



# 2016-17 REDWOOD MIDDLE SCHOOL TASK FORCE

Culminating Report to the Saratoga Union  
School District Board of Trustees

Presented May 11, 2017

**2016-17 Redwood Middle School Task Force  
Initial Report of Ideas to Consider**

**Presented to the Saratoga Union School District Board | May 11, 2017**

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# 2016-17 Redwood Middle School Task Force

## Initial Report of Ideas to Consider

Presented to the Saratoga Union School District Board | May 11, 2017

### EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

During the 2016-17 school year, Redwood Middle School convened a year-long task force to identify: a) areas of excellence to celebrate and b) opportunities for continued improvement.

**Phases of Development:** The project consisted of four phases to collaboratively collect community input and to research and refine ideas with the understanding that emerging ideas would provide a platform for consideration by the Saratoga Union School District Board and administration for future action.

- |                      |                                                 |
|----------------------|-------------------------------------------------|
| ● Phase 1: July-Sep  | Community Input & Areas to Celebrate Identified |
| ● Phase 2: Oct-Dec   | Task Force Formation & Themes of Focus Selected |
| ● Phase 3: Jan-March | Research & Development of Emerging Ideas        |
| ● Phase 4: April-May | Refinement & Presentation of Ideas to Consider  |

Copies of the interim reports issued at the end of each of the first three phases have been included in the Appendix of this report to capture the history of this project.

The project included a collaborative and repeated process of inquiry, research, and feedback with a focus on identifying **shorter-term opportunities** that might be implemented quickly and efficiently over time and potentially **longer-term opportunities** that might require additional planning and multi-year implementation. The Task Force recommendations in the individual reports have been grouped into these two categories.

**Task Force Formation & Meeting Process:** The Task Force consisted of 22 people, including 9 teachers and staff, 9 parents, 2 administrators, and 2 school board members. Following a period of community input and brainstorming, individuals interested in joining the Task Force completed an online application with skills sets, areas of interest and diversity of perspectives that should be considered. The Task Force facilitators screened applications blinded to individual names to balance skills sets and diversity of the group. All nine teachers who applied and an equal number of parents were accepted, creating a slightly larger task force than originally envisioned.

The group met approximately twice per month between December 2016 and May 2017 from 3:30 to 5:00 pm in the Redwood Library to review and synthesize community input, research and develop emerging ideas, and form recommendations for the Board.

In general, Task Force meetings were well-attended and teams were engaged between meetings through online collaboration tools.

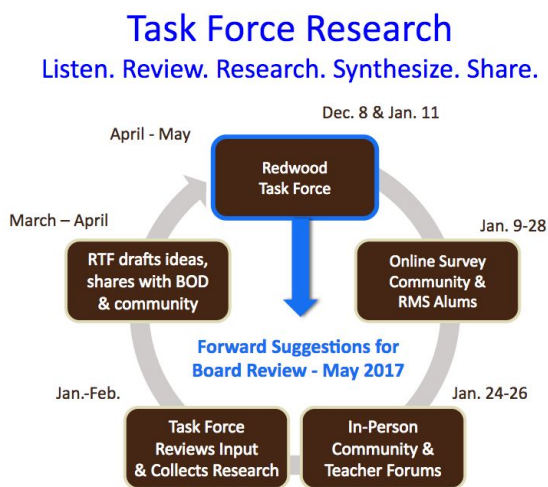
Facilitators provided each Task Force member with the opportunity to reflect upon their experience through a confidential online survey to inform future collaborative efforts. It should be noted that it is difficult to schedule collaborative time across multi-stakeholder groups. Often, members had to re-arrange personal schedules, including coverage for work and/or family responsibilities to attend, and their efforts and contributions to this project are deeply appreciated.

In the future, alternating meetings between times of day (morning / afternoon) and days of week might facilitate further collaboration, as might concluding project work in late March / early April given that individual schedules and school activities tend to be quite busy toward the end of the academic year. Meetings that would have taken place during the school day, however, would have required teacher release time and substitute coverage for classes.

During reflection on the process, Task Force members shared that the meeting times were “about right” and that the experience met or exceeded their expectations, however, they did feel rushed and in general would have liked to have had more time for meetings. Some members mentioned a desire for slightly longer meetings (two hours), additional opportunities for outside research or site visits, and more sharing across sub-groups.

**Collaborative Community Input:** Through three cycles of community input across the phases, the Task Force efforts were informed by extensive input and collaboration with key constituents in the Saratoga community:

- School Board
- Teachers, staff, and administration
- Parents and community members across the District (TK-8)
- Redwood Middle School students
- Redwood alumni and alumni families



Community members provided input during the year through:

- Six in-person community forums (attended by more than 350 people)
- Student focus groups (including approximately 115 students, grades 6-8)
- Four online surveys with input from more than 415 people, including parents, teachers and staff, alumni, and community members



- Three teacher and staff meetings for input and information sharing
- Direct emails sent to the Task Force through [RMSTaskForce@saratogausd.org](mailto:RMSTaskForce@saratogausd.org)

**Community Outreach:** Monthly updates were routinely provided to the Saratoga School Board in public meetings and posted in the Board's online resources. In addition, the Task Force posted monthly updates on its progress and interim reports on the Task Force website and circulated announcements regarding interim reports, opportunities for community input, invitations to community forums, and links to online surveys through District-wide emails, calendar updates, Superintendent notes, and school newsletters.

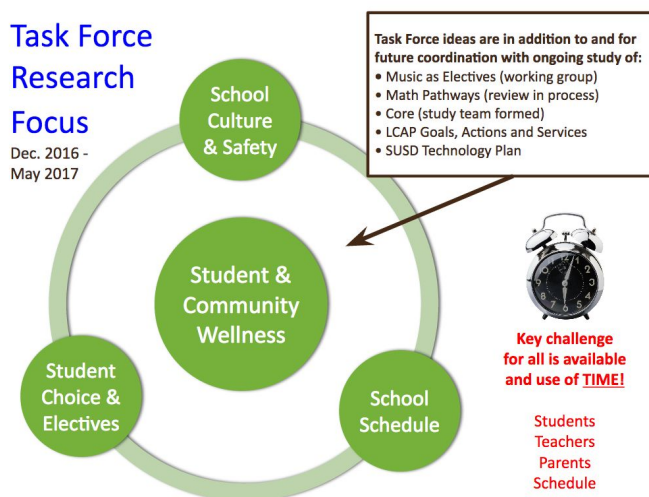
**Areas of Focus:** Based upon community input and understanding that some topics of community interest were already being addressed by other working groups, Task Force research focused on four key areas for exploration with each member serving on one of these four sub-committees:

- Student and Community Wellness
- Climate, Culture and Safety
- Electives and Student Choice
- School Schedule

These areas were independent of other groups focused on review of math pathways, new curriculum adoption in English Language Arts, orchestra as an elective during the school day, LCAP goals, site council plans, and an overall technology plan for the District.

### Task Force Research Focus

Dec. 2016 - May 2017



**Shared Community Values:** In general, based upon input, the Saratoga community shares many values for what the definition of student success looks like, including a desire for students to be happy, safe, confident, and prepared for their futures.

The definitions of what these terms mean in context of Saratoga and how best to achieve these outcomes can differ based on personal experience and family values.

### Phase 1 Parent Input: What Would Ideal Success Look Like for Your Child?

#### We want our kids to:



**Ideas for Consideration:** Each individual sub-team report on the pages that follow includes both shorter-term and longer-term ideas to consider with key ideas for consideration and potential action summarized on page 9.

Several of these ideas are still at the early stage of development and merit additional research or development. Following direction from the Board regarding which ideas should be refined further, it is anticipated that more detailed implementation plans, potential timing, and estimated costs / resource identification would be developed over the next one to three years as part of future budget proposals and annual objectives.

**To summarize, the ideas generally include opportunities to build student **resiliency**, strengthen **connections** between stakeholders, foster student **empowerment**, focus on **safety**, enable students to explore and develop their personal **passions**, and improve the efficient and effective **use of time** during the school day. Ideas to achieve these objectives, include opportunities to:**

- Create a more **welcoming and inclusive community** at Redwood, including fun social events that bring together parents, students, teachers, staff, and Board for community building opportunities that celebrate the cultural diversity and international community at Redwood and to integrate new students and families
- Consider a **modified block schedule** over the next few years to create more time for in-depth learning and project-based exploration, student connections, wellness, shared Griffin time, and space for a comprehensive health program
- Expand **opportunities for student choice** to develop passions and explore new interests through electives and enhanced before- / after-school activities
- Focus on **life skills for students**, including time management, organization, and opportunities to build resiliency and connections with other students / adults

**Staging Implementation:** Should the Board / Administration decide to take action on any of these recommendations, further development, definition, pilot testing, budgets, implementation plans, and metrics to measure success would be required in the coming months (Summer 2017) and in the years ahead.

In addition, given significant and ongoing new initiatives already taking place at Redwood, it is recommended that any actions or recommendations based upon ideas in this report be undertaken in a staged manner and in context of ongoing work to ensure adequate design, support, communication, and implementation for any action items.

**Priorities Identified by Community:** During Phase 4 refinement in April 2017, the Task Force hosted two in-person community forums (attended by approximately 30+ people), a meeting with Redwood teachers and staff (attended by approximately 45+ people), and an online survey (31 responses) to gather additional community input to inform the final ideas for consideration. Initial emerging ideas that resonated most with the community (at least four or more mentions) included support for and interest in learning more about:

- Enhanced **electives**, including semester-long electives to increase choice
- Potential **block** schedule, with concern that blocks not be too long for age group
- **Griffin Time** as potential common opportunity for students, more definition desired
- **Longer lunch-time** opportunities, including healthy food, movement, sports
- **Wellness center** on campus
- Physical **safety** action committee
- Increased activities and information regarding **wellness** (Wellness Week)
- School-wide community **service learning** program and activities
- Consistent **schedule** with more consistent start and end times
- **Before- and after-school** activities, with suggestion to study demand first
- Comprehensive **health** program
- More opportunities for student-directed **self-education** / student-directed clubs
- Community-wide **social opportunities**
- Continued support for advanced **math pathways** (even though not formally an area of focus for Task Force study)

In addition, it should be noted that even though the Task Force focused primarily on student and community wellness and had limited time during the year, other topics mentioned that might merit further study in the future, include:

- Vision for common, formative **assessments**, including opportunity to consider standards-based grading or as was mentioned in one forum: optional grades
- Assessment of **homework** purpose and work load to reduce student stress
- Potential to enhance school **sports** (physical well-being and to build school spirit)
- Opportunity to create appropriate and manageable mechanisms for **teacher-parent connections**, (possible office hours / opportunity for check-ins)
- Creating a **warm and welcoming campus** for parents that is also compatible with desire for emerging independence by middle school students and impact of campus safety procedures (fingerprinting / closed campus) on volunteerism

**Celebrate Cultural Diversity.** Independent of the Task Force work, SUSD learned that the high school district has been working with **PassageWorks.org** to provide a program of professional development to build culturally responsive learning communities of “inclusive excellence.”

The Task Force did not have time to research this further, however, it might be of interest to Redwood / SUSD in the future as yet another way to support and celebrate the global diversity of local families.

In conclusion, on behalf of the Redwood and Saratoga communities and the hundreds of hours of volunteer time contributed by Task Force members, teachers and staff, parents, community members, and alumni students and families, we would like to thank the community for its active engagement and participation in this project to build upon existing excellence and to improve Redwood Middle School for future students.

**Submitted with respect and appreciation  
on behalf of the 2016-17 Redwood Task Force,**

Lana Guernsey and Natalie Byrd  
Facilitators, Centio Communications

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### **2016-17 Redwood Middle School Task Force Members**

**Superintendent:**

Nancy Johnson

**Redwood Principal:**

Barbara Neal

**SUSD Board**

**Representatives:**

Patty Buchanan

Susan Germeraad

**Teachers & Staff:**

Alexis Nesper

Cassie Sprenger

Jason Robertson

Jennifer Rocabado

Jonathan Jow

Laressa Mead

Michelle Lehner

Nicole Burruss

Paul Navarro

**Parents:**

Dede Smullen

Hong Zhang

Honglin (Rocky) Li

Ilaria Keogh

Matthew Andrews

Rita Cao

Savitha Raghothamarao

Sophia Lim

Susanne von Stern

**2016-17 Redwood Middle School Task Force — Key Ideas for Consideration**  
**Highlights from Individual Committee Reports & Research Recommendations Next 1-3 Years**

<p><b>1. Student and Community Wellness</b>  Increase student <b>resiliency</b> through health and wellness education, activities and classes.</p> <p><b>Key Idea(s) for Consideration:</b></p> <p><b>1.1</b> Host Wellness Weeks / Days during 2017-18  <b>1.2</b> Identify resources to lead and share routine communication &amp; activities on wellness  <b>1.3</b> Explore more opportunities for before / after school activities (LGS Recreation and others)  <b>1.4</b> Explore development and implementation of comprehensive health program  <b>1.5</b> Support design of “Griffin Time” in schedule  <b>1.6</b> Create Wellness Center</p>	<p><b>2. Climate, Culture &amp; Safety</b>  Build and strengthen <b>connections</b> between stakeholder groups throughout the community and foster student <b>empowerment</b>. Attend to campus/facilities <b>safety</b> needs.</p> <p><b>Key Idea(s) for Consideration:</b></p> <p><b>2.1</b> Create School Safety Action Committee  <b>2.2</b> Increase family/staff social opportunities  <b>2.3</b> Support teacher-led teacher wellness  <b>2.4</b> Provide parent education opportunities and parent-teacher partnerships to support student success and wellness  <b>2.5</b> Create plan to collect student-generated ideas for self-selected education and clubs  <b>2.6</b> Design school-wide service learning</p>
<p><b>3. Student Choice and Electives</b>  Create more opportunities for students to <b>explore interests and passions</b> through electives that are engaging for students &amp; staff.</p> <p><b>Key Idea(s) for Consideration:</b></p> <p><b>3.1</b> During 2017-18, research and plan revised electives, including opportunity to enhance opportunities for hands-on learning and student choice with semester-long offerings  <b>3.2</b> Complete initial planning process and identify staffing opportunities by January 2018 to offer new class registrations for 2018-19 year  <b>3.3</b> Explore professional development opportunities for electives teachers and all teachers interested in teaching an elective  <b>3.4</b> Create long-term strategic plan to evaluate and plan for future enhancements / expansion</p>	<p><b>4. School Schedule</b>  Enhance and <b>improve the use of time</b> during the day to increase time for projects, depth, student support, connections, and relationships.</p> <p><b>Key Idea(s) for Consideration:</b></p> <p><b>4.1</b> Review / consider merits of block or hybrid block schedule, including development of ideas for “Griffin Time” (i.e., Digital Citizenship, Academic Assistance, Advisory, SEL, Health), more consistent start and release times for school day  <b>4.2</b> Pilot test schedule (few weeks) in 2017-18  <b>4.3</b> Determine opportunities for professional development to help teachers implement new schedule and best utilize block time and to incorporate “Griffin Time” and SEL  <b>4.4</b> Implement new schedule 2018-19</p>

*It is recommended that any action items / timing be considered in context of other ongoing priorities at RMS to balance / stage workload and implementation resources. For example, ongoing initiatives include and are not limited to: communication regarding math pathways; new curriculum adoption for English Language Arts; LCAP initiatives; compliance with new California law on Sexuality Education; SUSD technology plan, future dashboards, and more...*





# 1. Student and Community Wellness Committee Report

Presented May 11, 2017

# 1. Student and Community Wellness

Ideas to Consider Presented by the 2016-17 Redwood Middle School Task Force

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**Objective:** Increase student resiliency through health and wellness education and activities

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## 1.1 Ideas to Consider:

- **Short-Term Opportunities** (<12-18 months to implement):
  - Explore other meaningful lessons or strategies to use during the monthly 8th period (such as Mind Up, Challenge Success, Search Institute/Project Cornerstone)
  - Monthly newsletter or blog educating parents and students on wellness and connectedness
  - Incorporate Wellness Weeks and Events throughout the year
  - Explore more opportunities for before/after school programs (while keeping in consideration: physical access to campus, safety, and partnership with the community)
- **Longer-Term Project Opportunities** (18-24+ months):
  - Introduce “Griffin Time” (an anchor class that supports connectedness, wellness, and academic success)
  - Explore the development and implementation of a comprehensive health program that would include the CA Healthy Youth Act curriculum and other Health/Wellness topics relevant to a student’s overall sense of well-being. Special consideration should be given to the restrictions of students taking one or more support classes in lieu of an elective.
  - Creation of a Student/Wellness Center on campus

## 1.2 Rationale to Support:

- Research compiled from multiple sources (listed below) indicates a need for an improvement in student connectedness, having a caring school climate, and having more opportunities for activities on campus. Improvements in these areas can lead to more assets in our students, which is positively correlated with the likeliness that they will thrive socially, emotionally, physically, and academically.
  - Project Cornerstone results
  - Relationships First (article from Search Institute)
  - Task Force survey data

### 1.3 Next Steps and Potential Action Items:

- **Short-Term Opportunities** (<12-18 months to implement):
  - Explore other meaningful lessons or strategies to use during the monthly 8th period (such as Mind Up, Challenge Success, Search Institute/Project Cornerstone)
    - Identify staff to explore the available resource
    - Contact Wellness subcommittee at RMS as a potential implementer (content and logistics)
    - Get approval for implementation
  - Monthly newsletter or blog educating parents and students on wellness and connectedness (already existing or creating our own)
    - Identify staff to find or create existing newsletter/blogs
    - Obtain district approval for distribution of newsletter/blog
  - Incorporate Wellness Weeks and Events throughout the year (see attachment as an example)
    - Develop a plan for creating student-led wellness activities
  - Explore and offer more opportunities for before/after school programs (while keeping in consideration: physical access to campus, safety, and partnership with the community)
    - Survey community about needs, wants, current activities
    - Identify community programs and partnerships
    - Offer an array of activities/classes
- **Longer-Term Project Opportunities** (18-24+ months, additional planning required):
  - Introduce “Griffin Time” (an anchor class that supports connectedness, wellness, and academic success)
  - Explore the development and implementation of a comprehensive health program that would include the CA Healthy Youth Act curriculum and other Health/Wellness topics relevant to a student’s overall sense of well-being. Special consideration should be given to the restrictions of students taking one or more support classes in lieu of an elective.
  - Creation of a Student/Wellness Center on campus

#### 1.4 Elements Required for Success:

- Prioritization of opportunities to pursue
- Resources to support
- Individuals / volunteers to lead elements for implementation

#### 1.5 Supporting Materials:

- **List of Attachments for Reference:**
  - Info Graphic regarding Ideas for Wellness Week Activities
  - Growth of Youth Assets In Santa Clara County 1999-2017
  - Sample Idea for Health Program Submitted to Task Force
  - Individual Assets with Significant Increases 1999–2016
  - Task Force Received Idea for 7th Grade Health Curriculum
- **List of Resources / Bibliography Consulted:**
  - Project Cornerstone — [www.projectcornerstone.org](http://www.projectcornerstone.org)
  - Challenge Success — [www.challengesuccess.org](http://www.challengesuccess.org)
  - Relationships First / Search Institute — <http://www.search-institute.org>

# 2016-17 Redwood Middle School Task Force

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## 1.6.1 Wellness Week Information Graphic Sample of Potential Activities / Focus

# RELIEVE THE STRESS FEST

## Redwood Middle School Wellness Week

2017

\*\*Most Activities will be held in the Quad. Look for signs and tables at Break and Lunch ☺

Mellow MONDAY	Twisted TUESDAY	Well-Rounded WEDNESDAY	Thoughtful THURSDAY	Feel Good Friday
<b>Break</b>  <b>Tips for a Positive Attitude</b> ~ Brought to you by our Amazing Psychologists! <b>Quad</b>	<b>Break</b> <b>Hula Hoop to Music</b>  <b>Quad</b>	<b>Break</b> <b>Quick and Easy Ideas for being a: Well Rounded Person</b>  IDEAS: <a href="http://www.wikihow.com/Become-a-Well%E2%80%90Rounded-Person">http://www.wikihow.com/Become-a-Well%E2%80%90Rounded-Person</a>	<b>Break-Quad</b>  <b>The Sun IS Your Friend</b> <b>Healthy Skin Tips</b>  Bring a healthy snack from home share	<b>Break-Quad</b>  <b>The Sun IS Your Friend</b> <b>Healthy Skin Tips</b>  Bring a healthy snack from home share
<b>Lunch</b> <b>Color Me Calm</b>  <b>Quad</b> <b>Mini Sand Art</b> 	<b>Quad</b> Share your favorite <b>Tongue Twister</b> with your friend(s). or <b>Pipe Cleaner Art</b> with licorice on the side! OR a game of <b>Giant Jenga!</b> 	<b>What does Resilience mean?</b> <b>re-sil-i-ent</b> <b>rə 'zilyənt/</b> adjective 1. A person able to withstand or recover quickly from difficult conditions. <b>Being FLEXIBLE, or "ROLLING WITH THE PUNCHES".</b> Remember, all great people started out knowing nothing. Be patient with yourselves! <b>RELAX and BREATHE</b> 	<b>Lunch</b> <b>Listen to Feel</b> <b>Good music while you eat</b> 	<b>Break-Quad</b>  <b>The Sun IS Your Friend</b> <b>Healthy Skin Tips</b>  Bring a healthy snack from home share
			<b>Fill out a <i>Caught In the Act</i> form in the office for a student who has been thoughtful or kind.</b>	Come Learn about: <b>Eat2Perform</b> 



# 2016-17 Redwood Middle School Task Force

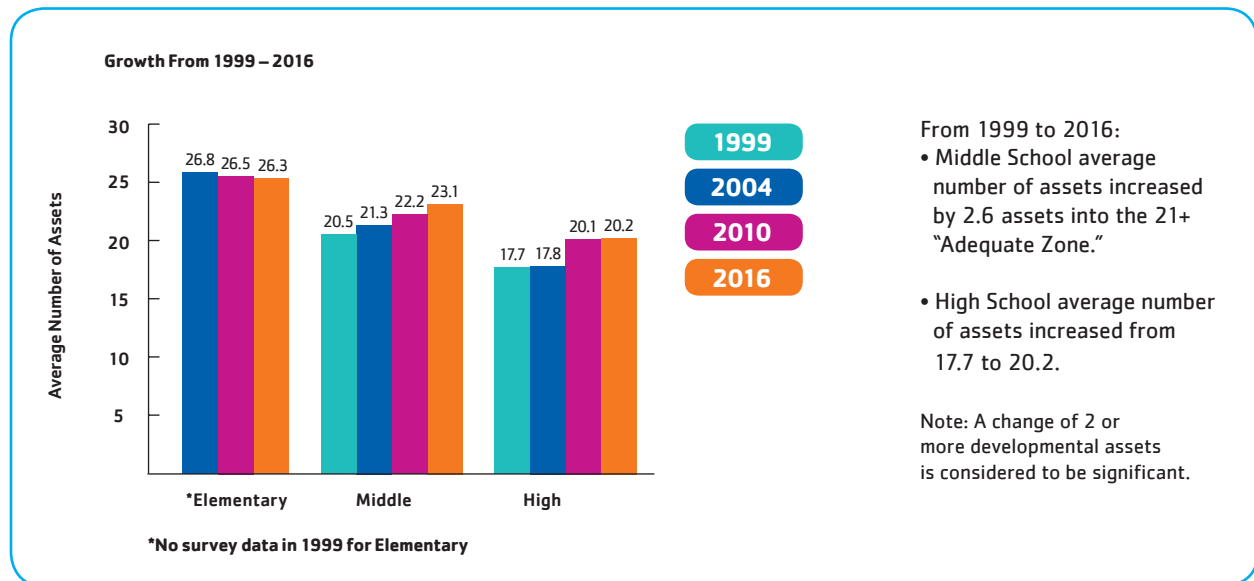
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## 1.6.2 Project Cornerstone Growth of Youth Assets in Santa Clara County 1999-2016

### Highlights from Middle School & High School Data

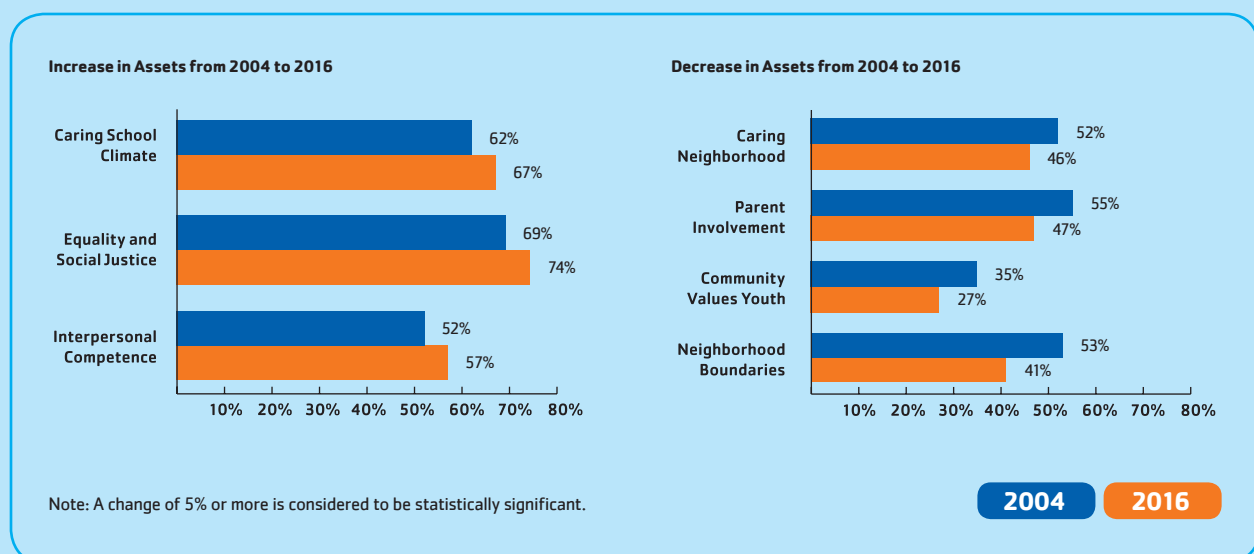
## Growth of Youth Assets In Santa Clara County

While elementary school students continue to report more assets than middle and high school students, their average number of assets over the years have maintained while older students' numbers have steadily increased.



## Highlights from Elementary School Data

13,120 students in 4th–6th grades took the Me and My World Survey created by the Search Institute in Fall 2016. While elementary school students' average number of assets places them in the adequate level, almost half of them don't have adult role models. Only 28% spend time each day off the screen and interacting with family.

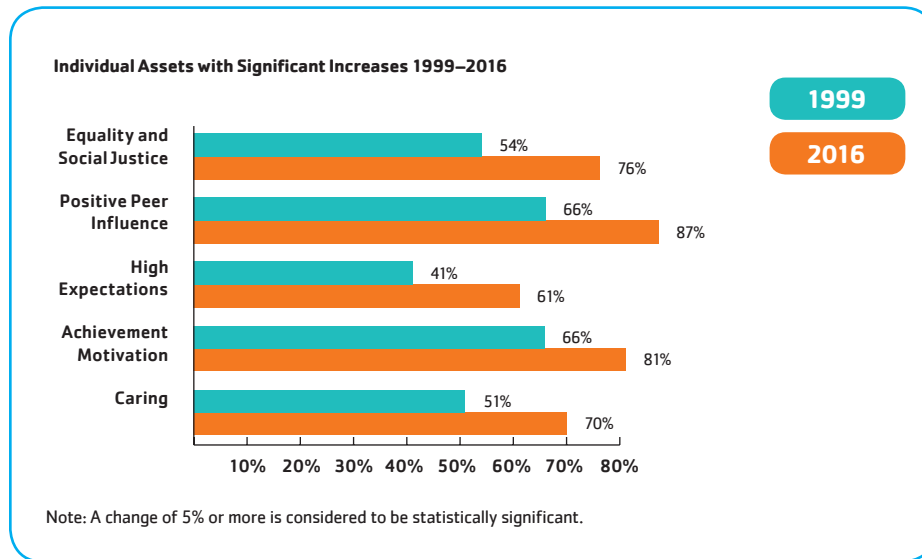


## Risk Behaviors

From 2004 to 2016, all the risk behaviors have either stayed the same or decreased. The most significant change was in sadness—decreased from 58% to 40%. However, this is still four out of ten elementary school students.

## Highlights from Middle School & High School Data

13,735 middle school students and 18,734 high school students took the Attitudes and Behaviors Survey created by the Search Institute in Fall 2016. From 1999 to 2016, the number of youth with 21 or more assets (Adequate & Thriving zones) increased from 38% to 54%.



**While some of the following assets also had significant growth, the numbers are still not high enough.**

**The 2016 data reveals that:**

- Only half of all youth (including elementary school students) feel their school is a caring place.
- Most high school students don't feel valued or appreciated by adults in the community.
- Nearly two-thirds of middle school students don't feel safe at home, school, or in their neighborhoods.
- More than half of middle and high school students don't have adult role models.
- Less than half of all youth are actively engaged in learning. (A decrease from 60% to 41%)
- More than half to nearly two-thirds of middle and high school student don't have a strong sense of personal power or high self-esteem.

## Risk Behaviors

All 24 risk behaviors have decreased from 1999 to 2016 with a significant decline in alcohol/tobacco drug use. The numbers for sadness/depression or attempted suicide are slightly lower.

# 2016-17 Redwood Middle School Task Force

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## 1.6.3 Sample Idea for Health Program Submitted for Task Force Review By Jim Fitzgerald & Jen Vandenberg, Redwood Teachers

Dear Task Force Members,

I have attached the 2003 California Health Framework and the 2008 California Health Education Content Standards for your reference.

Though the 2003 Framework is no longer current (the new CA Health Framework is due out in 2019), the following excerpt is relevant to the amount of time that should be spent on teaching health education at the middle school level. This excerpt on page 36 (page 49 if printing the page) of the 2003 Health Framework states:

**"Ensure sufficient time for health education.** Because the goal of health education is to influence students' lifelong health-related behavior, the commitment of a realistic amount of time for health education is essential. Studies have shown that when students receive instruction in health education over several years, their health-related behavior is influenced positively and significantly. Health education should begin before kindergarten and be continued yearly from kindergarten through grade twelve. Several national research studies suggest that significant changes in knowledge about health and attitudes toward health seem to occur after 50 hours of classroom instruction per school year or about one and one-half hours per week. **This framework recommends that the kindergarten through grade twelve course of study in health be anchored by a full year's work at the middle school level and a second full year's work at the high school level.** Various options exist for including health education in the curriculum at those levels, and decisions on how best to offer health education should be made locally. What is essential is that adequate amounts of time be allocated for such instruction."

Please also note content standards for grades 6-8 on pages 28-44 in the attached 2008 CA Health Education Content Standards.

Thank you for your time and commitment to improve student wellness, community wellness, and safety at Redwood Middle School.

Sincerely,

Jim Fitzgerald

## **7<sup>th</sup> Grade Semester Health Class Proposal to RMS Task Force**

On February 8, 2017, Jim Fitzgerald and Jen Vandenberg, as representatives of the Human Growth and Development (HG&D) committee for their respective departments, discussed ways in which the HG&D curriculum and standards could be best incorporated into the Redwood Middle School program.

Challenges of implementation were discussed as well as feedback provided from the staff of the science and physical education departments. The departments reviewed the logistics of where and how to incorporate the recommended Health Connected Teen Talk curriculum. The final recommendation is that a significant portion of the Health Connected Teen Talk curriculum would be best implemented in a semester long mandatory health class in the 7<sup>th</sup> or 8<sup>th</sup> grade.

There were several reasons why we felt a semester long health class is needed at Redwood Middle School.

The following reasons were discussed in recommending a one semester health class:

- With the implementation of NGSS in our science department, there is no room for the curriculum at any grade level. There are no health standards that are related to the NGSS curriculum at any grade level.
- Physical Education already incorporates several health education standards in their curriculum at all grade levels, and there is a consensus that there is no room for more health curriculum to be incorporated in the 6<sup>th</sup> and 7<sup>th</sup> grade. A portion of the Teen Talk curriculum that might be more age appropriate for older students could be taught in 8<sup>th</sup> grade physical education; however, the entire curriculum would not be able to be taught without severely impacting the quality of instruction of the 8<sup>th</sup> grade physical education standards.
- With our SUSD board's decision to compact 7<sup>th</sup> grade Core from 3 periods to 2 periods effective in the 2017-18 school year, there is room in the schedule to implement a semester health education class without impacting current electives offered.
- Some students not taking the 6<sup>th</sup> grade wheel (i.e. Orchestra, Band, ELD, IL Study, SDC) will miss 6 weeks of health instruction.
- A semester long health class could help students learn how to better manage stress and address several other health education standards that are not being sufficiently addressed due to lack of time being allocated in our middle school schedule. Time needs to be allocated to help teach behavior modification in addition to providing health education. The idea of reinforcing health curriculum taught at prior grade levels is similar to our belief that a comprehensive sex education program be taught at every grade level.
- The following health education standards include, but are not limited to:
  - Expectation 1: Students will demonstrate ways in which they can enhance and maintain their health and well being.
    - Nutrition education: The current 6<sup>th</sup> grade nutrition unit is taught in physical education. Too many students are still making poor nutritional choices as evidenced by the large number of students consuming chips, cookies, and other foods low in nutritional value. Providing another level of nutrition education in 7<sup>th</sup> grade could reinforce knowledge and behavior modification learned in 6<sup>th</sup> grade.
    - Physical activity: Obtaining a sufficient amount of sleep is extremely important during the teen years. 92% of U.S. teens do not get the recommended amount of sleep (Strauss, 2012).
    - Mental and emotional health: Many U.S. students are finding it ever more difficult coping with stress. Nearly half of teens (42 percent) report they are not doing enough or are not sure if they are doing enough to manage their stress and more than 1 in 10 (13 percent) say they never set aside time to manage stress (Bethune, 2014).



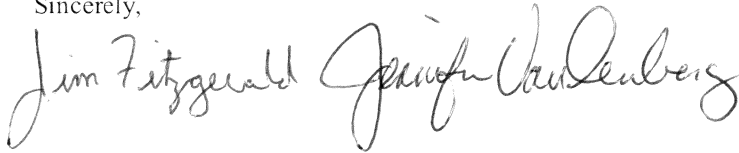
- Expectation 2: Students will understand and demonstrate behaviors that prevent disease and speed recovery from illness.
  - Students learn how common behavioral disorders contribute to chronic conditions.
  - Students should be provided time to practice positive health behaviors to reduce the risk of disease.
- Expectation 3: Students will practice behaviors that reduce the risk of becoming involved in potentially dangerous situations and react to potentially dangerous situations in ways that help to protect their health.
  - Students would benefit from learning and using skills to avoid, resolve, and cope with conflicts.
  - Students develop more methods and practices of reporting or obtaining assistance when faced with unsafe situations both from peers and trusted adults.
  - Students need the skills and practice to recognize and avoid situations that can increase risk of abuse and learn how to respond to negative social influences and pressures.
  - Students would benefit from basic first-aid procedures and CPR.
- Expectation 4: Students will understand and demonstrate how to play a positive, active role in promoting the health of their families.
  - Students develop and use effective communication techniques when discussing problems and health related issues with family or other adults, and use effective strategies to cope with change in the family, such as seeking assistance from a parent, a trusted adult, a support system, or counseling when needed.
- Expectation 5: Students will understand and demonstrate how to promote positive health practices within the school and community, including how to cultivate positive relationships with their peers.
  - Students learn and demonstrate appropriate ways to make new friends, show or express feelings, resolve conflicts in a positive, constructive way, and resist negative peer pressure.
  - Students demonstrate responsibility for helping to take care of their school such as disposing of trash properly, recycling, composting, and helping other students assume responsibility for that action.
  - Students should have the opportunity to contribute to the strengthening of health-related policies at school
- Expectation 6: Students will understand the variety of physical, mental, emotional, and social changes that occur throughout life.
  - Students demonstrate the ability to manage feelings appropriately.
  - Students develop and use effective communication skills to discuss with parents or other trusted adults the changes that occur during adolescence.
- Expectation 7: Students will understand and accept individual differences in growth and development.
  - Students demonstrate and practice an understanding of individual differences.
  - Students establish a realistic body image, and recognize problems associated with not having a realistic body image, including dieting and eating disorders, and seek appropriate help when necessary.
  - Students should be able to identify, express, and manage feelings appropriately.
  - Students need to recognize one's own strengths and limitations.
  - Students will be able to use coping strategies, including time-management skills.
- Expectation 8: Students will understand their developing sexuality, and will learn about protecting their sexual health, and will treat others with respect.
  - Part of the Health Connected curriculum could be taught during this semester health class allowing for greater time to focus on the fast-paced curriculum, providing a better method of spreading the curriculum throughout the middle school years instead of past practice of offering comprehensive sex education in

- only the 7<sup>th</sup> grade.
- Expectation 9: Students will identify information, products, and services that may be helpful or harmful to their health.
  - Students identify a variety of consumer influences and analyze how those influences affect decisions.
  - Students use critical thinking skills to analyze marketing and advertising techniques and their influence on the selection of health-related services and products.
- Healthy Youth Act: Meeting the requirements of the Healthy Youth Act would be a main focus of the proposed semester health class.

We would welcome current and future proposals on how the aforementioned issues might be resolved and expectations achieved in lieu of a semester health class, which if properly designed, could effectively address meeting the needs of implementation of curriculum while fulfilling the Task Force goal of improving student wellness.

Thank you for your time and consideration of this proposal.

Sincerely,

Handwritten signatures of Jim Fitzgerald and Jen Vandenberg in black ink. The signatures are written in a cursive style. Jim Fitzgerald's signature is on the left, and Jen Vandenberg's signature is on the right, overlapping slightly.

Jim Fitzgerald and Jen Vandenberg

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[www.apa.org/news/press/releases/2014/02/teen-stress.aspx](http://www.apa.org/news/press/releases/2014/02/teen-stress.aspx).

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[www.washingtonpost.com/blogs/answer-sheet/post/sleep-deprivation-and-teens-walking-zombies/](http://www.washingtonpost.com/blogs/answer-sheet/post/sleep-deprivation-and-teens-walking-zombies/)

[2012/03/10/gIQA0QP3R\\_blog.html?utm\\_term=.fc1a13561842](http://www.washingtonpost.com/blogs/answer-sheet/post/sleep-deprivation-and-teens-walking-zombies/2012/03/10/gIQA0QP3R_blog.html?utm_term=.fc1a13561842).

## 2016-17 Redwood Middle School Task Force

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### 1.6.4 Challenge Success: Stanford University Graduate School of Education

“Do You Know?”

Middle School Research Highlights

[www.challengesuccess.org](http://www.challengesuccess.org)

# CHALLENGE SECTIONS

Do You Know?

## Middle School

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### Academic Stress and Mental Health

- Multiple factors are shown to predispose children to positive outcomes in the face of adversity: one stable, caring, and supportive relationship with an adult; a sense of mastery over life circumstances; strong executive functioning and self-regulation skills; and the supportive context of affirming faith or cultural traditions.

**Source:** National Scientific Council on the Developing Child. (2015). *Supportive Relationships and Active Skill-Building Strengthen the Foundations of Resilience: Working Paper 13*.

<http://www.developingchild.harvard.edu>

- SEL programs yield significant positive effects and enhance students' prosocial behaviors, reduce conduct and internalizing problems, and improve academic performance.

**Source:** Durlak, J. A., Weissberg, R. P., Dymnicki, A. B., Taylor, R. D. & Schellinger, K. B. (2011).

The impact of enhancing students' social and emotional learning: A meta-analysis of school-based universal interventions. *Child Development*, 82(1): 405–432.

- The biggest influence of mothers' and parents' time with children may be during adolescence and related to fewer delinquent behaviors and better outcomes.

**Source:** Milkie, M. A., Nomaguchi, K. M. and Denny, K. E. (2015), Does the Amount of Time Mothers Spend With Children or Adolescents Matter?. *Journal of Marriage and Family*, 7, 355–372. doi: 10.1111/jomf.12170

- School-age children, (5 to 18 year-olds) were shown to have an increase in ER visits for headaches in the fall. The increase in fall headaches may be attributed to a number of factors, including academic stressors, schedule changes and an increase in extracurricular activity. Other common headache triggers include lack of adequate sleep, skipping meals, poor hydration, too much caffeine, lack of exercise and prolonged electronic screen time.

**Source:** Palaknis, A. & Heyer, G. (2015). Comprehensive Headache Clinic at Nationwide Children's Hospital. Retrieved from: <http://www.nationwidechildrens.org/news-room-articles/more-evidence-supports-that-kids-headaches-increase-at-back-to-school-time?contentid=145757>

- Learning to cope with manageable threats (like failing a test or forgetting one's line's in a play) to our physical and social well-being is critical for the development of resilience.

**Source:** National Scientific Council on the Developing Child. (2015). *Supportive Relationships and Active Skill-Building Strengthen the Foundations of Resilience: Working Paper 13*.

<http://www.developingchild.harvard.edu>

- Over 17 million children in the U.S. under 18 have or have had a diagnosable psychiatric disorder, 32% of which are anxiety disorders. The median age at which a child is diagnosed with an anxiety disorder is 6 years old.

**Source:** Child Mind Institute. Children's Mental Health Report. (2015). Retrieved from:  
[http://www.speakupforkids.org/ChildrensMentalHealthReport\\_052015.pdf](http://www.speakupforkids.org/ChildrensMentalHealthReport_052015.pdf)

- Resilience results from the interaction of an intrinsic resistance to adversity AND a strong relationship with important adults in family and community; it is the interaction of biology and environment that helps build the capacity to cope with adversity.

**Source:** National Scientific Council on the Developing Child. (2015). *Supportive Relationships and Active Skill-Building Strengthen the Foundations of Resilience: Working Paper 13*.  
<http://www.developingchild.harvard.edu>

- Over 1,000 teens were surveyed and they report that their stress level during the school year far exceeds what they believe to be healthy. Even during the summer teens reported their stress during the past months at levels higher than what they believe is healthy. 83% of teens reported that school is a somewhat or is a significant source of stress.

**Source:** American Psychological Association (APA). (2009). *Stress in America*. Retrieved from  
<http://www.apa.org/news/press/releases/stress/2009/stress-exec-summary.pdf>

- Teens underestimate the impact stress has on their physical and mental health.

**Source:** American Psychological Association (APA). (2009). *Stress in America*. Retrieved from  
<http://www.apa.org/news/press/releases/stress/2009/stress-exec-summary.pdf>

- When people are living with high stress, they are less likely to sleep well, exercise and eat healthy foods, which may lead to additional stress.

**Source:** American Psychological Association (APA). (2009). *Stress in America*. Retrieved from  
<http://www.apa.org/news/press/releases/stress/2009/stress-exec-summary.pdf>

- 42% of teens say they either are not doing enough to manage their stress or they are not sure if they are doing enough to manage it.

**Source:** American Psychological Association (APA). (2009). *Stress in America*. Retrieved from  
<http://www.apa.org/news/press/releases/stress/2009/stress-exec-summary.pdf>

- 37% of teen girls and 23% of teen boys report feeling depressed or sad due to stress.

**Source:** American Psychological Association (APA). (2009). *Stress in America*. Retrieved from  
<http://www.apa.org/news/press/releases/stress/2009/stress-exec-summary.pdf>

- 35% of teens report that stress caused them to lie awake at night and for teens who sleep fewer than 8 hours per school night, 42% say their stress level has increased over the past year.

**Source:** American Psychological Association (APA). (2009). *Stress in America*. Retrieved from  
<http://www.apa.org/news/press/releases/stress/2009/stress-exec-summary.pdf>

- The quality of adolescents' relationship with their parents plays a critical role in the development of internalizing (i.e., depression) and externalizing (i.e., tobacco, drug, or alcohol use) symptoms.



**Source:** Kim-Spoon, J., Longo, G.S., & McCullough, M.E. (2012). Adolescents who are less religious than their parents are at risk for externalizing and internalizing symptoms: The mediating role of parent-adolescent relationship quality. *Journal of Family Psychology*, 26(4), 636-641.

- 20% of teens report exercising less than once a week or not at all.  
**Source:** American Psychological Association (APA). (2009). *Stress in America*. Retrieved from <http://www.apa.org/news/press/releases/stress/2009/stress-exec-summary.pdf>
- Among teens who report overeating or eating unhealthy foods because of stress (26%), 33% say they did so because it helps distract them from what was causing them stress.  
**Source:** American Psychological Association (APA). (2009). *Stress in America*. Retrieved from <http://www.apa.org/news/press/releases/stress/2009/stress-exec-summary.pdf>
- 67% of teens who report skipping meals due to stress say it was because of a lack of appetite, and 25% say it was because they did not have time to eat.  
**Source:** American Psychological Association. (2013). Press Release: Stress in America 2013 highlights: Are teens adopting adults' stress habits? Retrieved from <http://www.apa.org/news/press/releases/stress/2013/highlights.aspx>
- Of 1200 children ages 8-17 surveyed, 44% reported that doing well in school was a source of worry.  
**Source:** American Psychological Association (APA). (2009). *Stress in America*. Retrieved from <http://www.apa.org/news/press/releases/stress/2009/stress-exec-summary.pdf>
- 9- to 13-year-olds said they were more stressed by academics than any other stressor—even bullying or family problems (36% said they were stressed out the most by grades, school, and homework).  
**Source:** *KidsHealth KidsPoll, October 12, 2005*. Kids and stress, how do they handle it? Poll questions retrieved June 19, 2009, from the National Association of Health Education Centers (NAHEC) database.
- 70% of Bay Area parents report that their 9- to 13-year-old children experience moderate to high levels of stress. What contributes most? Parents say schoolwork and homework.  
**Source:** Lucile Packard Foundation for Children's Health. (2005). New Poll Highlights Parents' Views on Physical, Emotional Health of Children. Retrieved from: [www.KidsData.org](http://www.KidsData.org)
- Academic stressors are associated with increases in both depressive and aggressive symptoms in girls and aggressive symptoms in boys.  
**Source:** Little, S., & Garber, J. (2004). Interpersonal and achievement orientations and specific stressors predict depressive and aggressive symptoms. *Journal of Adolescent Research*, 19, 63 – 84.
- The number of visits by children and adolescents during which depression was reported more than doubled from 1995–1996 (1.44 million) to 2001–2002 (3.22 million). Overall, depression affects 2-8% of all children and adolescents.  
**Source:** Ma J., Lee K-V., & Stafford R. S. (2005). Depression treatment during outpatient visits by U.S. children and adolescents. *Journal of Adolescent Health*, 37(6), 434 – 42.

- In 2009, suicide was the third leading cause of death for young people ages 15–24.  
**Source:** *Suicide: A major, preventable health problem.* (2015). Retrieved from: <http://www.nimh.nih.gov/health/publications/suicide-a-major-preventable-mental-health-problem-fact-sheet/index.shtml>
- A meta-analysis of studies reveals that students from kindergarten through high school who participate in social and emotional learning (SEL) programs not only demonstrate increased social and emotional skills and attitudes but also demonstrate improved academic performance, reflected in an 11-percentile-point gain in achievement.  
**Source:** Durlak, J. A., Weissberg, R. P., Dymnicki, A. B. Taylor, R. D., and Schellinger, K. B. (2011). The impact of enhancing student’s social and emotional learning: A meta-analysis of school-based universal interventions. *Child Development*, 82(1), 405-432.
- A study of 6,294 students at 15 high-achieving schools reveals that some students who work hard in school may be compromising their mental and physical health in the pursuit of top grades. Most students reported working hard, but two-thirds of students reported not regularly being “fully engaged” in their academic schoolwork. Absence of full engagement was associated with more frequent school stress, higher rates of cheating, and greater internalizing, externalizing, and physical symptoms of stress.  
**Source:** Conner, J., & Pope, D. (2013). Not just robo-students: Why full engagement matters and how schools can promote it. *Journal of Youth and Adolescence*, Retrieved from <http://link.springer.com/article/10.1007/s10964-013-9948-y#page-1>

## Cheating

- 90% of middle school students admitted to cheating at least once in school.  
**Source:** Galloway, M. K., Conner, J. O., and Pope, D. (2009). *Stanford Survey of Adolescent School Experiences*. Presentation at Challenge Success May Conference, Stanford, CA.
- In an online survey with more than 1,000 teenage students, 35% of teens who had cell phones reported having used them to cheat at least once, and 65% said that they were aware that others in their school cheat by using cell phones. 52% of the students reported that they had cheated using the internet.  
**Source:** Benenson Strategy Group. (2009). Hi-tech cheating: Cell phones and cheating in schools. Retrieved from: <http://www.commonssensemedia.org/hi-tech-cheating>
- A study of 285 students from an urban middle school found that when students perceived an external reward for doing well (for example, they could earn a privilege for doing their work well), they saw cheating as more justifiable and cheated more often. In addition, when students thought that their schools valued performance goals (e.g. grades and test scores) on the whole, they were more likely to both justify and engage in cheating.  
**Source:** Anderman, E. M., Griesinger, T., & Westerfield, G. (1998). Motivation and cheating during early adolescence. *Journal of Educational Psychology*, 90, 84-93.

## Homework

- A review of research on homework showed almost no correlation between homework and achievement for elementary school students. There was a 0.7 correlation for middle school students for the first 60 minutes; for any additional times spent by middle school students, little or no correlation was found.  
**Source:** Cooper, H., Robinson, J.C., & Patall, E.A. (2006). Does homework improve academic achievement? A synthesis of research 1987-2003. *Review of Educational Research*, 76(1), 1-62.
- 26% of all students grades 3-12 say homework is just busywork and unrelated to what they are learning in school.  
**Source:** MetLife survey of the American teacher: The homework experience. A survey of students, teachers and parents. (2007). Retrieved from:  
[http://www.eric.ed.gov/ERICWebPortal/search/detailmini.jsp?\\_nfpb=true&\\_ERICExtSearch\\_SearchValue\\_0=ED500012&ERICExtSearch\\_SearchType\\_0=no&accno=ED500012](http://www.eric.ed.gov/ERICWebPortal/search/detailmini.jsp?_nfpb=true&_ERICExtSearch_SearchValue_0=ED500012&ERICExtSearch_SearchType_0=no&accno=ED500012)
- A 2007 national survey revealed that while 60% of parents think that their children's teachers assign the right amount of homework and an additional 25% think that too little homework is assigned, one-third of parents rate the quality of homework assignments as fair or poor, and 4 in 10 believe that a great deal or some homework is busywork and not related to what students are learning in school.  
**Source:** MetLife survey of the American teacher: The homework experience. A survey of students, teachers and parents. (2007). Retrieved from:  
[http://www.eric.ed.gov/ERICWebPortal/search/detailmini.jsp?\\_nfpb=true&\\_ERICExtSearch\\_SearchValue\\_0=ED500012&ERICExtSearch\\_SearchType\\_0=no&accno=ED500012](http://www.eric.ed.gov/ERICWebPortal/search/detailmini.jsp?_nfpb=true&_ERICExtSearch_SearchValue_0=ED500012&ERICExtSearch_SearchType_0=no&accno=ED500012)
- Educators of middle school students may have increased homework because they feel pressure to assign more homework to maintain test scores.  
**Source:** Cooper, H. (2007). *The battle over homework: Common ground for administrators, teachers, and parents*. Thousand Oaks, CA: Corwin Press.

## Literacy

- Parents are concerned that digital devices are distracting children from reading. Among parents of children in every age group, nearly half (49%) feel their children do not spend enough time reading books for fun – the kind of reading practice that is critical for children to build stamina, fluency, vocabulary and comprehension.  
**Source:** Scholastic. (2012). Kids and Family Reading Report, 4<sup>th</sup> Edition. Retrieved from:  
<http://mediaroom.scholastic.com/files/kfrr2013-wappendix.pdf>
- Among girls, there has been a decline since 2010 in frequent readers (42% vs. 36%), reading enjoyment (71% vs. 66%), and the importance of reading books for fun (62% vs. 56%).  
**Source:** Scholastic. (2012). Kids and Family Reading Report, 4<sup>th</sup> Edition. Retrieved from:  
<http://mediaroom.scholastic.com/files/kfrr2013-wappendix.pdf>

- Compared to 2010, boys are more likely to think reading books for fun is important (39% in 2010 vs. 47% in 2012), but they still lag girls on this measure (47% for boys in 2012 vs. 56% for girls in 2012).  
**Source:** Scholastic. (2012). Kids and Family Reading Report, 4<sup>th</sup> Edition. Retrieved from: <http://mediaroom.scholastic.com/files/kfrr2013-wappendix.pdf>
- Frequency of reading books for fun is significantly lower for kids age 12-17 than for children age 6-11; frequency for reading books for school is also lower for kids age 12-17 than for kids age 6-11.  
**Source:** Scholastic. (2012). Kids and Family Reading Report, 4<sup>th</sup> Edition. Retrieved from: <http://mediaroom.scholastic.com/files/kfrr2013-wappendix.pdf>
- The percentage of boys who read 5-7 days a week drops at every age, whereas girls level off in their teens. 47.5% of both cohorts age 6-8 say they read for fun and it decreases to 18% for boys age 15-17 and 30% for girls.  
**Source:** Scholastic. (2012). Kids and Family Reading Report, 4<sup>th</sup> Edition. Retrieved from: <http://mediaroom.scholastic.com/files/kfrr2013-wappendix.pdf>
- Having reading role-model parents or a large book collection at home has a greater impact on kids' reading frequency than does household income.  
**Source:** Scholastic. (2012). Kids and Family Reading Report, 4<sup>th</sup> Edition. Retrieved from: <http://mediaroom.scholastic.com/files/kfrr2013-wappendix.pdf>

## Media

- On any given day, American teens (13-18) average about 9 hours of entertainment media use, excluding time spent at school or for homework. Tweens (8-12) average about 6 hours of entertainment media daily.  
**Source:** Common Sense Media. (2015). *The common sense census: Media use by tweens and teens*. Retrieved from: [https://www.commonsensemedia.org/sites/default/files/uploads/research/census\\_executivesummary.pdf](https://www.commonsensemedia.org/sites/default/files/uploads/research/census_executivesummary.pdf)
- Boys and girls have very different media preferences and habits: boys spend more time than girls playing video games but girls spend more time than boys on social media.  
**Source:** Common Sense Media. (2015). *The common sense census: Media use by tweens and teens*. Retrieved from: [https://www.commonsensemedia.org/sites/default/files/uploads/research/census\\_executivesummary.pdf](https://www.commonsensemedia.org/sites/default/files/uploads/research/census_executivesummary.pdf)
- Teens still prefer watching TV and listening to music over spending time on social media.  
**Source:** Common Sense Media. (2015). *The common sense census: Media use by tweens and teens*. Retrieved from: [https://www.commonsensemedia.org/sites/default/files/uploads/research/census\\_executivesummary.pdf](https://www.commonsensemedia.org/sites/default/files/uploads/research/census_executivesummary.pdf)

- Highly multipurpose technology, such as mobile phones, can have a negative impact on productivity through distraction. Schools that restrict access to mobile phones subsequently experience an improvement in test scores. Banning mobile phones improves outcomes for the low-achieving students the most and has no significant impact on high achievers.

**Source:** Beland, L-P. & Murphy, R. (2015). Ill communication: Technology, distraction & student performance. *Centre for Economic Performance, CEP Discussion Paper No. 1350*.

- 92% of teens 13-17 report going online daily, with 24% who say they go online “almost constantly”. 71% of teens use Facebook while 52% and 41% use Instagram and Snapchat, respectively. Additionally, 71% of teens report using more than 1 social network site. Girls are more likely to use visually-oriented social media platforms while boys continue to be more likely to play videogames.

**Source:** Lenhart, A. (2015). Pew Research Center. *Teen, Social Media and Technology Overview 2015*. Retrieved from:  
[http://www.pewinternet.org/files/2015/04/PI\\_TeensandTech\\_Update2015\\_0409151.pdf](http://www.pewinternet.org/files/2015/04/PI_TeensandTech_Update2015_0409151.pdf)

- Compared to 2010, in 2012 more girls age 12-17 are connecting through technology 5-7 days a week. For girls age 12-14, 61% use a cell phone to text or talk vs. 52% in 2010. However use of a smartphone to go online for girls age 12-14 smartphone usage is at 24%, compared to 21% in 2010. For girls age 12-14, 53% are using social media sites compared to 38% in 2010.

**Source:** Scholastic. (2012). Kids and Family Reading Report, 4<sup>th</sup> Edition. Retrieved from:  
<http://mediaroom.scholastic.com/files/kfrr2013-wappendix.pdf>

- Compared to 2010, fewer boys age 12-14 are playing video games, while more boys age 15-17 are going online via computer, visiting networking sites, and playing video games 5-7 days a week. 47% of boys age 12-14 are going online for fun, vs. 44% in 2010. There was a 10% drop from 2010-2012 for boys age 12-14 playing video or computer games (58% to 48%). There was a slight drop in visiting social networking sites from 29% in 2010 to 27% in 2012 for boys 12-14.

**Source:** Scholastic. (2012). Kids and Family Reading Report, 4<sup>th</sup> Edition. Retrieved from:  
<http://mediaroom.scholastic.com/files/kfrr2013-wappendix.pdf>

- Researchers found that having a bedroom television was a significant predictor of adolescent weight gain, about 1 pound per year, even after accounting for hours of TV watched each day and socioeconomic factors.

**Source:** Li, Z., Adachi-Mejia, A., McClure, A., & Sargent, J. (2014). Do bedroom televisions contribute to youth obesity? *JAMA Pediatrics*. Dartmouth-Hitchcock Norris Cotton Cancer Center.

- An estimated 75% of teens own cell phones, 54% use their phones for texting, and about 25% log on to social media sites more than 10 times per day. The American Academy of Pediatrics has warned of the dangers of cyberbullying, sexting, Facebook depression, Internet addiction, and sleep deprivation and encourages parents to regularly discuss use of social media with their children and supervise online activities.

**Source:** O’Keeffe, G.S., et al. (2011). The impact of social media on children, adolescents, and families. *Pediatrics*. 127:800. Retrieved from

[http://pediatrics.aappublications.org/content/127/4/800?ijkey=55d8cf4c87f41acca196bbe649ede6a266630149&keytype=tf\\_ipsecsha](http://pediatrics.aappublications.org/content/127/4/800?ijkey=55d8cf4c87f41acca196bbe649ede6a266630149&keytype=tf_ipsecsha)

- Parents believe the use of electronic or digital devices negatively affects the time kids, ages 6-17 spend reading books (41%), doing physical activity (40%), and engaging with family (33%).  
**Source:** Scholastic. (2010). 2010 Kids and family reading report. Retrieved from: <http://mediaroom.scholastic.com/research>
- Between 2004 and 2009, the average amount of time 8- to 18-year-olds spent consuming media increased to 7.5 hours of media exposure per day (an increase of 2.25 hours). Factoring in multi-tasking (time spent using more than one medium at a time), today's youth pack a total of 10 hours and 45 minutes worth of media content into those hours. This does not include time spent talking on cell phones or sending text messages (8- to 18-year-olds spend an average of 1.5 hours a day talking, while 7th to 12th graders spend an average of 1.5 hours a day texting.)  
**Source:** Kaiser Family Foundation. (2010). Generation M2: Media in the lives of 8- to 18-year-olds. Retrieved from: <http://www.kff.org/entmedia/upload/Executive-Summary-Generation-M-Media-in-the-Lives-of-8-18-Year-olds.pdf>
- Nearly one in three (31%) 8- to 18-year-olds say that “most” of the time they are doing homework, they are also using one medium or another—watching TV, texting, listening to music, etc.  
**Source:** Kaiser Family Foundation. (2010). Generation M2: Media in the lives of 8- to 18-year-olds. Retrieved from: <http://www.kff.org/entmedia/upload/Executive-Summary-Generation-M-Media-in-the-Lives-of-8-18-Year-olds.pdf>
- In a survey of youth ages 8-18, nearly 1 in 4 said they have felt “addicted” to video games.  
**Source:** Harris Interactive. (2007). Video Game Addiction: Is it real? Retrieved from: <http://www.harrisinteractive.com/NEWS/allnewsbydate.asp?NewsID=1196>
- 71% of all 8- to 18-year-olds have their own television in their rooms (ranging from 54% of 8- to 10-year-olds to 76% of 11- to 18-year-olds). In addition, half have a video game player (50%) or cable TV (49%), and a third have a computer (36%) and internet access (33%) in their rooms.  
**Source:** Kaiser Family Foundation. (2010). Generation M2: Media in the lives of 8- to 18-year-olds. Retrieved from: <http://www.kff.org/entmedia/upload/Executive-Summary-Generation-M-Media-in-the-Lives-of-8-18-Year-olds.pdf>

### **Playtime, Downtime, Family Time**

- Family meals during adolescence were shown to be protective against the development of overweight and obesity in young adulthood.  
**Source:** Berge, J.M., Wall, M., Hsueh, T-F., Fulkerson, J.A., Larson, N., & Neumark-Sztainer, D. (2014). The protective role of family meals for youth obesity: 10-year longitudinal associations. *The Journal of Pediatrics*, 166(2), 296-301.

- How families manage household responsibilities and chores can impact their happiness. Caretakers report more satisfaction and less stress when family members do chores together, rather than getting the chores done by a division of labor.  
**Source:** Galovan, A.M., Holmes, E.K., Schramm, D.G., & Lee, T.R. (in press). Father involvement, father-child relationship quality, and satisfaction with family work: Actor and partner influences on marital quality. *Journal of Family Issues*. Cited in Rende, R. (2014). *The Misperceptions of Chores: What's Really at Stake?* White paper.
- Children are *less likely* to help an adult (e.g., by picking up an object that the adult dropped) if they have been given a *material reward* for doing so in the past. A material reward diminishes the intrinsic motivation to help.  
**Source:** Hepach, R., Vaish, A., & Tomasello, M. (2013). A new look at children's prosocial motivation. *Infancy*, 18, 67-90.
- While parental involvement might be the extra boost that students need to build their own confidence and abilities, over-parenting (helicopter parenting) appears to do the converse in creating a sense that one cannot accomplish things socially or in general on one's own.  
**Source:** Bradley-Geist, J.C. & Olson-Buchanan, J.B. (2014). "Helicopter parents: an examination of the correlates of over-parenting of college students", *Education + Training*, 56(4), 314 -328.
- The percentage of youth aged 12–15 who had adequate levels of cardiorespiratory fitness decreased from 52.4% in 1999–2000 to 42.2% in 2012. Only 1/2 of boys and about one-third of girls aged 12–15 years had adequate levels of cardiorespiratory fitness.  
**Source:** Gahche, J., Fakhouri, T., Carroll, D.D., et al. (2014). Cardiorespiratory fitness levels among U.S. youth aged 12–15 years: United States, 1999–2004 and 2012. NCHS data brief, no 153. Hyattsville, MD: National Center for Health Statistics. 2014.
- In a survey of over 10,000 middle and high school students, 80% chose happiness and achievement as personal values over caring for others (20%). 80% also reported that their parents value personal happiness and achievement over caring for others. Youth were also 3 times more like to agree than disagree with the statement: “My parents are prouder if I get good grades in my classes than if I’m a caring community member in class and school.”  
**Source:** Weissbourd, R., Jones, S., Ross-Anderson, T., Kahn, J. & Russell, M. (2014). The children we mean to raise: The real messages adults are sending about values. *Making Caring Common Project, Harvard Graduate School of Education*. Retrieved from: [http://sites.gse.harvard.edu/sites/default/files/making-caring-common/files/mcc\\_the\\_children\\_we\\_mean\\_to\\_raise\\_0.pdf](http://sites.gse.harvard.edu/sites/default/files/making-caring-common/files/mcc_the_children_we_mean_to_raise_0.pdf)
- Adolescents who frequently ate meals with their family and/or parents were less likely to engage in risk behaviors when compared to peers who never or rarely ate meals with their families.  
**Source:** Skeer, M. & Ballard, E. (2013). Are family meals as good for youth as we think they are? A review of the literature on family meals as they pertain to adolescent risk prevention. *Journal of Youth & Adolescence*, 42(7), 943-963.
- Frequent family meals are associated with greater consumption of fruits and vegetables and breakfast. Adolescents who frequently shared family meals were also more likely to report that what they ate in the past week was healthier than adolescents who did not.

**Source:** Utter, J., Denny, S., Robinson, E., Fleming, T., Ameratunga, S., & Grant, S. (2013). Family meals among New Zealand young people: Relationships with eating behaviors and body mass index. *Journal of Nutrition and Behavior*, 45(1), 3-11.

- Family meals were found to offer protection against dangerous disordered eating behaviors and substance abuse in adolescence. Protection of family meals tends to be stronger among girls than boys, regarding disordered eating behavior. Adolescents who eat frequent family meals have higher self-esteem and are less likely to report depressive symptoms, suicidal ideation and attempts compared to adolescents who eat fewer family meals. Eating frequent family meals was found to be associated with lower levels of cigarette smoking, alcohol and marijuana use in adolescents.

**Source:** Loth, K.A. (2013). The importance of family meals. *Pediatrics for Parents*, 29(3/4), 26-27.

- Teens who have frequent family dinners (at least 5/week) are 1.5 times more likely (than teens who eat less than 3/week) to say their parents know a great deal/fair amount about what's really going on in their lives. Those who say their parents know very little/nothing at all about what goes on in their lives are 1.5 times more likely to have used marijuana and alcohol. Teens who have frequent family meals report having high-quality relationships with their parents. These teens are less likely to use drugs, drink, or smoke. Teens who have frequent family meals are 1.5 times less likely to report high levels of stress and thus, less likely to have used marijuana, alcohol, or tobacco. Teens who have IN-frequent family meals are less likely to say their parents would be extremely upset to find they had used marijuana and are 3x likelier to say "it's ok for teens my age to use marijuana or get drunk".

**Source:** National Center on Addiction and Substance Abuse at Columbia University. (2012). The importance of family dinners VIII: A CASAColumbia White Paper. Retrieved from <http://www.casacolumbia.org/addiction-research/reports/importance-of-family-dinners-2012>

- Family mealtime communication was significantly associated with higher positive affect and engagement and with lower negative affect and stress.

**Source:** Offer, S. (2013). Assessing the relationship between family mealtime communication and adolescent emotional well-being using the experience sampling method. *Journal of Adolescence*, 36(3), 577-585.

- In 2002/2003, American children aged 6-17 spent 6-7 hours a day in school, depending on their age/level of schooling. Twenty years prior, in the early 1980s, the time spent in school ranged from 5-6 hours a day in school. The direct result has been less time for extracurricular activities, sleeping, and family time.

**Source:** Juster, F.T., Ono, H., & Stafford, F. (2004). Changing times of American youth: 1981-2003. Ann Arbor, MI: Institute for Social Research, University of Michigan. Retrieved from [http://www.umich.edu/news/Releases/2004/Nov04/teen\\_time\\_report.pdf](http://www.umich.edu/news/Releases/2004/Nov04/teen_time_report.pdf)

- The greater the amount of time adolescents report spending in regularly scheduled structured activities, the higher their self-reported level of anxiety tends to be.

**Source:** Melman, S., Little, S. G., & Akin-Little, K. A. (2007). Adolescent overscheduling: The relationship between levels of participation in scheduled activities and self-reported clinical symptomology. *The High School Journal*, 90(3), 18-30.



## School Culture and Student Engagement

- Research suggests that enjoyment of education as an expression of the ‘affective’ aspects of school engagement has a longitudinal effect on learner identity across the lifespan. In turn, this appears to further influence subsequent education and career choices well into adulthood. These findings highlight the importance of schools providing a rich learning environment inside and outside the classroom, that challenges and rewards effort, and helps to create a mastery goal orientation among students. Active, rather than passive learning styles that engage both mind and body, involving humour, music and movement, and learning activities, which promote interest, concentration, enjoyment and a feeling of accomplishment have been credited with encouraging engagement.

**Source:** Abbott-Chapman, J., Martin, K., Ollington, N., Venn, A., Dwyer, T., & Gall, S. (2014). The longitudinal association of childhood school engagement with adult educational and occupational achievement: Findings from an Australian national study. *British Educational Research Journal*, 40(1), 102-120.

- The stress that society places on financial success as the “ultimate reward” of learning is counterproductive, partially because it has detrimental effects on mastery-oriented learning. It may be that government and parental attempts to raise the educational aspirations of their children by linking education to increased earning power may not have its desired effect at all; such a focus could very well discourage youths from fully engaging with learning. Additionally, materialistic values are negatively associated with teenagers’ mastery-oriented learning motivation and also resulted in a deterioration of school grades over time.

**Source:** Ku, L., Dittmar, H., & Banerjee, R. (2012). Are materialistic teenagers less motivated to learn? Cross-sectional and longitudinal evidence from the United Kingdom and Hong Kong. *Journal of Educational Psychology*, 104(1), 74-86.

- Five best flags to predict dropout included: attending school 80% or less of the time during 5<sup>th</sup> grade, failing math in 6<sup>th</sup> grade, failing English in 6<sup>th</sup> grade, receiving an out-of-school suspension in 6<sup>th</sup> grade, and receiving an unsatisfactory final behavior mark in any subject in 6<sup>th</sup> grade. This work makes it clear that the vast majority of dropouts, at least in large, high-poverty urban schools, are highly identifiable and predictable before they have entered or spent much time in high school.

**Source:** Balfanz, R, Herzog, L., & MacIver, D.J. (2007). Preventing student disengagement and keeping students on the graduation path in urban middle-grades schools: early identification and effective interventions. *Educational Psychologist*, 42(4), 223-235.

- In school year 2011–12, some 3.1 million public high school students, or 81%, graduated on time with a regular diploma. Among all public high school students, Asians/Pacific Islanders had the highest graduation rate (93%), followed by Whites (85%), Hispanics (76%), and American Indians/Alaska Natives and Blacks (68% each).

**Source:** Public high school graduation rates for the 2011-2012 school year compared to past years. (2014, May). U.S. Department of Education, Institute of Education Sciences, National Center for Education Statistics. Retrieved from: [http://nces.ed.gov/programs/coe/indicator\\_coi.asp](http://nces.ed.gov/programs/coe/indicator_coi.asp)

- It is suggested that intelligence (IQ) helps students learn and solve problems independent of formal instruction, whereas self-control helps students study, complete homework, and behave positively in the classroom.

**Source:** Duckworth, A.L., Quinn, P. D., & Tsukayama, E. (2012). What *No Child Left Behind* leaves behind: The roles of IQ and self-control in predicting standardized achievement test scores and report card grades. *Journal of Educational Psychology*, 104(2), 439-451.

- Student engagement is vital to academic achievement. Engaged students are attentive and participate in class discussions, exert effort in class activities, and exhibit interest and motivation to learn. Disengaged students become disruptive, are less likely to aspire to higher educational goals, have lower grades, and are more likely to drop out of school. This evidence suggests that when teachers create a sense of community, respond to students' needs, and foster positive relationships, academic success likely ensues.

**Source:** Reyes, M.R., Brackett, M.A., Rivers, S.E., White, M., & Salovey, P. (2012). Classroom emotional climate, student engagement, and academic achievement. *Journal of Educational Psychology*, 104(3), 700-712.

- Middle school students' perception of their school environment influences their academic and psychological adjustment. Perceived emphasis on competition and differential treatment are related to diminished academic values, low self-esteem, and lower academic achievement as well as increases in truancy, anger, and depressive symptoms. Perceived positive teacher regard and emphasis on effort and improvement are associated with increased academic values, academic competence, and academic achievement as well as decreased depressive symptoms, anger, and truancy and increases in self-esteem over time.

**Source:** Roesler, R. W., & Eccles, J. S. (1998). Adolescents' perceptions of middle school. *Journal of Research on Adolescence*, 8(1), 123-158.

- In a study of 373 7<sup>th</sup> graders, the belief that intelligence is malleable and can be increased through effort (e.g. "*The more time and effort you put in, the smarter you can get*") predicted an upward trajectory of grades over the two years of junior high school, while a belief that intelligence is unchangeable ("*Some people are smart and others just aren't*") predicted a flat trajectory. An intervention teaching a malleable theory of intelligence to 7<sup>th</sup> graders (N = 48) promoted positive change in classroom motivation and grades compared with a control group (N = 43), which displayed a continuing downward trajectory.

**Source:** Blackwell, L., Trzesniewski, K., & Dweck, C.S. (2007). Implicit theories of intelligence predict achievement across an adolescent transition: A longitudinal study and an intervention. *Child Development*, 78, 246-263.

- In the context of high-performing middle and high schools, lack of full engagement is associated with more frequent school stress, higher rates of cheating, and greater internalizing, externalizing, and physical symptoms of stress. "Full engagement" means that students are engaged behaviorally, affectively, and cognitively with their schoolwork.

**Source:** Conner, J., & Pope, D. (2013). Not just robo-students: Why full engagement matters and how schools can promote it. *J Youth Adolesc.* Retrieved from <http://link.springer.com/article/10.1007/s10964-013-9948-y#page-1>

- Project-based learning methods may help to decrease the gap in achievement between female and male middle school students.  
**Source:** Swan, K., Vahey, P., van Hooft, M, Kratcoski, A., Rafanan, K., Stanford, T., Yarnall, L., Cook, D. (2013). Problem-based Learning Across the Curriculum: Exploring the Efficacy of a Cross-curricular Application of Preparation for Future Learning. *Interdisciplinary Journal of Problem-based Learning*. 7(1).
- Students who were exposed to project-based learning activities prior to directed instruction showed greater learning gains than students who were exposed to only the directed instruction (traditional approach), as measured by changes in scores from pre- to post-tests.  
**Sources:** Geier et al. (2007). Standardized Test Outcomes for Students Engaged in Inquiry-Based Science Curricula in the Context of Urban Reform. *Journal of Research in Science Teaching*. 45(8), 922-39.  
Schneider et al. Preparing for Future Learning with a Tangible User Interface: The Case of Neuroscience. (2013). *IEEE Transactions on Learning Technologies*. Volume 6, Issue 2.  
Schmidt et al. (1989). Explanatory Models in the Processing of Science Text: The Role of Prior Knowledge Activation Through Small-Group Discussion. *Journal of Educational Psychology*. 81(4), 610-619.
- Implementation of project-based teaching units in Detroit public school science classes resulted in higher scores across all five categories in annual state standardized tests, compared to students who received traditional schooling. This effect was increased for students involved in the program over multiple years.  
**Source:** Swan, K., Vahey, P., van Hooft, M, Kratcoski, A., Rafanan, K., Stanford, T., Yarnall, L., Cook, D. (2013). Problem-based Learning Across the Curriculum: Exploring the Efficacy of a Cross-curricular Application of Preparation for Future Learning. *Interdisciplinary Journal of Problem-based Learning*. 7(1).

## Sleep

- During adolescence biological changes dictate both a sleep duration of nine hours and later wake and sleep times. The conflict between social time (social conventions of when school and work days should start) and biological time (actual biological and circadian rhythms of sleep pressure and wakefulness) in adolescence is greater than at any other point in our lives. The level of sleep loss due to this conflict causes impairment to physiological, metabolic and psychological health in adolescents while they are undergoing other major physical and neurological changes.  
**Source:** Kelley, P., Lockley, S.W., Goster, R.G. & Kelley, J. (2015). Synchronizing education to adolescent biology: 'let teens sleep, start school later'. *Learning, Media and Technology*, 40(2), 210-226. DOI: 10.1080/17439884.2014.942666
- Middle school students need 9-11 hour of sleep per night.  
**Source:** National Sleep Foundation. (2014). Children and Sleep. Retrieved from <http://sleepfoundation.org/sleep-topics/children-and-sleep/page/0%2C2/>

- What is sleep's role in achievement and learning? Too little sleep impairs acquisition of material and leads to irritability, distractibility, and inattention; ability to process input is diminished; it impairs retrieval or ability to access learned information. Sleep allows for consolidation, stabilization, strengthening, and filtering of information.  
**Source:** Carskadon, M. (2013). Biology of Teen Sleep Patterns. Presentation at National Sleep Foundation Conference. Retrieved from: <http://www.cehd.umn.edu/carei/sleepresources.html>
- A healthy sleep cycle promotes the academic and emotional success of adolescents. Bright lights associated with laptops, smartphones and other electronic devices have been found to suppress melatonin, a hormone that helps regulate the sleep cycle. Sleep behavior is highly modifiable with the right support.  
**Source:** Asarnow, L.D., McGlinchey, E., & Harvey, A.G. (2013). The effects of bedtime and sleep duration on academic and emotional outcomes in a nationally representative sample of adolescents. *Journal of Adolescent Health*, published online.  
DOI:10.1016/j.jadohealth.2013.09.004
- Teenagers who go to bed late during the school year are more prone to academic and emotional difficulties in the long run, compared to their earlier-to-bed counterparts. Teens who went to bed after 11:30pm on school nights had lower GPA scores, and were more vulnerable to emotional problems than teens with earlier bedtimes. While going to bed late in the summer did not appear to impact their academic achievement, including grades, researchers did find a correlation between later summer bedtimes and emotional problems in young adulthood.  
**Source:** Asarnow, L.D., McGlinchey, E., & Harvey, A.G. (2013). The effects of bedtime and sleep duration on academic and emotional outcomes in a nationally representative sample of adolescents. *Journal of Adolescent Health*, published online.  
DOI:10.1016/j.jadohealth.2013.09.004
- Results of a longitudinal study suggest “regardless of how much a student generally studies each day, if that student sacrifices sleep time to study more than usual, he or she will have more trouble understanding material taught in class and be more likely to struggle on an assignment or test the following day.”  
**Source:** Gillen-O’Neel, C., Huynh, V.W., & Fuligni, A.J. (2013). To Study or to sleep? The academic costs of extra studying at the expense of sleep. *Child Development*, 84, 133-142.
- In a study of 2,259 students, aged 11 – 14, those who experience lower levels of sleep at the beginning of sixth grade also exhibit lower self- esteem and grades and higher levels of depressive symptoms at that point. Students who get less sleep over time also experience heightened depressive symptoms and decreased self-esteem.  
**Source:** Fredriksen, K., Rhodes, J., Reddy, R., & Way, N. (2004). Sleepless in Chicago: Tracking the effects of adolescent sleep loss during the middle school years. *Child Development*, 75(1), 84-95.
- A majority of adolescents are averaging 7 hours of sleep per night, and 1/4 are getting 6.5 hours or less.  
**Source:** Wolfe, P. (2005). Advice for the sleep-deprived. *Educational Leadership*, 62(7), 39-40.
- 85% of adolescents are reported to be mildly sleep deprived, and 10-40% may be significantly sleep deprived. Sleep deprivation decreases motivation, concentration,

attention, and coherent reasoning; it also decreases memory, self-control, and increases frequency of mistakes.

**Source:** Bergin, C. & Bergin, D. (2010). Sleep: The E-Z Z Z Intervention. *Educational Leadership* 67(4), 44-46.

- An estimated 25% of adolescents have some form of sleep disturbance, including nightmares, sleepwalking, waking at night and trouble falling asleep.  
**Source:** Clarke, G., & Harvey, A. G. (2012). The complex role of sleep in adolescent depression. *Child and adolescent psychiatric clinics of North America*, 21(2), 385.

## Sports and Extracurriculars

- American teens may not get enough daily exercise which can set them up for a host of chronic diseases including diabetes and heart disease.  
**Source:** Carlson, J.A., et al. (2015). Locations of physical activity as assessed by GPS in young adolescents. *Pediatrics* (online). Retrieved from: [www.pediatrics.org/cgi/doi/10.1542/peds.2015-2430](http://www.pediatrics.org/cgi/doi/10.1542/peds.2015-2430).
- 1.24 million kids were seen in emergency rooms for sports injuries in 2013. 13-15 year olds accounted for 37% of these injuries. 23% of coaches, 28% of athletes, and 31% of parents said they don't do anything to prevent injuries. Fewer than half the coaches surveyed said they had received certification on how to prevent and recognize sport injuries. 54% of youth athletes said they have played injured, and 42% said they have hidden or downplayed an injury during a game so they could keep playing. 53% of coaches said they felt pressure from a parent or player to put an athlete back into a game even if the child had been injured.  
**Source:** SafeKids Worldwide. (2014). *Changing the culture of youth sports*. Retrieved from <http://www.safekids.org/research-report/research-report-changing-culture-youth-sports-august-2014>
- 8 studies about recess time and academic achievement found one or more positive associations between recess and indicators of cognitive skills, attitudes, and academic behavior; none of the studies found negative associations.  
**Source:** Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. (2010). *The association between school-based physical activity, including physical education, and academic performance*. Atlanta, GA: U.S. Department of Health and Human Services.
- 19 studies examining the relationship between participation in extracurricular physical activities and academic performance found one or more positive associations.  
**Source:** Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. (2010). *The association between school-based physical activity, including physical education, and academic performance*. Atlanta, GA: U.S. Department of Health and Human Services.
- Moderate to vigorous physical activity was positively associated with higher GPAs of both males and females.  
**Source:** Bradley, B.J. & Greene, A.C. (2013). Do health and education agencies in the United States share responsibility for academic achievement and health? A review of 25 years of evidence

about the relationship of adolescents' academic achievement and health behaviors. *Journal of Adolescent Health*, 52, 523-532.

- Children who are more physically fit also tend to have higher cognitive functions and academic achievement.  
**Source:** Fedewa, A.L. & Ahn, S. (2011). The effects of physical activity and physical fitness on children's achievement and cognitive outcomes: A meta-analysis. *Research Quarterly for Exercise and Sport*, 82(3), 521-535.
- Adolescent participants in high injury sports (like football and wrestling) had higher odds of NMUPO (non-medical use of prescription opioids) than adolescents who did not participate in these types of sports. There is an increased opportunity for non-injured teammates to get opioids from injured teammates on the pain medication.  
**Source:** Veliz, P.T. (2013). Playing through the pain: Sports participation and nonmedical use of opioid medications among adolescents. *American Journal of Public Health*, 103(5).
- Female 9<sup>th</sup>-12<sup>th</sup> grade athletes suffer more overuse injuries than males. Students who play sports all year long had a 42% increased risk of overuse injuries compared to those who played fewer than 4 seasons. Reducing the number of sport seasons played by high school athletes could decrease their rate of overuse injuries with greatest gains potentially achieved by taking at least 1 season off from sports entirely each calendar year.  
**Source:** Cuff, S., Loud, K., & O'Riordan, M.A. (2010). Overuse injuries in high school athletes. *Clinical Pediatrics*, 49(8), 731-736.
- A TBI (traumatic brain injury) is an injury caused by a blow to the head or rapid acceleration – deceleration forces, and such an injury may lead to decreased levels of consciousness, amnesia, neurologic or neuropsychological abnormalities, or other consequences including death. Symptoms and effects are wide-ranging from mild headaches to memory loss to significant neurological deficits. In athletics, individuals who suffer TBI and resume play too soon may be at greater risk of re-injury.  
**Source:** Harvey, H.H. (2013). Reducing traumatic brain injuries in youth sports: Youth sports traumatic brain injury state laws, January 2009-December 2012. *American Journal of Public Health*, 103(7), 1249-1254.
- Sports activities account for an estimate 20% of all TBI's among youths and young adults. Children and young teens are at greatest risk of TBIs and they take longer to heal in part because youths' brains are still growing and developing. Sports associated with TBI include football, hockey, cheer, dance, lacrosse, baseball, and soccer.  
**Source:** Harvey, H.H. (2013). Reducing traumatic brain injuries in youth sports: Youth sports traumatic brain injury state laws, January 2009-December 2012. *American Journal of Public Health*, 103(7), 1249-1254.
- Between 2009-2012 44 states (and DC) enacted 1 or more youth sports TBI laws. 6 states have no TBI laws as of July 2013.  
**Source:** Harvey, H.H. (July 2013). Reducing traumatic brain injuries in youth sports: Youth sports traumatic brain injury state laws, January 2009-December 2012. *American Journal of Public Health*, 103(7), 1249-1254.

- In a study of age-group swimmers, the greater the value placed on the outcome of the swim race by a significant other, the more the race outcome mattered to youth swimmers, whereas if swimmers perceived their parent as being more concerned with the swimmer's mastery of skills, the swimmer also became more intrinsically motivated.  
**Source:** Swain, A.B., & Harwood, C.G. (1996). Antecedents of state goals in age-group swimmers: An interactionist perspective. *Journal of Sports Sciences*, 14(2), 111-124
- 52% of coaches of athletes aged 8-18 describe themselves as “very knowledgeable/well-trained” at recognizing sports injuries, yet 4 out of 10 coaches have had no sports safety training. 47% of coaches said that they had too many responsibilities and not enough time to focus on injury prevention. But 49% of youth sports injuries are treated by a coach or adult on-site. 32% of those injuries were severe enough to require medical treatment.  
**Source:** Toporek, Bryan. (2012). Survey: Many coaches misinformed about youth sports safety risks. *Education Week*. Retrieved from:  
[http://blogs.edweek.org/edweek/schooled\\_in\\_sports/2012/04/survey\\_many\\_coaches\\_misinformed\\_about\\_youth\\_sports\\_safety\\_risks.html?cmp=ENL-EU-NEWS2](http://blogs.edweek.org/edweek/schooled_in_sports/2012/04/survey_many_coaches_misinformed_about_youth_sports_safety_risks.html?cmp=ENL-EU-NEWS2)
- 39% of coaches of athletes aged 8-18 have been pressured by a parent and 20% have been pressured by an athlete to continue playing an injured young athlete. 31% of young athletes aged 8-18 believe that “good players should keep playing their sport even if they are hurt.”  
**Source:** Toporek, Bryan. (2012). Survey: Many coaches misinformed about youth sports safety risks. *Education Week*. Retrieved from:  
[http://blogs.edweek.org/edweek/schooled\\_in\\_sports/2012/04/survey\\_many\\_coaches\\_misinformed\\_about\\_youth\\_sports\\_safety\\_risks.html?cmp=ENL-EU-NEWS2](http://blogs.edweek.org/edweek/schooled_in_sports/2012/04/survey_many_coaches_misinformed_about_youth_sports_safety_risks.html?cmp=ENL-EU-NEWS2)

## 2016-17 Redwood Middle School Task Force

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### 1.6.5 Search Institute 2017 Report [www.Search-Institute.org](http://www.Search-Institute.org)

“Relationships First”

*Creating Connections that  
Help Young People Thrive*



# RELATIONSHIPS FIRST

CREATING  
CONNECTIONS THAT  
HELP YOUNG  
PEOPLE THRIVE



EUGENE ROEHLKEPARTAIN  
KENT PEKEL  
AMY SYVERTSEN  
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# BEYOND THE CLICHÉ

“It’s all about relationships.” That statement has become a cliché, whether the focus is on parenting, mentoring, teaching, coaching, raising money for a cause, getting a job, or finding a partner. And the cliché has research behind it: We’ve known for decades that high-quality relationships are essential to young people’s growth, learning, and thriving—including for those young people who face serious challenges in their lives and in the world around them. (See box.)

Yet, as many as 40 percent of young people feel lonely.<sup>11,26</sup> If we say relationships really matter, how do we make them a true priority for all young people to experience? How much do we invest in high-quality relationships in our families, schools, and youth programs?

Growing evidence suggests that strategically and systematically investing in building developmental relationships can be catalytic for effective education, programs, and services for children, youth, and families. Researchers Li and Julian wrote:

The effectiveness of child-serving programs, practices, and policies is determined first and foremost by whether they strengthen or weaken developmental relationships. . . . When developmental relationships are prevalent, development is promoted, and when this type of relationship is not available or diluted, interventions show limited effects.<sup>14</sup>

To respond, we first have to ask: What makes a relationship “developmental”? In other words, what happens in relationships that contribute to learning, growing, and thriving? And how do we start doing something as nebulous as “improving relationships”?

# NEW INSIGHTS BUILT ON A STRONG LEGACY

Search Institute is committed to exploring these questions with colleagues and partners. This booklet introduces what we’re learning and provides some starting points for action by organizations and leaders dedicated to children and youth. Here’s what you’ll find:

- The Developmental Relationships Framework.....3
- One Community’s Snapshot of Developmental Relationships.....6
  - Why Developmental Relationships Matter.....7
- How Developmental Relationships Grow.....10
- Activating Relationships in Organizations.....12
- 55 Ideas for Deepening One-to-One Relationships.....14
- Imagining Strong and Flexible Webs of Relationships...16
- References .....17

# THE CENTRALITY OF RELATIONSHIPS

Relationships are at the heart of what youth need to learn, grow, and thrive.

**Resilience:** “Whether the burdens come from the hardships of poverty, the challenges of parental substance abuse or serious mental illness, the stresses of war, the threats of recurrent violence or chronic neglect, or a combination of factors, the single most common finding is that children who end up doing well have had at least one stable and committed relationship with a supportive parent, caregiver, or other adult.”  
— *National Scientific Council on the Developing Child*<sup>17</sup>

**Growth:** “Supportive relationships are critical ‘mediums’ of development. They provide an environment of reinforcement, good modeling, and constructive feedback for physical, intellectual, and social growth.”  
— *National Research Council*<sup>15</sup>

**Social-emotional skills:** “Relationships are the soil in which children’s SEL [social-emotional learning] skills grow.”  
— *Jones & Bouffard*<sup>12</sup>

**Education:** “Positive relationships with adults are perhaps the single most important ingredient in promoting positive student development.”  
— *Pianta, Hamre, & Allen*<sup>21</sup>

**Civic life:** “No society can long sustain itself unless its members have learned the sensitivities, motivations, and skills involved in assisting and caring for other human beings.”  
— *Bronfenbrenner*<sup>3</sup>



# THE DEVELOPMENTAL RELATIONSHIPS FRAMEWORK

It's not enough to say that relationships matter. To be actionable, teachable, and measurable, we must specify some of the ways young people interact with others that contribute to their learning, growing, and thriving.

To that end, Search Institute has embarked on a major initiative to understand and document the day-to-day actions within relationships that contribute to a young person's development. We propose that relationships are developmental when they help young people:

- Discover who they are;
- Develop abilities to shape their own lives; and
- Learn how to engage with and contribute to the world around them.

Our research team identified five critical elements of developmental relationships. These elements are expressed through 20 specific actions (page 4).

Research by many other scholars shows that each element matters in young people's development.<sup>24,25</sup> In addition, our emerging research (which began with a national study of parents<sup>20</sup>) suggests that these elements work together to influence young people's learning, growth, and thriving (see pages 7-9).

## WHAT SEARCH INSTITUTE'S DEVELOPMENTAL RELATIONSHIPS FRAMEWORK OFFERS

This Developmental Relationships Framework invites young people, parents, teachers, coaches, program leaders, policy makers, researchers, and other adults to

focus attention on building and strengthening relationships in young people's lives. It offers the following features:

- Is relevant across different kinds of relationships in different contexts, including for young people who face serious challenges and barriers in life and in society.
- Operationalizes relationships, informing a holistic framework and approach that links theory, measures, strategies, and practical tools to improve youth outcomes and reduce inequities.
- Identifies starting points for exploring and enriching relationships—helping individuals be more intentional in how they form, grow, and adjust relationships, while also helping organizations create cultures, policies, and practices that encourage relationships to flourish.

## ONE SIZE DOES NOT FIT ALL

Of course, an influential relationship for one young person may not be meaningful for another. Some relationships are fleeting. Others last a lifetime. We each need different things from different people at different times. Meaningful relationships are characterized by a dynamic give and take that shapes who we are as we grow, change, and encounter new challenges and circumstances. The framework offers a way to keep our bearings as different kinds of relationships evolve and change, so we can continue to be intentional on the ever-changing journey of learning, growing, and thriving.

## THE ROOTS OF SEARCH INSTITUTE'S DEVELOPMENTAL RELATIONSHIPS FRAMEWORK






The Developmental Relationships Framework grew out of focus groups with youth, parents, educators, youth workers, and others; a wide-ranging review of existing research; extensive analysis of existing data; and input from both scholars and practitioners.<sup>27</sup>

It also builds on Search Institute's landmark research with more than 5 million youth on Developmental Assets—critical supports and strengths they need to thrive. Peter L. Benson, who created the asset framework, wrote:

After decades of forming hypotheses, conducting surveys, crafting and rewriting definitions, analyzing data, and writing journal articles, Search Institute researchers and practitioners have arrived at a surprisingly simple conclusion: nothing—*nothing*—has more impact in the life of a child than positive relationships.<sup>2</sup>






# SEARCH INSTITUTE'S DEVELOPMENTAL RELATIONSHIPS FRAMEWORK

A developmental relationship involves a dynamic mix of five elements, which are expressed through 20 actions. Because relationships are, by definition, bidirectional, each person in a strong relationship engages in and experiences each of these actions. However, for the purpose of clarity, this framework is expressed from the perspective of one young person.

Elements	Actions	Definitions
<b>Express Care</b> 	Be dependable Listen Believe in me Be warm Encourage	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Be someone I can trust.</li> <li>• Really pay attention when we are together.</li> <li>• Make me feel known and valued.</li> <li>• Show me you enjoy being with me.</li> <li>• Praise me for my efforts and achievements.</li> </ul>
<b>Challenge Growth</b> 	Expect my best Stretch Hold me accountable Reflect on failures	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Expect me to live up to my potential.</li> <li>• Push me to go further.</li> <li>• Insist I take responsibility for my actions.</li> <li>• Help me learn from mistakes and setbacks.</li> </ul>
<b>Provide Support</b> 	Navigate Empower Advocate Set boundaries	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Guide me through hard situations and systems.</li> <li>• Build my confidence to take charge of my life.</li> <li>• Defend me when I need it.</li> <li>• Put in place limits to keep me on track.</li> </ul>
<b>Share Power</b> 	Respect me Include me Collaborate Let me lead	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Take me seriously and treat me fairly.</li> <li>• Involve me in decisions that affect me.</li> <li>• Work with me to solve problems and reach goals.</li> <li>• Create opportunities for me to take action and lead.</li> </ul>
<b>Expand Possibilities</b> 	Inspire Broaden Horizons Connect	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Inspire me to see possibilities for my future.</li> <li>• Expose me to new ideas, experiences, and places</li> <li>• Introduce me to more people who can help me grow.</li> </ul>

# HOW YOUNG PEOPLE DESCRIBE THE POWER OF DEVELOPMENTAL RELATIONSHIPS

Search Institute has interviewed hundreds of young people from different backgrounds and in different settings about the important relationships in their lives. Here are examples of how they describe their experiences of developmental relationships with adults.

				
<b>Express Care</b>	<b>Challenge Growth</b>	<b>Provide Support</b>	<b>Share Power</b>	<b>Expand Possibilities</b>
“He made me feel like I was a better person, like I was worth something—worth more than I had put myself out to be.”	“Even if it’s really hard, the [staff] will most likely try to motivate you to do the right thing. . . . Even though you might think it’s hard, they know you can do it.”	“She helped me out with a nice place to live for 30 days when it was 21 below zero and I had nowhere to go.”	“My [youth leader] is, like, ‘I’m here, you’re here, we’re equal.’ And if we’re working on something together I can tell her, ‘No, this isn’t going to work.’”	“She puts you around people who’ve reached the places you wanna go in life. . . . And when you see people who come from the same places that you do, . . . it gives you hope.”

## DIFFERENT TYPES OF RELATIONSHIPS CAN ALL BE DEVELOPMENTAL

The Developmental Relationships Framework articulates elements and actions within relationships that can be experienced in a single relationship. They can also be experienced in a wide range of relationships with different people at home, at school, and in the community. Young people are most likely to do well when they have at least one well-rounded, strong, and sustained relationship in their lives, as well as a broader web of many positive relationships across the places they spend time and the people with whom they interact.

Here are conclusions from other researchers about relationships with different people in young people’s lives.

**Mentors and other non-family adults:** “VIPs [very important people who are nonparental adults] tend to provide a combination of positive adult qualities . . . and ‘peer-like’ relations. . . . Through their relationships with VIPs, adolescents often have an experientially rich and interpersonally supportive environment for development.”  
— *Beam, Chen, & Greenberger*<sup>1</sup>

**Parents:** “Regardless of age, children need parents. Indeed, across multiple studies, it appears that the quality of the parent-child relationship is one of the more important factors in determining what kind of behaviors and attitudes adolescents adopt across domains such as health, education, reproductive behaviors, social interactions, and problem behaviors.”  
— *Hair, Moore, Garrett et al.*<sup>10</sup>

**Friends:** “Close and intimate connections with peers . . . during adolescence are essential for psychological and emotional development.”  
— *Niwa, Rogers, & Way*<sup>18</sup>

**Teachers:** “When teachers learn to make modest efforts to form a personal connection with their adolescent students—such that the students feel known—they can dramatically enhance student motivation in school and emotional functioning outside of school.”  
— *Pianta, Hamre, & Allen*<sup>21</sup>

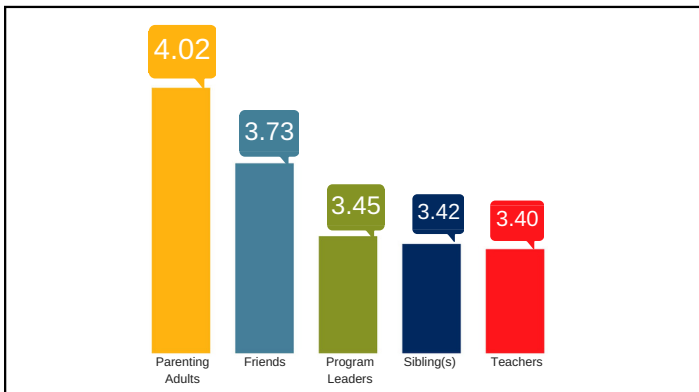
**Program leaders:** “Community programs for youth provide opportunities to expose young people to caring adults who challenge them, encourage them to participate in positive experiences, and respect their opinions. . . . [Guidance from adults] may be one of the most important characteristics of highly valued programs.”  
— *National Research Council*<sup>15</sup>

# ONE COMMUNITY'S SNAPSHOT OF DEVELOPMENTAL RELATIONSHIPS

How often do young people experience the five elements of developmental relationships? A 2016 Search Institute survey of 25,395 students, grades 6 – 12, in a large, diverse U.S. city asked one question about how often they experienced each of the five elements of developmental relationships. Participants responded five times, each time focusing on a different kind of relationship: parents, siblings,\* friends, teachers, and program leaders. (Future studies will expand to other communities and will deepen measures of each kind of relationship.)

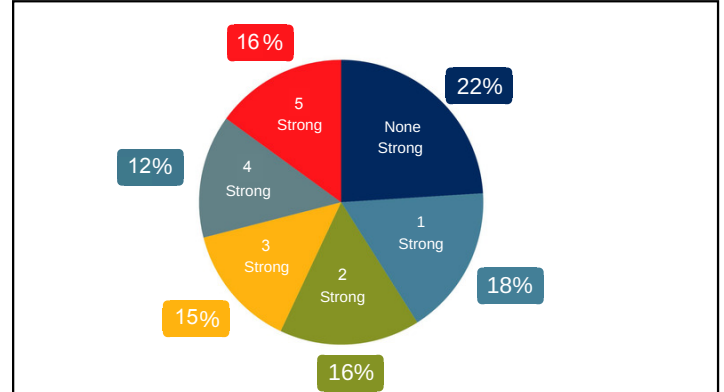
## STRENGTHS IN RELATIONSHIPS WITH PARENTING ADULTS

Looking across all five elements of a developmental relationship, young people reported the most strength in their relationships with parenting adults, followed by friends. Relationships with siblings, teachers, and program leaders (such as coaches, mentors, and club leaders) were roughly similar (3 = “sometimes,” 4 = “often”).



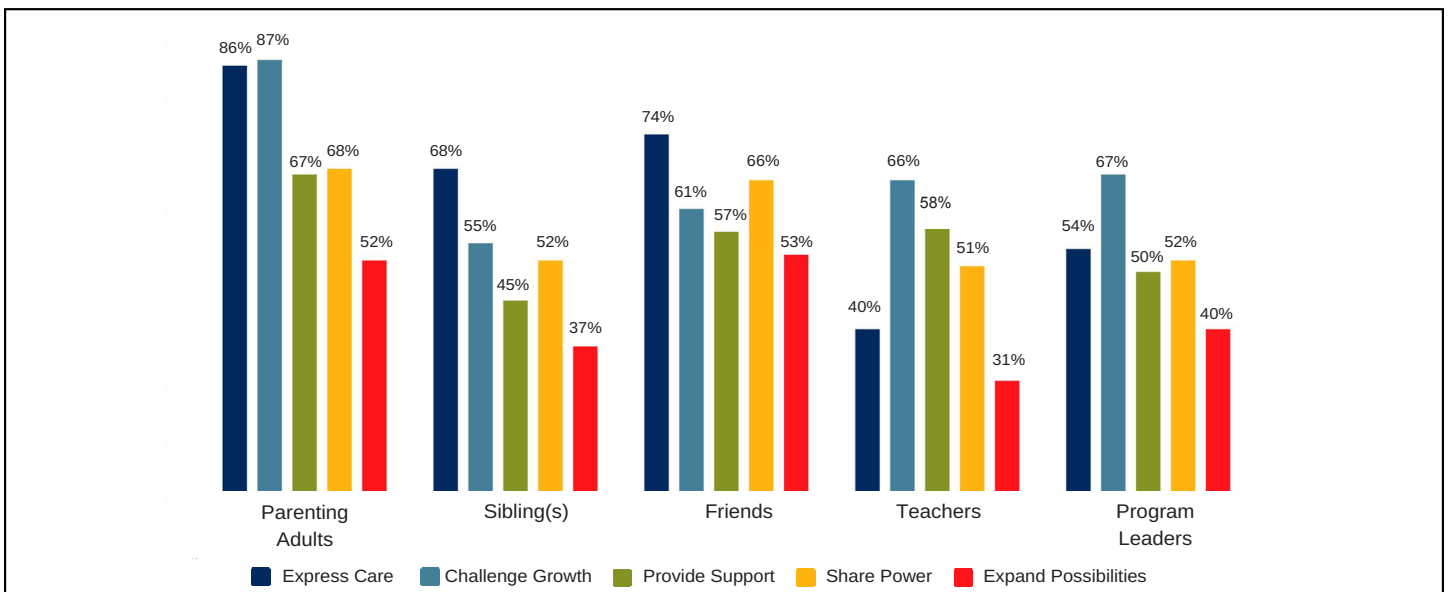
## MANY YOUTH LACK STRONG WEBS OF RELATIONSHIPS

Relationships are considered “strong” when young people experience the 5 elements of developmental relationships, on average, often or very often. In this study, only 28% of young people experience strength in 4 or 5 types of relationships. On the other hand, 40% identify just one or no types of relationships that are, on average, strong.



## DIFFERENT RELATIONSHIPS CONTRIBUTE DIFFERENT STRENGTHS

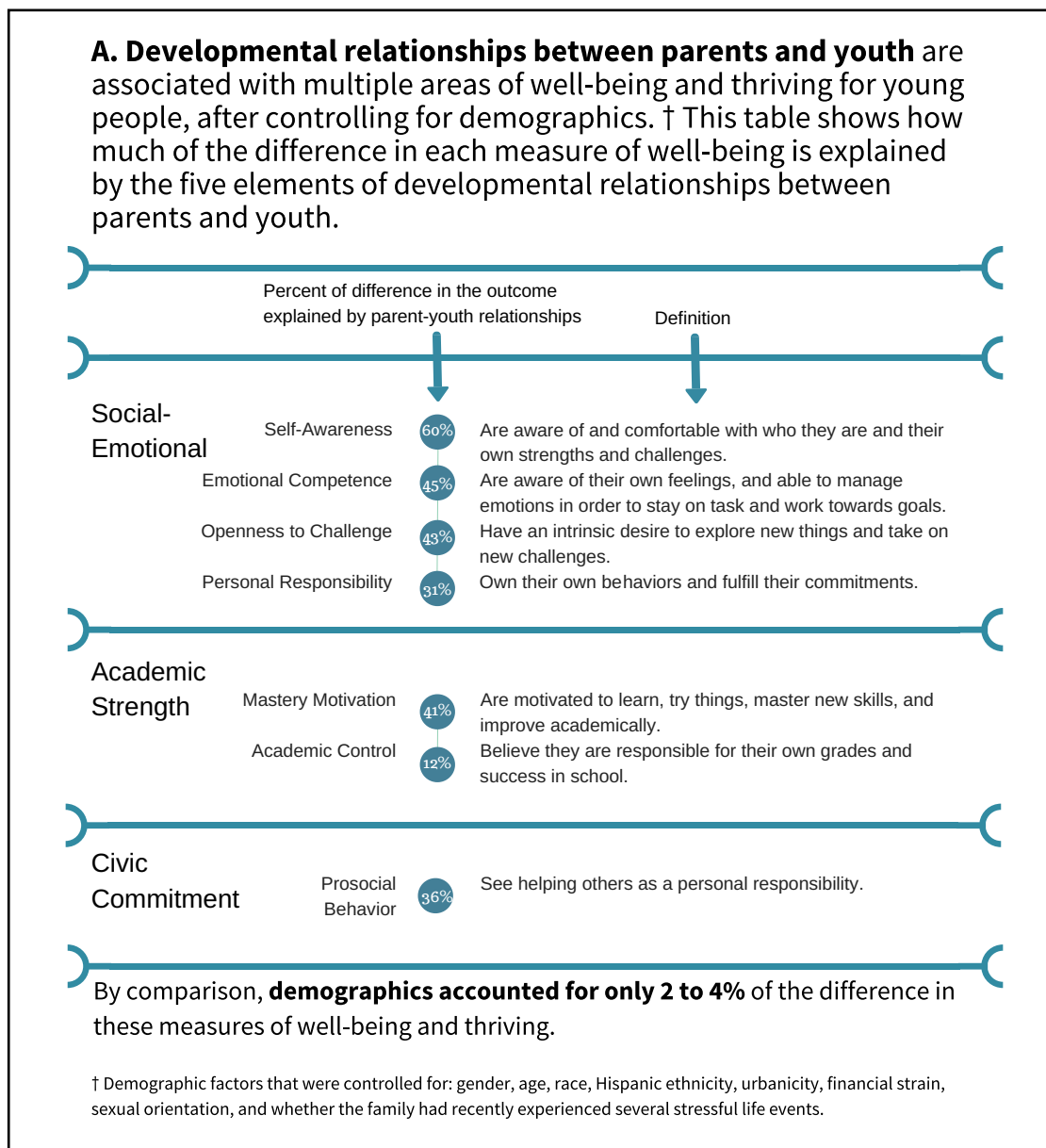
Young people differ in the elements of developmental relationships they report experiencing most in different kinds of relationships. Across all relationships, middle and high school students are least likely to experience “expand possibilities.” Here are the percentages of young people in this one community who said they experienced each of the five elements of developmental relationships “often” or “very often” within each type of relationship.



# WHY DEVELOPMENTAL RELATIONSHIPS MATTER

The Developmental Relationships Framework focuses on elements of relationships that contribute to a young person's growth, learning, and thriving. Through studies that examine different relationships, Search Institute has begun to document the power of these relationships in young people's lives, building on a wide range of existing research by many scholars on the power of relationships.

## 1. YOUNG PEOPLE WHO EXPERIENCE STRONG DEVELOPMENTAL RELATIONSHIPS ARE MORE LIKELY TO REPORT A WIDE RANGE OF SOCIAL-EMOTIONAL STRENGTHS AND OTHER INDICATORS OF WELL-BEING AND THRIVING



SOURCES: A. Cross-sectional studies of 633 matched parent-adolescent pairs from one semi-urban and one rural community in the United States. B. A survey of 675 students in grades 6 to 8 in a large, suburban middle school. C. 917 participants in an immersive conservation-focused summer program, reporting on their relationships with crew leaders and members.<sup>27</sup>

## B. Teacher-student relationships

Middle school students who reported high levels of developmental relationships with their teachers were 8 times more likely to stick with challenging tasks, enjoy working hard, and know it is okay to make mistakes when learning, when compared to students with low levels of student-teacher relationships.



## C. Program leaders

When young people experienced strong developmental relationships with leaders during a conservative service experience, they were more likely to exhibit: conservation leadership; a sense of community identity; and social responsibility.



## 2. YOUNG PEOPLE WITH STRONG RELATIONSHIPS ARE MORE RESILIENT IN THE FACE OF STRESS AND TRAUMA.

Families dealing with adversity are better equipped to mitigate the negative impact of stressful events when they have robust parent-child relationships. If young people in high-stressed families\* have strong developmental relationships with their parents, then they are . . .

- 21 times more likely to manage their emotions well.
- 17 times more likely to take personal responsibility for their actions.
- 5 times more likely to be good at making and keeping plans.
- 4 times more likely to have a sense of purpose in life.†

## 3. YOUNG PEOPLE DO BETTER WHEN THEY EXPERIENCE A STRONG WEB OF RELATIONSHIPS WITH MANY PEOPLE.

Each relationship can be an important source of strength. But, young people do even better when they have a strong web of many developmental relationships. This finding reinforces the importance of nurturing many developmental relationships in young people's lives, each of which complements and reinforces the others.

The charts on page 9 show the average score (from 1 to 100) that youth report on measures of each element of well-being or risk, based on the strength of their web of relationships.‡ Data are from surveys of 25,395 students, grades 6 – 12, in a large U.S. city. (See page 5 for more information about the web of relationships.)

\* High-stressed families are those who scored in the top 30% on a measure of 14 high-stress events or experiences in family life, including death of a parent, a family member's incarceration, or a chronic illness or disability.<sup>23</sup>

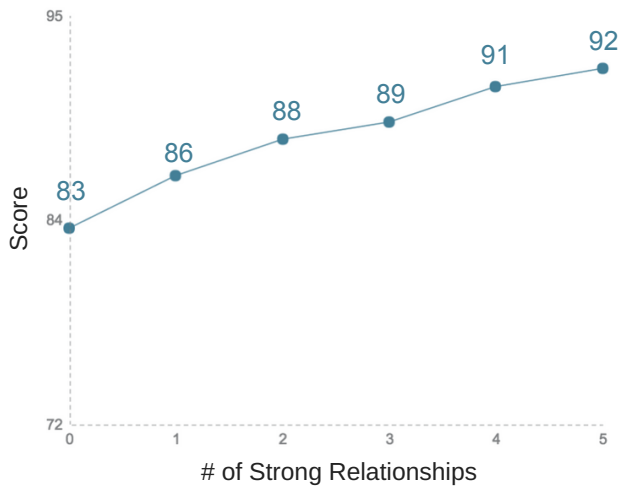
† Findings are from a study of 633 families in two communities. A parent and a youth in each family completed the survey. For these analyses, data on stressful life events came from the parent survey. Measures of relationships and outcomes are from the youth surveys. These calculations were made after accounting for a number of demographic differences, including the youth's gender, age, race/ethnicity, urbanicity, financial strain, and sexual orientation.

‡ Each well-being measure was calculated on a 5-point scale, and then multiplied to create a 100-point index. "High-risk behaviors" is based on a composite measure of 24 behaviors. The web of relationships is based on youth reporting about the types of relationships (e.g., with parents, teachers) in which they experience the five elements of a developmental relationship "often" or "very often."



### Academic Motivation

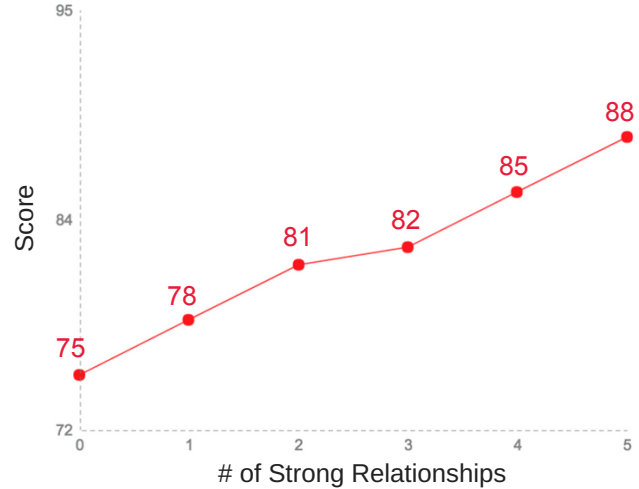
Care about how they do in school, and try as hard as they can to do their best work.



The average score (1-100) that youth report on measures of academic motivation.

### Socio-Emotional Skills

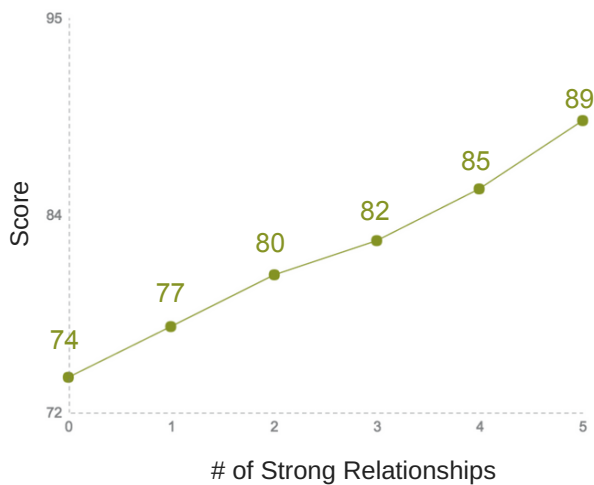
Recognize and respect other people's feelings, and are good at making and keeping friends.



The average score (1-100) that youth report on measures of socio-emotional skills.

### Responsibility

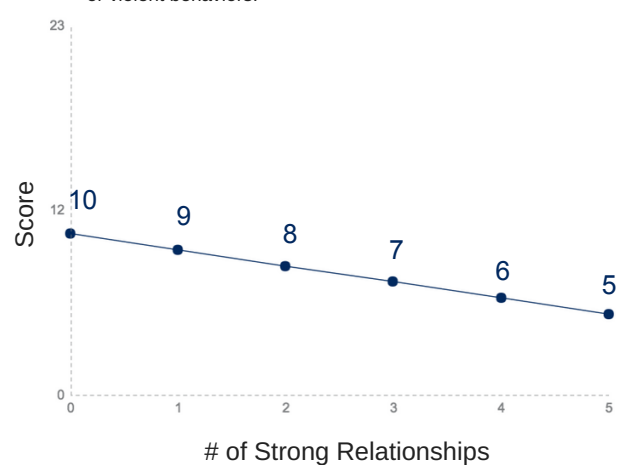
Take responsibility for their own actions, and do their best even on tasks they don't like.



The average score (1-100) that youth report on measures of responsibility skills.

### High-Risk Behaviors

Engage in high-risk behaviors, such as alcohol use, tobacco use, or violent behaviors.



The average score (1-100) that youth report on measures of high-risk behaviors.

# HOW DEVELOPMENTAL RELATIONSHIPS GROW

The research on relationships and the emerging framework offers fresh insights into the elements of relationships, and their role in young people's growth and learning. But how do they start, grow, and change over time? Search Institute is just beginning to explore the processes that may be at work.

As a starting point, it's clear that all strong relationships are dynamic and changing, not rigid and unchanging.<sup>6</sup> They evolve as the people in them grow, and they also stimulate growth for each person.

Although each relationship is unique, it can be helpful to articulate how actions might be intentionally phased across time. The figure on page 9 illustrates one potential path, beginning with basic relationship actions and adding others as a relationship deepens.

Many factors can alter this pathway, including how often people interact with each other, each person's relational skills, the setting they are in, and many other factors. For example, when we are intentional about listening, we may discover a need to advocate for that young person to address a pressing need, thus shifting the path of our relationship.

## A PATH THROUGH THE DEVELOPMENTAL RELATIONSHIPS FRAMEWORK

Where might you start with building developmental relationships? Each relationship is different, involving different people, at different places in their own developmental journeys, and in different settings. In some cases, the first phases may pass quickly. In others, it may take years.

Relationships are not linear; they have their ups and down, and their backs and forths. Different aspects of relationships have to be revisited and renegotiated as people, experiences, and circumstances change. Phases recycle as circumstances change and as young people grow. And, all these changes are occurring for both people in a relationship, not just the young person. As, one parent told us about their relationship with their child, "He's my first child, and I still learn from him. I learn from him every day.

"Within this complexity, it can be helpful to reflect on which relationship actions might be most meaningful at different phases of a relationship. Where might you start? Mentoring<sup>9</sup> and other fields offer clues about potential phases in building new developmental relationships, shown in the display below. Over time, Search Institute will refine our understanding of these processes, through learning partnerships in diverse settings.

### A DEVELOPMENTAL RELATIONSHIP IN REAL LIFE

#### "ANYTHING YOU NEED, YOU CAN COME TO HER ABOUT."

*To create and refine the Developmental Relationships Framework, Search Institute has conducted interviews and focus groups with young people across the United States. Cedric's story is based on an in-depth interview. Names and details have been changed to maintain anonymity.*

When Cedric first met Miss Lonnie, you would have assumed the relationship was going nowhere. Cedric's sister had coaxed him to go to an arts class Miss Lonnie led, but he didn't go back after the first time. In his own words, he was "a really shy kid who didn't really talk to anybody."

However, Cedric's passion for art grew, as did his self-confidence. Years later he returned, and he became really involved in the programs Miss Lonnie was leading. By the time he was a high school senior, Cedric thought of Miss Lonnie first, when asked about important adults in his life beyond his family. Miss Lonnie became "a second mom and a sister." Listening to Cedric, you can hear how his relationship with Miss Lonnie reflects each element of a developmental relationship:

**Express Care:** Cedric describes Miss Lonnie as "accessible, not judgmental," and "always available and here for you." Because "she listens a lot and is very open," he can talk to her about almost anything, and "it won't be weird or uncomfortable."

**Challenge Growth:** Miss Lonnie pushes Cedric to "find out who I was and what I wanna do in life. . . . No matter who she works with, she sees the potential in you."






**Provide Support:** "She's here for you, pretty much anything you need. She tries to help you with as best she can, whether it's advice or you need a ride somewhere, someone just to talk to."

**Share Power:** When their after-school group was planning a college tour, Miss Lonnie "came to me about figuring out the events and ordering the shirts and stuff. So I contacted the places, got names for the shirts, figured out how much it would cost."

**Expand Possibilities:** Miss Lonnie "surrounds us with these professional people" and gives students opportunities to explore options for their future. "I've been in a business program, accounting program, and dance. Going to these different programs that she's told me about, I've kinda discovered myself."

## AN EXAMPLE: A POSSIBLE PROGRESSION IN A DEVELOPMENTAL RELATIONSHIP

Below is an example of how you might think about the growth of a new relationship to becoming, over time, more of a developmental relationship. For example, “respect me” is listed in the first stage, since this action is often a precursor to appropriate self-disclosure that sets the stage for other actions. This is, of course, only an example. Depending on the circumstances and the relationship, other actions may be appropriate entry points. Thinking about a specific relationship you have, what progression did you experience? If forming a new relationship, how might you focus your attention based on what you know about the young person?

	1. Get to know each other Explore first impressions and shared interests.	2. Build mutual trust Explore mutual interests and bond through appropriate self-disclosure.	4. Confirm shared commitments Test the depth and boundaries of the relationship	5. Invest in each other's growth Put energy into reaching goals and adapt the relationship to match growth.
 Express Care	Listen Be warm	Be dependable Believe in me	Encourage	
 Challenge Growth		Expect my best	Stretch Hold me accountable	Reflect on failures
 Provide Support		Navigate	Empower Set boundaries	Advocate
 Share Power	Respect me	Include me Collaborate		Let me lead
 Expand Possibilities		Inspire		Broaden Horizons Connect

# ACTIVATING RELATIONSHIPS IN ORGANIZATIONS

A well-intentioned curriculum and social service system will not be effective unless its implementation builds on and enhances the quality of developmental relationships in the classroom or the community.

— Li & Julian<sup>14</sup>

A core hypothesis of Search Institute's work on developmental relationships is that enhancing relationships can strengthen youth programs and services, and improve outcomes. As we've seen, developmental relationships are consistently associated with positive outcomes for young people. Through listening to young people and others, we have been able to articulate actionable ways to be more intentional in building relationships.

But what might it look like if organizations took seriously the idea of relationships as the "active ingredient"<sup>16</sup> in the effectiveness of their programs and services? Of course, the specific strategies will look different in schools, after-school programs, faith communities, social or work settings, and other youth development organizations. However, a focus on actively cultivating a relationally rich culture grounded in relational trust<sup>4</sup> has tremendous potential for enhancing effectiveness and impact across a wide variety of organizational settings.

## STARTING POINTS

It might be tempting to begin by designing new program or campaign that focuses on promoting relationships. Yet, relationships are already being built in any school, youth program, and other places. What is needed is an intentional focus on building developmental relationships. Building a relationally rich culture school or program. This might include the following strategies:

- Introduce staff, young people, volunteers, families, and other stakeholders to the idea and importance of developmental relationships. Ask: How do they see this approach fitting with shared priorities? The "levels of relationships" box highlights the need to recognize and operationalize a variety of roles in building relationships within an organization.
- Examine how your organization already invests in building relationships and identify opportunities for focused attention. Prime thinking with the 7 questions on page 13.
- Have individuals identify ways they can start building developmental relationships right away (Share tips from the list on pages 14-15.)

## PILOTING PRACTICAL TOOLS FOR BUILDING RELATIONSHIPS

Search Institute has begun working with partners to develop processes and tools to mobilize individuals, groups and organizations to become more intentional about nurturing developmental relationships. Here are some examples of our first work, with focused efforts in other settings on the horizon.

**Teacher-student relationships:** Most educators recognize the importance of student-teacher relationships.<sup>30</sup> However, it can be challenging to focus on building relationships when accountability is elsewhere and when you teach dozens, if not hundreds, of students each semester. Search Institute is working with 12 Minnesota schools to create the REACH Process, a system of classroom activities and teacher professional development opportunities that

## LEVELS OF RELATIONSHIPS IN ORGANIZATIONS

A common reaction to the detailed articulation of elements of developmental relationships is to say, "I can't do all that with everyone." However, the goal is not to require every person to have a deep, sustained relationship with every young person. Rather, how can you ensure that each and every young person is embedded in a web of positive relationships?

Think about different levels of relationships that are consistent with the Developmental Relationships Framework:

- **All:** What relational actions are expected by everyone, such as treating each other with respect and warmth?
- **Some:** What kinds of relational actions are expected (and realistic) for interactions with groups of youth, such as knowing the names of students in your classroom?
- **A few:** Who are the handful of young people each person will invest in because of a particular connection or opportunity, such as sharing a passion for music or basketball, or because the young person him- or herself invites a stronger relationship?



emphasizes teacher-student relationships as a catalyst for improving students' academic motivation.

All REACH components are built on factors identified in research that contribute to student motivation, with relationships as the vital starting point (the “R” in REACH). Other key factors include students' Effort, Aspirations, Cognition, and Heart.<sup>19</sup> This approach focuses on creating a school-wide commitment to activating these “active ingredients” in student motivation. Ongoing research is both focused on strengthening the model and building evidence of its impact.

**Family relationships:** Few would dispute that parent-child and other family relationships are vital for a young person's well-being.<sup>22,29</sup> But don't relationships really matter most in early childhood? And can—and should—schools and other organizations invest in strengthening parent-youth relationships? If it's hard to get parents to show up for parent nights and other events, will they value opportunities focused on building family relationships?

Search Institute is exploring these questions through a pilot program, Keep Connected, with partners from California to Washington, DC. Through six workshops plus a graduation celebration, middle school students and their parents explore their relationships separately and in combined sessions.

**Peer relationships:** Relationships among peers have potential to be particularly catalytic for learning and development during middle school and high school.<sup>5</sup> Working with Barbara Varenhorst, a founder of the peer-helping movement, Search Institute is partnering with middle and high schools to understand and strengthen peer relationships. This effort involves testing tools and services that schools and programs can use to enhance peer relationships and measure their impact.

Our hypothesis is that high-quality peer programs can help peers build developmental relationships with each other (and adult leaders) that enhance the social-emotional strengths needed for school success, health, and civic engagement. Through this work, we will learn more about how schools and organizations can intentionally cultivate positive peer relationships as resources for growth and learning.

**Exploring other relationships:** Over time, Search Institute will engage with a range of partners to examine and strengthen different kinds of relationships, including relationships with program leaders and mentors. Each effort will be designed to enhance, not replace, existing content emphases, based on the premise that relationships function as the “active ingredient” to increase the effectiveness of other youth development and educational strategies.

## 7 QUESTIONS

### How Does Your Organization Invest in Relationships?






Use these questions for reflection and dialogue with colleagues and stakeholders:

1. **Experience:** How consistently do young people experience developmental relationships in your organization? Are some groups of youth more likely than others to experience them?
2. **Expectations:** How clearly articulated are relationship actions that are essential to your mission, strategy, and culture?
3. **Time:** Is regular time dedicated to building relationships with and among youth? What happens during that time?
4. **Personnel:** How are abilities to nurture strong relationships factored into staff and volunteer hiring and development?
5. **Budget:** How might your budget more explicitly reflect your commitment to reinforcing relationships?
6. **Training:** How often do staff meetings or professional development focus on practical ways to cultivate relationships?
7. **Feedback:** How do you collect and use data, feedback, or other information that can help monitor and strengthen intentional relationship building?

Think about what might happen if you were to increase your investment in these areas. How might youth, staff, parents, and other stakeholders respond?

# 55 IDEAS FOR DEEPENING ONE-TO-ONE RELATIONSHIPS






The Developmental Relationships Framework focuses on aspects of relationships that can be changed through intentional action. Try the following tips for strengthening each element of developmental relationships with and among young people. (Of course, ideas for one group can be adapted for others.) These ideas build on insights from focus groups and interviews, as well as research on the elements of developmental relationships.

ELEMENTS	ALL ADULTS	YOUNG PEOPLE
<b>Express Care</b> 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Pay attention. Focus on youth when they are talking about things that matter to them. Put away your cell phone.</li> <li>2. Follow up with young people when you learn about what they are going through something, rather than waiting for them to bring it up again.</li> <li>3. Make time for lightness. Share in some humor, fun, and laughter amid the practical tasks.</li> </ol>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>16. When taking with friends, ask follow-up questions that help you get to know them better.</li> <li>17. Let friends know you noticed when they do something you admire.</li> </ol>
<b>Challenge Growth</b> 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>4. Highlight future goals. Talk with young people about the things they look forward to or dream about.</li> <li>5. Expand their thinking by asking hard questions, providing alternate explanations, and encouraging openness to different opinions. This helps them expand their own thinking.</li> <li>6. Emphasize mistakes are a necessary part of learning. Praise them for hard work, whether they succeed or fail.</li> </ol>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>18. Encourage friends to spend time doing things that will help them reach their future goals and dreams.</li> <li>19. Model how you put in effort to learn. Push back if others dismiss the value of learning.</li> </ol>
<b>Provide Support</b> 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>7. Offer information and practical help to solve a practical problem, or loan them something they may need.</li> <li>8. Show young people how to ask for help when they need it.</li> <li>9. Shift levels of support. Give more support when young people are struggling, and less when they are making progress. Step back as their skills and confidence build.</li> </ol>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>20. When a friend can't figure out how to solve a problem, offer to talk it out together.</li> <li>21. Offer your support when friends face challenges. If needed, ask a trusted adult to be an ally and resource.</li> </ol>
<b>Share Power</b> 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>10. Let young people make decisions about activities you do together and what you talk about. Don't jump in too fast when they don't make quick decisions or think of things to talk about.</li> <li>11. When you can, offer choices ("So, what could you do differently to tackle this problem?"), rather than always giving instructions.</li> <li>12. Learn from young people—and show it. Young people have a lot to teach adults. Let them know when you've learned something from them that you're excited about.</li> </ol>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>22. When you're on a team or in a group, practice listening to others, negotiating, and making decisions that work well for everyone.</li> <li>23. Notice peers who tend to be left out or are quiet. Find ways to include them and give them a voice.</li> </ol>
<b>Expand Possibilities</b> 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>13. When young people seem curious about an activity, topic, or issue, ask questions such as "what strikes you about this?"</li> <li>14. Introduce young people to a wide range of people, places, ideas, cultures, and vocations. Start with ones they're curious about.</li> <li>15. Broaden the web of relationships. Connect young people to people who share their interests or can expand their world.</li> </ol>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>24. Take turns with friends trying new food, music, or outings, based on each other's interests.</li> <li>25. Introduce friends to people who can help them learn things that interest them.</li> </ol>

## YOUTH PROGRAM LEADERS

## PARENTING ADULTS

## TEACHERS

<b>Express Care</b> 	<p>26. Ask follow-up questions so you both know you're interested and tracking.</p> <p>27. Find satisfaction in doing things for and with your child, even if these things wouldn't otherwise be important to you.</p>	<p>36. Strive to understand and show sensitivity to students' feelings.</p> <p>37. Use varied teaching strategies to make learning enjoyable, and to help students connect with you and each other.</p>	<p>46. Work to understand young people's points of view when they share ideas or opinions.</p> <p>47. Do what you say you will do, and keep your promises.</p>
<b>Challenge Growth</b> 	<p>28. Expect your children to do their best, even when doing something they don't really like.</p> <p>29. Teach your children that making mistakes is a part of learning.</p>	<p>38. Emphasize mastery and self-improvement more so than doing better than other students.</p> <p>39. Challenge students to reach high expectations. Hold them accountable.</p>	<p>48. Challenge young people to try things that are a little hard for them to do.</p> <p>49. Help young people find their own solutions, rather than just telling them what to do.</p>
<b>Provide Support</b> 	<p>30. When you teach your child a skill, demonstrate it by breaking it into smaller steps.</p> <p>31. When your children are not getting the help they need, find people who can address the issue.</p>	<p>40. Provide specific and descriptive feedback for students to use toward their improvement.</p> <p>41. Teach strategies for performing and learning under pressure.</p>	<p>50. Help young people think through options and resources when they encounter obstacles.</p> <p>51. Show young people how to ask for help when they need it.</p>
<b>Share Power</b> 	<p>32. Include your children in thinking about decisions, even when you have to make the final call.</p> <p>33. When you disagree, take time to understand each other's point of view.</p>	<p>42. Give students classroom choices within rules and safety limits.</p> <p>43. Ask students for input on assignments, class content, and how they can show proficiency.</p>	<p>52. Provide opportunities for young people to lead programs based on their interests.</p> <p>53. Emphasize building community and serving others through youth-initiated projects.</p>
<b>Expand Possibilities</b> 	<p>34. Find ways for your children to spend time with people who are different from your family.</p> <p>35. Encourage your children to try things they might be interested in. Maybe even try it together.</p>	<p>44. Demonstrate how what students are learning relates to their interests and to success outside of school and in the future.</p> <p>45. Connect students with educators, other students, and community members who can explore with them areas of personal interest and strength.</p>	<p>54. Introduce young people to other cultures, ideas, and places that help them discover their place in the world.</p> <p>55. Model being a curious learner by asking questions and sharing what you're learning in your own life.</p>



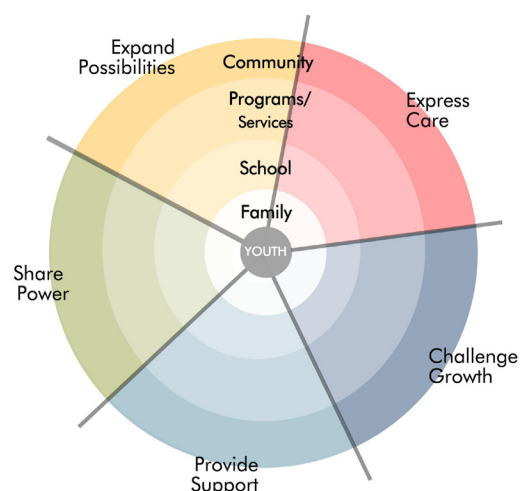
# IMAGINING STRONG AND FLEXIBLE WEBS OF RELATIONSHIPS

Spider webs are marvels of nature. They are both very strong and very flexible. By some estimates, they are five to ten times stronger than a steel web of the same weight. They can also stretch by 30 to 40 percent without breaking. Engineers who study them say that the genius of spider webs lies in this combination of strength and flexibility. One report on the research put it this way:

Spider webs, it turns out, can take quite a beating without failing. . . . Localized damage can simply be repaired, rather than replaced, or even left alone if the web continues to function as before. “Even if it has a lot of defects, the web actually still functions mechanically virtually the same way,” MIT engineer Marcus Buehler says. “It’s a very flaw-tolerant system.”<sup>8</sup>

The spider web is a useful, if imperfect, analogy for what each and every young person needs to grow and thrive. A spider depends on its web for sustenance; a young person depends on a web of relationships to shape and guide virtually every aspect of life. A web of relationships does not have to be perfect to be life sustaining. But it does need to be strong and flexible, adapting to the world around it, and to the needs and strengths of the people in those relationships.

The diagram on this page is a reminder that a strong web of relationships needs to include strands from home, school, and community; made up of parents, siblings, grandparents, friends, teachers, mentors, coaches, and many others. Current research suggests that young people are most likely to flourish when they are embedded in a



web of these relationships while also having at least three to five “anchor relationships”<sup>7,22</sup> they know they can depend on at home, at school, and in other places they spend time. All relationships are not the same. And as children grow into adulthood, the people they rely on most typically shift and change. Along the way, other relationships complement the strengths of those central relationships. Like a web, each significant relationship influences and shapes the others.

So everyone doesn’t have to do everything for every young person all the time. But, each and every young person needs a web of relationships through which they experience all five elements of developmental relationships. Each and every person can be part of some young person’s web.

## MANY QUESTIONS REMAIN TO BE EXAMINED

Search Institute is at the beginning of its focused exploration of developmental relationships. Numerous critical questions drive Search Institute’s research agenda moving forward.

- How are developmental relationships consistent and unique across cultures and contexts?
- How might strengthening developmental relationships contribute to reducing inequities in opportunities and supports for young people who are marginalized in society, including youth of color, immigrant youth, youth with special needs, low-income youth, and LGBTQ youth?
- How are different relationships (e.g., parent, teacher, peer, mentor) developmental in different ways? How do these different relationships complement each other?
- To what extent do developmental relationships enhance social-emotional strengths in domains of identity, agency, and commitment to community, which in turn predict success in school, work, and other areas of life?

Examining these and other questions is the heart of Search Institute’s research agenda, which focuses on building stronger evidence about developmental relationships. This will include mixed-methods observational, longitudinal, and experimental studies in diverse contexts.



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# RESOURCES FROM SEARCH INSTITUTE



REACH is a new set of research-based resources to strengthen students' academic motivation and put them on the path to becoming self-propelled young adults. REACH is an acronym for:

**R** elationships—Connections to learn and grow  
**E** ffort—The power of a growth mindset  
**A** spirations—Hopes for a positive future  
**C** ognition—Key self-regulation strategies  
**H** eart—Core values and sparks (deep personal interests)

The REACH suite includes a student survey, workshops for educators, technical assistance, and an in-depth implementation. For more information, visit [reach.search-institute.org](http://reach.search-institute.org)



## RELATIONSHIP-BASED RESOURCE FOR FAMILY ENGAGEMENT

Keep Connected offers a six-session workshop series for parents and their middle schoolers. Families explore the five essential elements of parent-youth relationships through a mix of learning and sharing activities. To learn more, visit: [www.parentfurther.com/content/keep-connected](http://www.parentfurther.com/content/keep-connected)

Keep Connected is aligned with ParentFurther.com, a free resource focused on encouraging families to strengthen relationships through shared activities. It includes self-quizzes and self-guided activities families can enjoy together to strengthen their relationships.

## SURVEYS

[www.search-institute.org/surveys](http://www.search-institute.org/surveys)

Identify young people's strengths and challenges by using high-quality, useful survey instruments from Search Institute. Available surveys examine developmental relationships, student motivation, youth program quality, and Developmental Assets. Each survey is offered online and includes a detailed, actionable report on findings.

## WORKSHOPS

[www.search-institute.org/keynotes-workshops](http://www.search-institute.org/keynotes-workshops)

Build expertise and develop practical strategies to put Search Institute research into practice with a range of workshops for educators, youth workers, community leaders, parents, and young people.

## OTHER RESOURCES

[www.search-institutestore.org](http://www.search-institutestore.org)

Search Institute offers a variety of books and other resources for educators, youth workers, parents, and other leaders that focus on practical strategies to build assets and other strengths with young people.

Roehlkepartain, E. C., Pekel, K., Syvertsen, A. K., Sethi, J., Sullivan, T. K., & Scales, P. C. (2017). *Relationships First: Creating Connections that Help Young People Thrive*. Minneapolis, MN: Search Institute.

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Search Institute is an international leader in discovering what kids need to succeed in their families, schools, and communities. Using applied research and improvement solutions, we collaborate with organizations, schools, and community coalitions to solve critical challenges in young people's lives.



## 2. School Culture Climate and Safety Committee Report

Presented May 11, 2017

## 2. School Climate, Culture and Safety

### Ideas to Consider Presented by the 2016-17 Redwood Middle School Task Force

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#### Objective:

Throughout the process of data collection, the most prevalent and important topics that surfaced were how to increase **student empowerment** and how to build and strengthen **connections between stakeholder groups (community, students, teachers, administration, Board)**.

Other concerns also surfaced on the subjects of increasing **physical safety** and enhancing a positive **teacher climate** but to a lesser degree. Our recommendations are meant to address these four topics.

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#### 2.1 Ideas to Consider

- **Short-Term Opportunities ( <12-18 months to implement):**
  - **Form a School Safety Action Committee**
    - Opportunity for task force made up of parents, students, sheriff, city, and teachers to specifically handle physical safety issues.
    - Topics and examples cited include, but are not limited to:
      - Strangers walking through campus
      - Traffic gridlock / street crossing dangers
      - Weekend vandalism / students on roof on weekends
      - Parents entering campus at back/side of school and not signing in
      - Rule-breaking
      - A more welcoming physical entrance -- clearer signage for office
      - Unclear student safety protocol (adult visitors, especially parents, checking in at office) interfering with kind and welcoming school climate?
  - **Bring Back the Fun**
    - Provide Family/Staff Social Opportunities
      - Opening BBQ (information fair)--district/school, PTA, teachers
      - Spring Carnival
      - International Night--Cultural Awareness (booths, food, panel discussions, arts, talents)
      - Math Family Night--District, teachers, SCCOE, parents
      - Arts/Entertainment Night
      - Talent Shows "Redwood's Got Talent"
      - Buddy Parent Program for new families--district/PTA

- Create new groups--teacher social committee with PTA social committee
  - Build on Leadership activities to help create student/staff connections
    - Student vs Staff competitions
    - Eat lunch together
    - Involvement in club 47
    - Jam sessions (musical teachers with kids)
    - Cultural Awareness (speakers/assemblies)
- **Voluntary Self-Education Groups (gender-based groups for discussing social/emotional issues facilitated by staff and perhaps CASSY)**
  - Human Sexuality
  - Drugs/Alcohol use/experimentation
  - Social Questions
  - Bullying
  - Self-Harm/Suicide
  - Cultural Awareness (speakers/assemblies)
  - Club 47 Expansion
- **Lunch Clubs/Activities (volunteer teachers/parent volunteers)**
  - Intramurals
  - Design Challenge
  - Recycling
  - Garden
  - Tai Chi
  - Yoga
  - Cultural Awareness (speakers/assemblies)
  - Leadership--for students who aren't in the class but still want to participate in activities
- **Teacher Wellness Groups (teacher wellness/social committee)**
  - Run Club
  - Boot Camp
  - Yoga
  - Tai Chi
  - Social Committee?
  - Team Mud Runs?
  - Paint Night

- **Longer-Term Project Opportunities (18-24+ months):**
  - **Service Learning/Problem Solving Empowerment Projects**
    - BEYOND RAISING MONEY OR COLLECTING COATS/FOOD
    - 20time project
    - Service learning
      - Pilot project or make it an elective
      - Teaching Saratoga senior citizens how to use the computer
  - **Interest-Based Electives**
    - Harry Potter Literature class
    - Science Olympiad-type class
    - Maker's Space-centered class
    - Math Olympiad
    - Crafting of some sort
    - Built in 20% time
    - Drama

**Rationale and potential next steps outlined on attached grids summarizing each potential focus.**



**2.2 School Climate, Culture and Safety**  
**Rationale to Support / Next Steps and Potential Action Items:**

Topic	How addressed	Rationale	Next Steps	Time Frame
<b>Student Empowerment</b>	Service Learning/ Empowerment Projects	To give students a real-world way to make a difference in the community. Our hope is to research and implement a program that allows students to volunteer, invent, and explore different opportunities to become responsible/responsive citizens.	Research Service Learning/ Empowerment Projects Generate proposals from students	18-24 months
	Self-Selected Education Opportunities	Most of the student feedback indicated a need for more student choice based on student interests. This would include opportunities in the school day as well as lunch/after school options to reach as many students as possible.	Explore opportunities for lunchtime clubs/ self-education groups	18-24 months
	Clubs	Meant to be extracurricular in nature, these clubs would help students explore other interests and passions.	Explore lunchtime and after school clubs for student enjoyment. Contact Saratoga Rec to work with them about their offerings.	18-24 months

Topic	How addressed	Rationale	Next Steps	Time Frame
Building Connections and Community	Family/Staff Social Opportunities	In order to build a stronger community, there needs to be more opportunities for all stakeholders to socialize and get to know one another. These social opportunities would provide community-building and also supportive networking for parents and new families.	PTA is already planning a fall and spring event. We will need to work with the PTA to ensure participation of all stakeholders.	Happening now and expand next year.
	Parent Education	Help parents keep abreast of new developments in education and parenting support. Possibly collaborate with other schools to bring in presenters on relevant subjects. (Common Ground Speaker Series)	Some parent education opportunities already offered. We'd like to explore expanding these options to focus on more topics and with notable speakers. Reach out to PTA and SEF to help expand options and opportunities.	Happening now and more next year.
	Parents As Partners	Parents and teachers need to work together to support student wellness/success. Parents need opportunities to check-in with teachers when needed. Also we aim to encourage respect for teachers as professionals. We need to recruit more parent participation by making PTA meetings more convenient and efficient.	Develop the Communication Committee to make explicit communication pathways. Reduce meeting time of PTA to encourage more parents to attend.	Next 6 - 9 months

	Board Collaboration	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>– Collaborate with teachers on new programs</li> <li>– Increase sense of partnership and build collaborative trust between professional staff, Board, district staff, and parents</li> <li>– Coordinate efforts among stakeholders to implement mandated programs so people feel we are on the same page.</li> <li>– Collaborate with stakeholders to address concerns / develop protocols to help with excess pressure / workload on math department.</li> </ul>	Develop the Communication Committee to make explicit communication pathways.	Next 6 - 9 months
	Teacher/admin/ community Communication Committee?	Identify problems in our communication system. Help build communication protocols and stronger working relationships between all stakeholder groups. Need for a coordinated system for grades, assignments, curriculum that will be available consistently and for a significant timeframe.	Develop the Communication Committee to make explicit communication pathways.	Next 6 - 9 months

Topic	How addressed	Rationale	Next Steps	Time Frame
<b>Student/Campus Safety (Physical Campus Condition)</b>	School Safety Action Committee	As an immediate concern, we feel that these issues need to be addressed with administration, law enforcement, and the community. This task seemed outside of the scope of our group's capabilities. We recommend a separate group address this.	<p>Convene a group of experts to make recommendations on:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Traffic patterns/gridlock</li> <li>• Campus access</li> <li>• night/weekend campus security</li> <li>• Establish clear protocols and consistent communication/education of drivers and campus visitors</li> </ul>	6-12 months

Topic	How addressed	Rationale	Next Steps	Time Frame
<b>Teacher Wellness Climate</b>	Teacher Wellness Groups	Give teachers opportunities to build relationships with one another through social/wellness time.	Teachers reach out to teachers about their thoughts and ideas about how this would work for them. Calendar time at a staff meeting to discuss plans.	6-12 months

# 3. Student Choice and Electives Committee Report

Presented May 11, 2017

### 3. Electives and Student Choice

#### Ideas to Consider Presented by the 2016-17 Redwood Middle School Task Force

**Objective.** These recommendations are designed to address the following vision / questions / concerns that if implemented could enhance the student experience at Redwood:

- More options for students to explore their interests/passion
- Provide electives that are engaging to students/staff
- Align our offerings with the high school
- Community Feedback: Consider adding other World Language options

#### 3.1 Ideas to Consider:

- **Short-Term Opportunities** (<12-18 months to implement):
  - Research **semester-long electives**
  - **Collaborate with Saratoga High** on alignment/progression of 7th/8th grade elective classes
  - Research **potential new electives** (input from the community, “relevance”)
    - ...and the connection to 6th grade wheel
      - Look at exploratory wheel: Any need to reevaluate or change?
        - Based on format and structure of 6th/7th grade wheel options at Miller Middle School; Does the 6th grade wheel rotation have to be 6 classes, or can the number of rotations be changed?
        - For future consideration: Possible wheel option for 7th grade (refer to Interest-Based Electives as noted in School Climate, Culture and Safety group)
        - If a wheel option comes to 7th grade, could rotations consist of 6th and 7th grade students in the same classes?
      - Align exploratory wheel to 7th/8th grade course offerings?
    - Specific elective class ideas (taken from community feedback, school visitations, and committee research)
      - Study Skills (or equivalent curriculum/support for all students)
        - 6th grade introduction
        - 7/8th grade reinforcement class for longer-term support
        - IL Study Class before / after school (so students in double math & IL study can access an elective during the day)
      - Incorporate service learning into the Leadership class, or other classes. Leadership could also turn into multi-level classes whereby a level 1 Leadership perhaps is more theory and some practice; and a level 2 Leadership class involves more service to

the school and service to the community. This is a model observed at a local middle school.

- Speech and Debate (aligns with high school and community popularity)
  - Another World Language (can we offer Chinese, for example, and align with the high school course offerings?)
  - More hands-on electives like photography, cooking, woodshop, etc. (Use MakerSpace for these electives?)
- Dedicate **observation/professional development time** for electives teachers to:
    - Explore similar local classes, foster ideas to expand and adapt curricula
    - Utilize maker's space for electives projects and new curricula
    - Collaborate with equivalent teachers at other schools and other districts (many times elective teachers in our district are the only ones in their subject matter)
- **Longer-Term Project Opportunities** (18-24+ months):
    - Create a longer-term task force to create a **Strategic Plan**, specifically for electives, to address goals and implementation (reference San Diego USD materials)

### 3.2 Rationale to Support

- Importance of having students explore their interests/passion before high school
- Electives keep learning “fun”
- Giving staff time to research and collaborate on electives might result in more interesting/engaging classes
- Makes Redwood competitive with the schools around them
- Service Learning: Linking education with activities that address real problems make learning relevant and is proven to increase developmental assets.

### 3.3 Next Steps and Potential Action Items:

- Some of the items that this team would have recommended have already been decided; i.e. adding orchestra as an elective, allotting 7th graders two elective classes.
- A survey of staff to see if we have teachers who have the desire/knowledge to teach a certain elective
- Survey parents and students to see what electives they are most interested in; speech and debate and world languages seem to rise to the top of the list
- Look at scheduling options that would allow for semester long electives
- Take a look at level of interest for other World Languages -- Which ones do the community want? Would there be enough interest for Chinese?

### 3.4 Requirements for Success:

- Funding to hire necessary staffing for elective classes
- Enrollment to support the diversity of the electives program
- Adding orchestra as an elective has already helped
- 2 electives in 7th grade has expanded the amount of time students have for electives. Semester long electives should be easily adaptable to this new schedule

### 3.5 Supporting Materials / Resources Consulted:

- Review of current elective offerings at Redwood Middle School
- Program review and personal outreach (\*) meetings with admin / teachers / students at:
  - Crocker Middle School, Hillsborough \*
  - Blach Intermediate School, Los Altos\*
  - Miller Middle School, Cupertino\*
  - Saratoga High School, Saratoga\*
  - Fisher Middle School, Los Gatos
  - Harker Middle School, San Jose
  - Jordan Middle School, Palo Alto
  - Terman Middle School, Palo Alto
- San Diego Unified School District - Visual and Performing Arts Pathways, Strategic Plan <http://www.sandiegounified.org/vapa>
- Resources from ChallengeSuccess.org, SPACE framework, Stanford research regarding research on sleep, extracurriculars, stress, engagement, health accessed online at: <http://www.challengesuccess.org/resources/school-resources/space-framework>



## 4. School Schedule Committee Report

Presented May 11, 2017

## 4. Redwood School Schedule

Ideas to Consider Presented by the 2016-17 Redwood Middle School Task Force

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**Objective.** To enhance and improve the use of time during the school day, these recommendations are designed to address the following vision / questions / concerns that if implemented could enhance the student experience at Redwood:

- Time for longer projects and getting deeper into subjects
  - Less rushed feel for several days of week
  - Building time into schedule for advisory/SEL/health/digital citizenship/schoolwide activities/student academic support/building teacher student relationships
  - Longer lunch on some days to build community and have club time
  - Maintain teacher prep time and professional development
  - Maintain academic success
  - Improve consistency of end times (remove monthly SLCT days).
- 

### 4.1 Ideas to Consider:

- **Short-Term Opportunities** (<12-18 months to implement):
  - Review the merits of a 2-day block or hybrid block schedule
  - Develop several hybrid block schedule models for discussion/review
  - Develop ideas for “Griffin Time” that become available in a block schedule, including but not limited to Digital Citizenship, Academic Assistance, SEL (8th period) lessons and Health Topics
  - Pilot test a short time period of new schedule to assess its value and reveal unforeseen circumstances
  - Plan and schedule Professional Development (PD) to support teachers in lesson planning for longer blocks of instruction
  - Determine the need for PD/curriculum to help teachers implement Griffin Time
  - Survey to collect baseline data for metrics to evaluate success of pilot schedule
- **Longer-Term Project Opportunities** (18-24+ months):
  - Decide on a schedule for the 2018-19 school year
  - Address any impacts on teacher prep time, PD time and any other contract-related issues or District needs
  - Determine student composition of Griffin Time classes (multigrade, looped, etc.)
  - Determine curriculum of Griffin Time.
  - Determine what factors will be used to assess success of new schedule
  - Implement schedule for 1 semester/school year
  - Run surveys for teachers/students/community to determine effects of schedule change.

## 4.2 Rationale to Support:

The following provides a summary of the rationale as to why / how we believe these recommendations will impact the student experience:

- “Given the number of rigorous standards in the middle grades and the reality of teaching the adolescent learner, there is simply not enough time in current instructional models for interventions, when necessary, and for meeting all students’ academic, physical, emotional, and social needs. As a result, flexible schedules and creative solutions at each school site are necessary to meet the needs of students.” <http://pubs.cde.ca.gov/tcsii/ch3/imprtnttimemdlgrds.aspx>
- Extended periods of learning allow the student to engage more deeply in a topic, and allow teachers more time for engaging with individual students
- Reduced transitions and stress, attend to adolescent development (Challenge Success Book Overloaded and Underprepared)
- An included advisory supports student-adult connections
- A longer lunch period on some days supports social connection/team building activities
- Community desire for standard start and end time.

**NOTE: Master schedule issues that arose during our discussions and for consideration.**

1. Provide IL Study before school or after school to allow 6th graders in 8th graders in Algebra Block to have an elective.
2. Consider options for a two period core in 6th grade to allow students to take both Exploratory Wheel and orchestra or IL Study and Exploratory Wheel or Exploratory Wheel and Math Advisory.
3. Looking at the possibility of shorter term electives such as semester electives.
4. Having a Math Advisory during school day so students can also take band (6th grade)

## 4.3 Next Steps and Potential Action Items:

To move forward on this idea / recommendations, we suggest SUSD / RMS take the following next steps (provide associated potential timeframe):

<b><u>2017-18</u></b>	Summer	Develop the Draft Schedules, addressing its pros and cons.
	Fall	Circulate and obtain feedback from stakeholder groups on drafts
	Winter	Develop the Pilot Schedule, based on feedback Run the Pilot Schedule for a period of weeks. Get feedback. Begin teacher Professional Development.
	Spring	Present proposed changes to Master Schedule for Board Approval
<b><u>2018-19</u></b>	Fall	Potentially implement new schedule

#### 4.4 Requirements for Success

- Continue to research and refine options for use of time, including blocks and Griffin Time
- Complete successful pilot and evaluate for opportunities to improve
- Communicate with stakeholders (students, faculty, parents) to build buy-in
- Identify and provide professional development / support for faculty re: block teaching

#### 4.5 Resources Consulted:

- Overloaded and Underprepared, by Denise Clark Pope, Stanford University Strategies for Stronger Schools and Healthy, Successful Kids  
<http://www.challengesuccess.org/overloaded-and-underprepared>
- Research in 2012 and prior years by Redwood Staff
- The California Department of Education web site, including: “Taking Center Stage II,” a study of Middle School practices. This publication outlines a number of considerations related to schedule, student well-being and achievement.
  - “The Importance of Time in Middle Grades”  
<http://pubs.cde.ca.gov/tcsii/ch3/imprnttimemdlgrds.aspx>
  - “Practices in the Spotlight: Recommendation 3 - Time” List of all “Schools to Watch” in California that have been recognized for their schedules  
<http://pubs.cde.ca.gov/tcsii/practiceinspotlite/spotlightindex.aspx#three>
  - “Designing an effective middle school block schedule” Donald G. Hackmann, Donald G. & Valentine, Jerry W. Middle School Journal, Volume 29, Number 5, 1998.  
<https://pdfs.semanticscholar.org/f506/83b60ded21367bc94722585266c88b272942.pdf>
- Reviewed 2007 Redwood planning and research regarding instructional day, time, bell schedules and potential block schedule, previously considered, but not implemented
- Reviewed sample bell schedules and research regarding other local schools submitted and shared with Task Force through community input process, including:
  - Cupertino Union:  
[http://www.edline.net/pages/JF\\_Kennedy\\_Middle\\_School/School\\_Info](http://www.edline.net/pages/JF_Kennedy_Middle_School/School_Info)
  - Palo Alto district:  
<http://jls.pausd.org/default/index.cfm/for-students/daily-schedules/>
  - Los Gatos: (Fisher) block-non block mixed schedule  
[http://rjfisher.lgusd.org/apps/bell\\_schedules/](http://rjfisher.lgusd.org/apps/bell_schedules/)

- Harker: non-block and long mixed schedule  
<http://www.harker.org/uploaded/faculty/ericn/BellSchedule.htm>
- Los Altos: (Egan middle) mixed schedule: 2 day block about every other week  
<http://www.eganschool.org/egan/4868-Bell-Schedule.html>
- Other local middle school schedules consulted online or in conversation with sites:
  - Fisher Middle School, Los Gatos
  - Miller Middle School, Cupertino
  - Blach Intermediate School, Los Altos
  - Crocker Middle School, Hillsborough
  - Jordan Middle School, Palo Alto
- Consulted with high school schedule, which has 90 minute periods every day.  
 Recommendation for Redwood considers this to support transition to high school, while addressing developmental needs of 6th-8th graders with shorter block times

## 2016-17 Redwood Middle School Task Force

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### 4.6.1 Sample Schedules for Consideration Or Future Refinement

*NOTE: Additional Research, Planning  
and Pilot Testing Recommended Prior  
to Consideration for Implementation*

## 2016-17 Redwood Task Force School Schedule Committee

### Sample (75 min) 2-DAY BLOCK SCHEDULE (classes meet 4x/week)

Additional Research, Planning and Pilot Testing Recommended Prior to Consideration for Implementation (2018-19 Year TBD)

Wednesday (early out)				Thursday				Mon, Tues, Fri (same as 2016-17)							
Start	End	min	Wed	Start	End	min	Wed	Start	End	min	Monday	Tuesday	Wed	Thurs	Friday
8:15	9:30	1:15	Period 2	8:15	9:30	1:15	Period 1	8:15	9:03	0:48	Period 1	1			1
9:30	9:45	0:15	Break*	9:30	9:40	0:10	Break	9:03	9:07	0:04	Passing	Passing			Passing
9:45	9:50	0:05	Passing	9:40	9:45	0:05	Passing	9:07	9:55	0:48	Period 2	2			2
9:50	11:05	1:15	Period 4	9:45	11:00	1:15	Period 3	9:55	10:00	0:05	GNN	GNN			GNN
11:05	11:45	0:40	Lunch*	11:00	11:10	0:10	GNN	10:00	10:10	0:10	Break	Break			Break
11:45	11:50	0:05	Passing	11:10	11:45	0:35	Lunch	10:10	10:14	0:04	Passing	Passing			Passing
11:50	12:15	0:25	GriffinTime	11:45	11:50	0:05	Passing	10:14	11:02	0:48	Period 3	3			3
12:15	12:20	0:05	Passing	11:50	1:05 PM	1:15	Period 5	11:02	11:06	0:04	Passing	Passing			Passing
12:20 PM	1:35 PM	1:15	Period 6	1:05 PM	1:10 PM	0:05	Passing	11:06	11:54	0:48	Period 4	4			4
1:35 PM	1:55 PM	0:20	duty	1:10 PM	1:45 PM	0:35	GriffinTime	11:54 AM	12:29 PM	0:35	Lunch	Lunch			Lunch
1:55 PM	3:40 PM	1:45	Meeting/PD	1:45 PM	1:50 PM	0:05	Passing	12:29 PM	12:33 PM	0:04	Passing	Passing			Passing
				1:50 PM	3:05 PM	1:15	Period 7	12:33 PM	1:21 PM	0:48	Period 5	5			5
								1:21 PM	1:25 PM	0:04	Passing	Passing			Passing
								1:25 PM	2:13 PM	0:48	Period 6	6			6
								2:13 PM	2:17 PM	0:04	Passing	Passing			Passing
								2:17 PM	3:05 PM	0:48	Period 7	7			7
														</	

## 2016-17 Redwood Task Force School Schedule Committee

### Sample (80 min) 2-DAY BLOCK SCHEDULE (classes meet 4x/week)

Additional Research, Planning and Pilot Testing Recommended Prior to Consideration for Implementation for 2018-19 Year

Wednesday (early out)				Thursday (per 1,3,5,7)				Mon, Tues, Fri (same as 2016-17)							
Start	End	min	Wed	Start	End	min	Wed	Start	End	min	Monday	Tuesday	Wed	Thurs	Friday
8:15	9:35	1:20	Period 2	8:15	9:35	1:20	Period 1	8:15	9:03	0:48	Period 1	1			1
9:35	9:50	0:15	Break	9:35	9:45	0:10	Break	9:03	9:07	0:04	Passing	Passing			Passing
9:50	9:55	0:05	Passing	9:45	9:50	0:05	Passing	9:07	9:55	0:48	Period 2	2			2
9:55	11:15	1:20	Period 4	9:50	11:10	1:20	Period 3	9:55	10:00	0:05	GNN**	GNN			GNN
11:15	11:55	0:40	Lunch	11:10	11:45	0:35	Lunch	10:00	10:10	0:10	Break	Break			Break
11:55	12:00	0:05	Passing	11:45	11:50	0:05	Passing	10:10	10:14	0:04	Passing	Passing			Passing
12:00	12:15	0:15	GNN* (w/6th)	11:50	1:10 PM	1:20	Period 5	10:14	11:02	0:48	Period 3	3			3
12:15 PM	1:35 PM	1:20	Period 6	1:10 PM	1:15 PM	0:05	Passing	11:02	11:06	0:04	Passing	Passing			Passing
1:35 PM	1:55 PM	0:20	duty	1:15 PM	1:40 PM	0:25	GriffinTime	11:06	11:54	0:48	Period 4	4			4
1:35 PM	3:20 PM	1:45	Meeting/PD	1:40 PM	1:45 PM	0:05	Passing	11:54 AM	12:29 PM	0:35	Lunch	Lunch			Lunch
				1:45 PM	3:05 PM	1:20	Period 7	12:29 PM	12:33 PM	0:04	Passing	Passing			Passing
late start vs. early out								12:33 PM	1:21 PM	0:48	Period 5	5			5
lack of daily prep is a contract issue				*15 min for WEEKLY announcements (Tues) or Announcements in GriffinTime (Wed)?							1:21 PM	1:25 PM	0:04	Passing	Passing
longer break and lunch on Wed								1:25 PM	2:13 PM	0:48	Period 6	6			6
alternates periods to avoid long Core class in 7th & 8th grades								2:13 PM	2:17 PM	0:04	Passing	Passing			Passing
								2:17 PM	3:05 PM	0:48	Period 7	7			7

late start vs. early out  
 lack of daily prep is a contract issue  
 longer break and lunch on Wed  
 alternates periods to avoid long Core class in 7th & 8th grades

\*15 min for WEEKLY announcements  
 (Tues) or Announcements in GriffinTime  
 (Wed)?

\*\*GNN could be done only weekly, in which case the 5 min could be redistributed.



75 minute blocks (2 days/week)				
Time (minutes)				
YEAR	2016-17	2-day blk (75)	diff/wk	diff/yr
Overall In-Class Time	231	228	-3	-123
Academics (per section)	231	219	-12	-432
passing	120	107	-13	-468
Griffin Time	0	60	60	2160
Lunch + Break	225	235	10	360
prep time*	231	219	-12	-432
avg weekly mtg.	110	105	-5	-180
(Academics + GT) days/wk x min/class days/wk x pass/day x min/pass min/wk (lunch+break) x5 same as Academics 105 min each Wednesday with block schedule				
80 minute blocks				
Time (per week)				
YEAR	2016-17	2-day blk (80)	diff/wk	diff/yr
Overall In Class	231	230	-1	-46
Academics (per section)	231	224	-7	-252
passing	120	102	-18	-648
Griffin Time	0	40	40	1440
Lunch + Break	225	235	10	360
prep time*	231	224	-7	-252
avg weekly mtg.	110	105	-5	-180
(Academics + GT) days/wk x min/class days/wk x pass/day x min/pass min/wk (lunch+break) x5 same as Academics 105 min each Wednesday with block schedule				
* 1 less prep/wk and 1 less lesson/wk				
**These calculations do not include special schedule weeks (2 minimum days, testing week schedule, holidays, assemblies) Can be done as a schedule becomes finalized.				

## Sample Student Schedules

### 6th Grader

Mon, Tues, Fri		Wednesday		Thursday	
Period	Class	Period	Class	Period	Class
1	Math	2	Core	1	Math
2	Core	4	Core	3	Core
3	Core	Lunch		Lunch	
4	Core	GNN		5	Science
Lunch		6	PE	Griffin Time	
5	Science			7	Exploratory
6	PE				
7	Exploratory				

### 7th/8th Grader

Mon, Tues, Fri		Wednesday		Thursday	
Period	Class	Period	Class	Period	Class
1	Math	2	Elective	1	Math
2	Elective	4	Core	3	Core
3	Core	Lunch		Lunch	
4	Core	GNN		5	Science
Lunch		6	PE	Griffin Time	
5	Science			7	Elective
6	PE				
7	Elective				

## 5. APPENDIX

# Interim Reports and Community Updates

- 5.1 Phase 1 – November 2016
- 5.2 Phase 2 – February 2017
- 5.3 Phase 3 – April 2017



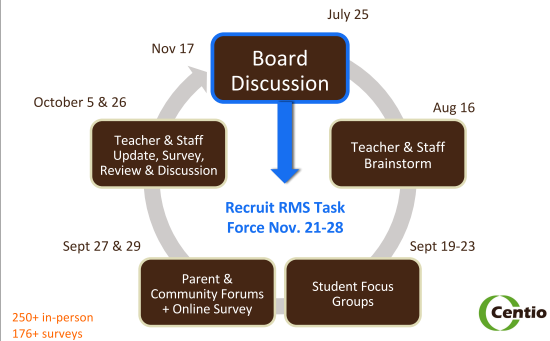
## REDWOOD TASK FORCE UPDATE

Community Update Report | November 18, 2016



## Phase 1: Task Force Input / Brainstorming

Listen. Review. Synthesize. Share.



## Examples of Areas to Celebrate

### Teachers:

- Volume of material in Core, graduate strong writers for high school
- New **Maker Space** & what we do in STEAM
- **Project Cornerstone**
- Assemblies for wellness
- Music is legendary & w/focus on digital tools
- **Unique field trips** (ILM)
- Electives & choice
- 2 year **world language** allows skip year in HS
- **Differentiation** is in our blood, lots to celebrate

### Students:

- Teachers are great, friendly, caring, responsible, supportive
- Lots of **electives** (fun!)
- **Lunch** is great (music)
- PE (not sitting at desk)
- **Everyone respects each other**; no bullying
- Activity nights
- Intramural **sports**
- **Spirit** days / weeks
- Math, science, Spanish, computer class
- Music program
- Facilities
- **Friends**

### Parents:

- RMS working hard to keep **supportive** environment
- Nice physical **campus**
- Prepare well for next grade
- Great **test scores**
- Learning resources
- **Caring, supportive teachers**
- Good electives & academics
- Trying to have open **communication** w/parents
- Provide a lot of **options**
- **Safe** and nurturing
- Media arts
- School counselor
- Lots of **activities**
- Music programs
- **Rigorous** academics

"I love the education at Redwood."

## Opportunities to Consider

- **Community Building:** significant interest from teachers & staff to study school climate and culture "where all learners' needs are met" (mutual respect, safety, collaboration, support for teachers, community events)
- **Student Wellness:** balance homework / tests, time for check-ins with teachers (caring adults), free time, fostering risk taking,
- **Community Wellness:** including teacher wellness to best support students  
"Students need balance coming from all parts of their lives."
- **Communication:** input & feedback to improve home-school partnerships
- **Schedule:** re-consider block schedule for balance & depth, examine 3/2 pd.
- **Electives:** passion for student choice, including desire to ensure students with special needs / IEP's / English learners have access to elective(s); more music (orchestra) during school day; desire for more world languages
- **Academics:** interest in strong writing and communication skills; life and study skills (organization); continued focus on STEAM and technology; integration of new Maker Space; teacher interest in continued development of formative assessments

## Parent Input: What Would Ideal Success Look Like for Your Child?

We want our kids to:

### BALANCE

- Be less stressed
- Love learning
- Discover their passions
- Have a balanced curriculum not solely focused on academics
- Develop good character
- Have a well-rounded education with a broad set of subjects

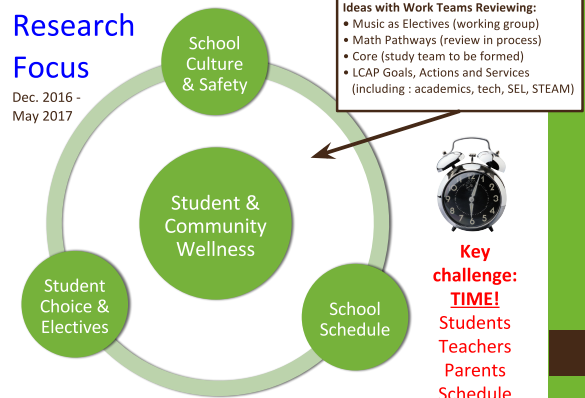
Be happy  
Be safe  
Be prepared for the future  
Be confident in themselves  
Be responsible and mature young adults

### RIGOR

- Be academically advanced
- Focus the most time on math and science
- Learn advanced math topics
- Learn a challenging curriculum
- Be competitive with peers academically

## Proposed Research Focus

Dec. 2016 - May 2017



## Broad Input to Identify Draft Themes

Common interest across all groups regarding: student wellness & electives. Parents also prioritized STEAM, Core, Differentiation.

Aug / Sept Rankings (#1-3) of Emerging Themes	Teacher Staff Forum August	Parent Forums September	Parent Survey October
<b>Wellness</b>	<b>38</b>	<b>45</b>	<b>53</b>
<b>Electives</b>	26	33	22
STEAM	16	38	53
World Lang.	10	6	5
Core	9	31	48
Differentiation	8	33	38
Music	5	24	22
Other *	23	8	9

Follow-up survey and in-person meeting with teachers & staff (Oct.) to refine themes and consider / rank-order ideas including "Other" write-ins shown on next slide.

## Teachers & Staff Survey to Refine Areas

Identified Themes for Task Force Research 2016-17 (some areas work already ongoing)

Teacher & Staff Survey 10/26/16 (n=27) Theme Refinement for Potential Research	Weighted Rank Order Priority for TF Study	% Essential / Very Important for TF Study
<b>Wellness (student &amp; staff)</b>	<b>9.6</b>	<b>100% *</b>
<b>School community / culture (write-in)</b>	<b>8.3</b>	<b>96</b>
Electives (world language, music, access)	6.9	76
Schedule and school day (write-in)	6.4	64
<b>School safety (write-in)</b>	<b>5.8</b>	<b>74</b>
CORE (lang.arts, writing, social studies)	5.0	45%
Differentiation	4.9	43
STEAM	3.8	35
Project-based learning	3.8	33
Sports	3.0	36

\* 93% teachers & staff marked wellness as essential, 7% as very important. 0% ranked it as either "somewhat" or "not" important for Task Force study.

## Task Force Design Opportunities

Community Interest Expressed during Phase 1	Structural Opportunity
<b>Balance skills, perspectives, expertise, diversity</b>	Task Force of 15-20 people to be balanced across grades, subjects, experience, parent groups, community diversity
<b>Fair &amp; transparent selection process</b>	Anyone can apply & self-identify skills, areas of focus, expertise, diversity; outside facilitator (blinded to names) recommends balance across represented areas (see next)
<b>Compensation for teachers who commit to full year (Dec-May) Task Force</b>	Teachers who commit to full year Task Force and attend at least 80% of meetings, receive extra pay at the Basic Hourly Rate at 5 hours/mo. x 6 mo. x 6-12 teachers total
<b>Options for additional community input/non-TF</b>	Monthly updates (online / newsletters), 2 AM/PM parent forums (Jan & Apr), 2 refinement surveys, BOD meetings
<b>Teacher availability limited some for research / survey</b>	Support teacher interest in staying informed, giving convenient feedback through online teacher surveys; create online portal to collect teacher research / ideas
<b>Leverage prior teacher &amp; staff research efforts</b>	Build upon and leverage LCAP, Teacher & Staff Task Force research from 2003 (3 year) initiative & individual work

## Proposed Task Force Composition

Online Applications Open to All (Nov. 21-28) (seats to be balanced across areas of focus / expertise)	# of People
<b>Teachers &amp; Staff:</b> balanced across grade levels, subjects, areas of experience, years of service at RMS	6-8
<b>Parents &amp; Community:</b> balanced across leadership areas Site Council, PTA, SEF, Music & Sports Boosters; children ages, expertise, involvement, interests, special needs/ELA	6-8
<b>Administration:</b> (Principal & Superintendent)	2
<b>School Board:</b> 1-2 Representatives designated by Board	1-2
<b>TOTAL TASK FORCE:</b> meets 1-2 times per month to review and consolidate input, research and brainstorm ideas for consideration by Administration and Board for 2017+	<b>15-20</b>

### Opportunities for Continued / Broader Community Input Beyond TF Seats:

- monthly updates via email / electronic newsletters / posted online
- Open email address: [RMSTaskForce@saratogausd.org](mailto:RMSTaskForce@saratogausd.org) monitored by facilitator
- Future community forums and online surveys for comment on emerging ideas
- Public disclosure at Board meetings with updates / presentation of draft ideas.

## Proposed Research & Input Schedule

Month	RMS Task Force Mtg. (3:30-5:00) 9 Committee Meetings (Dec-May)	Board Mtg. & Email Update	Community Input Opportunities
Nov. 2016	Applications open online 11/21-28	BOD 11/17 Email 11/18	
Dec.	Invitations sent 12/1-3 12/8 R Prioritize ideas, review data	BOD 12/15 Email 12/16	Online survey 12/16-1/6
Jan. 2017	1/11 W Review survey	BOD 1/12 retreat Email 1/13	Community Forum (Library) 1/24 T 6-8 pm 1/26 R 8:30-10:30 am
Feb.	2/1 W Review forums 3/2 R Refine draft ideas	BOD 2/16 Email 2/17	
Mar.	3/15 W Refine for survey 3/28 T Pre-draft	BOD 3/23 Email 3/24	Teacher/Staff Mtg. Review Online survey 3/27-4/10
April	4/19 W, Review survey/draft BOD	BOD 4/20 preview Email 4/21	Community Forum (TBD) 4/24 M 6-8 pm 4/26 W 8:30-10:30 am
May	5/1 M finalize ideas for Board 5/17 W Last TF mtg., wrap-up	BOD 5/11 action Email 5/12	

Summer 2017  
Leadership to identify next steps and timing based on Board direction and resources.  
Facilitation Note: while some recommendations might be implementable during 2017-18, longer-term or larger-scale initiatives would be expected to impact 2018-19 and beyond.

## Challenges to Address

- Continue to build community / define wellness in context of Redwood
- Set reasonable expectations (It will be easy to take on too much!)
- Divide ideas to consider into **near-term** and **longer-term** opportunities
  - Near-term for next year (2017-18) develop and define by May 2017
  - Longer-term for 2018 + will require new teams after May
- Limited time for Task Force meetings / collaboration / research
- Need to be thoughtful about which opportunities will be part of ongoing operations or that require specialized teams / expertise (beyond TF)
- Important to keep work in context of other ongoing initiatives, professional development, LCAP, program reviews and more... to balance and co-ordinate projects strategically across the school / District

## Next Steps and Action Items

### Phase 1 INITIAL INPUT / BRAINSTORM THEMES

July-Sept

### Phase 2 FORM TASK FORCE / BEGIN RESEARCH

Oct-Dec

- ✓ Provide brief Board update and community progress report, metrics (Oct. 20-21)
- ✓ Review proposed themes with staff for input / brainstorm TF structure (Oct. 26)
- ✓ Circulate proposed structure for teacher & staff comment (Nov. 11-16)
- ✓ Circulate Phase 1 report (Nov. 18) / Task Force application survey (Nov. 21-28)
- ✓ Task Force invitations sent (Dec. 1-3) / Task Force Kick-Off (Dec. 8)

### Phase 3 Task Force Development of Ideas to Consider

Jan-March

### Phase 4 Refinement of Draft Ideas for Board to Consider

April-May



## APPENDIX FOR REFERENCE:

### EXECUTIVE SUMMARY OF PHASE 1 INPUT

## Redwood TF Update Summary

### Phase 1 (July-Sept) Complete / Initial Input & Brainstorming

- Expanded Phase 1 input opportunities to collect parent and community, plus student input in September, prior to Task Force formation
- Identified numerous areas to celebrate / opportunities to consider that will be given to Task Force for review and further processing
- Common focus across all groups: **student wellness**
- Highlights from sessions summarized in attached Appendix from:
  - 198 pages of hand-written brainstorming notes from 250+ people @ forums
  - 36 pages of online survey data from 148+ parents / 28+ teachers

### Phase 2 (Oct – Dec): Structure Task Force / Begin Recruitment & Research

- TF structure for staff preview (Nov. 11-16) & Board comment (Nov. 17)
- TF recruitment via online survey (Nov. 21-28) / TF Kick-Off (Dec. 8)



## Appendix: Phase 1 RMS TF Progress

- Brainstorming generated significant volume – ideas broad and specific have been saved and catalogued for review & processing by Task Force
- Numerous potential themes identified with a few areas of common overlap across community groups, including significant interest in:

### Student & Community Wellness

- Eight (8) in-person brainstorm and listening sessions completed
  - >250 people: 50+ Teachers/Staff; 85+ Parents/Community; 114+ Students
- 86 RMS parents responded to online survey for input / rank themes
  - 69 had not attended in-person & 17 had attended in-person forum
- 28 Teachers/staff reviewed teacher notes & refined themes online
- 28 Teachers participated in follow-up survey regarding TF participation
- Project email box collecting additional: [RMSTaskForce@saratogausd.org](mailto:RMSTaskForce@saratogausd.org)
- Parent passions for math & music evident in discussions / online (review team / work group already ongoing or in formation for both)

## Initial Areas for Potential Research

Working draft of key ideas generated across all input sessions as summarized by facilitator. Draft themes for review / refinement shared with teachers and staff – Oct. 26.

Student **wellness** and personal connections

School **climate & culture** consistent with SUSD mission and vision

Student **choice**: personalized learning, **electives** and sports

**Academics**: including language arts, writing, social studies and STEAM2\*

**Calendar and schedule**: support for collaboration, projects, depth and choice

Availability of **music offerings** on campus and during school day

\* Continued community passion for and interest in mathematics pathways; math and music (M2) to be part of ongoing SUSD review, outside of core Task Force focus.

## Examples of Deep & Broad Ranging Ideas for TF to Process / Consider / Research

### Examples of Opportunities to Support Student & Community Wellness:

- What does wellness mean in context of SUSD given high expectations?
- How do we create more time and choice and help balance schedules and stress?
- How can we create an even more inclusive and caring community respectful of all?
- How can we support teacher wellness so they can support students even more?
- How could home-school partnerships / events support student wellness?

### Examples of Ideas Mentioned during Brainstorming Sessions:

- Re-consider block scheduling (previously researched for Redwood)
- Evaluate three period core block in context of broader schedule and constraints
- Identify opportunities to increase music options as electives during school day
- Consider homework and assessments, align timing / expectations / consistency
- Create more opportunities for project-based learning, teacher collaboration and depth
- Consider ways to increase number of electives for grade 7 and Special Needs / ESL
- Evaluate opportunity for additional elective wheels for increased choice / exposure

100's of ideas generated and catalogued across all areas from in-person forums & surveys to be given to Task Force teams electronically (PDF) as starting point for research.

## Teacher & Staff Input – August

"If you were to think about ways to improve transformational learning and student well-being over the next 3-5 years, what opportunities and outcomes would you most like to see for our Redwood students?"



## Teacher & Staff Input – August

"How can we build upon the current strengths of Redwood Middle School?"



## Student Focus Groups – Question 1

"What do you like most about Redwood Middle School?"



## Student Focus Groups – Question 2

Pick one of the top things you think makes Redwood great.  
What could Redwood do to make this even better in the future?



## Student Focus Groups – Question 3

Which areas / ideas do you think would be most important for Redwood to study to make RMS the best it can be for all students?



## Parent Focus Groups – Question 1

Online Survey: Priorities for Child's Time at Redwood





### Online Survey: Opportunities to Consider / Areas to Improve

[illegible]



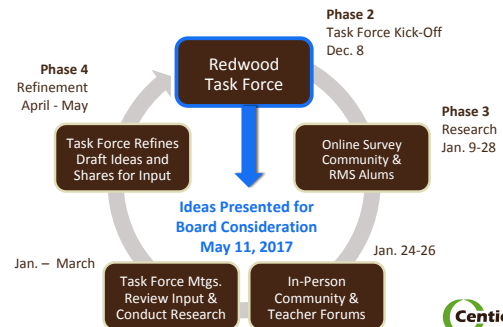
## 2016-17 Redwood Task Force

February 17, 2017 – SUSD Board & Community Update



## Phase 3 Research Ongoing

Areas of Focus: Wellness. Culture. Electives. Schedule.



## Examples of Task Force Work in Progress Draft Ideas for Emerging Vision

Wellness	Climate & Culture
... exploring <b>best practices</b> that educate parents, students, and other stakeholders (staff, community members) to promote <b>student connectedness</b> and create <b>support systems</b> to help build <b>resiliency</b> , which will allow all RMS students to thrive <b>socially, emotionally, physically, and academically</b> .	... exploring ideas about creating a <b>school identity</b> where people can <b>feel connection and belonging</b> through community service, character building programs, students-supporting-students programs, student clubs/activities, and community events to create opportunities for as many RMS students as possible to <b>feel safe, cared for, and successful</b> .
Schedule	Electives
... exploring different <b>ways of structuring the day</b> to create opportunities for as many RMS students as possible to have <b>reduced stress, sustained learning</b> experiences, and <b>better relationships</b> with adults.	... exploring <b>ways to offer a relevant electives program</b> to create opportunities for as many RMS students as possible to create a smooth <b>transition to high school</b> , and for students to <b>thrive and grow academically and socially</b> .

## Examples of Community Input from January 2017 Online Surveys & Forums

Wellness	Climate & Culture
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• support system at home and at school</li><li>• healthy body and mind</li><li>• academic support</li><li>• equip students with life skills</li><li>• communication: school &amp; parents</li><li>• lessen stress given high expectations</li><li>• building students' self esteem</li><li>• celebrating differences</li><li>• less homework</li><li>• bring students together socially</li><li>• teach internet/online safety</li><li>• more health education</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Improve safety during drop-off and pick-up</li><li>• value hard work and critical thinking skills</li><li>• create a more fun environment</li><li>• campus safety (fence, security, vandalism)</li><li>• embrace diversity</li><li>• improve communication</li><li>• inform community about safety issues/developments</li><li>• address academic/emotional bullying</li></ul>
Schedule	Electives
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• consider block schedule</li><li>• 6 period day (more time for each class)</li><li>• two period core</li><li>• start &amp; end time in sync with other schools</li><li>• after-school activities too late in day</li><li>• same dismissal time, eliminate ½ days</li><li>• simplify the schedule</li><li>• give 7th graders two electives</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• more options, two electives for 7th</li><li>• consider speech and debate</li><li>• do not have new electives every year</li><li>• match teacher interests with electives</li><li>• music as an elective (orchestra)</li><li>• allow students to pursue their passions</li><li>• more foreign language options</li><li>• social media/online safety course in 6th</li><li>• higher-level electives for advanced kids</li><li>• semester-long electives</li></ul>

## Examples of Research Ideas Submitted from Task Force, Surveys & Forums

Examples of model programs at other Bay Area schools:

- Crocker, Hillsborough (schedule & community service)
- Campbell Union (community service & staff wellness)
- Local middle schools: Fisher, Miller, Union, Blach
- Other independent and charter schools (Nueva SEL, Lakeside)
- SEARCH class at Miller...

Examples of additional resources suggested for review:

- Challenge Success (.org) - Denise Clark Pope / Stanford
- 20time project, Monterey
- #ICanHelp anti-negativity, Net Safety
- GreaterGood.berkeley.edu, gratitude...



## Examples of Input from Jan. 2017 Alumni & Alumni Family Online Survey

**Most Impactful / Memorable about RMS:**

- Inspirational and motivational **teachers**
- **Exploratory wheel** subjects / elective options
- School organized **events** & field trips
- **Art** program / Media Arts class / working as art docent
- **Music** program / musical / marching band
- Lunchtime **sports**
- 8th grade graduation
- **Friendships** and meeting new people
- Learning life **skills**
- Developing a passion for **learning**
- **Inclusive** community



## Examples of Input from Jan. 2017 Alumni & Alumni Family Online Survey

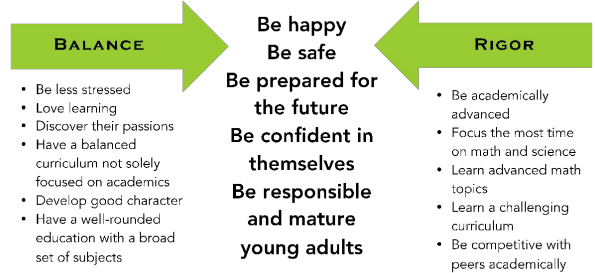
### Opportunities to Improve:

- create more **elective options**, including STEM
- less focus on math and more focus on **life skills**
- more student body **involvement** (leadership)
- **orchestra** should be a class
- more **language** options
- prioritize **mental health** & balance
- minimize **academic peer pressure**
- more **field trips** and activities outside of class
- better/healthier **food**
- more **preparation for high school**



## Examples Phase 1 Parent Input: Community Desires Similar Outcomes

### We want our kids to:



## Examples of Jan. 2017 In-Person Forums Brainstorm on Shared Values

### How can SUSD balance desire for excellence & reduce student stress?

- Need diverse models to define success for kids and parents
- Help parents understand letter grades
- Break or free period so students don't run ragged
- Opportunity for education on good vs. debilitating stress
- Educate parents on homework and research role
- Consider making grades optional, prefer more teacher narrative reports
- Keep math in balance with other subjects
- Respect each other as parents (parents stressed too)
- Reduce screen time for kids
- Support activities to reduce stress (arts, dance, exercise...)
- Consider homework: time, expectations, support, the research
- Offer choice challenge homework packets for those who want
- Teach resiliency, life skills, study skills to deal with stress

## Examples of Jan. 2017 In-Person Forums Brainstorm on Shared Values

### How can SUSD balance desire for excellence & reduce student stress?

- Increase parent awareness that Ok for students to try and seek help
- For kids with special interests, how do we give deep choice
- Teach importance of respect for similarities, differences, values
- Parent integration: how do we build community all feel they belong?
- Accept limited resources and balance allocation of resources
- Evaluate home and school expectations, balance for kids
- Support teachers to coordinate expectations across subjects
- Give time for students to learn and demonstrate interests, more engaged if students love learning and are passionate about school
- **Example of Critical Question from Participant:** *What tools do we need to build resilience, study skills, mindfulness and allow kids to explore and teach them to be respectful?*

## Next Steps & Action Items

- March Potential RTF site visits to model programs  
Opportunity to consult subject-area experts  
Task Force continues to develop initial ideas
- April 20 Emerging ideas presented for Board preview
- April 24 Online survey for input closes May 5
- April 24 & 26 Community Forums for input / discussion
- May 3 Teacher and staff for input / discussion
- May 11 Revised ideas presented for Board review
- May 17 Task Force concludes

Community comments may be submitted to the Task Force at anytime by email: [RMSTaskForce@saratogausd.org](mailto:RMSTaskForce@saratogausd.org).



Thank You!



## Redwood Task Force Update

Emerging Ideas Presented to SUSD Board - April 20, 2017



## Overall Context and Vision

- 2016-17 Redwood Middle School Task Force efforts support the SUSD mission and ongoing commitment to **continuous improvement**

Saratoga Union School District Mission:

- “Create an **innovative public school system** that stimulates intellectual curiosity, providing academic rigor for each and every learner, and instills leadership, responsibility, and global citizenship in a **safe and nurturing environment** where learners THRIVE.”

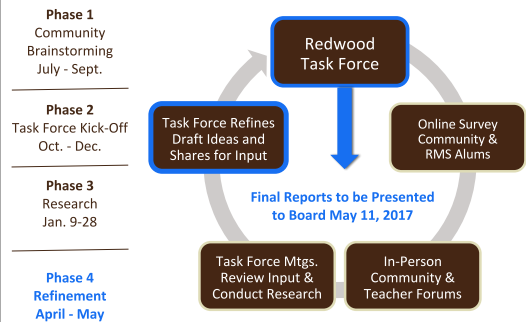
## 2016-17 Task Force Overview

Based upon broad and collaborative community input, the Redwood Middle School Task Force project identified areas of excellence to celebrate at RMS and four areas for focus:

- Student and Community Wellness
- School Climate, Culture & Safety
- Student Choice & Electives
- School Schedule



## Phase 4 Refinement of Ideas



## Shared Vision for Student Success

With input from Board / teachers & staff / parents / students, SUSD community shares common spirit for students to be:

- happy
- safe
- resilient
- connected
- engaged
- confident & empowered
- prepared & organized
- balanced (able to manage time / navigate choices)
- responsible and mature young adults who are prepared for their futures and contribute effectively to their communities

While there is a shared spirit across community for desired outcomes, the definitions of each term / concept and how best to achieve these varies significantly across the community

## Emerging Vision for Possibilities

Areas of 2016-17 Task Force Focus

Student & Community Wellness	Climate, Culture & Safety
<p>Increase student <b>resiliency</b> through health and wellness education, activities and classes</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Wellness Week</li> <li>Routine communication &amp; activities focused on wellness (8th Period)</li> <li>Common "Griffin Time" class for all</li> <li>Explore more opportunities for before / after school activities (LGS Recreation and other options)</li> </ul>	<p>Build and strengthen <b>connections</b> between stakeholder groups throughout the community and foster student <b>empowerment</b>. Attend to campus/facilities <b>safety needs</b>.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Create School Safety Action Committee</li> <li>Provide family/staff social opportunities</li> <li>Support teachers in creating teacher wellness</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Comprehensive health program</li> <li>Create Wellness Center</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Develop school-wide service learning program</li> <li>Student-generated ideas for self-selected education and clubs</li> <li>Provide parent education opportunities and parent-teacher partnerships to support student success and wellness</li> </ul>

## Emerging Vision for Possibilities

Areas of 2016-17 Task Force Focus

Student Choice & Electives	School Schedule
<p><b>Create more opportunities for students to explore interests and passions through electives that are engaging for students &amp; staff</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Research potential new electives and more hands-on offerings</li> <li>Align offerings with high school</li> <li>Create professional development opportunities for electives</li> <li>Consider opportunities to add other elective options based on research (see: specifics to be in final report)</li> <li>Evaluate potential for semester long electives as part of schedule</li> <li>Create longer-term strategic plan for electives / implementation</li> </ul>	<p><b>Enhance and improve the use of time during the day to increase time for projects, depth, student support, connections, and relationships</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Review and consider merits of block or hybrid block schedule including "Griffin Time"</li> <li>Develop ideas for possible "Griffin Time" periods (i.e., Digital Citizenship, Academic Assistance, Advisory, SEL, Health)</li> <li>Create more consistent start/release times</li> <li>Pilot test schedule for few weeks / month(s)</li> <li>Determine opportunities for professional development to help teachers implement new schedule, including longer classes, "Griffin Time" and SEL</li> <li>Implement new schedule 2018-19</li> </ul>

## Next Steps & Action Items

- April 21-28 Online survey for community input
- April 24 & 26 In-person Community Forum discussions
- April 26 Teacher and staff input
- May 1 Task Force meets to revise emerging ideas
- May 3 Teacher and staff review of revised ideas
- May 11 Revised ideas presented for Board action
- May 12-15 Community updates on progress / action
- May 17 Task Force identifies next steps and timelines
- June-July Implementation plans formalized and integrated into plans for 2017-18 school year

It is recommended that any action items / timing be considered in context of other ongoing priorities at RMS to balance / stage workload and implementation resources



## Board Questions & Discussion

Thank You!