Introduction

Implementing strategies that motivate students and increase resilience can lead to improved attendance, increased time on task, reduced disciplinary action, and increased academic outcomes.

Strategies to Increase Motivation

1. Adopt Student-centered Approaches

Student-centered approaches to learning are drawn from the mind/brain sciences, learning theory, and research on youth development. They are essential to full engagement and achieving deeper learning outcomes. Students at the Center[1]

- Provide flexible scheduling.

- Acknowledge each student's unique readiness.

- Ensure student work is in the zone of proximal development[2].

- Establish relevance - Students must understand why they need to learn in connection with past, current, or future life experience.

- Explicitly teach organizational skills and time management[3] in addition to academic instruction.

- Praise incremental success. Motivation is increased when students succeed. When students do better, they try harder.

- Encourage student ownership of academic progress through the Dashboard[4].

2. Develop Positive Relationships

Creating an environment for learning begins with establishing ground rules that include many aspects of quality teaching, such as respect, responsibility, honesty, civility and tolerance. Only after these values are established can learning begin to accelerate.

- Teachers[5] and students[6] have access to a host of tools within the LMS for communication. Consider also using tools like Zoom or Google Meet so you can see one another, create a sense of community and share teacher or student screens.

- Stress plays a large role in cognition; therefore, school must be a place where students feel safe, supported, and encouraged.

- "The most powerful weapon available to secondary teachers who want to foster a favorable learning climate is a positive relationship with our students" Canter and Canter (1997).

- Be available throughout the day. Take interest in clubs and attend after-school events.

- Conduct weekly progress and performance check-ins to hold students accountable.

- Offer rewards/incentives to celebrate student success, such as snacks or "Music Mondays."

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[1] http://www.studentsatthecenter.org/

[2] https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Zone_of_proximal_development

[3] http://www.pbisworld.com/tier-2/organizational-tools/

[4] http://www.brainshark.com/apexlearning/gt_student_dashboard

[5] http://www.brainshark.com/apexlearning/gt_teach_comm-tools

[6] http://www.brainshark.com/apexlearning/gt_student_comm-tools

- Set parents up as coaches[7] to receive a weekly progress email and share the Coach Report Guide[8]

3. Develop a Growth Mindset

When students and educators have a growth mindset, they understand intelligence can be developed. Students focus on improvement instead of worrying about how smart they are. They work hard to learn more and get smarter. Carol Dweck, renowned psychologist and author of Mindset[9], established students who learn this mindset show greater motivation in school, better grades, and higher test scores.

- Convey that all students can become proficient and are responsible for progress.

- Praise effort and persistence rather than aptitude. Labeling students, even when positive, is ineffective and creates pressure to live up to expectations.

- Help students get comfortable with struggle and risk taking. Let students know failure is expected on the way to success.

- Celebrate and reward direction, not perfection.

- Encourage daily goal setting when a student is struggling.

- Encourage long-term goal setting and relate present choices and actions to future goals.

4. Create a Mastery-focused Classroom

Mastery-focused classrooms concentrate on learning rather than instruction. Students develop and demonstrate competencies, or mastery of the knowledge and skills required for a unit, regardless of the amount of time required to achieve mastery.

- Provide custom learning plans for each student using prescriptive assessment.

- Set student work expectations (learning contracts, due dates) and convey confidence that students will meet expectations.

- Monitor student performance daily.

- Provide early intervention with one-on-one instruction, concept, unit, or quarter recovery.

- Provide alternative options for evidence of learning as appropriate.

Getting Support

To access **online help** at any time, sign in to Apex Learning and click Help in the main menu. Apex Learning Support

- Monday – Friday. 5:00 AM – 7:00 PM Pacific Time
- 1-800-453-1454 option 2
- support@apexlearning.com

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[7] http://www.brainshark.com/apexlearning/ht_add-coach

[8] https://support.apexlearning.com/help/reports/student/coach

[9] http://mindsetonline.com/index.html