



Dynamics of Learning

The Relationship Between Achievement and Social-Emotional Well-Being of Students

In the late 1990s, legislators looked to enhance teachers' content knowledge and teaching skills with the idea that instructional excellence would lead to increased achievement. For many children, this led to measured growth in school subjects. More recently evidence has supported that explicitly teaching social-emotional skills, such as dealing with one's emotions, relationships, and environment, leads to increased achievement. **In fact, the relationship between achievement, instruction, and social-emotional learning is interactive.** Managing emotions helps maintain focus in the classroom and excellent instruction helps children feel more self-confident as successful learners.

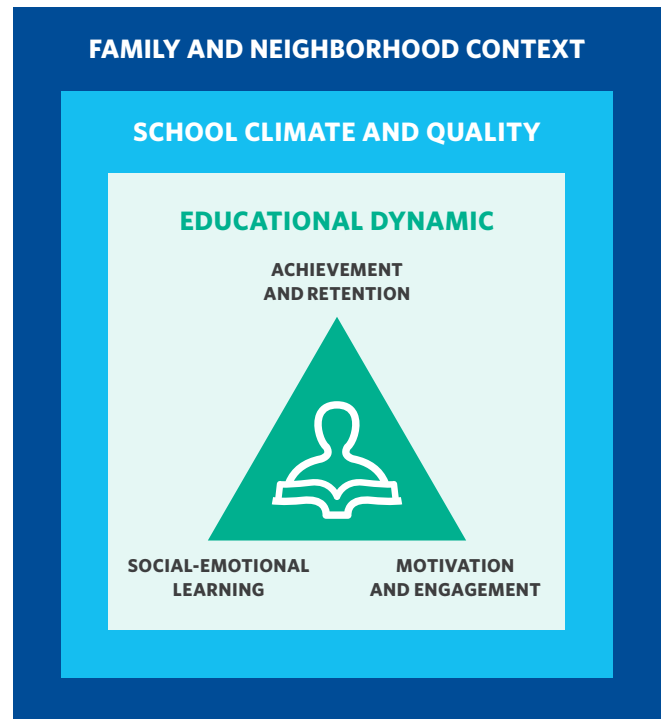
Factors that Contribute to Overall Student Achievement

The Role of Family and Neighborhood. The most overarching factor involves the values and resources found in children's families, cultures, and neighborhoods. Do children feel safe walking to school? Can families make time and space for children to do their schoolwork?

School Climate and Quality. With support from the larger context of the community, school climate and expectations for teacher quality develop and evolve. Schools can offer attractive enriched education for students and their families when they have sufficient resources. Schools that are valued by the community and where expectations are high attract experienced teachers who are more likely to stay and enhance the school's climate for learning and stability.

Educational Dynamic. Within the classroom, some of the most important dynamics include:

- The impact of social-emotional learning on motivation to learn and engage leads to increased achievement.
- The impact of motivation and engagement on achievement leads to increased sense of self-efficacy and self-confidence as a learner.
- The impact of successful learning leads to increased engagement and motivation and social-emotional well-being.



Key Elements of the Educational Dynamic

Social and Emotional Learning (SEL) is the process through which children and adults understand and manage emotions, set and achieve positive goals, feel and show empathy for others, establish and maintain positive relationships, and make responsible decisions.

Achievement and Retention. The successful acquisition of school learning is defined as achievement. Retention refers to persistence through the grade levels or to more rigorous courses of study.

Motivation and Engagement. Student engagement and interest in class are important conditions for active learning. For this they must be highly motivated. In other words, students who have high motivation make an effort to be engaged in class.