The ROAD MAP PROJECT
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SKILLS & DISPOSITIONS

THAT SUPPORT YOUTH SUCCESS IN SCHOOL

PART 2: Strategies for Building Motivation, Engagement and 21st Century Skills

Youth Development Executives of King County &

The Road Map Project

May 2014

YOUTH DEVELOPMENT EXECUTIVES
OF KING COUNTY

BACKGROUND AND ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

Youth Development Executives of King County (YDEKC)
The mission of YDEKC is *to build and organize the youth development field in King County*. Our vision is that every young person has the opportunity to learn, lead, work, thrive, contribute and connect with active support from organized, networked and unified youth development efforts in King County. We are Executive Directors, CEOs and other key leaders of non-profit organizations directly serving youth ages 5 through young adulthood within King County. We are focused on developing shared outcomes and measurement tools; adopting high-quality common standards of practice; and speaking with a common voice.

The Road Map Project (staffed by Community Center for Education Results)
The Road Map Project is a collective impact effort aimed at getting dramatic improvement in student achievement in South Seattle and South King County. The Road Map Project goal is to double the number of students in the region who are on track to graduate from college or earn a career credential by 2020. The Road Map Project is committed to nothing less than closing the unacceptable achievement gaps for low-income students and children of color and increasing achievement for all students from cradle to college and career.

Youth Development for Education Results (YDEKC & the Road Map Project)
In 2011 and 2012, the Youth Development for Education Results workgroup of the Road Map Project, staffed by Youth Development Executives of King County (YDEKC), worked to increase the clarity of the Road Map indicators, goals and strategies wherein community-based youth development organizations play a vital and integral role. The workgroup developed a definition of Motivation, Engagement and 21st Century Skills and recommendations around measurement. From 2012 – 2014, YDEKC, Road Map districts and partners have continued to elevate the importance of these skills, piloting and refining measurement tools and exploring strategies to support building these critical success skills.

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INTRODUCTION

Part One of this series explores recent research showing the importance of **student motivation, engagement and 21st century skills** to student success in school and in the workforce. Youth development organizations play a vital and integral role in developing these skills in young people. The Road Map Project recognizes the essential role that **Community Based Organizations (CBOs)** play in supporting the goal of doubling the number of students successful in postsecondary education and eliminating the achievement gap by the year 2020.

The purpose of this report is to illuminate culturally responsive strategies that support the development of student motivation, engagement and 21st century skills, and improve student performance on the "alternative ABCs" (attendance, behavior and course completion),[1] that form the basis of school district early warning systems.

It is our belief that vibrant partnerships between schools, community organizations, students and families can build institutional capacity and ultimately help young people navigate the challenges of achieving a healthy, happy and productive life.

In the fall of 2012, the Youth Development for Education Results work group of the Road Map Project (staffed by Youth Development Executives of King County) partnered with the Renton School District to pilot a Student Engagement and Motivation Survey (SEMS). The survey asked students to rate themselves on various dimensions of motivation and engagement including academic behaviors, future orientation, sense of belonging and mindsets such as self-efficacy.

The graph below shows the students in grades 5 – 12 who agreed with survey statements related to these four dimensions of motivation and engagement.

Students Who are Engaged and Motivated
2013 Renton School District Pilot Survey

SOURCE: Renton School District and The Center for Educational Effectiveness
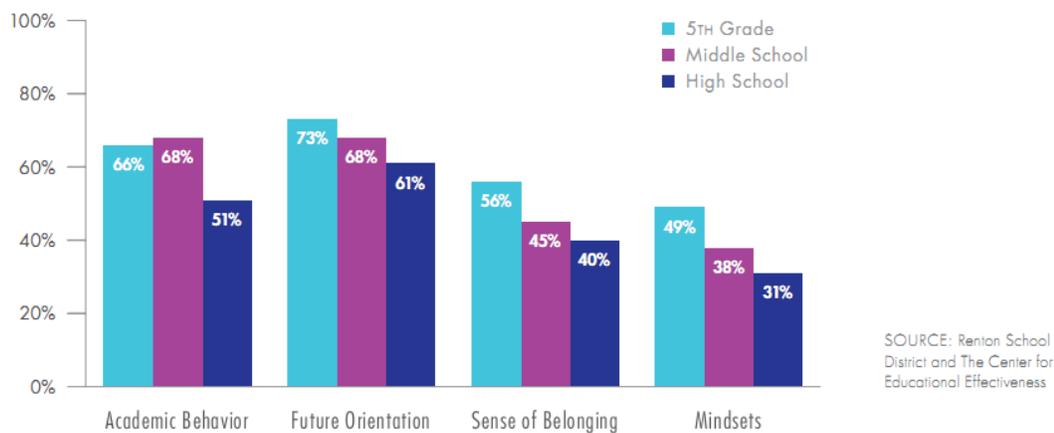
The data clearly shows a decrease in student motivation and engagement after the 5th grade. The environments in which students spend their time and the systems inherent within these environments have a great deal of influence over the skills and dispositions young people develop and demonstrate. We believe that employing strategies outlined in this paper can help to build skills and dispositions in students that can significantly change student outcomes.

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[1] Balfanz, Spiridakis, Neild & Legters (2003)

Version 2.0 of the SEMS is being administered in multiple school districts in 2013-2014. We hope this report will be helpful to school districts and their Community Based Organization (CBO) partners as they implement strategies to ensure our students are motivated and engaged.

THE OPPORTUNITY GAP

Students from low-income backgrounds, many students of color, and English Language Learners often have limited access to the opportunities afforded to many white students and those from affluent communities. Stanford Education Professor Linda Darling-Hammond has identified these opportunities to include: secure housing, food and healthcare; supportive early learning environments; equitably funded schools and access to high-quality teaching; well-prepared and supported teachers and leaders; standards, curriculum and assessments focused on 21st century skills; and schools organized for in-depth student and teacher learning.[2] Access to information, services and programs for youth and families also differ greatly from one community to another. Opportunity gaps follow race, ethnicity, language, class, ability and gender lines. In addition, critical factors such as homelessness, immigration status, mobility, LGBTQ status, history of traumatic experience, drug or alcohol addiction and/or status as a foster child, can further impact access to opportunities for youth.

We believe all youth should be afforded the same opportunities to succeed in life, and that it is our shared responsibility as a community to ensure this happens. Not surprisingly, opportunity gaps have mirrored income gaps, and have widened over the years.[3] This is apparent even during non-school hours. David Brooks points out that "over the last 40 years upper-income parents have increased the amount they spend on their kids' enrichment activities, like tutoring and extracurricular activities, by $5,300 a year. The financially stressed lower classes have only been able to increase their investment by $480, adjusted for inflation."[4]

Gaps are pervasive, profound and persistent: pervasive because gaps exist in all states; profound because there are gaps at all levels of aggregation; and persistent because the gaps have not diminished over time.[5] In the diverse Road Map Region of South King County, achievement and opportunity gaps are particularly apparent. **Because the achievement gap refers only to differences and disparities in *academic outcomes* we view the achievement gap as one problematic outcome of opportunity gaps. Opportunity gaps must be addressed in order to improve achievement gaps.**

THE SCHOOL TO PRISON PIPELINE

The opportunity gap for low-income youth and youth of color is further exacerbated by disproportionate application of exclusionary disciplinary practices (suspension and expulsions), disproportionate access to educational services during expulsion, dropout rates, law enforcement officer contact and juvenile detention.

According to Osher, et al., "The gap between suspension rates for African American students and White students has grown from 3% in the 1970s to more than 10% in the 2000s."[6] A 2012 study revealed that discipline gaps are prevalent in Washington State as well. "Data from 177 school districts show that students of color were 1.5 times more likely to be

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[2] Darling-Hammond (2010), p.26
[3] Reardon (2011)
[4] Brooks (2012)
[5] Braun, Chapman & Vezzu (2010)
[6] Osher et al. (2012), p.285

disciplined [suspended or expelled] than their white peers, and that Native Hawaiian/Pacific Islanders, American Indian/Alaska Natives, and African Americans were more than twice as likely to be disciplined."[7]

Youth who are pushed out of school through exclusionary practices are more likely to end up in the justice system due to a complex set of reasons – now commonly referred to as the "school to prison pipeline."[8] This term encompasses a whole host of disciplinary practices and interventions that serve to criminalize the behavior of young people - particularly young people of color, and most specifically African American, Latino, and Native American males. Nationally, youth of color are markedly overrepresented in both juvenile and adult detention facilities. African-American youth are nearly five times more likely to be confined than their white peers; Latino and American Indian youth are between two and three times more likely to be confined.[9] Washington's rates of detention reveal similar disparities for youth of color.[10]

Schools are of paramount importance for reversing these trends. While causes of individual youth behaviors may include bad choice-making, *disproportionality* in school discipline is not the result of bad choices made by young people. Rather, research points to patterns of differential individual and systemic treatment that leads to disproportionate numbers and duration of suspensions and expulsions.[11] This is a systemic problem that can be addressed in part through better staff training and alternative approaches to school discipline.[12] By instituting policies and strategies that better support all young people in school, and changing discipline policies and systems from those that push students out, to those that engage them in the school and community, the Road Map region, Washington State and the nation have the opportunity to change the odds for a generation of young people.

EARLY WARNING INDICATORS

Early Warning Indicators (EWIs) are based on the "alternative ABCs" – attendance, behavior and course completion – and are highly predictive of student outcomes. In particular, research has shown that students who drop out can be reliably identified in middle school based on their performance on these indicators.[13] Data on students who trigger EWIs in the Road Map region provides evidence of opportunity and achievement gaps.

Districts in the Road Map region and around the country are rolling out systems to track early warning indicators as early as elementary school and often through high school. While early warning indicator data is predictive at multiple grade levels, for regional reporting purposes, The Road Map Project has identified two Early Warning Indicators at the 9th grade to track and report on annually. The two indicators include:

1) Six or more absences <u>and</u> at least one course failure in the 9th grade
2) 9th graders with a suspension or expulsion

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[7] Washington Appleseed & TeamChild (2012), p.vii

[8] American Civil Liberties Union (n.d.); Wald & Losen (2003); American Academy of Pediatrics Committee on School Health (2003); Council of State Governments Justice Center (2011); Cassella (2012)

[9] The Annie E. Casey Foundation (2013)

[10] Sickmund et al. (2013)

[11] Skiba et al. (2011); Osher et al. (2012)

[12] Balfanz et al. (2003); Skiba et al. (2002); Wald & Losen (2003); Osher et al. (2012)

[13] Balfanz, Herzog & Mac Iver (2007)

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In the Road Map Project's 2013 Results Report, early warning data show significant disparities between low and not low-income students, and between students of color and white students. Over a third of students in the region are triggering at least one of the early warning indicators. Low income students are more than twice as likely as their non-low income peers to trigger Early Warning Indicator #1 (six or more absences and at least one course failure in the 9th grade).

Early Warning Indicator #1 Students with Six or More Absences and at Least One Course Failure in the 9TH Grade
Trend   By Income
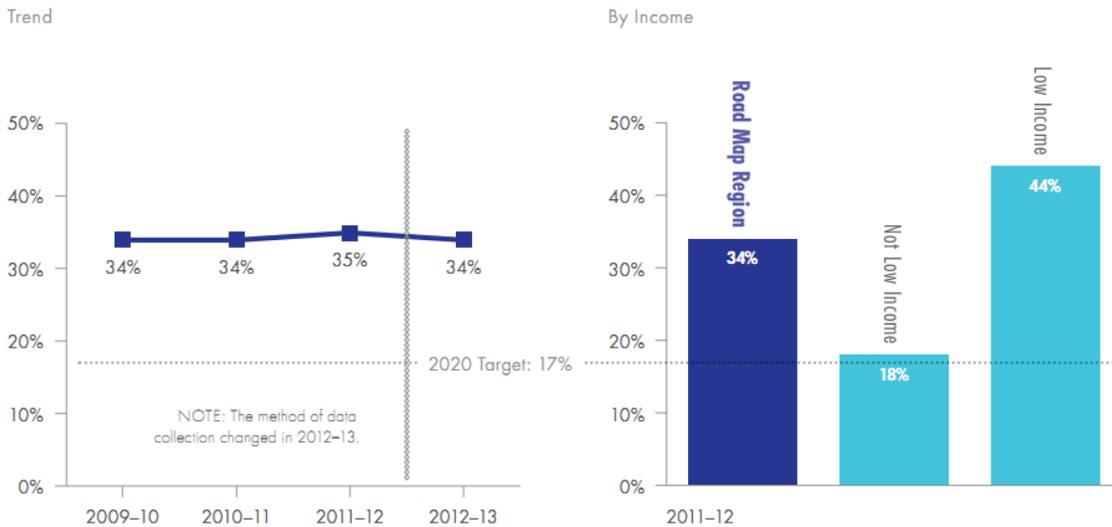
Black or African American students are nearly three times as likely as their white counterparts to trigger Early Warning Indicator #2 (9th graders with a suspension or expulsion).

Early Warning Indicator #2 9TH Graders with a Suspension or Expulsion
Trend   By Race/Ethnicity
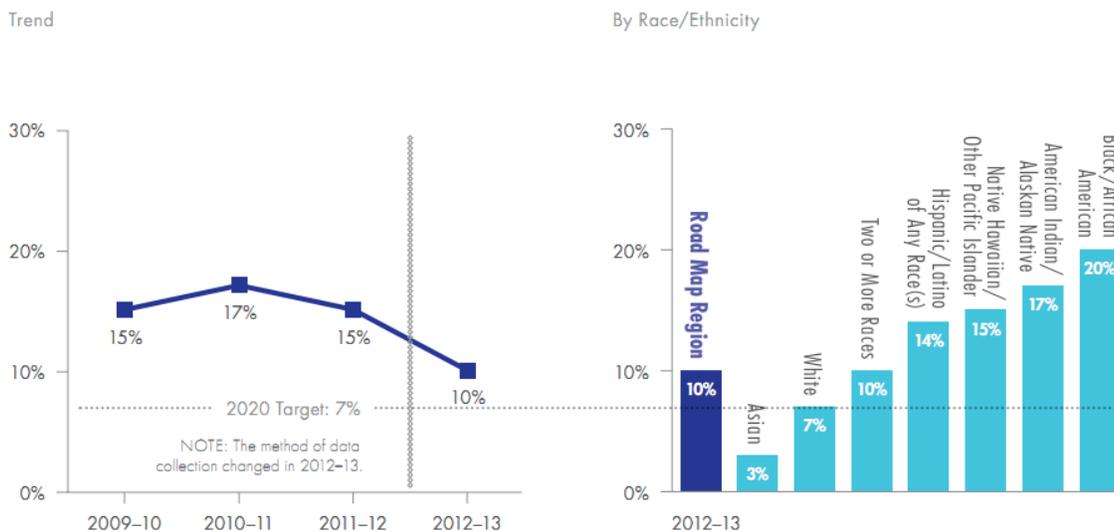
SOURCES: OSPI student-level data, districts for 2009–10 through 2011–12; OSPI student-level data for 2012–13

While early warning data illuminates disparities in the region, it also highlights an opportunity for the region to intervene early. If we can deploy better supports to students based on recognizing risk earlier, we can stem the tide of dropouts that is far too high in our region and nation.

NOW WHAT?

This report begins to answer the question: now what? It is being written to address a growing recognition across the region that a multifaceted approach to ensuring young people's holistic health and success is not only desirable, but necessary. These approaches must not only focus on supports for students but also include advocacy for systems and practice change in schools, districts and communities. We hope that the concepts and strategies included in this report will help those who work with young people to think deeply about what's working and what's not, and will inspire the kind of cross-sector collaboration that can dramatically change outcomes for kids.

THE CONTRIBUTION OF YOUTH DEVELOPMENT

The strategies outlined in this document are informed by the youth development field. The Aspen Institute, in a comprehensive review of youth development, states that young people need "to be consistently exposed, from infancy on, to environments that provide the relationships and experiences they need to mature—it has also become clearer that strategies to improve youth outcomes need to focus on strengthening environments rather than on changing individual youth."[14] Schools are under increasing pressure to eliminate achievement gaps yet tend to focus on relatively narrow definitions of individual student success.

The pressure to improve academic outcomes is often attended by calls for extending the traditional school day. However, "more of the same" for students who are already disengaged from the learning process does not necessarily lead to better results. Fortunately, youth development programs offered through school- and community-based collaboration offer many rich opportunities to expand learning without extending the traditional school day.

Strategies that seek to support youth success in school but do not account for the interconnected nature of development or the complexities and richness of community life often fall short of intended outcomes. Indeed, the Youth Leadership Institute found that one of the most salient differences between traditional approaches "inside" systems (i.e. dominant and mainstream institutions like schools) and those that emanate from "outside" these traditional systems was the "outside" focus on power relations, equity and social justice. The authors call for **"inside" and "outside" approaches to work in tandem to identify their overlapping and interconnecting agendas.[15]**

Research into partnerships between schools and youth-serving organizations shows their potential to improve student engagement, academic achievement and overall school culture.[16] **Seamless partnerships between the school, community organizations and youth development strategies offer the possibility of a comprehensive, culturally responsive approach to change.**

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[14] Gambone (2004), p.288
[15] Libby, Sedonaen & Bliss (2006)
[16] Catalano et al. (1998); Larson (2000); McLaughlin (2000); Sheldon (2003); Bowles & Brand (2009)

COLLECTIVE IMPACT FOR YOUTH SUCCESS

The Road Map Project uses a collective impact approach to narrow disparities and improve educational outcomes across South Seattle and South King County. Collective impact seeks to organize, coordinate and amplify diverse strategies to maximize impact. Kania and Kramer state, "Shifting from isolated impact to collective impact is not merely a matter of encouraging more collaboration or public-private partnerships. It requires a systemic approach to social impact that focuses on the relationships between organizations and the progress toward shared objectives."[17] They outline five conditions for effective collective impact: 1) a common agenda including a shared vision, agreement on the problem and the actions steps necessary to address it; 2) shared measurement systems that support the ways success is measured and reported; 3) **mutually reinforcing activities that assist all participants in doing what they do well with the support they need**; 4) continuous communication based on trust, a common vocabulary and clear communication of various interests and 5) backbone support organizations to include a separate organization staff with the express purpose of supporting the overall initiative. These conditions provide a helpful starting point to imagine new kinds of strategic partnerships to enhance the development of young people.

MUTUALLY REINFORCING ACTIVITIES FOR STUDENT MOTIVATION AND ENGAGEMENT

Core to collective impact efforts are **mutually reinforcing activities that assist all participants in doing what they do well with the support they need.**

> Collective impact initiatives depend on a diverse group of stakeholders working together, not by requiring that all participants do the same thing, but by encouraging each participant to undertake the specific set of activities at which it excels in a way that supports and is coordinated with the actions of others. The power of collective action comes not from the sheer number of participants or the uniformity of their efforts, but from the coordination of their differentiated activities through a mutually reinforcing plan of action. Each stakeholder's efforts must fit into an overarching plan if their combined efforts are to succeed. The multiple causes of social problems, and the components of their solutions, are interdependent. They cannot be addressed by uncoordinated actions among isolated organizations.[18]

The entire Road Map Project was built to ensure that mutually reinforcing activities support student achievement from cradle to career. An explicit, region-wide focus on aligning efforts to support student motivation and engagement across the settings in which young people spend their time represents a critical and largely untapped opportunity.

This paper explores a range of systems, structures, strategies and practices already in broad use locally or nationally in schools and community-based settings. For the purposes of this paper, we call these **mutually reinforcing strategies** as they often have broader impact when they are **not** implemented in isolation. No one strategy will be effective for all students, nor does any single strategy comprehensively address all of the skills and dispositions we hope to develop in students. A combination of strategies implemented by both school staff and community partners can create the conditions for more of our students to be successful in school and life.

Where possible, this paper explores strategies **that fundamentally shift adult attitudes and behaviors to better support students**. Effective strategies:

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[17] Kania & Kramer (2011), p. 39
[18] Kania & Kramer (2011), p. 40

- **Build student motivation, engagement and/or 21ˢᵗ century skills,** and/or support improved attendance or decreased disciplinary action.
- **Are adaptive to our local context**, either because they are being widely implemented or because they are being developed in the region, and include standards for implementation.
- **Support alignment of experience and expectations across schools and community based organizations**. Shared language and mutually reinforcing action is necessary for collaboration between schools and CBOs; environments that reinforce one another increase impact and reduce stress on youth as they transition from one environment and set of expectations to another.
- **Support a continuous improvement paradigm**. Implementation takes time, effort and a continuous feedback loop to ensure efforts are meeting goals.
- **Respond to the opportunity gap.** To achieve equity in opportunity and achievement for young people, strategies must be culturally responsive to the students most in need of support.

FOUNDATIONAL PRACTICES

Foundational practices are strategies or frameworks that we believe are necessary for all youth-serving organizations to adopt. We have identified three inter-related foundational practices: 1) active and continuous pursuit of cultural responsiveness in settings, curricula and individuals; 2) ongoing development of a positive and sustainable school or program climate and 3) high-quality instructional practice. These practices are good starting places for conversations in schools and CBOs about how and why to move forward with specific interventions or programs. For the purposes of this document, these foundational practices will also be included and detailed as mutually reinforcing strategies.

ACTIVE PURSUIT OF CULTURAL RESPONSIVENESS

Institutionalized marginalization refers to the often invisible and unspoken aspects of society that assume, maintain and reinforce the normalcy of white, middle class, heterosexual culture. These forces manifest themselves in a variety of forms in public education, youth development organizations, and our communities. The active pursuit of cultural responsiveness works to continuously counter institutionalized marginalization in its multiple forms.

Cultural Responsiveness is defined as a set of congruent behaviors, attitudes and policies that come together in a system, agency, or among professionals that enables that system, agency, or those professionals to work effectively in cross-cultural situations.[19] Culture is complex. It is the intersection of one's national origin, religion, language, sexual orientation, socio-economic class, age, gender identity, race, ethnicity, immigration status and physical/developmental ability. In short, culture "gives people clues about … norms and values. These clues help individuals decide how to act and what to do."[20]

Race and class differences, cultural bias and inequitable systems of education and law enforcement need to be part of transparent, ongoing and intentional conversation across the community and in schools. Ensuring that districts, schools and youth programs are providing a culturally responsive experience for young people is essential as we adapt to the changing landscapes of the students and communities we serve. It is also essential to prepare all students with 21ˢᵗ-century skills to work in increasingly diverse settings locally, nationally and globally. Cultural discrimination and marginalization can create barriers to educational success by defining that success through a narrow, culturally specific lens. Cultural discrimination can also present significant barriers to communication. Without a high level of cultural responsiveness, a large and growing population of our youth will be poorly served by our schools and organizations.

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[19] Cross, Bazron, Dennis & Isaacs (1989)
[20] Corwin & Tierney (2007)

build respectful relationships and use solution-focused problem solving with students and each other. One such approach is **Positive Behavioral Interventions and Supports (PBIS)**, a tiered system of behavior management used in many schools locally. **Restorative justice** is another approach that emphasizes the redress of harm over punitive discipline.

- **Developing Skills:** Some skills and dispositions can be taught directly (e.g. **growth mindset**, **social and emotional learning**) or cultivated in particular kinds of skill-building activities. **Arts integration** programs, for example, build a sense of belonging and teach creativity and critical thinking through the arts. **College and career readiness programs** teach academic behaviors (study skills, time management, etc.) while also promoting future orientation and self-management skills.

- **Leveraging Partnerships:** We believe that all strategies described in this paper are best implemented in a school or program settings with strong partnerships. Mutually reinforcing activities depend on partners using their strengths to support youth in their areas of need. In this section, we discuss several models that include partnerships as a fundamental component: **expanded learning opportunities**, **project based and service learning** and the **community schools model**.

The strategies described in this paper do not fit neatly into the above categories. For example, mentoring programs do not focus wholly on relationships, but also on skill building. Similarly, college and career readiness programs teach skills, but the best ones also leverage relationships. **We would also like to emphasize that the strategies described in this paper are not mutually exclusive. They share a number of common features, and are in fact best implemented in combination with one another, and with thoughtful consideration of the school or program setting.**

MUTUALLY REINFORCING STRATEGIES

The remainder of this document focuses on individual strategies for building motivation and engagement. This list is by no means comprehensive, but attempts to provide a range of options for educators and policymakers who are invested in student success. Each of the following is explored in more depth:

Foundational Practices

1. Cultural Responsiveness
2. Positive School Climate
3. High-Quality Instructional Practice

Deepening Relationships

4. Trauma-Informed Practice
5. Mentoring

Transforming Discipline

6. Positive Behavior Interventions and Supports (PBIS)
7. Restorative Justice

Developing Skills

8. Growth Mindset
9. Social-Emotional Learning Programs
10. College and Career Readiness Programs
11. Arts Integration

Leveraging Partnerships

12. Expanded Learning Opportunities
13. Project Based and Service Learning
14. Community Schools

Moving Forward: The strategies described in this document are not mutually exclusive. To the contrary, we believe that they are most effective when implemented in combination, and in a manner well suited to local circumstances. We conclude this paper with brief recommendations for how to use these strategies moving forward.

1. FOUNDATIONAL PRACTICES: CULTURAL RESPONSIVENESS

Across Washington, public school students are becoming more culturally diverse. The diversity of teachers is not increasing at the same rate. 2012 statistics from the Office of the Superintendent of Public Instruction (OSPI) reveal that while 89% of Washington teachers identified as white (not Hispanic), only 59% of its students identified similarly.[25] This fact highlights just one aspect of the culture gap between staff and students in our schools, and underscores the need for cultural responsiveness work in order to meet the needs of a diverse student body. It cannot be assumed that teachers or youth workers (of any race or cultural background) have the awareness, attitude, knowledge and skills to appropriately serve all young people. Developing these competencies must be a transparent, ongoing and intentional part of continuous improvement.

Cultural Responsiveness is defined as a set of congruent behaviors, attitudes, and policies that come together in a system, agency, or among professionals and enables that system, agency, or those professionals to work effectively in cross-cultural situations.[26] One's cultural identity is the intersection of one's national origin, religion, language, LGBTQ status, socio-economic class, age, gender identity, race, ethnicity, immigration status and physical/developmental ability. This set of factors contributes to the complexity of individuals and their relationships.

Ensuring that every school, district, classroom and youth program is providing a culturally responsive and relevant experience for young people is essential if we are to adapt to the changing landscapes of our students and communities. It is also essential for preparing all students with the 21st century skills they will need to work in increasingly diverse settings in the future.

HOW IT WORKS

In the effort to "be" culturally responsive, school districts and youth development organizations often provide trainings or seek certifications. Despite this tendency, cultural responsiveness is not an end to be achieved; rather it is an ongoing process of self-reflection and behavior change at the individual and institutional level. Cultural responsiveness is the process of understanding one's own culture, values and biases, then seeking knowledge and awareness of other cultures, values and biases.

In organizations that are working toward cultural responsiveness, staff members learn skills that seek to minimize the negative impact of cultural biases. They then begin the work of changing the systems that perpetuate cultural discrimination. At an organizational level, cultural responsiveness can mean that members actively seek to change policies and procedures that support the institutionalized and structural discrimination that is prevalent in our communities.

CHARACTERISTICS OF INDIVIDUALS WITH HIGH LEVELS OF CULTURAL RESPONSIVENESS:[27]

➢ Continuously practice active self-reflection and ongoing education and engagement with others to uncover cultural values, biases and world views
➢ Value cultural differences that may affect how youth and adults express themselves
➢ Practice the "platinum rule" in treating others how they wish to be treated
➢ Proactively respond to bullying, discrimination and bias between students and/or staff
➢ Are skilled in ways to engage in cultural discussions and reflection

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[25] State of Washington, Office of Superintendent of Public Instruction (OSPI) (2012)
[26] Cross, Bazron, Dennis & Isaacs (1989)
[27] Hollins (2012)

➢ Work toward institutional transformation – policy and procedure changes that mitigate the effects of institutional discrimination

Characteristics of Settings with High Levels of Cultural Responsiveness:[28]

➢ Create inclusive opportunities for youth and staff to participate
➢ Establish safe environments for youth to explore and express their own cultures and identities
➢ Develop culturally relevant and sensitive curriculum, materials and tasks[29]
➢ Do not assume or require that students acculturate or assimilate to the dominant cultural practices (i.e. allow Muslim girls to remain covered during P.E.; address gender non-conforming youth by the pronoun they prefer)

How Cultural Responsiveness Impacts the Opportunity Gap

Cultural discrimination includes the "aspects of society that overtly and covertly attribute value and normality to white people and whiteness, and devalue, stereotype, and label people of color [or any non-dominant cultural groups] as 'other', different, less than, or render them invisible."[30] Cultural discrimination is not limited to issues of race and ethnicity, but extends to all cultural identifiers including national origin, religion, language, LGBTQ status, socio-economic class, age, gender identity and physical/developmental ability.

Though often unintentional, unconscious and unrecognized by people in power (including teachers, youth development professionals and administrators), cultural discrimination can result when individuals and institutions are not actively and intentionally focused on their own cultural responsiveness and the cultural relevancy of their programs.

Cultural discrimination can create barriers to education. Students are sometimes targeted for engaging in behaviors that are cultural in origin. This may contribute to a conception of success in education that is narrowly culturally specific. Cultural discrimination can also present barriers to communication. Without a high level of cultural responsiveness, a large and growing proportion of our youth will remain poorly served by our schools and organizations.

By actively reflecting on beliefs and assumptions, school and organizational leaders can create environments that are inviting and supportive to all youth and staff. Through training and program development, staff can reflect on their own beliefs, and provide the space for youth to self-reflect and voice their experiences. This process of self-reflection about assumptions creates the foundation for mutual understanding and respect. Through the sharing and experiencing of other cultures, staff, parents and youth can breakdown the pejorative assumptions about cultures different from their own.[31]

Considerations

Cultural responsiveness work is critical to developing many of the skills and dispositions that support youth success in school. This work is not about surface-level modifications in language or attempts to create a "colorblind" environment, nor one that ignores other aspects of human cultural diversity and experience. It requires a commitment to deep individual and group work meant to transform some of our most basic assumptions about the nature, potential, experiences and world views of groups and individuals. It asks that we explore uncomfortable conversations within ourselves and with others in order to push the boundaries of norms that are so deeply ingrained that we often have difficulty identifying them.

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[28] Hollins (2012)
[29] School's Out Washington (2010)
[30] Adams, Bell & Griffin (1997), p.162
[31] School's Out Washington (2010)

SKILLS AND DISPOSITIONS FOR YOUTH SUCCESS SUPPORTED BY CULTURAL RESPONSIVENESS:

While this work is difficult, its benefits can be profound for students. Cultural responsiveness work fosters a **sense of belonging**, **personal identity** and **relationship building** with adults and peers. When pursued with diligence and a long view, the work of developing cultural responsiveness can also help students to stay connected to school over the long term.[32]

EARLY WARNING INDICATORS (THE ABC'S)

The active, developmental, and ongoing processes of cultural responsiveness work impact student connectedness to schools and may lead to decreased **absences** and improved **behavior**. There is some research that suggests that teachers who exhibit high levels of cultural responsiveness in their teaching practice elicit better **course performance** in their students.[33]

FOR MORE INFORMATION

➢ **Teaching Tolerance (Southern Poverty Law Center) -** http://www.tolerance.org/
  Teaching Tolerance has provided well-developed and research-based cultural education for 21 years (SPLC 41 years). Teaching Tolerance has hundreds of activities that address many topics including gender, race, bullying, immigration and migrant workers. The programs range from very specific to broad topics.

➢ **Cultures Connecting -** http://www.culturesconnecting.com/index.html
  Caprice D. Hollins, Psy.D and Ilsa Govan, M.A. provide workshops, both custom and framed. Based out of Renton WA, Cultures Connecting provides well-developed and culturally responsive training on the self-reflection processes of understanding cultural discrimination and responsiveness.

➢ **Non-Profit Anti-Racism Coalition -** http://www.nparcseattle.org/
  NPARC acts as a forum to: understand and address the intersection of race, racism and other forms of oppression; share information, resources and best practices; and provide training for members.

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[32] Northwest Regional Educational Laboratory (2005)
[33] Northwest Regional Educational Laboratory (2005)

2. FOUNDATIONAL PRACTICES: POSITIVE SCHOOL CLIMATE

According to the National School Climate Council, school climate (also referred to as school culture) includes the norms, values and expectations that support people feeling socially, emotionally, intellectually, and physically safe. In a positive and sustainable school climate, people are engaged and respected. Students, families, community partners and educators work together to develop and contribute to a shared school vision. In positive school climates, educators model and nurture attitudes and practices that emphasize the benefits and satisfaction gained from learning.[34]

Improving school climate begins with changing how staff and administrators feel about youth, their families, and their communities. Transforming how adults feel about youth changes how they behave toward youth, and ultimately alters how youth feel about themselves and school.

By focusing on vision and mission, schools and programs can create an environment in which positive change is possible. Shifting to beliefs and values that promote and support the growth of each student creates an atmosphere of achievement. Positive and sustainable climates reflect the beliefs that all students can learn, all parents want their children to succeed, and that parents are partners with administrators, teachers, and students in education and decision making. By believing in positive characteristics of all students and parents, and implementing appropriate professional development and support, teachers and administrators are better able to work toward valuable change and positive outcomes.[35]

> *"A growing body of empirical research shows that a sustained, positive school climate reduces dropouts and fosters youth development and academic achievement, as well as the knowledge, skills, and dispositions necessary for students to be responsible and productive members of society."*
>
> *National School Climate Council (2009)*
>
> *~National School Climate Council*

HOW IT WORKS

The process for developing a positive and sustainable school climate begins with an assessment of the current climate. There are multiple tools for this initial evaluation. It is critical that all of the voices in a school community are taken into account. Many school districts use their own climate surveys or partner with entities such as the Center for Educational Effectiveness to administer surveys to different groups within a school community.

The next step is to develop a common vision and plan of action by setting policies and practices that promote the learning and positive social, emotional, ethical, and civic development of students; enhance engagement in teaching, learning, and school-wide activities; address barriers to learning and teaching and reengage those who have become disengaged; and develop and sustain an appropriate operational infrastructure and capacity-building mechanism for meeting these expectations. [36]

CHARACTERISTICS OF POSITIVE SCHOOL CLIMATE[37]

- ➢ Common goals are clear to all
- ➢ Policies align with the development & sustainability of social, emotional, civic and intellectual skills, and engagement

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[34] National School Climate Center (2009)
[35] Tableman (2004)
[36] National School Climate Center (n.d.)
[37] National School Climate Center (2009)

➢ Comprehensive systems address barriers to teaching and learning
➢ Systems reengage disengaged students
➢ The value and contributions of all stakeholders - students, school and afterschool or youth development program staff – are recognized
➢ Decision-making is shared among stakeholders
➢ Meaningful practices and norms promote social and civic responsibilities and a commitment to social justice

How Positive School Climates Impact the Opportunity Gap

A critical component of a positive and sustainable school climate lies in the expectations that teachers and administrators hold for their students. Low expectations often become self-fulfilling prophecies. Changing what staff expect and communicate to youth of color and ELL students can dramatically alter what youth expect of themselves, and how youth connect to schools and programs.[38]

School connectedness is a stronger predictor of reduced at-risk behavior than any other school environment variable.[39] Lower rates of school connectedness in Black and Latino youth contribute to the opportunity gap they experience. By taking an active role in school, connecting to adults, and gaining recognition for their successes and potential, youth are more likely to attend and stay in school.

Considerations

A school's climate is largely the result of the adults' ideas, behaviors, and policies in the school. Transforming a school's climate is no easy task. Often there is a belief that climate cannot be changed without significant staff or student turnover. But experience suggests that with support there are very real steps that can be taken to improve school climate. In addition, there is often concern that without strong administrative leadership, a shift in school climate is not possible. Leadership from school administrators is important. However, moving an organization to pursue a positive climate requires shared leadership among all the stakeholders in a school community including staff, students, families, and others.[40] Staff members are an especially important component, and should lead the way to ensure continuity of efforts.[41]

Cultural responsiveness work is an important aspect of changing the norms, values, and expectations that shape school climate. Educators may unwittingly carry and reflect the messages of institutionalized and structural discrimination and marginalization regarding race, ethnicity, national origin, religion, language, sexual orientation, socio-economic class, age, gender identity, and physical/developmental ability. Pairing this work with any and all other strategies described in this series will enhance effectiveness. This work can be closely related to **restorative justice** initiatives, **trauma-informed practices,** and with the ongoing work involved in developing and maintaining a **PBIS** framework.

Skills and Dispositions for Youth Success Supported by Positive School Climates

The ongoing and intentional work of developing a positive and sustainable school climate can affect students in a multitude of ways. Thapa et al. conducted a comprehensive review of studies on positive school climates in 2013 for the American Educational Research Association. This review revealed profound impacts of climate on motivation, engagement and social-

[38] Thapa, Cohen, Guffey & Higgins-D'Alessandro (2013)
[39] Blum & Rinehart (1997)
[40] Fullan (2009)
[41] School Climate Resource Center (2007); Fullan (2009)

emotional well-being.[42] Some of the skills and dispositions a positive school climate helps cultivate include a **sense of belonging**, **relationships** with staff, **hope and optimism,** and **social capital. [43]**

EARLY WARNING INDICATORS (THE ABC'S)

Research also suggests that positive school climates are associated with decreased student **absences** and **behavior** concerns (including bullying). In addition, a school climate that supports students to believe in their potential and grants them a safe and supportive learning environment can improve **course performance**.[44]

FOR MORE INFORMATION

➢ **Safe, Supportive and Civil Schools -** http://www.schoolclimate.org/programs/safeCivilSchools.php
Safe, supportive and civil schools are characterized by norms, values and expectations that support people feeling socially, emotionally and physically safe; engaged and respected; and collaboratively involved with student-family-educator partnerships to develop, live and contribute to a shared school vision.

➢ **Center for Educational Effectiveness -** http://effectiveness.org/
Based on the 9 characteristics of high performing schools, CEE works to uncover staff, student, and parent perceptions about school Climate and use this data to recommend specific training and facilitate a change in focus for schools and programs.

➢ **Kids at Hope -** http://www.kidsathope.org/index.html
Kids at Hope empowers schools to transform their cultures and support student engagement through professional, personal and volunteer development workshops, seminars, institutes and classes. The Northwest Regional Office can be contacted at wally@kidsathope.org

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[42] Thapa et al. (2013)
[43] National School Climate Center (2007)
[44] National School Climate Center (2007); Thapa et al. (2013)

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3. FOUNDATIONAL PRACTICES: HIGH-QUALITY INSTRUCTIONAL PRACTICE

High-quality practice at the classroom or program level is fundamental to building youth skills and dispositions. In Washington's classrooms, high-quality practice is largely defined by the teacher evaluation frameworks authorized by the State's Teacher and Principal Evaluation Project (TPEP) – Charlotte Danielson's Framework for Teaching, the 5D+ Framework from the Center for Educational Leadership and the Marzano Teacher Evaluation Model. In youth programs, quality is defined by the Center for Youth Program Quality's Youth Program Quality Assessment (Youth PQA) and the statewide Quality Standards developed by School's Out Washington. The common themes within these frameworks represent broad agreement on what constitutes a high-quality learning environment for young people.

HOW IT WORKS

The Center for Youth Program Quality's "Pyramid of Program Quality" (pictured below) has parallels to Maslow's hierarchy of needs.[45] The pyramid provides a way to think about the complex job of a classroom teacher or youth development professional. In addition, this approach offers a common language for those who work with young people to engage in meaningful dialogue about how to create productive learning environments. In this section, we use the Youth PQA pyramid as an organizing principle for our discussion of high-quality practice both in and out of school. In particular, we describe the four key domains of the pyramid and the extent to which they are common across quality frameworks.

© Weikart Center for Youth Program Quality

CHARACTERISTICS OF HIGH-QUALITY PRACTICE

> ➢ **Safe Environment** – The safety of young people is necessary if they are to have an opportunity to learn. Safety is important in all of its aspects: physical, emotional and psychological. The Youth PQA tool assesses physical and emotional safety including addressing bias within a program. One of the basic criteria in Washington State's TPEP (detailed in all three evaluation frameworks) is that teachers foster safe, positive learning environments. This domain – particularly its focus on emotional and psychological safety - relates directly to the first two Foundational

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[45] Maslow (1943)

Practices explored in this paper: active and continuous pursuit cultural responsiveness; and ongoing development of a positive and sustainable climate.

➢ *Supportive Environment* – Supportive environments offer the space to develop opportunities for meeting and overcoming challenges. Supportive environments go beyond statements of support to encompass high expectations and a broad range of strategies for meeting them. By consistently offering encouragement rather than praise, adults can help to develop a growth mindset in young people. Supportive environments also recognize and address the social and emotional challenges and needs that young people demonstrate in school or in youth programs. All three teaching frameworks and the Youth PQA promote individualized instruction, and the establishment of classroom cultures that respect students' cultures, values, and diverse learning needs.

➢ *Interaction* – The culture that exists in various environments is one of the most powerful forces that shapes youth experience —and it can have big impacts on young lives. Young people, like all people, desire positive relationships with adults and peers. When school and community structures are alienating, young people are more likely to seek out unhealthy or unsafe relationships in their search for connection. Developing exciting, challenging, and purposeful opportunities for young people to learn and interact with each other inside and outside of school will increase their capacity to learn and grow. The Youth PQA details expectations for building peer-to-peer and youth-to-adult relationships in programs. Teacher quality frameworks outline practices that build mutual respect and rapport (Danielson), and teach conversation and inquiry techniques that deepen understanding (5D+, Marzano).

➢ *Youth Engagement* – When young people feel safe and experience a sense of belonging, this enables them to experience challenge and deepen their learning. Youth engagement is at the top of the Youth PQA pyramid and consists of two main ideas: voice and choice in programming at all levels and opportunities to set goals, make plans, and to reflect on experiences. All of the teacher quality frameworks approved by OSPI incorporate student engagement in learning as an outcome of effective instructional practice. The 5D+ framework integrates student voice and choice into both instruction and assessment domains. The Marzano framework makes student engagement a component of effective teaching practice. The Danielson framework describes a learning culture in which students are highly engaged, and take responsibility for their own and others' learning.

Taken together, the classroom practice and evaluation frameworks above define a way of teaching and engaging young people that is essential for their growth, development and success, regardless of the specific content being delivered. Employing the instructional practices in all four program quality domains is necessary to ensuring youth achieve positive outcomes. Research shows that programs that are unable to reach the higher domains of the quality pyramid (positive interaction and engagement) will not have as much impact on youth success as those programs and classrooms that are able to demonstrate high quality practice in all domains.[46]

HOW HIGH-QUALITY PRACTICE IMPACTS THE OPPORTUNITY GAP

High-quality practice increases students' engagement in school or in youth programs by influencing students' sense of belonging. Low school engagement is widely thought to be a major factor in the decision to drop out, and is a major contributor to academic achievement gaps.[47] High-quality learning environments have been shown to increase engagement irrespective of a student's background, and are essential to decreasing the opportunity gap.

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[46] Durlak, Weissberg & Pachan (2010)
[47] Furrer & Skinner (2003); Bridgeland, DiIulio & Morison (2006)

CONSIDERATIONS

Although we reference teacher evaluation tools above, we are primarily interested in the learning environments that these frameworks describe. We do not wish to place summative judgments on teachers or youth workers, but rather to use these evaluation frameworks and supporting assessments to build and sustain high-quality practice. We embrace the formative or continuous improvement paradigm that the Youth Program Quality Assessment model promotes as a means of improving the experiences of young people in programs and classrooms. To that end, the Youth PQA improvement system includes not only assessment but aligned trainings that can be used for professional development for teachers as well as youth workers.

SKILLS AND DISPOSITIONS FOR YOUTH SUCCESS SUPPORTED BY HIGH-QUALITY PRACTICE

Virtually all of the subcomponents of student motivation and engagement are supported by high-quality practice. Structure and clear limits help to teach **self-management skills**, and supportive environments characterized by interest and challenge can build **perseverance**. Given the focus on positive interaction, high-quality practice improves **relationships** within program settings, and in turn increases **sense of belonging**. Finally, students build **interpersonal skills** in interactive environments, and **critical thinking** skills by participating in activities that emphasize voice, choice, and reflection.

EARLY WARNING INDICATORS (THE ABC'S)

All of the frameworks above define highly engaging learning environments. It is well known that students who are motivated and engaged are more likely to demonstrate academic behaviors including regularly **attending class**.[48] Additionally, programs and classrooms that establish clear limits and expectations as described in the above quality frameworks can limit the incidence of **behavior** problems, and using effective techniques to scaffold and support student learning can improve **course performance**.

FOR MORE INFORMATION ABOUT YOUTH PROGRAM QUALITY

➢ **School's Out Washington -** http://schoolsoutwashington.org/
School's Out Washington supports implementation of the Youth Program Quality Intervention across Washington State by offering training and technical assistance.

➢ **David P. Weikart Center for Youth Program Quality -** http://cypq.org/
The Weikart Center, in conjunction with stakeholders around the country including partners in Washington State, developed the Youth PQA to assess, plan, and improve program environments for young people.

FOR MORE INFORMATION ABOUT TEACHER EVALUATION FRAMEWORKS

➢ **Center for Educational Leadership's 5D+ Teacher Evaluation Rubric** – http://www.k12-leadership.org/
Developed by the Center for Educational Leadership at the University of Washington, the 5D+ rubric is based on the 5 Dimensions of teaching and learning: purpose, student engagement, curriculum and pedagogy, assessment, and environment and culture.

➢ **Danielson's Framework for Teaching** - http://www.danielsongroup.org/
The Danielson framework is based on a constructivist approach to teaching and learning, and is used by many districts locally for evaluation and professional development.

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[48] Farrington (2012)

➤ **Marzano Teacher Evaluation Model -** http://www.marzanoevaluation.com/
The Marzano framework explicitly aligns teacher practice with student growth. Also includes a leadership component.

➤ **Washington State Teacher/Principal Evaluation Project (TPEP)** - http://tpep-wa.org/
Washington State's resource for teacher and principal evaluation process. TPEP specifies broad evaluation criteria and recommends evaluation tools for school districts to use.

4. DEEPENING RELATIONSHIPS: TRAUMA-INFORMED PRACTICE

Lead Contributor: Jody McVittie, MD, Sound Discipline

Trauma-informed practice is founded on an understanding of the effects that trauma and insecure attachment have on the brain, psychology, and behavior of people. This understanding in turn leads to strategies and practices to create safe and supportive environments for all students to learn the social-emotional and academic skills necessary for school and life success.

Trauma-Informed practice continues to advance from a growing body of research in neuroscience, mental health and trauma that have studied the impact of adverse experiences on the developing brain.[49] Because adverse experiences change the brain's response to stress and impact how brains develop, understanding brain development can inform systems and practices for supporting trauma-exposed youth and building communities that promote resilience.

It is now widely accepted that adverse childhood experiences (ACEs) have long-term impacts on health and well-being,[50] as well as children's ability to learn and function well in the school environment.[51] The original study of ACEs involved over 17,000 adults and examined ten categories of experiences including abuse (physical, emotional, sexual), neglect (physical, emotional) as well as household dysfunction (use of drugs or alcohol, witnessing domestic violence, loss of a parent, parental incarceration). Traumatic events are experienced differently by different individuals, and are influenced by developmental and cultural factors. What may be traumatic to one child may not be so for another. Because so many parts of the brain are adversely impacted by trauma, it is common for trauma-exposed children to carry multiple psychiatric labels (ADHD, ODD, etc.) and to be on multiple medications. The impacts of adverse experiences are mitigated by the support and social network that surrounds a child. Critical in this are the early relationships that a child has with his/her primary caregiver(s). Children who have safe, reliable, consistent, responsive and attuned caregivers are more resilient.[52]

Students exposed to trauma have nervous systems that are highly sensitive to stressors. Their reactions to events in their environment can seem out of proportion or irrational. Many students with a history of significant neglect or trauma exposure are hyper-vigilant and struggle to self-regulate their emotions and/or behaviors. Because their brains are more focused on surviving than thriving, they can misinterpret or entirely miss social cues or instructions. The brains of these students dysregulate (disrupt regulatory mechanisms) easily. Because of biological differences between males and females, boys tend to dysregulate using the fight response (with outward behavior), while girls tend to use the freeze response (and pull inward). As a result, in school or afterschool environments more male students experience disciplinary responses from adults; more female students go unnoticed and disappear "under the radar."

While we know that trauma has profound effects on social-emotional and academic outcomes for students, we also know that strong networks of social support and safe consistent environments can mitigate the impact of trauma. Trauma-informed practices can actually repair damage to the brain caused by trauma and support youth to build helpful, responsive

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[49] Beers & De Bellis (2002); Nelson & Carver (1998); Carlson, Furby & Armstrong (1997)
[50] Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) (n.d.); Anda & Brown (2010); Felitti (2002)
[51] National Child Traumatic Stress Network (2008); Cole, O'Brien, Gadd, Ristuccia, Wallace & Gregory (2005); Cicchetti, Toth & Hennessy (1989)
[52] Perry (2013)

and respectful relationships, develop self-regulation skills, and build competencies in executive function, cognitive, inter-personal, intra-personal and emotional domains.[53]

HOW IT WORKS

Leadership and entire staffs are trained in how to respond to the social-emotional needs of trauma-exposed students. Schools begin the process with information about how trauma affects children's learning and behavior. They learn about brain development, and tools that enhance students' sense of safety and ability to self-regulate. Leadership and staff also train in instructional principles and strategies, building community partnerships, and student engagement. In addition, because working with students exposed to trauma is vulnerable work that can lead to vicarious trauma for the adults, there is a community awareness of the importance of self-care. Finally, staff members are not expected to act as counselors, but to have some understanding, strategies, and partnerships with mental health professionals to support students.

CHARACTERISTICS OF TRAUMA-INFORMED PRACTITIONERS[54]

- ➢ Have an understanding of the brain science that underlies behaviors
- ➢ Understand that trauma-exposed students dysregulate easily and misperceive safety
- ➢ Focus on strengths to empower and encourage youth
- ➢ Self –regulate well and provide safe, consistent environments
- ➢ Understand the importance of routines
- ➢ Incorporate self-regulations tools into curricula at all levels
- ➢ Avoid contingency-based discipline practices (rewards and punishments) as these tend to further dysregulate trauma-exposed students
- ➢ Focus on repair/solutions instead of punishment
- ➢ Check their assumptions, observe and question
- ➢ Provide opportunities and build skills for helpful participation

CHARACTERISTICS OF TRAUMA-INFORMED SCHOOLS[55]

- ➢ Focus on culture and climate in the school and community
- ➢ Train and support all staff regarding trauma and learning
- ➢ Encourage and sustain open and regular communication for all
- ➢ Use a strengths-based approach in working with students, families and colleagues
- ➢ Ensure that discipline policies include prevention and are trauma-informed as well as focused on teaching and repair, rather than punishment
- ➢ Have established data teams to review school discipline, academic and attendance data
- ➢ Provide tiered support for all students based on what they need
- ➢ Provide access, voice, and ownership for staff, students and community
- ➢ Actively build relationships with families/caregivers
- ➢ Incorporate continual intentional learning to improve cultural responsiveness
- ➢ Hold awareness and are responsive to vicarious trauma and the need for self-care

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[53] Kinniburgh, Blaustein, Spinazzola & Van der Kolk (2005); Fisher, Gunnar, Chamberlain & Reid (2000); Herman (1997)
[54] Wolpow, Johnson, Hertel & Kincaid (2009)
[55] Cole, O'Brien, Gadd, Ristuccia, Wallace & Gregory (2005)

HOW TRAUMA-INFORMED PRACTICE IMPACTS THE OPPORTUNITY GAP

The effects of trauma on a student's ability to learn and perform academically are multi-faceted. The lack of resiliency is perhaps the most fundamental of opportunity gaps experienced by children. Trauma, especially acute or chronic (termed complex trauma) affects students in their ability to feel safe, build relationships, express and manage emotions, develop physically and cognitively, and develop a self-concept and future orientation. It is no surprise that students' academic performance and outcomes are negatively impacted.

Any child can experience traumatic events and effects, and all students can benefit from trauma-informed practices. Children who are refugees or economic migrants; those living in poverty; and those deeply impacted by the social and political effects of racial, ethnic, or gender marginalization may be especially vulnerable to experiencing complex trauma for a variety of reasons. Forging partnerships to develop the capacity of schools and youth development organizations to use trauma-informed practices can increase students' resiliency. This increase results in part from growing the student's social web of caring people (peers and adults) who are consistent, safe, reliable and attuned.

SKILLS AND DISPOSITIONS FOR YOUTH SUCCESS SUPPORTED BY TRAUMA-INFORMED PRACTICE

The fundamental goal of trauma-informed practice is to build resiliency in children who have experienced trauma.[56] Trauma-informed practice directly supports students in **building relationships** with peers and adults. These relationships enable further skill building in the areas of **self-management** and **self-efficacy.** When ongoing and intentional work is directed toward making schools safe and supportive environments for *all* children, it increases the likelihood that students will develop a **sense of belonging** and a positive **future orientation**. This is particularly critical for trauma-affected children, who may otherwise experience depression and poor school attachment. Ultimately, in conjunction with other mutually reinforcing initiatives, trauma-informed practices can mitigate students' stress and open them up to developing the high-order thinking and learning skills that are critical to academic success.

EARLY WARNING INDICATORS (THE ABC'S)

Trauma-informed practices transform adults' conceptions of youth behaviors. Moments of harmful or inappropriate **behaviors** are reframed as opportunities for growing skills and practicing-self regulation rather than punishment and shame. This shift dramatically reduces suspensions and expulsions, both because students are developing new coping skills and because the adults are developing new response skills. Trauma-informed practices also reduce **absences** because of increased school connectedness, improved relationships with caregivers, improved school climate, and reduced risk-taking behaviors. Finally, over time, **course performance and completion** are improved because students are supported and empowered to attend to emotional needs, reducing negative impacts on academic learning.[57]

FOR MORE INFORMATION

> - **Compassionate Schools** - http://www.k12.wa.us/compassionateschools/
>   Communities across the country are expressing interest in Washington's Compassionate Schools. Two examples of local successes are the cases of Lincoln High School in Walla Walla, and Manitou Elementary in Tacoma. Both schools have populations with high levels of ACEs. In the case of Lincoln High, suspensions have dropped by 85% since they started implementing a compassionate approach. Student engagement and school connectedness have risen dramatically, and staff morale has increased, as well. At Lincoln, partnerships have been developed with Children's

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[56] Wolpow, Johnson, Hertel & Kincaid (2009); Herman (1997)
[57] Wolpow, Johnson, Hertel & Kincaid (2009)

Resiliency Initiative, and Washington State University's Area Health Education Center to develop community and staff understanding.

➢ **Sound Discipline -** www.SoundDiscipline.org
Sound Discipline is a Puget Sound based non-profit that offers training and staff support with Positive/Solution Focused Discipline that emphasizes trauma-informed practices among other strategies, frameworks, and supports that build positive and sustainable, culturally responsive school climates.

➢ **ChildTrauma Academy (CTA) -** http://childtrauma.org
CTA is a not-for-profit organization based in Houston, Texas working to improve the lives of high-risk children through direct service, research and education. CTA translates emerging findings about the human brain and child development into practical implications for the ways we nurture, protect, enrich, educate and heal children.

➢ **The National Child Traumatic Stress Network (NCTSN)** - http://www.nctsn.org/
NCTSN is an extensive resource dedicated to raising the standard of care and access to services for traumatized children, their families and communities throughout the U.S.

➢ **ACEs Connection** - http://acesconnection.com/
ACEs is an online community of practice network.

5. Deepening Relationships: Community Based Mentoring

Lead Contributor: Janet Heubach, Washington State Mentors

A critical part of growing up includes developing and relying on relationships with caregivers and other adults. There is immense power in the knowledge that adults care about, are there for, and believe in an individual. The need for these relationships is common to all youth. That need may be especially acute among youth with a strained caregiver relationship or an absent parent.

Traversing childhood, adolescence, and/or young adulthood without positive relationships with adults places kids at higher risk for poor decision-making, poor development of social-emotional skills, poor performance in school, and an increased likelihood of failure to fulfill one's potential in adulthood.

Community-Based Mentorship programs offer youth support from adults that are not primary caregivers or authority figures in their lives. Mentors choose to have a relationship with a young person and participate in the sharing of care and understanding between generations. Mentees also choose to participate in this relationship. Both participants reap personal rewards for their participation. Research supports the role that mentorship can play in improving the mental health, academic, and life outcomes of youth.[58]

How it Works

High quality mentoring programs recruit appropriate mentors and mentees by realistically describing the program's aims and expected outcomes. Next, they conduct a background check and screen prospective mentors to determine whether they have the time, commitment and personal qualities to be an effective mentor. Once this screening has been completed, the program trains prospective mentors in the basic knowledge and skills needed to build an effective mentoring relationship.

The mentoring begins once the program matches mentors and mentees along dimensions likely to increase the odds that mentoring relationships will endure (including consideration of shared interests and life experiences, as well as racial, ethnic, cultural, and gender identities).

For the duration of the mentorship the program is diligent in ensuring the safety of mentees. This work entails the monitoring of relationships and supporting appropriate interactions through ongoing advising, problem-solving support and training opportunities. Finally, the program facilitates bringing the match to closure in a way that affirms the contributions of both the mentor and the mentee and offers both individuals the opportunity to assess the experience.[59]

Characteristics of High Quality Mentoring Programs[60]

 ➤ Offer a structured relationship that focuses on the needs of mentees
 ➤ Provide ongoing supervision and support of matches for mentors, mentees and caregivers
 ➤ Foster caring and supportive relationships that persist for 6 months or more
 ➤ Encourage students to develop to their fullest potential

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[58] DuBois & Karcher (2013); Herrera, DuBois & Grossman (2013); Garringer (2007); Garringer & MacRae (2007); DuBois, Portillo, Rhodes, Silverthorn & Valentine (2011); Jekielek, Moore & Hair (2002)
[59] MENTOR (2009)
[60] MENTOR (2009); Garringer & MacRae (2007); Jekielek, Moore & Hair (2002)

➢ Operate according to a developmental model that is youth-driven and youth-focused
➢ Support students to cultivate a personal vision of the future
➢ Develop active community partnerships
➢ Support frequent mentor contact with mentees and caregivers

HOW MENTORING IMPACTS THE OPPORTUNITY GAP

A 2005 study suggested that while 17.6 million youth could especially benefit from having a mentor due to their particular life circumstances, only 2.5 million were in formal one-to-one mentoring relationships at that time.[61] This disparity is referred to as the "mentoring gap" and is representative of one of the missing opportunities for students experiencing the effects of opportunity gaps. All youth benefit from mentor relationships outside of those provided by their caregivers alone. Community-based mentorship programs provide mentoring opportunities to youth who lack access to or knowledge of mentors that meet their specific needs within their existing networks.

CONSIDERATIONS

Community-based mentorship can be a meaningful and significant tool for reaching students who lack enough informal relationships with positive and invested adults, parental or otherwise. It is a promising strategy that offers students an individualized relationship to support their individual needs. Mentorship integrates well with other mutually reinforcing activities outlined in Part 2 of this series. Youth who benefit from mentorship can also benefit from **trauma-informed practice** and **social-emotional learning** programs, as these are similarly focused on relationships and interpersonal skills. Several other skill-building strategies – notably **college and career readiness** and **service learning** programs – often incorporate mentoring as a key program component and/or delivery mechanism.

SKILLS AND DISPOSITIONS FOR YOUTH SUCCESS SUPPORTED BY MENTORING

The potential outcomes of a mentorship strategy vary depending on the particular needs of the student. A strong matching process, lasting relationship, and ongoing mentor support can help build **hope and optimism**, **perseverance**, **a sense of belonging**, **relationship building** skills, **positive personal identity**, and **social capital**.[62] In order for a mentoring program to achieve its maximum impact, it should be selected based on the needs of the school or community, and implemented according to evidence-based quality standards such as those outlined in the *Elements of Effective Practice for Mentoring.*[63]

EARLY WARNING INDICATORS (THE ABC'S)

Emerging research on mentorship programs reveals that these relationships often have a positive impact on students' school **attendance**. Violent **behaviors** may also be reduced among mentored youth. Some studies have shown modest positive effects on **course performance**, though this is more likely when the mentoring program focuses explicitly on academics. **[64]**

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[61] MENTOR (2005)

[62] DuBois, Portillo, Rhodes, Silverthorn & Valentine (2011); MENTOR (2007); Herrera, DuBois & Grossman (2007); DuBois, Holloway, Valentine & Cooper (2002); Jekielek, Moore & Hair (2002); Rhodes, Grossman & Resch (2000)

[63] MENTOR (2009)

[64] DuBois, Portillo, Rhodes, Silverthorn & Valentine (2011); MENTOR (2007); Herrera, DuBois & Grossman (2007); DuBois, Holloway, Valentine & Cooper (2002); Jekielek, Moore & Hair (2002); Rhodes, Grossman & Resch (2000)

FOR MORE INFORMATION

➢ **Washington State Mentors** - http://www.wamentors.org/organizations
WSM works to improve quality mentoring programs through comprehensive training and technical assistance. WSM is also a resource to connect with mentorship programs throughout the state.

➢ **Community For Youth** - http://communityforyouth.org/
CfY is currently partnered with four Seattle high schools, Chief Sealth, Cleveland, Franklin, and Rainier Beach. This organization matches and supports both mentors and students in a community that comes together regularly and develops ongoing, long-lasting relationships that nurture students and mentors.

➢ **Big Brothers Big Sisters of Puget Sound -** https://www.bbbsps.org/NetCommunity/
Big Brothers Big Sisters operates under the belief that inherent in every child is the ability to succeed and thrive in life. As the largest donor and volunteer supported mentoring network in the Puget Sound region, Big Brothers Big Sisters makes meaningful, monitored matches between adult volunteers and children.

➢ **Friends of the Children King County -** http://friendskc.org/
Through long-term mentoring relationships, Friends of the Children King County empowers youth facing the toughest challenges to achieve their greatest potential.

➢ **Education Northwest** - http://educationnorthwest.org/resource/360
Education Northwest provides resources for planning, designing, and implementing a youth mentoring program developed by Education Northwest's National Mentoring Center project.

➢ **MENTOR: The National Mentoring Partnership** - http://www.mentoring.org/
For more than 20 years, MENTOR has served the mentoring field by providing a public voice; developing and delivering resources to mentoring programs nationwide; and promoting quality for mentoring through standards, cutting-edge research, and state of the art tools.

➢ *Handbook of Youth Mentoring (**The SAGE Program on Applied Developmental Science**)*
The *Handbook* is a scholarly and comprehensive synthesis of current theory, research, and practice in the field of youth mentoring.

6. TRANSFORMING DISCIPLINE: POSITIVE BEHAVIORAL INTERVENTIONS AND SUPPORTS (PBIS)

Lead Contributor: Lori Lynass, Executive Director, Northwest PBIS Network

Positive Behavioral Interventions and Supports (PBIS) is a framework for decision-making, implementation and ongoing evaluation of a continuum of evidence-based strategies for developing academic and behavioral outcomes for students. It includes a multi-tiered (usually three) set of prevention supports adopted and designed to meet the needs of all students.[65] Individual school communities can use the PBIS framework to choose the interventions and supports that best meet the needs of their students. All of the mutually reinforcing strategies discussed in this series, and many of the initiatives already present in schools, may be incorporated into a PBIS framework. In addition, with intentionality, a PBIS framework can be used to foster both a positive, culturally responsive school climate.

PBIS offers a range of interventions that are systematically applied to students based on their demonstrated level of need. By creating clear school-wide expectations, PBIS addresses the role of the environment as it applies to both the development and the improvement of behavior problems.

The traditional three tiers of prevention and intervention include: 1) Primary Prevention, or "Universal Supports" for all students that focuses on proactive systems that establish behavioral expectations, common language, common practices, and consistent positively stated feedback; 2) Secondary Prevention for students who require additional small group or low-level individual supports to meet expectations; and 3) Tertiary Prevention for students that need intensive individualized support for meeting expectations. [66]

HOW IT WORKS

The first step in setting up a school-wide PBIS system is to secure administrator and staff agreement for active support and participation. The next step is to establish a school-wide behavior support team to guide and direct the process. This team should be made up of an administrator, grade-level representatives, support staff, parents, community members and students. The team then conducts a self-assessment of the current student supports and discipline system in order to guide the creation of an implementation plan. Finally, the team establishes a way to systematically collect data on office referrals, suspensions, expulsions, absenteeism and other relevant indicators on a regular basis to evaluate the effectiveness of the school-wide PBIS efforts.

CHARACTERISTICS OF PBIS[67]

➢ Espouse the belief that all children can be effectively taught appropriate behaviors
➢ Adhere to early and preventative intervention rather than more intensive later intervention
➢ Use a multi-tier model of service delivery
➢ Use research-based, scientifically validated interventions to the extent available
➢ Promote a culturally responsive framework for supporting all children and youth
➢ Monitor student progress to inform interventions

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[65] Sugai & Simonsen (2012)
[66] Positive Behavioral Interventions & Supports (n.d.)
[67] Positive Behavioral Interventions & Supports (n.d.)

> Use data to make decisions
> Use three types of assessments: 1) data comparison per day and per month for total office discipline referrals; 2) diagnostic determination of data by time of day, problem behavior, and location; and 3) progress monitoring to determine if the behavioral interventions are producing the desired effects.

How PBIS Impacts the Opportunity Gap

A PBIS framework can support the closing of the opportunity gap when there is both fidelity to the principles and practices, and flexibility to the community context. PBIS can impact the opportunity gap both by reducing the *overall* number of office referrals, suspensions, and expulsions, and by reducing race- and class-based disparities. According to the Civil Rights Project at UCLA, national rates of suspension for black secondary students increased by 12.5 percentage points between 1972-73 and 2009-10, which is more than 11 times the rate of increase for white students during the same period.[68] To address this issue, it is critical that PBIS be implemented in a culturally responsive fashion. Some research has shown that racial and ethnic disparities in disciplinary action persist even in PBIS schools when there is not an intentional effort to address them.[69] When done well, PBIS can assist teachers in schools that primarily serve racially, linguistically, and economically marginalized students to understand and support students in a consistent, supportive, and predictable way.

Considerations

PBIS is not a curriculum, an intervention, or a practice. It does not prescribe particular interventions. Rather, it is a framework that supports decision-making within a system of preventive and interventionist supports that may manifest differently in different contexts. Central to a PBIS framework is the rigorous use of data to inform ongoing decision-making and practice. In addition, PBIS includes a continuum or tiered system for schools to provide support for developing and rewarding positive behaviors. Capacity building among staff in understanding data, and in implementing policies and practices with fidelity is a critical component of PBIS success.

In addition, careful decision-making around choosing appropriate interventions for a particular school's community helps determine the ultimate success of the framework. This point is especially important for students who need the additional supports offered in tiers 2 and 3 so that they are able to benefit from this school-wide strategy. Other mutually reinforcing activities described in this series can easily be incorporated into the PBIS framework to ensure inclusion of students with varying levels of need.

One misunderstanding of PBIS is that schools must use extrinsic rewards. PBIS encourages schools to provide students with high ratios of positive-to-punitive feedback, and supports the notion that schools can do this with or without the use of any tangible incentives. PBIS does encourage schools that decide to provide extrinsic motivation (such as students earning a school-wide dance or other events) to ensure all students are able to participate. A PBIS framework can support the idea that these celebrations contribute to a welcoming learning environment, and that the use of extrinsic rewards for some students may prove motivating while they are in the process of building internal reinforcement skills.

Skills and Dispositions for Youth Success Supported by PBIS

Because PBIS is a decision-making framework, the choices made regarding the particular programs, interventions, and supports for an individual school affect the skills and dispositions that are developed for students in a PBIS school. With that in mind, a PBIS framework where behavioral expectations are clear and consistently reinforced should increase students'

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[68] Losen & Martinez (2013)
[69] Eber, Upreti & Rose (2010); Skiba, Shure & Williams (2012)

individual **self-management** skills, and thus their ability to form positive relationships with peers and adults. Further, PBIS can have positive effects on the climate and culture of schools, increasing students' perceptions of safety, and their **sense of belonging**.[70]

EARLY WARNING INDICATORS (THE ABC'S)

A fundamental goal of PBIS is to reduce the incidence of problem **behaviors** in schools. PBIS can impact **attendance** in two ways: directly, by reducing or eliminating out-of-school suspensions; or indirectly, by improving students' perceptions of safety and support at school. The evidence on PBIS' impact on academic performance is inconclusive. However, reductions in problem behavior resulting from school-wide PBIS can increase instructional time, and may ultimately result in improved **course performance and completion**.

FOR MORE INFORMATION

➢ **School Wide Positive Behavior Supports (SWPBS) –** http://www.pbis.org
SWPBS is the primary PBIS research resource out of the University of Oregon. SWPBS also provides trainers and consultants to schools to guide implementation and evaluation.

➢ **Northwest PBIS Network -** http://www.pbisnetwork.org/
The NW PBIS Network provides regional training and support for schools developing and sustaining school-wide positive behavior supports.

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[70] Bradshaw, Koth, Bevans, Ialongo & Leaf (2008); Caldarella, Shatzer, Gray, Young & Young (2011)

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7. TRANSFORMING DISCIPLINE: RESTORATIVE JUSTICE

Lead Contributor: Nicholas Bradford, M.Ed.

Restorative Justice (RJ) is an approach to handling harmful behavior in schools or youth development programs. Even the best teachers and safest schools experience conflict and misbehavior. Restorative Justice seeks to provide tools and processes for students and communities to transform these inevitable experiences into growth opportunities.

Research supports the notion that "Zero Tolerance" policies are not only ineffective for improving safety, behavior and school climate, but can actually lead to increased suspensions, dropouts, and misbehaviors.[71] Punitive discipline often exacerbates the causes of harmful behavior by excluding youth and eroding positive relationships with staff. Schools throughout the nation are finding success in using restorative practices to improve school climate and reduce behavioral incidents.[72]

Linkages between school connectedness and school success are outlined in the first part of this series. School connectedness is lower in in schools where students are suspended for minor infractions, as opposed to schools with less harsh policies.[73] In addition, students of color and those from low-income families may experience cultural barriers to school engagement and connectedness stemming from various causes: differing communication and behavior norms, an inability to identify with staff members, and lack of access to culturally responsive curricular materials and teachers. A 2000 study found that African-American youth and students attending urban schools experience lower levels of school connectedness.[74] Exclusionary discipline reinforces notions that some youth do not belong in school. RJ provides tools beyond student removal to address behavior concerns that stand in the way of all youth gaining access to a high-quality education.

HOW IT WORKS

The tools or practices that RJ uses are numerous, but include most notably the victim-offender conference. This process seeks to empower the offender to take responsibility and process the impact of the act that created harm. Youth are able to maintain dignity while being held accountable. The outcome of the conference is often a contract that reflects an "act of apology." This tool is just one of many that reflect the larger principles of RJ.

RJ programs generally focus on the impact of an action on the victim and community. Harm to relationships, rather than rule violations, are highlighted. By focusing on the relationship rather than the rule, teachers and staff members are able to engage youth in making amends and clarifying the effects of their actions on others.[75] Clarifying the harm or effect of an action creates opportunity to engage the offender in "making things right."

CHARACTERISTICS OF RESTORATIVE JUSTICE INITIATIVES:

➢ Develop community expectations through a community-based process
➢ Teach staff and students new skills to turn negative incidents into learning opportunities
➢ Interrupt harmful behavior patterns and cycles
➢ Actively involve students through circles, intentional reflective discussions, mediation, and conferencing

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[71] Skiba (2000); American Psychological Association Zero Tolerance Task Force (2008); Skager (2013)
[72] Lewis (2009)
[73] McNeely, Nonnemaker & Blum (2002)
[74] Bonny, Britto, Klosterman, Hornung & Slap (2000)
[75] Amstutz & Mullet (2005)

➢ Foster awareness of how all are affected by behavior
➢ Focus on defining actions in context as problematic, rather than individuals as problematic
➢ Resolve problems by asking open-ended questions, exploring responses, reflecting on motives and emotions, and building consensus for next steps
➢ Follow up to determine ongoing steps and support reflective processes

HOW RESTORATIVE JUSTICE IMPACTS THE OPPORTUNITY GAP

Research over the past 25 years has consistently found evidence of socio-economic and racial disproportionality in the administration of school discipline without evidence of higher rates of misbehavior within these populations.[76] This disproportionality manifests in a number of ways, one being that minority youth are given significantly harsher treatment when referred for the same offense.[77] Alternative approaches to discipline can end the disproportional suspension rates of students of color, thus reducing the "push-out" effect that many students, particularly black and Latino males, experience.

CONSIDERATIONS

It is important to note that Restorative Justice can be more effective when used in conjunction with practices that help to prevent harmful behaviors in the first place. These include school-wide focus on **cultural responsiveness** and improved **school climate**. RJ is a strong strategy to employ within a **PBIS** framework, and works well alongside **trauma-informed** practices.

The process of implementing Restorative Justice in a school community is incremental, and may follow one of a few different frameworks in existence. Fidelity to the processes and ongoing opportunities for sense-making among staff and students at various stages will develop the process to increasing levels of success, widening and deepening the effects.

SKILLS AND DISPOSITIONS FOR YOUTH SUCCESS SUPPORTED BY RESTORATIVE JUSTICE

Some of the skills and dispositions for youth success discussed in this series are inherent to the work of RJ. These include **building relationships** between staff and students, developing **belonging**, compassionate dispositions, and **conflict resolution** skills. If done with a true spirit of student involvement, the process may also strengthen students' **communication** and **collaboration** skills.

EARLY WARNING INDICATORS (THE ABC'S)

Because RJ provides alternatives to suspension and expulsion, discipline-related **absences** are reduced. RJ can also reduce **absences** by increasing a sense of school connectedness. A recent summary of evidence from schools implementing RJ showed consistent improvements in both school climate and discipline referrals.[78] Because RJ builds an infrastructure that interrupts patterns of harmful **behavior**, it reduces future transgressions. Whether restorative justice has an effect on **course performance** is unknown; however, the increased presence of students in school, and students' increased connection to school should ultimately lead to improved academic results.

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[76] Costenbader & Markson (1998); Dunbar & Villarruel (2004); Gregory, Skiba & Noguera (2010); Washington Appleseed & TeamChild (2012)
[77] Losen & Skiba (2010)
[78] International Institute for Restorative Practices (2013)

RESTORATIVE JUSTICE IN ACTION: THE RESTORATIVE JUSTICE CENTER OF THE NORTHWEST & BIG PICTURE HIGH

SCHOOL

The Restorative Justice Center of the Northwest currently serves a number of schools around the Puget Sound. One of those schools is Big Picture High School. The work at Big Picture began about three years ago and was initiated by students who came together around a common concern regarding discipline practices. The students formed the RJ Youth Council, and the school community committed to using restorative practices on multiple levels, including conflict resolution in the classroom, communication between students and staff regarding academic struggles, and incidents that involve significant harm. The teachers have used "circles" (a coming together of participants to share information, points of view, and feelings on a particular issue) to address expectations and incidents of harm in the classroom. The principal has used restorative practices both informally and formally. Youth who struggle in class may be sent to the office, where the principal engages in a facilitated discussion about the relationships within the class and the impact of the actions overall. He will reinforce the expectations and why we have those expectations, as opposed to focusing on the breaking of rules as intrinsically problematic.

When significant harm occurs, the principal is able to engage numerous adults and youth in a conference. The author of the act and those impacted agree to the next steps. A contract is signed that is specific in the nature of amends. The youth will often make an apology either publicly or privately; there is often an educational project; and some work takes place to show there are repairs to the relationships. Big Picture continues to refine their processes to provide consistent access channels for students and staff to better utilize the tools that RJ has to offer.

FOR MORE INFORMATION

➢ **SaferSanerSchools -** http://www.safersanerschools.org
   SaferSanerSchools supports whole-school change through restorative practices. Their approach seeks to reduce misbehavior, violence & bullying, suspensions and expulsions, and student & teacher absenteeism. They also seek to increase instructional time, safety, a sense of community, and student & teacher engagement.

➢ **Restorative Justice Center of the Northwest** – http://www.RJfacilitator.com
   The RJ Center is a Puget Sound based agency (founded by Nicholas Bradford, M.Ed.) that provides training, as well as programmatic and policy consultation.

➢ *Implementing Restorative Justice: A Guide for Schools*
   http://www.icjia.state.il.us/public/pdf/BARJ/SCHOOL%20BARJ%20GUIDEBOOOK.pdf
   This guide was developed by the Illinois Justice Information Authority and offers a detailed overview of how to implement restorative practices.

8. DEVELOPING SKILLS: BUILDING GROWTH MINDSET

People with a "growth mindset" hold the belief that intellectual ability is elastic and will grow and develop with effort. Creating and sustaining school and youth program environments that foster students' growth mindset is an effective approach to building motivation and engagement, and bolstering academic success. To build growth mindsets in students, it is critical that teachers and youth program staff continuously model and reinforce the idea that every child can grow his or her abilities.

The growth mindset concept is based on over 20 years of research from Stanford University psychologist Carol Dweck and others. Dweck's work shows that the ways in which we think about intelligence and talent have a direct relationship to our success. People with a fixed mindset operate under the assumption that human intelligence and talent are innate characteristics that cannot be influenced or developed through hard work and effort. They believe that an individual is either smart or not. In contrast, people with a growth mindset believe that both intelligence and talent are malleable. They believe that one is actually capable of increasing one's intelligence and talent through hard work and persistence.

Research findings support the potency of the growth mindset concept and the efficacy of growth mindset initiatives for youth and adults.[79] A growth mindset is one of the core skills and dispositions that support school and life success, as described in Part One of this series.

Elements of "fixed" (i.e. not "growth") mindsets are ingrained in society's thinking, teaching and communication. Students in our schools are labeled and tracked from a very young age, and may come to think of themselves and their abilities in fixed terms early on. In addition, beliefs that undergird a fixed mindset are often intertwined with race, gender, class and other stereotypes. The mindsets of staff members in schools and youth programs affect how they view themselves, their students and their school communities. Mindsets also affect the messaging that these adults pass on to the children they work with. To counter the effects of these tendencies, it is important that growth mindset initiatives intentionally address the attitudes of both adults and young people.

HOW IT WORKS

Growth mindset initiatives typically begin with the training of an organization's staff. This work initiates a shift in mindset for the adults in the organization. A goal of training is to influence how staff interact and communicate with youth, both verbally and nonverbally. Growth mindset initiatives often provide tools that explicitly teach students the science of brain development, with an emphasis on the malleability of intelligence and ability. Ongoing training understanding for both adults and students is helpful to develop automaticity of thought and action patterns in different contexts. Eventually, a look at school and program policies can be an important step for recognizing and shifting institutional norms to support a pervasive mindset shift.

Messages from adults that focus on intelligence, ability and/or talent imply that students either have these attributes or not, teaching and reinforcing a fixed mindset. Dweck points out that "young people can become dependent on praise, fearful of challenges, allergic to effort, and demoralized by critical feedback."[80] Growth mindset initiatives teach adults to encourage students for their effort, work, persistence or strategy. Doing so implicitly teaches a growth mindset and affirms that success comes from effort, not talent or natural ability. Adults also learn to frame challenges as progress toward mastery, not simply completion.

[79] Aronson, Fried & Good (2001); Blackwell, Trzesniewski & Dweck (2007); Ramsden, Richardson, Josse, Thomas, Ellis, Shakeshar, Seguier & Price (2011)
[80] Dweck (2008), p.58

Explicitly training students (and adults) about growth mindset includes imparting the understanding that the brain can forge new connections and pathways, and that one can improve one's intelligence by working on difficult tasks. Lessons on these topics have proven effective for students when taught by teachers, outside workshop facilitators and college-aged mentors.[81] This aspect of growth mindset initiatives is critical to shifting mindsets for both youth and adults.

Finally, connecting to families and community members on the role of mindsets in success can integrate a growth mindset into the climate of a school and surrounding community. Tools and trainings are available to support this important work.

CHARACTERISTICS OF GROWTH MINDSET INITIATIVES

➢ Teach the importance of providing encouragement rather than praise
➢ Train adults to explicitly teach youth about brain development
➢ Provide tools and lessons for staff development in classrooms or youth development programs
➢ Strengthen positive school climate and cultural responsiveness work
➢ Enhance academic supports

HOW GROWTH MINDSET INITIATIVES IMPACT THE OPPORTUNITY GAP

Evidence shows that people will perform worse on certain tasks when reminded of a pervasive negative stereotype about a group with which they identify. The reminder can be as simple as checking a demographic box before taking a test. This phenomenon is known as "stereotype threat." Recent studies point to the efficacy of developing a growth mindset to counter the effects of stereotype threat based on race and gender.[82] Actively building growth mindsets for adults and children in schools, youth development programs, families and communities can counter some of the damaging effects of marginalization, and ultimately diminish opportunity and achievement gaps.

CONSIDERATIONS

Incorporating growth mindset initiatives into the work of developing a **positive and sustainable school climate** can be transformative for students and staff members. Growth mindset is a complement to **trauma-informed practices** and to the non-punitive disciplinary approaches outlined in this series. Growth mindset work can enhance the larger picture of how to address the needs of all students in our schools. While growth mindset initiatives can show immediate results, it is likely they will need to be school-wide and comprehensive in approach to sustain their effects over time.[83] Other mutually reinforcing strategies may help growth mindset initiatives to succeed, and support students in accessing their benefits.

SKILLS AND DISPOSITIONS FOR YOUTH SUCCESS SUPPORTED BY GROWTH MINDSET INITIATIVES

Growth mindset initiatives clearly support the development of **growth mindsets** in youth. Studies of the "Brainology" intervention have shown promising results on both mindsets (beliefs) and student achievement.[84] Emerging research reveals that this work can also build many other skills related to motivation and engagement. Some of these include **perseverance**, **self-efficacy**, and **future orientation**.[85]

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[81] Good, Aronson & Inzlicht (2003)

[82] Aronson, Fried & Good (2001); Good, Aronson & Inzlicht (2003); Aronson, Cohen & McColskey (2009)

[83] Donohoe, Topping & Hannah (2012)

[84] Romero, Paunesku & Dweck (2010); Paunesku, Goldman & Dweck (2011);

[85] Romero, Paunesku & Dweck (2010); Schmidt, Shumow & Durik (2012)

Early Warning Indicators (The ABC's)

There is emerging evidence to suggest that growth mindset initiatives can have a meaningful effect on students' **course performance** in both the short and long term.[86] Students who believe that they can improve their skills and intelligence work harder and are more successful as a result. Growth mindset initiatives may also result in fewer **absences** and **behaviors**[87] related to a lack of connectedness or sense of success in school.

For More Information

➢ **Mindset Works** - http://www.brainology.us/webnav/whatismindset.aspx
This website and the tools it provides are exclusively focused on Growth Mindset development. The Mindset Works® School Kit includes initial staff professional development, interactive programs for students, and tools for administrators, teachers and students to use on an ongoing basis to deepen the growth mindset in their schools.

➢ **Youth Worker Methods Training: Ask-Listen-Encourage** - http://cypq.org/products_and_services/training/YWM
As part of the Weikart Center for Youth Program Quality "Youth Worker Methods" Series, this training focuses on practices to encourage rather than praise students. School's Out Washington offers these trainings and can set up custom trainings for programs or schools.

➢ **Thrive Foundation for Youth** - http://www.stepitup2thrive.org/mindset/group-lessons/
Step-It-Up-2-Thrive lessons on growth mindset mirror the successful approach of Dr. Carol Dweck's team at Stanford University to shift youth to a growth mindset.

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[86] Romero, Paunesku & Dweck (2010); Paunesku, Goldman & Dweck (2011) (Secondary School); Paunesku, Goldman & Dweck (2011) (East Renfrewshire)
[87] Aronson, Fried & Good (2001); Romero, Paunesku & Dweck (2010)

9. DEVELOPING SKILLS: SOCIAL AND EMOTIONAL LEARNING PROGRAMS AND CURRICULUM

Research shows that social and emotional skills are pivotal to student success in school, career and life. While all strategies in this series focus on building these skills and dispositions in young people, Social and Emotional Learning Programs and Curriculum are developed to explicitly teach these skills. Providing students with opportunities to learn and practice these skills in a sequential, active, focused, and explicit[88] manner find improvements in virtually all aspects of school climate and culture. Students and adults develop the skills to promote "safe, caring, participatory, and responsive" learning environments.[89]

HOW THEY WORK

SEL programs can take a variety of forms, ranging from direct instruction by way of packaged curriculum to integrated school- and system-wide approaches focused on relationships and culture. They are typically preventative in nature and target known risk and preventative factors in student development. Many school based programs focus on the 5 competency areas identified by the Collective for Academic Social and Emotional Learning (CASEL): self-awareness, self-management, social awareness, relationship skills, and responsible decision making.   CASEL had conducted a review of SEL programs and have identified CASEL Select programs which meet the following criteria:

1. They are **well designed**, **teacher taught**, and **classroom-based**.
2. They provide **training and other implementation support**.
3. There is **evidence of effectiveness**. Many SEL programs, including the two specifically mentioned in this paper, have been rigorously evaluated using pre- and post- outcome measurement and a comparison group in randomized control trials.[90]

CHARACTERISTICS OF SEL PROGRAMS

SEL programs are best distinguished by their explicit and intentional focus on the development of social and emotional competencies. For the purposes of this piece, two SEL programs will be briefly discussed: Second Step and the RULER approach. These two have been chosen based on their strong evidence base, system-level supports, promising successes in King County, and/or widespread adoption. All schools considering an SEL program should choose the program that is the right fit for their school context, needs, and resources.

MODEL PROGRAMS

➢ The **Second Step** program is a comprehensive, manual-based SEL curriculum developed by the Committee for Children, based in Seattle, Washington. Second Step is generally taught by classroom teachers, who receive training in facilitating structured, discussion-based lessons that focus on empathy, social problem solving, and emotion management. Evaluations of Second Step have found the program to have positive effects on student behavior and achievement, but implementation matters. Teachers can reinforce the curriculum by modeling pro-social behaviors and using instructional practices that reinforce skills taught.

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[88] Durlak, Weissberg, Dymnicki, Taylor & Schellinger (2011)
[89] Cohen (2006), p. 202
[90] Collaborative for Academic, Social and Emotional Learning (CASEL) (2012)

> **RULER** is a multi-year program that provides curriculum for students with substantial training for educators. RULER is an acronym representing five key emotional literacy skills: **r**ecognizing emotions in the self and others, **u**nderstanding the causes and consequences of emotions, **l**abeling emotional experiences with an accurate and diverse vocabulary, and **e**xpressing and **r**egulating emotions.[91] Skill-building lessons are accompanied by the integration of supportive behaviors among the adults who work with young people. RULER is a program that can be scaled to entire schools or districts, and is currently being implemented in all Bellevue public elementary schools and in pockets across King County, such as South Shore PreK-8 in Seattle. Evaluations of the RULER approach have demonstrated positive effects on school and classroom cultures, teachers' perceptions of student behavior, student/teacher relationship quality, and grades.[92]

In addition to being evidence based programs, Second Step and RULER provide extensive implementation support.

CONSIDERATIONS

Social and Emotional Learning (SEL) programs are perhaps the best positioned to *teach* the skills and dispositions that support youth success in school. These programs are most effective when they are preventative, developmentally appropriate, and integrated throughout the school day.[93] It is essential that the skills taught are modeled, reinforced, and consistently supported by all school staff, in after-school programs, and in the community. Comprehensive SEL school programs cannot be the sole strategy for supporting the development of student motivation, engagement, and 21st century skills. Disciplinary practices and relational dynamics at school can either enhance or detract from, the program effectiveness.[94] School instruction can be enhanced when combined with additional preventative approaches to support student success including community schools, expanded learning opportunities, a Positive Behavior Intervention and Supports (PBIS), and or Multi-Tiered Systems of Support (MTSS).

HOW SEL PROGRAMS IMPACT THE OPPORTUNITY GAP

While social and emotional factors can put students at risk for poor achievement, they can also be thought of as protective. Improving relationships through SEL programs is a promising approach to improving student motivation and student achievement. The effects may be most powerful for low-income students and students of color, who are often most in need of supports.[95] One recent study of predominantly low-income students found that positive relationships with teachers were protective against achievement problems for those with low levels of effortful control. Conversely, effortful control was protective against achievement problems for students with poor teacher relationships.[96] This makes SEL programs, which teach effortful control *and* improve student-teacher relationships, seem especially promising.

SKILLS AND DISPOSITIONS FOR YOUTH SUCCESS SUPPORTED BY SEL PROGRAMS

The Motivation, Engagement and 21st Century Skills model developed by the Youth Development for Education Results workgroup of the Road Map Project includes many skills that are closely related to the CASEL competencies, particularly **self-management**, **belonging and identity**, and **interpersonal skills**. When schools are explicit, intentional, and consistent in

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[91] Brackett & Rivers (n.d.), p. 9
[92] Rivers, Brackett, Reyes, Elbertson & Salovey (2013); Brackett, Rivers, Reyes & Salovey (2012)
[93] Elias, Zins, Graczyk & Weissberg (2003)
[94] Frey, Hirschstein & Guzzo (2000); Cooke, Ford, Levine, Bourke, Newell & Lapidus (2007)
[95] Becker & Luthar (2002)
[96] Liew, Chen & Hughes (2010)

teaching these skills, students' capacities can increase. This leads to overall improvements in school culture and, as a result, student achievement.[97]

EARLY WARNING INDICATORS (THE ABC'S)

There is strong and compelling evidence that fully integrated SEL programs improve students' connection to school (i.e. **attendance**) and reduce **behavior** problems.[98] Furthermore, there is a growing understanding that they can improve **course performance**. A recent, comprehensive meta-analysis of SEL programs identified critical components of effective SEL programs that can be captured with the acronym SAFE: sequenced, active, focused, and explicit SAFE programs use a **S**equenced set of activities to achieve skill objectives; use **A**ctive forms of learning; Include at least one program component **F**ocused on developing personal or social skills; and **E**xplicitly target particular personal or social skills for development. When programs were implemented with fidelity by trained classroom teachers, and addressed all components of the SAFE model, they were associated with statistically significant improvements in both test scores and grades.[99]

FOR MORE INFORMATION

➢ **Collaborative for Academic, Social and Emotional Learning (CASEL)** - http://www.casel.org/
CASEL's mission is to help make evidence-based social and emotional learning an integral part of education from preschool through high school. They provide research and guidance on policy and practice for educators, parents, and partners.

➢ **Second Step** - http://www.cfchildren.org/second-step.aspx
Second Step is a comprehensive social and emotional skill development program focused on early education through grade eight. Developed by the Committee for Children, the program provides comprehensive curriculum for all grades, and has partnered with the Devereux Student Strengths Assessment to adapt their DESSA SEL-skill assessment tool for use with Second Step programs.

➢ **RULER Approach** - http://ei.yale.edu/ruler/
Developed by the Yale Center for Emotional Intelligence, RULER is a multi-phase school improvement process that attempts to integrate emotional learning into every aspect of the school curriculum and community. Ruler has been shown to improve achievement as well as school climate and culture.

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[97] Osher, Bear, Sprague & Doyle (2010)
[98] Durlak, Weissberg, Dymnicki, Taylor & Schellinger (2011); Greenburg, Weissberg, O'Brien, Zins, Fredericks, Resnick & Elias (2003); Payton, Wardlaw, Graczyk, Bloodworth, Tompsett & Weissberg (2000)
[99] Durlak, Weissberg, Dymnicki, Taylor & Schellinger (2011)

10. DEVELOPING SKILLS: COLLEGE AND CAREER READINESS PROGRAMS

Formal college and career readiness programs can be an important complement to instruction in academic skills. These programs typically teach academic *behaviors* explicitly and intentionally, and support college-going by providing students with information on college preparation and admission processes. By teaching time management, effective studying, and goal setting, college and career readiness programs can influence grades and achievement on standardized tests. By providing students with a college/career vision, and guiding them through the process of reaching it, these programs often provide students with the motivation they need to graduate high school college- and career-ready.

HOW IT WORKS

Several programs provide structured support for college and career readiness through classes. Advancement via Individual Determination (AVID) is one such program. Students enroll in AVID classes in middle and high school, and receive tutoring, college information, and instruction in note taking, time management and related skill areas. Research on AVID has shown that program participants had lower dropout rates, higher levels of college preparation and higher college enrollment and retention rates than comparison groups.[100] During the school day, college and career readiness programs are often carried out in advisory classes. In Washington State, Navigation 101 provides comprehensive curricula based on 6th through 12th grade academic and guidance standards. Early program evaluations have shown that the program has a positive impact on graduation rates, student and family engagement and college preparatory course enrollment.[101] In addition to Navigation 101, there are a number of tools that support college-going through the use of planning and self-assessment tools. Examples include ConnectEDU, ACT's EXPLORE and PLAN tools, the College Board suite, and Washington State's High School and Beyond Plan.

A number of community based organizations (CBOs) focus on college readiness both in and out of school. Many programs provide focused mentoring to students to see them through the college preparation and admissions process. One review of research on mentorship and college access found that mentorship had a number of proven impacts, including: increased grade promotion, reduced truancy, stronger goal orientation, and increased knowledge of college and financial aid.[102] Most research suggests that students benefit from the consistent presence of a caring adult through high school; the most successful mentorships therefore are those where the mentoring relationship is close and sustained over a long period of time.[103] Indeed, a key benefit of mentoring is the relationship itself; "Policies and practices that enable emotionally supportive relationships can have a positive impact on academic achievement by helping students develop the capacity for strategic thinking, problem-solving, information-seeking, experimentation, and optimism—all of which are associated with positive academic behaviors."[104]

While adult encouragement is critically important, peers also play a role in college decision-making. Sokatch found that low socioeconomic status urban youth were ten times more likely to enroll in a four-year postsecondary institution when their friends planned to enroll, and when they thought their friends wanted *them* to enroll.[105] Many programs, recognizing the importance of peers in determining college-going behavior, and provide opportunities for students to interact with a college-going peer group through academic enrichment activities. The Center for Higher Education Policy Analysis recommends that

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[100] Cunningham, Redmond & Merisotis (2003)
[101] Newell, Hubert & Ackleson (2011)
[102] Pathways to College Network & National College Access Network (2011)
[103] Gandara & Bial (2001)
[104] Savitz-Romer, Jager-Hyman & Coles (2009)
[105] Sokatch (2006)

college access programs capitalize on the power of peers by: establishing cohorts, making program identity visible, scheduling regular meetings over a sustained period of time, focusing on academics, and equipping students with the tools necessary to college preparation, application, and acceptance.[106]

CHARACTERISTICS OF COLLEGE AND CAREER READINESS PROGRAMS

- ➢ Encourage students to envision a positive future for themselves
- ➢ Enable students to establish realistic goals, create a plan to work toward them and reflect on progress
- ➢ Intentionally and explicitly teach self-management and academic success skills
- ➢ Incorporate self-assessments that provide students with insight into their interests, abilities and academic strengths and weaknesses
- ➢ Provide students with early and continuous information on college preparation and admissions processes
- ➢ Provide students with a college-going peer group and/or the consistent presence of a caring adult

CONSIDERATIONS

College and career readiness is a shared responsibility. CBO partners play an integral role in building students' skills and dispositions, but will be most effective when their efforts are supported by college-going cultures in schools. College-going cultures are characterized by clear expectations about postsecondary attainment in the school mission statement, strong student-staff relationships, multiplex ties among staff, and the dedication of high-value time and space to college readiness.[107]

SKILLS AND DISPOSITIONS FOR YOUTH SUCCESS SUPPORTED BY COLLEGE AND CAREER READINESS PROGRAMS

College and career readiness programs build students' **future orientation** by encouraging college and career aspirations, and teaching goal management skills. Since postsecondary goals involve focus and effort over a long period of time, programs can also build **perseverance** in students. **Positive mindsets** are supported by making schoolwork relevant to life goals. By guiding students through the complexities of the admissions and financial aid processes, college and career readiness programs also bolster participants' **social capital**. The ability to maintain social ties and access resources is widely considered to be a factor not only in college access, but also in persistence and success.[108]

HOW COLLEGE AND CAREER READINESS PROGRAMS IMPACT THE OPPORTUNITY GAP

It is well known that low-income students attend and graduate from college at much lower rates than their higher income peers. The reasons for this are a complex interplay of economic, academic, personal and social factors. College and career readiness programs address root causes in all of these areas. Some programs provide scholarships directly, and most provide guidance on applying for other forms of student aid. Academic encouragement and tutoring bolster academic preparation, as well as the skills and dispositions necessary for postsecondary success. Low-income students may lack college-going role models, both at home and among their peers, so the mentoring and social support offered by college and career readiness programs is tremendously important.

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[106] Center for Higher Education Policy Analysis (CHEPA) (2006)
[107] Weinstein & Savitz-Romer (2009)
[108] Tinto (1993)

EARLY WARNING INDICATORS (THE ABC'S)

College and career readiness programs are closely tied to academic outcomes. By cultivating academic goals in students, these programs increase ties to school, and minimize the likelihood that a student will develop **attendance** problems. The tutoring and academic behavior supports that these programs provide can have an impact on both college-ready **course enrollment and performance**.

COLLEGE AND CAREER READINESS PROGRAMS IN ACTION: FEDERAL WAY PUBLIC SCHOOLS

Federal Way School District has implemented AVID at the district level. Federal Way SD has 130 languages spoken by families and over the last 10 years the poverty rate has increased. The School District faced huge barriers to successful college admittance. Creating a college-going culture was essential to providing equitable access to higher education. Ten years ago the superintendent found AVID to be the best and most robust program to be implemented district wide. Not every student will choose to go on to post-secondary education but in the Federal Way School District, leaders want it to be up to the student, and not demographics.

It has been 10 years since Federal Way began the implementation of AVID at 11 middle and high schools. In 2012, Federal Way High School AVID seniors graduated with a 100% acceptance rate to at least one college. While not all schools in the district have seen equivalent success, possibly due to issues with fidelity to the program model, the 30-year national and 10-year Federal Way track record are strong.

FOR MORE INFORMATION

- ➢ **AVID** - http://www.avid.org/
  By developing social emotional as well as academic skills, AVID seeks to ready students for college. Typically offered as an elective class, the AVID curriculum uses the WICR (writing, inquiry, collaboration, and reading) method.

- ➢ **College Access Now** - http://www.collegeaccessnow.org/
  College Access Now coaches help low-income and first-generation students to get to college and succeed in their postsecondary studies.

- ➢ **College Success Foundation** - http://www.collegesuccessfoundation.org/wa/home
  College Success Foundation provides scholarships and support for underserved low-income students so that they can graduate from high school college- and career-ready.

- ➢ **State of Washington Office of the Superintendent of Public Instruction Career and College Readiness Resources** - http://www.k12.wa.us/SecondaryEducation/CareerCollegeReadiness/default.aspx
  This site provides guidance resources to help students make important choices in the areas of course selection, goal setting, career planning and postsecondary options, including financial aid.

- ➢ **Successful Youth, Inc.** - http://www.dannakjohnston.org/
  Successful Youth, Inc. provides academic and confidence-building activities to Seattle youth to promote on-time high school graduation and college and career readiness.

- ➢ **University of Washington (UW) Dream Project** - http://www.washington.edu/dreamproject/
  The Dream Project at the UW matches college student mentors with low-income and first-generation students in King County to provide support through the college admissions process.

11. DEVELOPING SKILLS: ARTS INCLUSION AND INTEGRATION

Lead Contributor: Elizabeth Whitford, Executive Director, Arts Corps

The new Common Core State Standards (CCSS) began in language arts and mathematics and have now inspired parallel efforts to develop new standards in science, social studies and the arts. With it, CCSS have brought a greater focus on habits of mind—higher order thinking skills that relate to the 21st century skills young people will need to master to participate in a 21st century creative and service-based economy. As these new standards emerge, districts and teachers have to learn how to develop curriculum that meaningfully builds these skills, as well as classroom-based assessments to measure student growth in these areas.

While for many, 21st century skills such as creativity and imagination might seem synonymous with arts learning, this perspective is not reflected in national or Washington State Arts Standards[109]. Until recently, arts standards have emphasized the development of discrete techniques and skills in specific arts forms, not the higher order thinking skills or processes involved in creative expression. The National Core Arts Standards currently in development seek to emphasize the development of 21st century skills alongside artistic technique and skills.

The development of 21st century skills is a key strategy to support school success for all learners, as presented in the first part of this series. Emerging research supports the notion that stand-alone arts education and integrated arts education can contribute to academic success[110] and can be a key driver of 21st century skill development.[111]

HOW IT WORKS

Arts inclusion can be done in a variety of ways. Partnerships with community-based youth development organizations can support these various efforts. Some schools have looked to partnerships to develop and implement arts curricula during or after school that focus both on technical skills and knowledge, and on 21st century skill development. Others have used partnerships to strengthen efforts to integrate arts into the regular curriculum in order to simultaneously develop art and other subject area skills and knowledge while supporting 21st century skills and academic engagement. The latter option requires greater levels of commitment, interest, and professional development from and for staff members; it can also result in greater rewards for students in terms of strengthening student engagement, recall, and analytic reasoning skills.[112]

CHARACTERISTICS OF HIGH QUALITY ARTS PROGRAMS[113]

- Foster broad dispositions and skills, especially the capacity to think creatively and the capacity to make connections
- Teach artistic skills and techniques
- Develop aesthetic awareness
- Provide ways of pursuing understanding of the world
- Provide a way for students to engage with community, civic, and social issues
- Provide a venue for students to express themselves
- Help students develop as individuals

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[109] State of Washington, Office of the Superintendent of Public Instruction (OSPI) (2011)
[110] Fiske (1999); Ingram & Riedel (2003); Rooney (2004)
[111] Fiske (1999); Psilos (2002); DeMoss & Morris (2002); Rooney (2004)
[112] DeMoss & Morris (2002)
[113] Seidel, Tishman, Winner, Hetland & Palmer (n.d.)

HOW ARTS INTEGRATION IMPACTS THE OPPORTUNITY GAP

According to a major study by UCLA, low-income students who attended arts-rich high schools were twice as likely to go on to receive a bachelor's degree than those at arts-poor high schools.[114] Despite the growing evidence of the importance of arts inclusion and integration in contributing to the closing of opportunity and achievement gaps[115], the disparity in arts learning opportunities between affluent and lower-income communities continues to grow. A recent national survey on arts participation by the National Endowment for the Arts underscored this problem: African-American and Latino respondents were half as likely as their white counterparts to report having had any childhood arts education.[116]

The same pattern around arts participation has been documented in Seattle. In fact, a recent report from Seattle Public Schools[117] shows that race is the greatest predictor for elementary music access. This same report found that at the secondary level, students who are black, bilingual or eligible for free or reduced price lunch are less likely to enroll in arts classes. It also revealed that in 2011-2012, the odds of African American, Latino and American Indian/Alaskan Native students being enrolled in an arts class were significantly lower – as much as 33% lower – than their white counterparts.

CONSIDERATIONS

One of the challenges contributing to an education system with stratified access to arts education lies within arts education itself. The historical approach to arts education in the United States, as reflected in the national arts standards, is one based on the conservatory tradition of arts education—a system of education designed to produce a creative elite of technically advanced artists who will become the producers of art for the economic elite, performing in the symphony hall or hanging work in galleries.[118] As such, school-based arts education has not been well designed as central to the education for all students.

Through an emphasis on teaching the 21st century skills developed through creative practice, principals, teachers and parents are increasingly recognizing the benefits of arts education for all young people. Increased efforts to universalize access to the arts will support low-income students and students of color to be better equipped to both thrive in school and participate in today's creative economies. 21st century skills have been a focus of many community-based arts education programs for years, rendering them excellent partners and resources in this work.[119]

SKILLS AND DISPOSITIONS FOR YOUTH SUCCESS SUPPORTED BY INTEGRATED ARTS INITIATIVES

Expanding access to arts curricula for all students and extending its focus beyond technical training supports the development of **creativity, critical thinking**, **collaboration** and **communication skills[120]**. In addition, arts education has also been shown to contribute to student **self-efficacy**, persistence, and engagement in learning.[121]

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[114] Catterall (2009)
[115] Catterall, Dumais & Hampden-Thompson (2012)
[116] Rabkin & Hedberg (2011)
[117] De Soto (2012)
[118] Rabkin, Reynolds, Hedberg & Shelby (2011)
[119] Aprill & Burnaford (2006)
[120] Fiske (1999); Psilos (2002); DeMoss & Morris (2002); Rooney (2004)
[121] Deasy & Stevenson (2005); Catterall & Peppler (2007)

EARLY WARNING INDICATORS (THE ABC'S)

There is little conclusive evidence that arts integration affects school **attendance** and **behavior** directly. There is, however, research that shows a correlation between arts involvement and stronger academic performance (i.e. **course performance**).[122] Arts programs, however, have a great deal of potential to improve academic outcomes at all levels. By their very nature, well-run arts activities are highly engaging to children and youth, and help them to build critical 21st-century skills.[123]

ARTS INTEGRATION IN ACTION: SEATTLE PUBLIC SCHOOLS AND ARTS CORPS

Arts Corps is a Seattle-based arts education program that has focused its work around the development and assessment of habits of mind. In 2012, Seattle Public Schools (SPS) partnered with Arts Corps to develop arts curriculum and assessments that district arts teachers could use to foster and assess for 21st century skills.

Arts Corps worked with national education consultant Dennie Palmer Wolf and SPS arts specialists to develop unit plans and performance based assessments to help teachers foster and document their students' growing 21st century skills. Arts Corps first approached this work by gaining the perspectives of key stakeholders to help inform the planning process, including arts specialists, curriculum managers, school principals and regional collective impact efforts (YDEKC and the Road Map Project). Arts Corps also reviewed current assessment practices within arts learning in Seattle Public Schools, as well as research on best practices in assessment of college readiness skills and creative capacities nationally and internationally.

This work has resulted in high quality unit plans and performance based assessments that build intentional opportunities to develop and explore 21st century skills. SPS is also developing support tools for principals (as the on-site supervisors of arts specialists) to bolster their understanding of arts teacher practices that cultivate 21st century skills.

FOR MORE INFORMATION

➢ **Arts Corps** - http://www.artscorps.org/
   Arts Corps unlocks the creative power of youth through arts education and community collaboration so that all young people have the courage to imagine and freedom to create a just and vibrant future. Programming is offered in schools and in community locations in Seattle and Highline School Districts.

➢ **The Creative Advantage -** http://www.seattle.gov/arts/creative_advantage/
   The Creative Advantage is reinvesting in Seattle's students and our community's economic and creative future by addressing current inequities in access and restoring arts education to all Seattle classrooms. By 2020 all Seattle students will have access to a continuum of arts classes, from two hours of visual arts and music per week for our youngest learners, to media arts courses at the middle school level, to connecting the arts to careers in high school. The Creative Advantage is a collaborative project between the City of Seattle Arts and Cultural Affairs, the Seattle Foundation and Seattle Public Schools.

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[122] Fiske (1999); DeMoss & Morris (2002); Ingram & Riedel (2003); Rooney (2004); Upitis (2011)
[123] Eisner (2004); Shernoff & Vandell (2007)

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12. LEVERAGING PARTNERSHIPS: HIGH-QUALITY EXPANDED LEARNING OPPORTUNITIES

Expanded Learning Opportunities (ELOs) are structured, intentional, and creative learning experiences that occur outside the traditional school day. ELOs build linkages with schools to align in-school and out-of-school learning. High-quality ELOs provide enriching experiences for youth with activities that both supplement and complement classroom-based instruction.[124] Research shows that high-quality ELOs play a critical role in the healthy development and educational achievement of young people.[125]

Across the nation, conventional thinking about when, where, and how kids learn is changing. Poor academic outcomes and widening achievement gaps have led to a growing realization that schools cannot produce results for young people in isolation. High-quality ELO's bridge school and out-of-school experiences through aligned content and partnerships with school staff to enhance student learning.

The Statewide Youth Program Quality Standards released in April 2014 by School's Out Washington provides standards of quality for ELO programs, and recommends aligned tools to assess the quality of programs.

HOW IT WORKS

ELOs are typically provided by child and youth development professionals before, during and after school, and in the summer. They offer a range of enrichment and learning activities in various subjects including arts, civic engagement, service learning and STEM (science, technology, engineering and math). They also build competencies for career readiness, including 21st-Century Skills and global citizenship.

The theory that drives ELOs is that additional time in a non-traditional learning environment fosters positive learning experiences for youth. ELOs offer academic support, promote deeper learning, and cultivate academic mindsets through highly engaging activities linked to, but distinct from, school-day experiences. When out-of-school time programming is directly tied to academic content, youth are able to draw real and fruitful connections from out-of-school time programming and the classroom experience. This translates to improvement in content knowledge, grades, and educational success.

CHARACTERISTICS OF EXPANDED LEARNING OPPORTUNITIES

High-quality ELOs can provide a range of program experiences, but share a number of common features. These include:

➢ **Structure and Supervision:** Particularly for school-aged children, structure and supervision are key components of effective programs. In the *Study of Promising Afterschool Programs,* children who were in high-quality afterschool programs did better than their less supervised peers on a range of social, behavioral, and academic outcomes.[126]
➢ **Supportive Relationships:** Supportive relationships with adults and peers are a critical component of high-quality ELOs. The quality of relationships increases program engagement, and provides a safe space for skill development.
➢ **Intentional Skill-Building:** A recent meta-analysis found that programs that use a sequenced, active, focused, and explicit approach to skill-building produce academic and social gains for youth and reduce problem behaviors.[127] The kinds of skills addressed by ELOs can be anything from organizing and studying techniques to self-management and collaboration.

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[124] School's Out Washington (n.d.)
[125] Little (2009)
[126] Vandell, Reisner & Pierce (2007)
[127] Durlak & Weissberg (2007)

➤ **Alignment with School-Day Learning:** While ELOs should not replicate the school-day experience, alignment with school-day learning is key to achieving academic outcomes. The National Council of State School Officers encourages ELO providers to draw implicit and explicit connections to the Common Core State Standards as these are adopted.[128]

➤ **Engaging Activities:** Engaging activities are a key feature of high-quality ELOs. Research suggests that these program settings provide a context that is particularly well suited to building skills because they provide youth with interesting, challenging experiences that capture their effort and attention.[129]

HOW ELOS IMPACT THE OPPORTUNITY GAP

Children of color and children from low-income homes often enter kindergarten less prepared than their white middle-class counterparts. This gap in preparation leads to a gap in academic performance that widens throughout childhood and adolescence.**[130]** This widening is partly due to the gap in access to out-of-school-time activities. Over the last 40 years, high-income parents have increased the amount they spend on their kids' enrichment, like tutoring and extracurricular activities, by $5,300 a year. The financially stressed lower classes have only been able to increase their investment by $480, adjusted for inflation.[131] Providing equitable access to expanded learning opportunities for lower-income young people is a critical responsibility of our communities to ensure the opportunity gap does not continue to widen. One recent study found that consistent participation in afterschool programs during elementary school eliminated the income-based achievement gap in math by 5th grade.[132]

Summer "learning loss" is a significant problem. The average student loses about one month of academic content over the summer, and low-income children are more strongly affected.[133] While summer learning loss is on average more pronounced in math, the effects appear to be more disproportionate in reading.[134] It is estimated that cumulative summer learning loss accounts for about two-thirds of the achievement gap in reading by the time students reach 9th grade.**[135]** Over a decade of research and evaluation shows that *high-quality* summer learning programs can help mitigate the effects of summer learning loss, particularly for children and youth living in poverty, youth of color, and English language learners.**[136]**

CONSIDERATIONS

Studies have shown mixed results for ELOs in terms of academic outcomes, suggesting that both youth participation rates and quality implementation practices matter to success.[137] It is important that programs are well run and have qualified, supportive staff members in place. It is also important that programming is targeted, age-appropriate, and culturally responsive. For ELO programs that are intentionally working to improve specific academic outcomes, partnership with school-day staff and alignment with school-day content are critical.

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[128] Plattner (2011)

[129] Larson (2000); Shernoff & Vandell (2007)

[130] Council of Chief State School Officers (2006)

[131] Brooks (2012)

[132] Pierce, Auger & Vandell (2013)

[133] McCombs, Augustine & Schwartz (2011)

[134] McCombs, Augustine & Schwartz (2011)

[135] Alexander, Entwisle & Steffel Olson (2007); Editorial Projects in Education Research Center (2011)

[136] Harris, Rosenberg & Wallace (2012)

[137] Redd, Boccanfuso, Walker, Princiotta, Knewstub & Moore (2012)

SKILLS AND DISPOSITIONS FOR YOUTH SUCCESS SUPPORTED BY HIGH-QUALITY ELOS

High-quality ELOs have immense potential to support youth development for academic and life success. While this mutually reinforcing activity encompasses a wide variety of programs, there are commonalities in the skills and dispositions generally supported by high-quality ELOs. Vandell et al. found positive effects on **interpersonal skills** as well as **self-efficacy** and task **persistence** for elementary and middle school students participating in high-quality programs.[138] Other studies have shown effects on relationships, **mindsets**, and **21st century skills**.[139]

EARLY WARNING INDICATORS (THE ABC'S)

Because high-quality ELOs are engaged in activities that complement classroom-based instruction, their impact on academic outcomes (study habits, homework completion, and **course performance**) can be pronounced.[140] In addition, high-quality ELOs can increase students' connection to school, resulting in improved **attendance**.[141] Since many ELOs focus on building social skills, students who participate can be expected to exhibit better **behavior** both in and out of school. Several evaluation studies confirm this.[142]

FOR MORE INFORMATION

➢ **Schools Out Washington** - http://www.schoolsoutwashington.org/index.htm
  Washington's Afterschool and Youth Development intermediary agency conducts trainings on many topics for youth serving organizations that offer expanded learning opportunities and other high quality opportunities for youth.

➢ **National Institute on Out-of-School-Time (NIOST) -** http://www.niost.org/
  NIOST is an action-oriented research organization dedicated to ensuring that children, youth, and families have access to high-quality out-of-school time experiences.

➢ **TASC: ExpandED Schools** - http://www.tascorp.org/
  TASC supports schools and youth development organizations in building a comprehensive system that opens the school for three hours after school without extending teacher time. This program also builds in connections between school day academics and afterschool learning opportunities.

➢ **The Expanded Learning and Afterschool Project -** http://www.expandinglearning.org/
  The Project is a 50 state initiative harnessing the power of networks and leaders to help schools and communities leverage the time beyond school to accelerate student achievement. Their website serves as a clearinghouse for research and resources related to high-quality Expanded Learning Opportunities.

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[138] Vandell, Reisner & Pierce (2007)

[139] Bowles & Brand (2009)

[140] Redd, Boccanfuso, Walker, Princiotta, Knewstub & Moore (2012)

[141] Goerge, Cusick, Wasserman & Gladden (2007)

[142] Bowles & Brand (2009)

13. LEVERAGING PARTNERSHIPS: PROJECT BASED AND SERVICE LEARNING

Lead Contributor: Lois A. Brewer, MS, Director, Service Learning Seattle – Seattle Public Schools

Project Based Learning (PBL) is a transformative teaching and learning framework. PBL undoes the traditional school structure that conceives of teachers as instructors who impart knowledge upon students, and students as knowledge-receivers. Instead, teachers are instructional leaders that provide guidance, structure, planning and assessment. Students explore complex questions, problems or challenges through extended processes of inquiry (Investigation, Preparation, Demonstration, and Reflection). Student voice helps to define an area of inquiry, and teachers guide the process to develop skills and understanding that link to the curriculum standards. Teachers also aid students in accessing resources and community partners to support the inquiry process.[143]

Service Learning is a particular type of PBL that connects classroom learning to real world issues and community needs. The K-12 Service-Learning Standards for Quality Practice [144] offers best practices for service learning programs and practitioners. Service Learning adds an "Action" component to the PBL inquiry process. According to Seattle Public Schools, "[Service] projects meet academic standards, civic, character, or leadership learning goals through hands on, relevant, and relational service, in collaboration with the community, build the capacity for empowered youth to be active and engaged citizens and the change they want to see…"[145]

HOW IT WORKS

Projects can range in time frame from one week, to several months or an entire year; and can be small, discrete projects or focused on an overarching theme. High quality PBL leads to deep understanding of content knowledge, as well as 21st century skill development, and classroom motivation and engagement.[146]

PBL is a cyclical process that borrows from elements of cooperative learning and experiential education. The image to the right details how that cycle may operate.
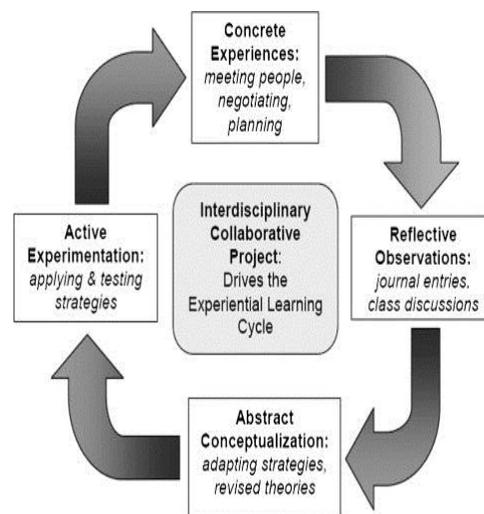
CHARACTERISTICS OF PROJECT BASED LEARNING AND SERVICE LEARNING

While Project Based Learning and Service Learning share some commonalities, they differ somewhat in their goals and features. Project-based learning is an instructional approach that attempts to engage students in deep, experiential learning. Service Learning combines a PBL-like philosophy with a range of community and civic engagement activities. The following table outlines key features of project based and service learning, and highlights how they are similar and different in their components, and in the skills they develop in young people.

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[143] Buck institute for Education (n.d.); George Lucas Education Foundation (edutopia) (2014)
[144] National Youth Leadership Council (2008)
[145] Seattle Public Schools (n.d.)
[146] Strobel & van Barneveld (2008)

	Project Based Learning[147]	High Quality Service Learning[148]
Skill Development	Requires critical thinking, problem solving, collaboration and communication skills; Fosters inquiry around an open-ended question that deepens learning by framing important issues, debates, challenges or problems	Requires critical thinking, problem solving, collaboration, and communication skills; Fosters inquiry around a relevant community need or issue that and deepens learning by framing important issues, debates, challenges or problems
Meaningful Service		Engages participants in meaningful and personally relevant service activities.
Links to Curriculum	Teaches significant content derived from academic standards; creates a need to know essential content and skills	An instructional strategy to meet academic, leadership, civic, character learning goals and/or content standards.
Reflection	Includes processes for revision and reflection	Includes processes for revision and reflection. Challenging reflection activities that analyze oneself and one's relationship to society.
Diversity		Promotes understanding of diversity and mutual respect among service participants & recipients.
Youth Voice	Student-directed, hands-on learning	Provides youth a strong voice in the planning, implementing, and evaluating experiences.
Partnerships	Involves a public audience that raises the stakes and authenticity of the project	Partnerships are collaborative, mutually beneficial, and address community needs.
Progress Monitoring		An ongoing process to assess the quality of implementation and progress towards completion goals.
Duration and Intensity		Sufficient duration and intensity to address community needs and meet specified outcomes and impacts.

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[147] Buck institute for Education (n.d.)
[148] National Youth Leadership Council (2008)

How Project Based and Service Learning Impact the Opportunity Gap

An important aspect of the opportunity gap is the disparity in curricula, learning opportunities and teaching strategies. Students relegated to lower tracks within schools, and/or to lower performing schools, are more likely to have inexperienced teachers in classrooms where teaching strategies and curricula are focused on delivering rote skills with fill-in-the-blank or multiple-choice worksheets.[149] This practice cuts students off from opportunities to develop the 21st century skills that are required to be college- and career- ready. In a national report, schools in low-income areas were less likely to offer service learning opportunities to students than those in higher-income areas.[150] However, there is evidence to suggest that these kinds of programs could be highly beneficial for students from low-income families. Research has shown that low-socioeconomic status (SES) students who participated in service learning fare better on a number of academic measures than their peers, and that exposure to service learning is associated with smaller achievement gaps between high- and low-SES students.[151]

It is widely understood that race and class are directly related to tracking within and between schools.[152] Offering the students most likely to suffer from opportunity gaps well-planned and well-executed Project Based or Service Learning opportunities can have long-lasting effects on building motivation and engagement and 21st century skills for students, while strengthening professional learning communities and collaborative teaching and learning practices within schools. One

Considerations

Project Based Learning can have a profound impact on students and their connection to school as well as intellectual stimulation, engagement, and 21st century skills.[153] Using this strategy in conjunction with other mutually reinforcing activities described in the this series could help address the systemic marginalization issues that students face, and support students in building internal coping skills for school and life success.

Skills and Dispositions for Youth Success Supported by Project-Based and Service Learning

The primary skills and dispositions addressed through PBL include **self-efficacy,**[154] **collaboration,**[155] **creativity, critical thinking**, and **problem-solving.**[156] While this is an extensive list, it is by no means complete. Since service learning engages students in their communities, it has been shown to increase **empathy** and other indicators of social and civic concern.[157] Other positive effects for youth include long-term retention in school[158] and the ability to integrate and explain concepts from different subject areas.[159]

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[149] Darling-Hammond (2010)

[150] Spring, Grimm & Dietz (2008)

[151] Scales, Roehlkepartain, Neal, Kielsmeier & Benson (2006)

[152] Oakes (2005)

[153] Belland, Ertmer & Simons (2006); Brush & Saye (2008)

[154] Tretten & Zachariou (1995)

[155] Horan, Lavaroni & Beldon (1996); ChanLin (2008)

[156] Gallagher, Stepien & Rosenthal (1992)

[157] Billig (2000); Astin, Vogelgesang, Ikeda & Yee (2000)

[158] Vernon & Blake (1993); Geier, Blumenfeld, Marx, Krajcik, Fishman, Soloway & Clay-Chambers (2008)

[159] Capon & Kuhn (2004)

EARLY WARNING INDICATORS (THE ABC'S)

Both PBL and Service Learning attempt to build school connectedness by involving students in work that is both engaging and relevant to their lives. Service learning in particular has been associated with decreased **absences** and improved **course performance**.[160] **Behaviors** related to a lack of interest and school connectedness may be expected to decline as well; students involved in service learning show reduced incidents of violent behavior and higher levels of engagement in school.[161] Building curricular connections and building student capacity to transfer the skills and dispositions for success to other subject areas can result in increased school, work, and life outcomes overall.

FOR MORE INFORMATION

➢ **Service Learning Seattle – Seattle Public Schools** –
http://www.seattleschools.org/modules/cms/pages.phtml?sessionid=&pageid=222692
Service Learning Seattle provides training and technical assistance to schools, teacher, and community partners in following the high quality service-learning practice standards, and in supporting project/program development and implementation.

➢ **National Service-Learning Clearinghouse (NSLC)** – http://www.servicelearning.org
NSLC offers support for the service-learning community in higher education, K-12 education, community-based organizations, tribal programs and others using service-learning.

➢ **National Youth Leadership Council (NYLC)** - http://www.nylc.org/
NYLC is a leading resource for schools and organizations that believe in the power of young people. The Council provides programs and services that develop young leaders, support educators, and advance the field of service-learning. This organization also publishes the K-12 Service-Learning Standards for Quality Practice (www.nylc.org/standards).

➢ **The George Lucas Educational Foundation -** http://www.edutopia.org/project-based-learning
Edutopia is a web resources dedicated to sharing "What Works in Education" including PBL.

➢ **Buck Institute for Education (BIE) -** http://www.bie.org/tools/online_resources/pbl-online
The BIE website provides introduction to basic ideas and methodology of PBL, offers an interactive site that coaches pre-service and practicing teachers through the process of planning a project, houses a project library for teachers to access and provides an online course on PBL.

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[160] Vernon & Blake (1993); Mergendoller, Maxwell & Bellisimo (2007); Scales, Roehlkepartain, Neal, Kielsmeier & Benson (2006)
[161] Billig (2000)

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14. LEVERAGING PARTNERSHIPS: COMMUNITY SCHOOLS

The Coalition for Community Schools describes the community school as "both a place and a set of partnerships between the school and other community resources."[162] Using the public school as a hub, community schools focus not only on academics, but also health and social services, youth and community development, and community engagement. This leads to improved student learning, stronger families, and healthier communities. Figure 1 shows an overview of the community schools model's results framework:
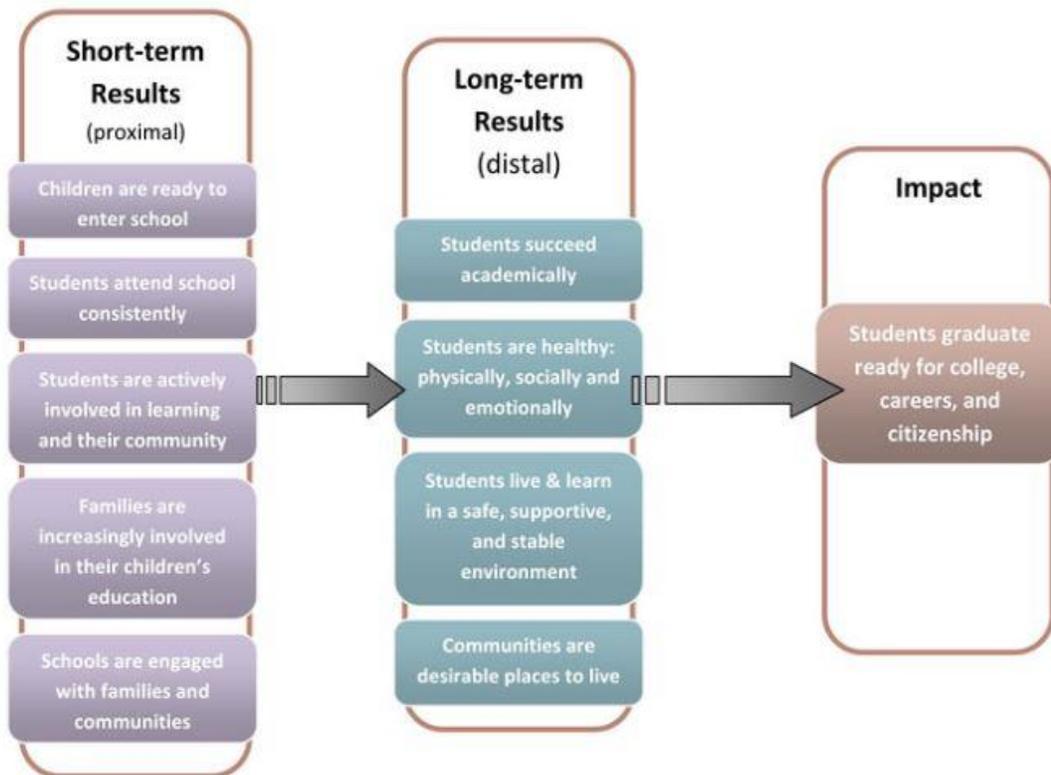
FIGURE 1: COMMUNITY SCHOOLS RESULTS OVERVIEW[163]

Community schools represent a structure, not a program. The structure is based on strong partnerships within a school that are used to provide what are often called wraparound services or integrated student supports. In a community school, all entities (school leadership and staff, CBO providers, parents, and other stakeholders) come together to agree upon the results – both academic and non-academic – that they will achieve together, and align resources to achieve these results.

HOW IT WORKS

Schools cannot create conditions for student success on their own, particularly when students and families are struggling with the effects of poverty. Rather, student success requires strategic partnerships among schools, partner agencies, families, and community members. A community schools strategy leverages, coordinates, and maximizes resources to support students.

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[162] Coalition for Community Schools (2012)
[163] Coalition for Community Schools (2012)

Community-level leadership (e.g. by the school district, government, United Way, business, community- and faith-based organizations) is responsible for developing an overall vision for community schools. This creates the context and capacity for expansion and serves as a networking vehicle for policy and resource development.

School site-level leaders (e.g., parents, residents, principals, teachers, community partners, and young people) are responsible for planning, implementation, and continuous improvement. Leaders ensure that implementation satisfies local needs, aligns with the school's academic mission, and generates practical knowledge and data to inform improvements in site-level policy and practice. Typically, a site-level staff person is responsible for coordinating day-to-day activities.

CHARACTERISTICS OF COMMUNITY SCHOOLS

Community schools are founded on the principles of shared vision and shared accountability for results. Broad local involvement in decision making is only one of many characteristics of the model. In a recent report, Child Trends identified five features common to community schools models:

1. **Needs assessment**, conducted initially and on an ongoing basis. Needs assessment at the community, school, family, and individual levels drives service delivery.
2. **Coordination of supports** in order to remove both academic and non-academic barriers to achievement.
3. **Integration within schools** is particularly important so that services are delivered seamlessly and school culture is responsive to student needs.
4. **Community partnerships** are critical to the community schools model. Schools do not typically develop new services; they mobilize and coordinate existing community resources.
5. **Data collection and tracking** has been compared to the "central nervous system" of the community schools model.[164]

HOW COMMUNITY SCHOOLS IMPACT THE OPPORTUNITY GAP

Some of the out-of-school factors that affect a student's readiness to learn include poverty, homelessness, health and disability status, parental education, and exposure to trauma.[165] Community schools are typically, though not always, implemented in high-poverty settings. They attempt to address these issues by providing the kinds of basic supports that make school success possible. By paying attention to both academic and non-academic learning, community schools reach the whole child and encourage the growth and development of a range of competencies—social, emotional, physical, and academic. In community schools, students come to school ready to learn, which helps to address the opportunity gaps created by living in poverty.

CONSIDERATIONS

The Community Schools structure is expansive in the services that it provides students, supporting and enhancing the motivation, engagement, and 21st century skills this series is focused on. Coordinating the array of services within a community school requires a staff person dedicated to the development of relationships and the use of data for decision making. The site coordinator position is a critical part of a community school's success.

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[164] Moore, Caal, Carney, Lippman, Li, Muenks, Murphey, Princiotta, Ramirez, Rojas, Ryberg, Schmitz, Stratford & Terzian (2014), p. 18

[165] Moore, Caal, Carney, Lippman, Li, Muenks, Murphey, Princiotta, Ramirez, Rojas, Ryberg, Schmitz, Stratford & Terzian (2014)

In the community schools approach, the central "lever of change" is improving educational equity and supporting educational attainment, especially for underrepresented or underserved groups. Community schools engage the community and increase access to quality services for students and their families in the areas of physical and behavioral health, nutrition, housing, youth development, parent education, and much more. At the same time, many community schools leverage resources to address specific academic needs. To understand this model we must understand that it is situated in a place. It is not a "school improvement model," but a community development strategy that focuses on schools as centers of the community. Community schools pair well with other strategies discussed in the 3rd part of this series, including **mentorship**, **trauma-informed practice**, **growth mindset** initiatives, **expanded learning opportunities**, and other initiatives that meet the needs of a particular school context.

SKILLS AND DISPOSITIONS FOR YOUTH SUCCESS SUPPORTED BY COMMUNITY SCHOOLS

Community Schools provide a partnership structure that bolsters the work of a school community to meet the needs of students. The skills that underlie motivation and engagement – **self-efficacy, self-management**, and **future orientation** – precede and are foundational to achievement in the classroom. Relationships with caring adults help young people build **social capital**, develop **communication** and **collaboration** skills, and generally expand their horizons. Finally, weaving families and communities into the fabric of the school supports students' **sense of belonging** and positive **personal identity**.[166]

EARLY WARNING INDICATORS (THE ABC'S)

Community Schools build school connectedness by engaging students, families, and communities. The provision of basic services also helps to mitigate some of the problems that contribute to school absences and behavior problems. Several program evaluations have shown positive results in the reduction of both **absences** and **behavior** referrals. Improved **course performance and completion** have also been observed in a number of studies.[167]

FOR MORE INFORMATION

➢ **Coalition for Community Schools** - http://www.communityschools.org/
The Coalition for Community Schools, housed at the Institute for Educational Leadership, is an alliance of national, state, and local community schools networks.
➢ **Community Schools Collaboration** - http://cscwa.org/
CSC supports Tukwila and Highline school districts, operating in 20 schools between the two districts. They have been recognized as a successful model.
➢ **Communities in Schools** - http://www.ciswa.org/
CIS is a national organization that can be found in 14 school districts operating in 69 schools in Washington State. They serve 5 districts in the Road Map Project area: Seattle, Renton, Auburn, Kent, and Federal Way and track progress towards school success for children served.
➢ **Schools United Neighborhoods Network** - http://web.multco.us/sun/sun-community-schools
SUN Community Schools are the school-based service delivery sites for the SUN Service System, a broader system of community-based care and support for children and their families. There are currently 64 SUN Community Schools in 6 school districts across Multnomah County.

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[166] Blank, Melaville & Shah (2003)
[167] Coalition for Community Schools and Institute for Educational Leadership (2013); Bireda (2009)

MOVING FORWARD

The strategies described in this document are not mutually exclusive. To the contrary, we believe that they are most effective when implemented in combination, and in a manner well suited to local circumstances. We acknowledge that this is not an exhaustive list. There are many ways to build student motivation and engagement, both in and out of school. Our hope is that this document provides both a starting point and an impetus for those who work with young people to take motivation and engagement seriously.

Finally, we would like to emphasize the importance of partnerships. Building the skills and dispositions that support youth in school requires input from all sectors. Educators, community organization staff, parents and young people all must invest time and energy in student success. Too often, these groups work independently of one another. We believe that they will have greater impact by working together, and learning from one another.

For **schools**, youth development programs and the attention they give to non-academic skills offer new opportunities to tackle persistent gaps. If done well, partnerships with community organizations or the introduction of youth development strategies within the school itself can yield powerful achievement outcomes, both academic and personal. Where resources are limited and time scarce, new kinds of partnerships- creative partnerships driven by a broad understanding of the lives of young people- can greatly enhance student success.

For their part, **community and youth development organizations** must establish partnerships with schools that seek common ground. Research into the involvement and impact of community partners demonstrates their capacity to influence achievement and provide opportunities for engagement that may not exist already. At the same time, when programs for young people are delivered without consistent and creative partnership with the schools those young people attend, the potential for long-term impact is lessened.

Even with expanded opportunities and access to youth programs, young people spend a great deal of time on their own and at home. Consequently, the role of **parents** and **youth** themselves cannot be ignored. Parents must become active partners in their children's education and in their activities outside of school. Parental support and engagement increases academic achievement, builds cultural power and improves overall wellbeing. For young people the task is simple: seek out challenging opportunities for engagement and take full advantage of them. We know that peer interactions and pressure, group dynamics and the desire to fit in influence success in school.

A foundation of youth development is that young people live in a real world of competing interests and, in order to succeed, must develop the character, conduct and consciousness necessary to navigate the world with power and resilience. Because of their overarching need to focus on academic success, schools sometimes lack resources necessary to serve the whole child. Youth development organizations can offer schools critical support in this area. They are more than "non-academic" partners. They offer schools the opportunity to create new kinds of learning communities in which the children, families and communities are strengthened. This requires creative partnerships, founded on an equitable basis and with a shared vision for success.

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