago; and Matthew E. Williams, MEd, Journal of Experimental Psychology: General, online Aug. 12, 2013.
Randomly Assigned Messages on Post-It Notes

Neutral Expectations Message

“I’m giving you these comments so that you’ll have feedback on your paper.”

High Expectations Message

“I’m giving you these comments because I have very high expectations and I know you can reach them.”

Results

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Neutral Expectations Message</th>
<th>High Expectations Message</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>White Students</td>
<td>62%</td>
<td>87%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>African-American Students</td>
<td>17%</td>
<td>71%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Poll #3

How important do you think strengthening the academic motivation of all students should be for your school or organization?
1. Our single highest priority
2. One of our highest priorities
3. Should receive attention but not our highest priority
4. Addressed but in a limited and targeted way
5. Not a goal for us at this time

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For more information on any of these resources, contact Mary Shrader at marys@search-institute.org or call 877-240-725.
The REACH Process

RELATIONSHIPS
EFFORT
ASPIRATIONS
COGNITION
HEART