

# It's Not All About Academics

## 5 Tips for Supporting College- and Career-Readiness with SEL

Mastery of academic content is just one important aspect of college- and career-readiness. The other is the development of non-cognitive skills (critical thinking, problem-solving, social skills, etc.) that are essential to success everywhere from college classrooms to the workplace.

To ensure that all students are prepared for life after high school, educators must balance academics with social-emotional learning (SEL) for non-cognitive skill development. Get started with these five tips for integrating SEL into the classroom environment and instruction.

### 1 Start early.



Begin a dialog of college- and career-readiness in elementary or middle school, at the latest. Even something as simple as displaying your alma mater's banner can encourage students to start setting goals for their future.

### 2 Align academic content and SEL skills.



Embed SEL objectives like empathy, conflict resolution, and appreciation for diversity into the core curriculum so that students learn these skills in tandem with academic content.

### 3 Foster academic mindsets.



Help nurture confidence in learning by encouraging students to contribute to classroom lessons. Incorporate opportunities for discussion, interaction, teamwork, and collaboration to create a sense of community and to inspire students to take ownership of their learning.

### 4 Elevate student voice.



Students are more engaged in learning when they feel valued and heard. Look for opportunities to involve students in problem-solving and decision-making, and make a strong effort to represent multiple values, beliefs, opinions, and perspectives in the classroom.

### 5 Take advantage of wrap-around services.



Students don't walk into classrooms as blank slates. They come from communities with significant "cultural wealth" that shapes their knowledge, skills, and abilities. When possible, look outside of school and into the community for resources to partner with to prepare students—and their families—for college and careers.

### Gain Insight Into the Social-Emotional Behavior Skills That Support Academic Achievement



Social-emotional behavior (SEB) assessment can help educators identify the non-cognitive skills students may need support to develop in order to excel in college and careers. The Social, Academic, Emotional Behavior Risk Screener (SAEBRS) that is part of the FastBridge assessment solution pinpoints students' SEB strengths and the competencies in which instruction and intervention is needed.

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