

# The Facts on Education

## How Best To Motivate Students?

Students' interest and desire to participate actively in the learning process is central to their success at any level of education. All students are motivated by some activities; in schools, student motivation is deeply affected by what happens in classrooms. Research drawn from several fields suggests ways we can improve students' engagement and motivation:

- **Relevance** – Building on students' interests and making the lessons relevant to students' lives and what they already know are good practices.
- **Choice** – Giving students more choices in their learning, both about what to study and about how to present what they know and can do, makes learning more interesting and heightens curiosity.
- **Recognizing Effort** – Success is a big spur to further effort. Students' motivation increases when their efforts and contributions are consistently valued.
- **Feedback** – Timely and specific feedback tells students what their strengths and weaknesses are. Feedback must be given so that students understand what they need to do in order to improve. Multiple opportunities to demonstrate learning are also important.
- **Teaching Methods and Tools** – Students learn best through a variety of teaching techniques and strategies that challenge them and encourage them to explore ideas. The use of technology, such as computers, and SMART Boards, can also help to motivate students.

Parents are valuable partners in the learning process. They can support their child's learning by suggesting strategies to teachers that they have observed to be successful at home. This will help teachers meet the child's learning needs.

Teachers and parents support their children's learning when they praise effort and hard work rather than intelligence. There is growing evidence that children's intelligence is not fixed, and the children who do best are those who develop "growth mindsets" so that they are prepared to put in the effort to succeed.

For online resources on motivating students as well as the research references that inform this issue, please visit:

[www.cea-ace.ca/facts-on-education](http://www.cea-ace.ca/facts-on-education)

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