

BUILD HOPE!

15 hope-building strategies for educators

Students experience hope when they believe their future is promising. But it is more than wishful thinking. Hopeful students have clear goals, paired with the mindset and motivation to reach them. They also anticipate and plan for obstacles, and therefore plan for multiple pathways to success.

Goals: Students' thoughts and ideas about their future: what they want to accomplish, who they want to become.

Educator practices:

1. **Model** a positive outlook for the future.
2. Support students in their self-awareness: identifying their strengths and interests.
3. Emphasize the importance of setting "approach" goals (what you are moving toward) rather than focusing on "avoidance" goals (what you are trying to avoid).
4. Practice breaking down big goals into incremental steps to reaching the goal.
5. Help students set "we" goals rather than "me" goals. Go together on a shared goal.

Agency: Students' perceived ability to shape their own lives, be the authors of their life story, accept responsibility for taking action, and move toward their goals.

Educator practices:

1. **Model** personal agency, sense of "what you do" matters in the outcome.
2. Provide support/guidance in setting personal, prioritized goals that matter to students. We only take the initiative on goals that truly matter to us.
3. Design learner-centered approaches: shifting roles of teacher and student; teacher as a coach; elevate student's voice.
4. Create a safe, trusting environment for courageous learning.
5. Help students re-frame perceived failures as signals to reflect, work harder, and/or formulate new strategies.

Pathways: Students seek out and identify multiple pathways to goals, pick the most appropriate routes, and monitor their progress.

Educator practices:

1. **Model** adaptability to seek out pathways and alternative routes.
2. **Advocacy:** When necessary, remove barriers blocking students from equitable opportunities and goals.
3. Provide the dress rehearsal for students to overcome barriers and obstacles.
4. Acknowledge hard work, effort, and willingness to formulate alternative pathways.
5. Provide support in identifying pathway partners and resources in role models, mentors, networks.

