

# Five Factors that Impact Student Motivation

At Search Institute, we are working with educators, parents, and other caring adults around the country to help young people *REACH* to become all that they can be in school and in other areas of their lives.

We are doing this by equipping adults with practical ways to address five factors that studies have shown influence young people's will to succeed, which we are calling the REACH Framework:

**Relationships:** Connecting young people to caring adults and to other young people who push them, support them, empower them, and expand their views of what is possible in life.

**Effort:** Helping students understand that with hard work and the use of good learning strategies they can succeed in school, regardless of how smart they think they are or how smart others think they are.

**Aspirations:** Grounding young people in the reality that the actions they take—or do not take—each day will influence their ability to realize their dreams for the future.

**Cognition:** Teaching students practical ways to think about their own thinking, control impulses, and stay on track to complete tasks and achieve goals.

**Heart:** Giving students the opportunity to discover and develop what they love to do—what we call their sparks—and articulate a set of core values that they want to guide their lives.

Our research indicates that many young people today—from both affluent and impoverished backgrounds and from all cultural groups—have gaps in the factors encompassed in the REACH Framework. Fortunately, in our work with schools and families, we are finding that it is possible to close those gaps when teachers, parents, and others are intentional about building young people's character strengths through developmental relationships.

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