

Adult Education New Teacher Training

Module 11

Student Efficacy

Classroom strategies to improve student self-efficacy and learning outcomes

Natalie Haskell, Smarthinking Tutor, Pearson | July 28, 2016 in [Higher Education](#)



One of the most critical tools in a teacher's arsenal actually belongs to the student: self-efficacy. Self-efficacy influences academic motivation, learning, and achievement (American Society for Horticultural Science, 2011). Increasing student self-efficacy, therefore, is crucial to a student's success. As teachers, we can stimulate critical thinking and comprehension and thus increase student self-efficacy through a variety of strategies such as dialogic, open-ended questioning, positive reinforcement, increased availability, and the flipped classroom.

The first and perhaps easiest way to increase student confidence and engagement with subject material is to be available to students outside of the classroom. Teachers should have regular office hours that work for students with various scheduling needs, but should also be available to set up individual sessions outside of these hours whenever possible. Some students may simply need a bit of extra help to boost their understanding and confidence in the material and themselves.

During these sessions and in class, there are several strategies teachers can use to increase student confidence in comprehension and analysis:

- Have students work problems out loud. This slows down the process of critical thinking and analysis, encouraging deliberate thinking and reasoning (cft.vanderbilt.edu).
- Pose open ended, dialogic questions to students rather than provide them with answers or directive, editorial style comments. Prompts teachers might use to encourage student confidence in reasoning could include the following:
 - Tell me what you know about _____ .
 - How might you break this problem into smaller steps?
 - How did you get from ___ to _____ ?
 - Why do you think the author _____ ?
- Remember the value of positive reinforcement. Make sure that this reinforcement is more than a generic “Good Job, Jane!” Rather, make your comments and actions specific and tangible. Display a student’s artwork. Read a strong student response out loud to the class. (Avoid naming students who might be overly self-conscious; simply displaying or reading the work serves as praise.)
- Build language arts programs that include but do not over-emphasize creative writing; build a strong analytical base by having students question and answer as they read other authors. Encourage the student to ask “What do you think and imagine?” as well as “What do I think and what can I imagine?” Notes Mahar (2016), a long-time English instructor at a Jesuit college preparatory high school in Maine, “Students seeking to understand what others know...are confident. Those conditioned for singular perception or thought lose their confidence; they discover the insular nature of a creative-centric curriculum.”
- Consider using a flipped classroom model, which can “produce significant learning gains” (American Society for Horticultural Science, 2011). In such a model, students do the “easier” work of comprehension and acquiring information independently. A variety of sources to appeal to multiple learning styles can be used: textbook readings, online comprehension quizzes, PowerPoint presentations, and video presentations from sites such as Khan Academy, YouTube, or Coursera (cft.vanderbilt.edu). The teacher can then devote the classroom time to “skilled navigation” (Mahar, personal communication, 2016) of student analysis, application, and discussion. Literature students might discuss symbolism or theme in novels, citing support for their responses; algebra students might work through problems in class, where a meaningful dialogue (see points one and two) can occur.

The “teaching to the test” mentality encouraged by No Child Left Behind and Common Core has eroded student confidence and placed an emphasis on learning to acquire information, achieve a score, and meet a “standard.” Our most important job as educators, however, is not to produce a generation of right answers; it is to produce a generation of confident, eloquent thinkers who can understand, effectively utilize, and enjoy their individual learning processes.

Building self-efficacy in the AE program

Many of the items outlined in the article above are already built into many local AE programs. Participatory learning strategies, the use of CCRS, and flipped classrooms are all commonly found throughout the State. The use of each of these, along with such things as positive reinforcements, all help to increase student confidence and engagement with both classroom materials as well as with colleagues inside and out of the class atmosphere.

At a program level, there are numerous things instructors can do to help increase/promote/celebrate student successes. We want students to be proud of their accomplishments and we want them to know that we share that pride.

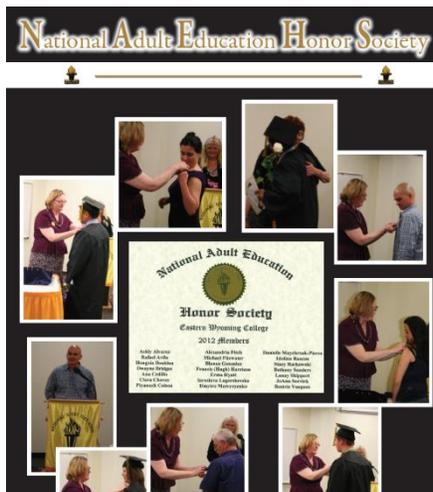
A) Tuition Waivers/scholarships

In an effort to encourage concurrent enrollments in postsecondary, many local programs in Wyoming offer what is commonly called a 'tuition waiver'. These waivers typically provide local scholarship funds for Adult Education students who want to pursue post-secondary education. Each program in the State has its own unique system, so instructors are encouraged to discuss this opportunity with the local director.

B) Graduations

High School Equivalency graduations are held at all programs in the State at various intervals throughout a year. Typically, all students who earn their HSEC are eligible to walk in a formal graduation ceremony sponsored by the local AE program. The local program will notify qualified students of these ceremonies and invite them to participate, if they wish.

C) National Adult Education Honor Society Induction (NAEHS)



Some AE providers in the State are charter members of the National Adult Education Honor Society. (NAEHS)

Each year, Charter Members induct students into this nationally recognized program. Induction ceremonies typically coincide with graduation so that participants and their families get an opportunity to partake in these ceremonies.

How it works

- A. **Eligibility:** All students enrolled at an AE center throughout the EWC service area are eligible. Test scores, academic excellence, and/or academic elitism are NOT valid criteria for determining eligibility.
- B. **Selecting Students:** All students are eligible for nomination. Teacher nominations must be based upon the following three criteria as outlined by NAEHS:

1. Attendance

- Student must arrive on time and is consistently present.

2. Cooperation

- Student works harmoniously with teachers and fellow students.
- Student respects other's ideas and values.
- Student speaks in turn and actively participates in classroom/lab activities.
- Student demonstrates patience

3. Self-reliance

- Student demonstrates personal initiative while performing education related tasks.
- Student comes to class prepared and completes homework.
- Student sets goals and follows through.
- Student listens with understanding.
- Student asks questions and seeks help when needed.
- Student takes responsibility for own learning.

C. Inducting Students: In March of each year, teachers submit their nomination forms to a local director for induction. The program director then submits these names to NAEHS. Inducted students receive NAEHS pins, certificates, and letters of recommendations. Induction ceremonies are then planned by the local program.

D) Student Success Stories



Student success stories are a very important part of our program and unfortunately, most successes go unrecognized. What many instructors do not know is that AE programs must report on student successes. A student success is not simply defined by the completion of a high school equivalency certificate. Student success stories detail experiences:

- 1) that happen to the student while they are enrolled in our program. Did they enroll concurrently in college? Were they inducted into Phi Kappa Theta, (College Honor Society) as a concurrent student? Did they participate in a work experience program?
- 2) that occurred once they left our program. How did you see them grow? Did they go to college? Get into the armed forces? Get a job? What happened to the student as a direct result of their experiences in Adult Education?

As mentioned above, local programs have to report on these success stories on a regular basis as follows:

- 1) Quarterly Report: One section of the quarterly report asks local directors to report on success stories. Instructors are encouraged to share student success stories as often as possible.
- 2) Annual Visit to Washington DC to visit Wyoming Senators: Each year, a program director from Wyoming is selected to visit our Senators in Washington DC. During this visit, the director has to bring along success stories from Adult



Education in Wyoming. These are presented/relayed to our Senators so that they know and understand the impact Adult Education is having upon the citizens of Wyoming.

- 3) Local Website: Local AE websites and the Commission's website publicize student success stories.
- 4) Facebook: Local programs also utilize Facebook pages as social media outlet for both student efficacy as well as to help enrollment numbers.

Instructors are encouraged to send in any/all success stories they may have on a particular student. We want the world to share the pride we have in our students!

E) The Hathaway Scholarship



Hathaway History

The Hathaway Scholarship was established to help Wyoming's students prepare for and pursue their post-secondary education in the state. The scholarship has its roots in Governor Stanley Hathaway's 1974 decision to create the state of Wyoming Permanent Mineral Trust Fund. The fund's income would support state government operations – including higher education in Wyoming. In 2005, state lawmakers created a scholarship fund with a \$400 million permanent endowment, whose income funds scholarships for qualified Wyoming high school graduates to attend the University of Wyoming or any of the state's seven community colleges. They honored Hathaway's many contributions to the state and accomplishments by naming the scholarship program for him.

The Hathaway Scholarship program has turned Governor Hathaway's dream of building a better Wyoming into a reality by making attending college possible through merit- and need-based scholarships for qualified Wyoming high school graduates.

Hathaway scholarships are designed to provide an incentive for Wyoming students to prepare for and pursue post-secondary education within the state of Wyoming. The program consists of four separate merit scholarships, each with specific eligibility requirements, and a need-based scholarship for eligible students that supplements the merit awards.

HSEC students can qualify for Hathaway Scholarship dollars if:

- 1) They initiate the scholarship within two years of their natural graduation date.
- 2) They receive their HSEC while living in Wyoming and attending a Wyoming high school.

Students cannot initiate the Hathaway Scholarship prior to student's natural graduation date, unless it has been court ordered to complete a HSEC, the student has been emancipated, is a parent or guardian of a minor, or for other good cause shown as determined by the department.

Student must initiate the Hathaway Scholarship within 4 years of their natural graduation date.

The student must have received the HSEC while residing in Wyoming and attended a Wyoming high school.

There are four level considerations for the Hathaway in regards to HSEC scores. These are shown in the table below.

	Honors Level Requirements: Scholarship award: \$1,680/year	Performance Level Requirements: Scholarship award: \$1,260/year	Opportunity Level Requirements: Scholarship award: \$840/year	Provisional Opportunity Level Requirements: Scholarship award: \$840 per year
GED	Score of 170 or higher	164-169	157-163	157-163
TASC	Score of 600 or higher	570-599	530-569	530-569
HiSET	Score of 16 or higher	14-15	12-13	12-13
ACT Score	Score of 25 or higher	21-24	19-20	17-18 or Workkeys score of 12

Additional information regarding the Hathaway Scholarship can be found at:

<https://edu.wyoming.gov/beyond-the-classroom/college-career/scholarships/hathaway/>