



**Engagement + Achievement
Equals
Increased Graduation Rates for
Students with High Incidence
Disabilities**

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What Is Student Engagement

- In education, **student engagement** refers to the degree of attention, curiosity, interest, optimism, and passion that **students** show when they are learning or being taught, which extends to the level of motivation they have to learn and progress in their education.

[Student Engagement Definition - The Glossary of Education Reform](#), Feb 18, 2016





What Is Student Engagement

- **Student engagement** is increasingly seen as an indicator of successful classroom instruction, and is increasingly valued as an outcome of school improvement activities. Students are engaged when they are attracted to their work, persist in despite challenges and obstacles, and take visible delight in accomplishing their work.





School Dropout and Student Engagement

Schools with lower dropout rates have several common features including: a caring committed staff with a sense of shared responsibility and efficacy related to student learning and student success; a school culture that encourages staff risk taking, self governance, and professional collegiality; a school structure that provides for a low student-teacher ratio and small class size to promote student engagement; and a school climate characterized by an ethics of caring and supportive relationships; respect, fairness, and trust.





Engagement - A Guiding Bond with School

- School practices that provide students with supportive, caring relationships with adults at school hold great promise for improving student learning and addressing the developmental needs of children. Especially when these adults:
 - Model and support healthy development,
 - Provide clear and consistent messages that students can and will succeed





Connection to and Affinity for School

- Too many high school students feel disconnected from their school, and this lack of connection is a primary factor in their failure to graduate.
- 50 years of resilience research tells us that... when the focus is on supporting and empowering youth, over 70% of young people in the most challenging of life's conditions not only survive, but grow into thriving adults.



Student Engagement – High Expectations

What it looks Like	What it Sounds Like
Encourage effort, focusing on the positive aspects of students' answers, products and behaviors.	Encouragement is key - they say "I believe in you, You can do it- we can help"
Give challenging work but provides supports and accommodations	They say "well done- or You can do better"
Listen to our concerns about assignments, interactions with other students	They say – "let's see if we can solve the problem"
They help you plan your goals after high school	"They say you can succeed in life" "They see you after class and say – See you in the future"

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Increasing High Expectations

Classroom	Both	School
Individualize learning. Adapt lessons to level of learner Set clear goals.	Stress importance of developing self efficacy and belief in their own academic competence...	Staff training on academics and connectedness.
Set clear guidelines. Link assessment directly to goals.	Let students know that you to believe that they are smart, can learn, and become smarter through study.	Provide college campus visits for <u>all</u> students to encourage post secondary education and training
Encourage effort, focusing on the positive aspects of students' answers, products and behaviors.	Highlight/celebrate achievement.	Revisit progress during staff meetings.

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What We Know about Meaningful Participation



Young people who engage in meaningful participation in school and community activities have improved chances for positive and healthy development

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Effective Secondary Transition and Student Engagement

- Student Involvement
 - Include student’s vision for the future
 - Consider needs, strengths, preferences, and interests
- Focus on a Course of Study
 - Relevant to student’s goals for the future
 - Access to general curriculum
 - Proficiency in core academic courses
 - Plan for graduation



Student Engagement – Meaningful Participation

What it looks Like	What it Sounds Like
Teachers make engagement inescapable	"Show me how to do it" "all kids are included- there is something for all"
Students are provided with engaging instructional approaches	Get the fun into class, do group projects
Actively seek students’ ideas and perspectives, and learn about student interests, problems and accomplishments and act upon them	"School is a community -it’s about people, not a building’, we can share ideas"
Personalized learning environments provides for empowerment and success	Kids helping kids, "I want to help tutor little kids in reading and math"
Learning is active and evident	More modeling hands on activities, more discussions

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Increasing Meaningful Participation

Classroom	Both	School
Involve students in lesson planning and class rules. Provide student time to discuss/respond.	Involve students in lesson/curriculum planning.	Involve students in all aspects of school policy (curriculum, school beautification, discipline etc.).
Ask student opinions. Offer choice in assignments.	Establish peer helping/ tutoring programs.	Create opportunities for Service Learning and community involvement .
Encourage self-reflection, critical thinking. Provide hands-on, Project-based, and Co-operative learning.	Project-based, and Co-operative learning.	Provide alternatives to suspension policies.

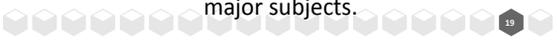
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What We Know about Positive Relationships



School connectedness, defined as feeling part of one's school and feeling close to people at school, is positively related to grade point average in major subjects.



Student Engagement – Caring Relationships

What it looks Like	What it Sounds Like
Adults are available and accessible to youth who need them	Be available ('be there'). They help by listening and encouraging
Adults model caring and show interest	Asks- how was your weekend – but also listens and gives eye contact
Adults both listen and dialogue	Knows our names and uses them
Adults show basic trust, patience, and understanding	They talk to me as a person and friend-not just a student
Adults ensures a safe supportive environment	They get to know our stories and don't tell" They stop bullies

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Student Engagement – Caring Relationships

Classroom	Both	School
One-to-one time with students. Personal contact. Learn students names as soon as possible	Student focus groups. Take the students' recommendations to heart and act on them	School climate task force. Teacher mentoring. Encourage more community involvement
Listen. Outside classroom Team-teaching	Team-teaching	Class-size reduction
Communicate interest and caring to students		Staff focus groups. Staff support groups

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Implement increasingly intensive evidence based methodologies toward improved academic outcomes in core academic areas

- Tutoring/individual instruction
- Study skills and test-taking classes
- Individual or small group instruction in reading and core academic areas
- Extra instruction/credit recovery through flexible schedules, Saturday school, after-school, or summer programs
- Self-paced online programs





Implement increasingly intensive evidence based methodologies toward improved academic outcomes in core academic areas

- Provide academic content in a variety of formats: online or blended learning options
- Providing strategy instruction that teaches students self-regulation, adaptability, and to be more strategic in their learning. Example: Teaching how to use planner for time management; think aloud





Implement increasingly intensive evidence based methodologies to improve social, emotional, and behavioral outcomes

- Promote knowledge or skills related to the self management, self awareness, social awareness, relationship skills, and decision making
- Create positive learning environments that are safe, caring, engaging, and participatory, and
- Improve student attitudes and beliefs about self, others, and school.

Byrnes and colleagues (2012), found that 32% of first time 9th grade students from both urban and rural schools who received even one out-of-school suspension were more likely to drop out.





Promote the implementation of attendance strategies and alternative programs to increase the likelihood that students with attend school regularly

- Welcome students as they enter school: School should be an inviting, safe place for students, welcoming them into the building supports this idea
• Recognize good and improved attendance: It is important to acknowledge students and provide rewards (e.g. gas gift cards, free entrance to sporting events, and front row parking) to students with good or improved attendance.
• Engage students and parents: Teaching students and parents about the importance of attendance.
• Monitor attendance data: Most schools already collect daily attendance data. Monitor data for chronic absenteeism. Students missing 10% of school is an early warning indicator they are at-risk.



Horizontal lines for notes



Promote the implementation of attendance strategies and alternative programs to increase the likelihood that students with attend school regularly

- Provide early personalized outreach
» Place calls home each day that a student is absent
» Include attendance on report cards and in report card conferences
» Integrate information about chronic absence into parent programs and communications throughout the year
» Assign an attendance buddy
» Recruit students for engaging afterschool activities
» Ensure continued regular and positive contact with the family
» www.attendanceworks.org



Horizontal lines for notes



Promote the implementation of attendance strategies and alternative programs to increase the likelihood that students with attend school regularly

- Identify/ Remove barriers to attendance-
» Identify barriers to attendance, such as health, transportation or housing
» Involve public agencies and community partners and resources as needed to address barriers to attendance
» Involve the school nurse with follow-up on medical related absences
» Provide families with information on community resources that can help overcome barriers
» Connect families with school-based resources that can support good attendance



Horizontal lines for notes



5 Provide rigorous and relevant instruction to better engage students in learning both academic and career skills.

Academic:

- Presenting academic content using a combination of words and graphics to assist with learning . Example: Graphic organizers
- Using computers to assist with and improve academic performance . Example: Computer-based instruction (READ 180)





Provide rigorous and relevant instruction to better engage students in learning both academic and career skills.

- Mnemonics - connects new information with prior knowledge using visual and acoustic cues such as a keyword method (Mastropieri, Sweda & Scruggs, 2000).
- Using peers to assist other students with academic instruction . Examples: Cooperative learning, peer tutoring





Provide rigorous and relevant instruction to better engage students in learning both academic and career skills.

- Career Skills
- Tying career related courses with academic courses. Often referred to as schools within a school. Student take classes organized around specific career pathways, for example: law, business, finance.
- Career exploration - Providing opportunities for students with disabilities to explore careers in a variety of settings so that students can make connections with people who know about job vacancies and employers who are open to hiring young people with disabilities (Trainor, Smith, & Kim, 2012).





Promote and ensure culturally responsive learning environments and instructional practices

- Visit the communities of the students to find out how they interact and learn in that environment
- Ask students about their learning preferences
- Interview parents about how and what students learn from them
- Devise and implement different ways for students to be successful in achieving developmental milestones
- Ensure success by setting realistic, yet rigorous, goals for individual students
- Allow students to set their own goals for a project
- Allow the use of the student's first language to enhance learning





Provide options for students with disabilities to be engaged in increasing intensive opportunities to participate in career related work based learning and supported employment.

- Classes focused on employability skills across a variety of occupations
- Occupationally specific programming in a trade, such as carpentry or plumbing
- Training in related skills such as computer literacy, job seeking, and workplace behavior
- On-the-job training for which students can earn credits
- Career days at which students can gain information from local employers
- Connections to postsecondary institutions





Prepare Students for the World Beyond High School

- Provide opportunities for students to apply their learning in relevant, real world situations that help them see connections to their futures.
- Create systems that promote activities and services to facilitate accomplishment of post secondary goals, including career awareness activities and work experiences during high school.
- Create structured partnerships between school and employers – designate a full time liaison when possible.



Embrace a philosophy of partnerships that empowers families, communities, and other stakeholders to become meaningfully involved in the improvement of outcomes for all students

- Conduct home visits to develop relationships with family members (Auerbach, 2009; Johnson, 2014)
- Provide transportation or arrange car-pooling to school events and offer to meet parents in locations that are convenient for them
- Provide assistance for parents in reinforcing classroom instruction and providing behavioral support for their children at home (Wilkins & Terlitsky, 2016).

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Embrace a philosophy of partnerships that empowers families, to become meaningfully involved in the improvement of outcomes for their students

- Create a welcoming environment
- Provide school information in family’s home languages
 - Bulletin board at the front of the school with positive information about student’s accomplishments (sports, academic achievements), include information about previous graduates
 - Invite parents to sit in or volunteer in classes

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Embrace a philosophy of partnerships that empowers families, to become meaningfully involved in the improvement of outcomes for their students

- Communicate with families
 - Provide information to parents in multiple ways: call, email, school website, distribute flyers at school events
 - Make positive phone calls home to families
 - Have students design a monthly newsletter to share information with families
- Provide incentives to families for attending events
 - Free family portraits for families who attend
 - Provide food at events
 - Create a raffle for families, for each event a family attends they receive a raffle ticket and at the end of each quarter/trimester/semester

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Promote the development of personalized learning environments that creates a sense of belonging and fosters a positive school climate

- Use instructional techniques that emphasize the relevance of classroom learning (Southern Regional Education, 2011; Wilkins, 2011a)
- Provide opportunities for engagement in service learning
 - 80% of at-risk students said they would have more positive feelings towards high school if they were involved in service learning opportunities. – (Bridgeland, Dilulio, Wulsin, & Stuart, 2008)





To interact with students in positive, caring ways

- Help students understand why a certain behavior is important.
- Encourage students to ask questions for clarification on lesson, assignments, homework
- Share personal stories to build trust and understanding.





Positive Teacher Interactions

- Encourage students to develop a sense of responsibility and self-reliance.
- Follow through on students’ ideas or concerns or explain why you cannot; don’t ignore them
- Catch students “being good” and recognize them with a pat on the back, a smile, a thank you, or a call or note home to parents