

# ENGAGEMENT

**EFFECT SIZE: 0.41**

## High-Quality Instruction Cycle Connection:

Step 2: Planning Instruction  
Step 3: Instruction

## Utah Effective Teaching Standards Alignment:

- Standard 2, Element 4

## Personalized, Competency Based Learning Framework Essential Component:

Culture of Learning  
Learner Agency  
Customized Supports  
Social and Emotional Learning

## WHAT?

Student engagement is 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.

## WHY?

The effect size of Engagement is 0.41 which is one year of growth for one year of learning. According to the [Visible Learning Meta X definition](#), engagement has long been regarded as a desired outcome for schooling and a predictor of achievement and lowered risk of negative educational outcomes. Researchers have theorized that cognitive engagement is the ultimate outcome of a student's ability to concentrate on a task and to persist despite challenges.

## HOW?

In order to be fully engaged, students must be at the center of the learning process. Teachers can engage students in learning tasks that have a low barrier to entry while also having a high ceiling for extension. These tasks should be cognitively rigorous, while also being framed in ways that students can connect and relate to. Classwide engagement can only be reached when students have agency to demonstrate

their understanding in personalized ways while simultaneously being provided personalized supports to help them reach the learning objective.

### **PREPARATION:**

Teachers can tailor their instruction to their students' interests and character by gathering data through surveys, interviews and building relationships. Building relationships is the single most important aspect of engaging students. When instruction is student-centered, the teacher is better able to provide customized supports to each student/group of students in the classroom. Lessons should consistently be designed to provide students the opportunity to solve problems, complete collaborative tasks and/or answer engaging questions. Well designed, asset-based rubrics can be used to assess student learning and empower students to demonstrate their knowledge in ways that resonate with them.

### **IMPLEMENTATION:**

#### **Teacher Actions**

- Design a survey to ask students at the beginning of the year to tell you about themselves, for example:
  - I learn best in class when...
  - I find it personally helpful to my learning when my teacher...
  - The most interesting learning experience from my last school year was..., because...
- Build rubrics to empower students to understand what they are being expected to accomplish and to personalize the demonstration of their accomplishments.
- Ask the class to participate in interactive opportunities consistently throughout the class period.
- Move throughout the class while students are working to accomplish the task you have set for them in order to seed discussions, formatively assess student progress and help “unstick” students that have become stuck.
- Be explicit when you design lessons that are a reflection of particular student interests that you learned about from your class.
- Provide your students with supports to be able to collaborate in an effective and efficient manner such as sentence stems, grouping based on interest and/or role establishment.
- Welcome students into the class personally every day.

#### **Student Look-Fors**

- Connect their learning to the learning intentions and success criteria.
- Engage in quick and consistent formative assessments to gauge understanding (Fist to five, thumbs up to thumbs down, repeat after me, etc.).
- Actively complete the work they were assigned.

- Have animated discussions, laughing and/or earnest debates.
- Demonstrate knowledge that is varied and personal to their strengths and interests.
- Ask questions that demonstrate their interests.

### Reflection

- Are students still working when the bells rings?
- Do students know what the learning objectives are and are they actively working towards meeting those objectives?
- Are students demonstrating their knowledge in varied ways?
- Does your classroom often go from quiet and focused when you are laying out instructions for the learning task to energetic and animated when students are set loose to pursue an answer to the task?
- Have you developed a knowledge of the interests, preferences and strengths of all of your students?

### Go Deeper—Resources to learn more

[Engagement Suggestions from the National Center on Safe Supportive Learning Environments](#)

[OECD study on student engagement](#)

[9 Strategies for Promoting Student Engagement \(Education Week\)](#)



### HOME CONNECTIONS

- Encourage parents to ask their students to tell them about what they worked on in class today, such as:
  - Tell me about your favorite activity that you worked on in school today.
  - What questions were you asked at school today that changed the way you think?
  - Teach me something that you learned today.
- Provide parents with overviews of your projects and the ways that you have adapted your lessons to fit the unique needs of their students.
- Help parents understand extracurricular opportunities that their students may be interested in through classroom updates, newsletters, parent teacher conferences, etc.