



> Improving Student Motivation

A RELATIONSHIP-BASED APPROACH TO
STRENGTHENING STUDENT MOTIVATION



FROM SEARCH INSTITUTE

What is REACH?

REACH is a system of professional learning & practical resources to help schools intentionally strengthen student motivation.

Student motivation is complex. Search Institute's REACH Framework breaks the complex task of increasing student motivation down into five essential strategies:

-  Building developmental **Relationships** with and among students
-  Helping students understand how **Effort** can increase intelligence
-  Connecting students' current actions to their future **Aspirations**
-  Teaching students how to use **Cognition** to defer gratification and achieve goals
-  Ensuring that students know and are known for the deep interests and values in their **Hearts**

REACH Tools & Resources

REACH provides a set of research based tools and resources designed to have impact on middle and high school students' social and emotional skills:

-  **REACH Strategies Guidebook-** Research Summaries, Classroom Anchor Activities, REACH Techniques for continual practice
-  **Content & Professional Development Workshops-** Open Enrollment or Flexible On-Site Professional Development (PD) Modules
-  **REACH Student Survey-**(Grades 6-12) Validated for Pre- and Post-measurement – assess and align to your school environment
-  **Implementation Support-** Work with Search Institute to guide effective implementation based on your school's expressed goals

Recent participants in a REACH Professional Development workshop said this, when surveyed as part of an independent evaluation of a major federal grant:

- **97%** strongly agree or agree that the event enhanced their understanding of the REACH approach to motivating students for success in school and beyond.
- **88%** indicated that they learned how to change students' mindsets from fixed to growth.
- **93%** learned actions they can take to help students persevere through challenges and obstacles.
- **96%** would recommend this program to a friend.

Why REACH?

Why focus on improving motivation?

> WHY FOCUS ON IMPROVING STUDENT MOTIVATION? SOME REASONS FROM RESEARCH:

- Just over a decade ago, the National Research Council released a report that showed that between 40 and 60 percent of U.S. high school students are disengaged from learning and don't put much effort into school (National Research Council, 2004).
- Nobel Prize-winning economist James Heckman and his colleague Tim Kautz (2013) have demonstrated that character strengths—such as conscientiousness, perseverance, sociability, and curiosity—“rival IQ in predicting educational attainment, labor market success, health and criminality” (p. 4)
- Studies have found that student motivation is a problem at all levels of the educational system, and that on average, students' desire to learn decreases steadily from the start of elementary school until they graduate from high school or dropout (Skinner, Kindermann, Connell, & Wellborn, 2012; Shernoff & Csikszentmihalyi, 2009)
- A national survey of teachers in 2013 by the Collaborative for Academic, Social and Emotional Learning (CASEL) showed a staggering 69 percent of teachers citing low academic motivation as a problem in their classrooms—a larger percentage than named either poor student behavior, bullying or negative school climate.
- As researchers at Stanford University wrote in a recent study, “No major reform has prioritized students' psychological experience in school or motivation to succeed, despite the fact that it is ultimately students themselves who must capitalize on learning opportunities” (Paunesku et al., 2015, pp. 1–2).

Thanks to new research, the belief that motivation is a fixed trait rather than a malleable skill is now changing. As scholars David Yeager and Greg Walton (2011) have put it, “Recent randomized experiments have found that seemingly ‘small’ social-psychological interventions in education—that is, brief exercises that target students' thoughts, feelings, and beliefs in and about school—can lead to large gains in student achievement and sharply reduce achievement gaps even months and years later” (p. 268).



“In 18 years I haven't come across a philosophy that is more applicable to our school. It will be accepted and embraced by our staff because it fits so well. It

gives to us a common language and a way to articulate the philosophy we're trying to use to foster independent thinking, achieving young people.”

*Dr. Kathryn Robinson, Psychologist,
Egan High School—Minnesota*



“As a principal, I love that the data is there to support doing this. I feel like we jump on the next bandwagon of education and ‘here's comes another thing we have to try’. But this is more

about the whole picture, about how to we help students find their biggest talents.”

*Jen Sass, Principal,
New Prairie High School—Indiana*

Where to Begin with REACH

The REACH Strategies Guidebook

Approaches and Activities to Strengthen Academic Motivation
Kirst Peibel, EdD

Search INSTITUTE

FREE DOWNLOADS

Download a free Anchor Activity:

- www.search-institute.org/anchor-activity

Download a free chapter of the REACH strategies guidebook:

- www.search-institute.org/reachchapter

Visit reach.search-institute.org to download the following samples:

- REACH Sample Survey and Report
- Psychometric Information for the REACH Survey
- Research Pages from the REACH Guidebook

HERE'S HOW TO BRING REACH TO YOUR SCHOOL OR CLASSROOM

● Attend a Workshop

We hold open enrollment *REACH: Strengthening Student Motivation* workshops for school staff and leadership teams. Visit reach.search-institute.org to find the next open enrollment workshop opportunity.

● Book a Professional Development REACH Module at your School Site

Work with Search Institute facilitators to customize and determine the best content for your school.

● Administer the REACH Survey

This valid and reliable youth self-report survey measures students' development of the social and emotional skills found in the REACH Framework.

● Buy the REACH Strategies Guidebook

The REACH Strategies Guidebook is a 200-page summary of research and effective strategies. It's also included with workshop attendance and with your REACH survey report.

FOR MORE INFORMATION

Visit reach.search-institute.org

Or contact Mary Shrader, Client Relationship Manager
marys@search-institute.org | 800-888-7828, Ext. 526