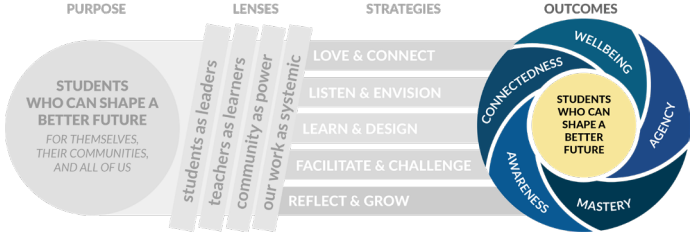
How can we know students are growing as leaders of a better future?

OUTCOMES

Students' increasing wellbeing, connectedness, awareness, agency, and mastery indicate they are growing as leaders of a better future. Deep learning and mastery are attained through, not at the expense of, broader student leadership outcomes.



OVERVIEW

Get started with a **summary** of **insights and resources** about student leadership outcomes.

DISCOVER

Virtually visit **transformational classrooms and communities** to find these families of outcomes for yourself.

LEARN

Explore **wellbeing**, **connectedness**, **awareness**, **agency**, and mastery with guidance from teachers and students.

DO

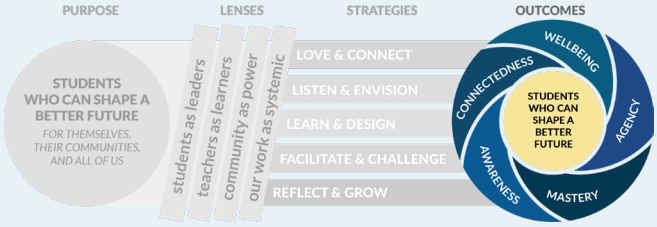
Use Teach For All's growing **library of assessment tools** to contextualize your own ways to measure students' growth.

SHARE

Contribute to and explore **incoming questions**, **challenges**, and **resources** related to student outcomes.

OVERVIEW

Five areas of student growth–wellbeing, connectedness, awareness, agency, and mastery–suggest students are growing as leaders of a better future. Mastery is not diluted but is enhanced when pursued with other outcomes.



DISCOVER

What Is Student Leadership and Why Does It Matter?

In this 2014 compilation video, you will hear and see examples of students from around the world growing as leaders of a better future. What inferences can you make about what these teachers and students are valuing?

(Explore other provocative illustrations of student leadership outcomes.)

LEARN

Five Student Leadership Outcomes

Students and teachers in transformational classrooms around the world value similar areas of growth as indicators of student leadership development. Our crowd-sourced studies are suggesting that rigorous mastery is achieved through, not at the expense of, other key outcomes, including wellbeing, connectedness, awareness, and agency.

Wellbeing
Students feel secure and loved, empowering them to be themselves, try new things, and make mistakes in ways that encourage deeper learning.

Connectedness
Students seek and value the perspectives and experiences of others as they work collaboratively toward a common good.

Awareness
Students are aware of inequity and celebrate their and others' unique strengths and identities as assets for navigating challenges in pursuit of their growing sense of purpose.

Agency
Students take independent or collective action toward shared goals to cause positive change in their own lives or the lives of others.

Mastery
Students attain higher-order command of knowledge and skills as a means to create new opportunities and solutions to challenges.

DO

Explore illustrations and "research constructs" related to these broader student leadership outcomes.

Find and adapt assessments from our global library of tools for measuring students' growing wellbeing, connectedness, awareness, agency, and mastery.

My response to the question, "What should we measure"? depends on who is asking. When someone is saying, "We have to know students' ability to read, write, and do math are improving dramatically," I tend to say "yes and," to push on the need for student creativity, self-worth, collaboration, and sense of justice and equity to complement that rigorous mastery. And when someone is pushing on social-emotional skills or "holistic outcomes," I'm the first one to say, "Yes, and we have to support and expect rigorous engagement with rigorous content to grow critical thinking readers, writers, mathematicians, and scientists." To me, there is nothing incompatible or hypocritical about those two messages because the path to rigorous mastery of reading, writing, math, and science is through, not separate from, student ownership, critical consciousness, empathy, and belief in themselves.

Taylor Delhagen
Former professor at Relay Graduate School of Education and Teach For America Alumnus

SHARE

Contribute your insights and see others' questions, resources, and challenges related to student leadership outcomes.

DISCOVER

Virtually visit classrooms growing student leadership outcomes

We can orient ourselves to purpose, we can become aware of and shift our lenses, and we can act on all the strategies in the previous sections. But how can we know if students in our classrooms are really growing as leaders of a better future for themselves, their communities, and all of us? These classroom leaders and classrooms help visualize student leadership outcomes.

GLOSSARY

Grow Students: We have chosen the verb "grow" in this phrase because we feel it's more active and meaningful than more traditional terms like "develop." We made this intentional choice to inspire readers to pause and think about the opportunity and responsibility we have to help students be prepared for a very different future than the one that shaped conventional classroom models.

Leaders Of A Better Future: This is a concept that emerged years ago, when Teach For All hosted a collective, year-long reflection process among students, teachers, teacher developers, CEOs, community leaders, and families about the aims of our network. One clear theme in those conversations was the changing and challenging world today's students are inheriting, and the need for education to prepare them to face and improve that future for themselves and others.

Transformational Classroom: These are classrooms where students seem to be on a different trajectory. They are making dramatic progress in their wellbeing, connectedness, awareness, agency, and mastery. That growth is transforming their paths and opportunities going forward.

Why Student Leadership Matters

As you virtually travel around the world in this video from 2018, meeting and learning from transformational students and teachers, think about what gives you confidence that these students are getting on a path to improving their and their community's future.

Students as Culturally Sustaining Agents of Change

Kia Aroha is a public secondary school in South Auckland, New Zealand, working with 300 students, most of them Māori or from the Pacific Islands. As shown in this video from 2018, the school has taken a radically different approach to education, focusing on bilingual, critically conscious, culturally responsive, and social justice education.

Critical Thinking for Mastery

Explore this video from 2013 on how Teach For America alumnus Taylor Delhagen (New York, United States) facilitated debate to develop students' critical thinking. Taylor provided concrete strategies for students to process information and develop their own viewpoints.

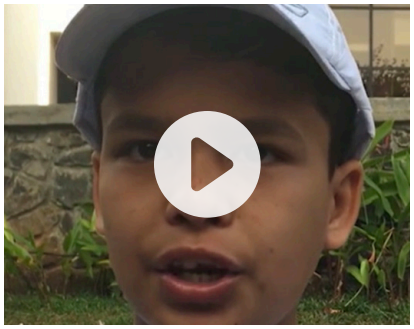
Building Collective Ownership and Leadership

In this video from 2019, former fellow from Teach For Armenia Arusik explores definitions of global citizenship with her students and what it means to be globally informed.

In 2012, Curtis was a young man growing up in Nottingham, England. He experienced and felt the oppression of complex systems around him, except in Mr. Boss's class, where Curtis found respect and his voice.

Discovering Your True Potential

Created more than eight years ago, Maya (Teach For India) was a game-changing exploration of what an excellent education can look like when you integrate values and mindsets, exposure and access to the arts, and rigorous academics.



Challenging Garbage Mountain

Meet a young leader in India who is working to make a better future for his community. Rehan shares his work to improve education and address pollution for his community through this video from 2019. He also shares how his determination spurs him on despite challenges.

Identity and Student Leadership

In this video from 2014, college student Elijah Miles of Baltimore, Maryland, U.S., sparks an important conversation about identity, culture, community, and the importance of how we define success. Elijah challenges us to consider how we define success for our students, ourselves, and our communities.

Reflection Questions

- What common patterns do you see in these classrooms related to the areas of growth that students, families, and teachers are working toward?
- When you think about "students as leaders of a better future," what indicators do you want to see in students today? How do those indicators show up in these videos?

HELP US DISCOVER & ILLUSTRATE

transformational Teaching Actions. Submit other examples!

LEARN

Rejecting the false dichotomy: mastery is achieved through, not at the cost of, other important student outcomes

While some people believe that any discussion of broader student outcomes is a dilution of student academic mastery, the classrooms we are studying show that is simply not true. In fact, we can only achieve meaningful mastery when we pursue rigorous academic achievement alongside and through student wellbeing, connectedness, awareness, and agency.

Many of the education systems we work in and around are designed to develop academic achievement and close achievement gaps. That's obviously a noble aim. Often, however, those systems grow relatively superficial academic knowledge and skills at the expense of other important elements of human growth and development.

Is that trade-off necessary? Absolutely not.

The transformational teachers we have studied consistently share their frustration with the misperception that broadening outcomes mean diluted academic mastery. In fact, they insist, **broadening outcomes is the path to more meaningful academic mastery**.

Students who feel safe, loved, and connected are much more able to take the risks necessary to try new and hard things and spend more time at the frontier edge of their learning. Students who are aware of their own cultural assets and identities as well as unjust dynamics of privilege that will shape their path through the world can appreciate more the value of new skills and knowledge. Students who are confident that if they see a challenge they can tackle it can push through challenging concepts and learning experiences. Mastery comes from, not instead of and not at the expense of, students' wellbeing, connectedness, awareness, and agency.

A consortium of influential education foundations recently conducted an extensive review of research and found that the perceived tension between academics and more holistic student outcomes is a "false dichotomy":

> Effective holistic approaches within education systems lead to improved academic, health, income, employment, and societal and wellbeing outcomes. Their impacts are lasting, and their effectiveness spans high- to low-income countries. Their results are felt most strongly by those who need it the most. Such approaches make for smart financial investment, and they have led consistently to improved long-term life outcomes. Despite this, the wider institutionalization of holistic practices in education systems remains the exception rather than the rule. This, in part, can be attributed to the misperception that a trade-off exists between supporting academic development versus holistic development, the "false dichotomy" that is being challenged within this synthesis. In fact, holistic child development incorporates, and is deeply intertwined with, academic rigor. Beyond academic outcomes, holistic approaches have a compounding positive effect over the course of a person's life. The consistent finding from the literature is that a holistic approach is a powerful driver of success and important buffer against adversities. Evidence behind these claims is both robust, consistent, and increasingly representative of diverse contexts. (From Challenging the False Dichotomy: An Evidence Synthesis)

We hear and see the same conclusion from the classrooms in our global learning loops. The deepest learning happens at the intersection of mastery and other outcomes. Far from being a zero-sum trade-off, the path to true rigor is through students' creativity, identity, collaboration, and agency.

Unfortunately, systems tightly designed to raise test scores tend to do a poor job of supporting those intersections. And yet the teachers in our studies report that taking this holistic approach to student learning, where mastery absolutely matters, is a much more fun and fulfilling approach to teaching and learning, for them and their students.

One lever for accelerating the paradigmatic shift from "mastery at the expense of student leadership" to "mastery through student leadership" is to define and measure student leadership outcomes, including but not limited to rigorous mastery of challenging content.

Wellbeing, Connectedness, Awareness, Agency & Mastery = Student Leadership

In our "learning loops," we asked participants to look beyond what ministries of education are asking teachers to measure, and instead to look at what teachers and students in transformational classrooms were actually valuing as indicators of progress.

So, what do young people need from us as educators in this kind of time?

Young people need knowledge. And more importantly, they need understanding. Understanding of how things fit together, how the world works, and how we got to this place and time. They need critical thinking skills to be able to analyze the media educational, cultural, and religious messages they are flooded with every day. They need help healing from the personal trauma they experience in their life, from the inequality, violence, and destruction, and from the historical trauma that has been transmitted to them from war, immigration, disasters, and systems of oppression. Young people need an understanding of interdependence with life above all living things and the earth itself. Young people need to feel part of a community or collective identity to develop a connection to and compassion for others. And they need role models. They need to see us working as educational activists for social justice in our communities. Young people need courage and that is gained from taking risks and from learning from their experiences. Young people also need an understanding of power: personal, collaborative, political, economic, and cultural power. How it works, how we can build it, and how to use it to help build the kind of world we all want to live in.

Young people need to learn our histories of resistance. We all come from a proud lineage of people who came together to win national liberation struggles for civil and human rights, struggles for lands, sovereignty, education, work, and healing. The young need to know and feel part of this legacy.

And finally, young people need to join us in our collective struggles for healing, community liberation, and justice. Young people bring tremendous motivation, energy, power, and creative vision to our world, but they are often met with a lack of adult support or even adult resistance to their participation. Many of us say that young people are our future, but then don't support their leadership in the present.

Paul Kivel
Social justice educator, activist, and writer whose work spans five decades in community education, engaged parenthood, political writing, and practical activism.

As you explore each of these families of outcomes below, keep in mind that (like the rest of the Teaching As Collective Leadership model) these outcomes are not meant to be prescriptive guidance for programs or teachers. Ultimately, the student leadership outcomes your classroom or program aspires to must align with and contextualize for the purpose you are collectively developing with students, families, and the community. That said, we believe these global patterns in student outcomes can be a provocative tool for considering which outcomes align with your local vision of student success.

GLOSSARY

Global Learning Loop: This concept is what we have called the mini-courses we host in which people from around the world virtually visit classrooms in different countries and share what they think we can learn from them. The Global Learning Lab has also worked with many partner organizations to host their "learning loops" where staff come together to learn from their strongest classrooms.

SPIRIT	WHAT WE SEE IN CLASSROOMS	WHAT WE MEASURE
WELLBEING Students feel secure and loved, empowering them to be themselves, try new things, and make mistakes in ways that encourage deeper learning.	Students are joyfully taking risks and learning together.	Increasing sense of safety and belonging among peers, feeling better able to manage their mental wellbeing, trusting their teacher, and liking school and learning.
CONNECTEDNESS Students seek and value the perspectives and experiences of others as they work collaboratively toward a common good.	Students are working collectively, helping peers to feel welcome and learn new content.	Increasing empathy for others, responsibility for others' learning, and eagerness to contribute to their classroom and community.
AWARENESS Students are aware of and celebrate their and others' unique strengths and identities as assets for navigating challenges and inequity in pursuit of their growing sense of purpose.	Students are exploring their own assets, strengths, and identities as well as systemic injustices that may devalue, inhibit, or privilege them.	Increasing appreciation of their own strengths, needs, and growth, and increased questioning of the assumptions around (and inside them) that inhibit them.
AGENCY Students take independent or collective action toward shared goals to cause positive change in their own life or the lives of others.	Students are finding their voice, leading learning, and connecting daily efforts to their aspirations for themselves and their communities.	Increasingly proactive influence on their own and others' learning and paths in life.
MASTERY Students attain a higher-order command of knowledge and skills as a means to create new opportunities and solutions to challenges.	Students are eagerly and productively struggling with challenging and relevant content, at the edge of their abilities.	Increasing ability to critically analyze, evaluate, and create knowledge and skills that matter to their chosen path to thriving in and improving the world around them.

Despite some influential people's belief that academic achievement should be the only measure of success in school, we are finding that prioritizing this broader set of outcomes, together, is actually the path to more meaningful and rigorous academic mastery. Well-being, connectedness, awareness, and agency enhance and accelerate, rather than dilute, rigorous academic learning and mastery. And (bonus!), those broader outcomes call for a much more fulfilling, joyful, sustainable way of teaching compared to more conventional models focused only on narrowly defined academic achievement.

Our learning loop participants have several hypotheses for this correlation between broader outcomes and mastery. We know, for example, from advancements in the science of learning and development that a sense of safety and belonging is an essential foundation for higher-order thinking. We know from indigenous traditions and cognitive science that when students' identities gain recognition and value, they can trust and take risks necessary for deeper learning. We see over and over in these classrooms that when students recognize that what they are learning gives them the power to shape their own world and future, they are more invested learners and leaders.

As with the strategies and actions, the customization of these general themes will vary with the local context, culture, values, and aspirations. These five outcomes serve as a valuable, globally informed catalyst for considering how to locally define and monitor the progress of students' growth as leaders of a better future.

In the following pages, you will find one-page explorations of each of the five student leadership outcomes, including illustrations and associated "research constructs[1]."

Education is often used to put a value on people. I had a colleague, who was also a person of color, who had many degrees. And they told me they felt they had to have all those letters after their name just to be taken seriously. I grapple with how that is wrong and how that is the reality. If we prepare students for that reality, do we risk perpetuating those same unjust patterns?

Denisse Arias
Former Director of Equity & Belonging at Teach For All and Teach For America Alumna

Related Research Constructs

These five families of outcomes arose from practitioners' explorations of strong classrooms, but we have also compared and contrasted these findings with research literature—the education landscape is quite "noisy" with competing outcomes models in the last several years, from 21st Century Skills to "social and emotional learning" to "whole child" models.

While academic researchers rarely use the same terms that have arisen in our learning loops, we are finding validation for these five student leadership outcomes in related research constructs. Wellbeing, for example, is highlighted in research on students' sense of belonging and security, their physical conditioning, their psychological, cognitive, and social wellbeing and their optimism. Frontiers of research on empathy, compassion, gratitude, perspective-taking, collaboration, and global-mindedness, for example, support the general aim of Connectedness. Awareness as a student outcome is informed by research into students' sense of identity, social awareness, metacognition, sense of purpose, etc. Agency is supported by research into students' self-efficacy, creativity, problem solving, curiosity, and growth mindset.

The vast majority of research on mastery in education focuses on "what works" in improving results on standardized tests. However, there is increasing research that suggests that a narrow pursuit of good grades, ends up sacrificing real mastery—as well as broader outcomes. The most effective schools do not make a trade-off between high academic expectations and broader outcomes, they see them as two sides of the same coin.

Check out this research/literature review of studies related to these student leadership outcomes written by Professor Madhu Narayanan at Relay Graduate School of Education.

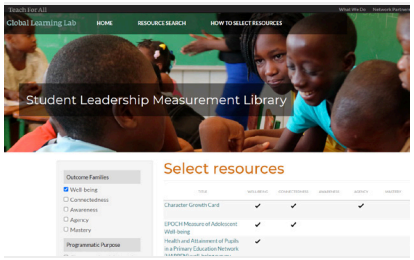
[1] A list of TACL-related research constructs, with their definitions and references to the research literature, can be found here.

A CLOSER LOOK AT...
WELLBEING

Students feel secure and loved, empowering them to be themselves, try new things, and make mistakes in ways that encourage deeper learning. We see students joyfully taking risks and learning together.

Measurable Indicators of Wellbeing

- Students' increasing sense of safety and belonging
- Students' increasing ability to manage their mental wellbeing
- Students' trust in teacher
- Students' enjoyment of school and learning
- What would you add?



Tools for Measuring Wellbeing

Explore Wellbeing

Conflicting Pathways of Success

In this video from 2015, Esther Rakete, a Maori educator and activist, shares her personal experience as a student in a system that devalued her identity. The damage to her sense of self-worth and wellbeing undermined her learning and growth.

Growth, Not Perfection

Isaac Pollack, Principal of New Orleans' Carver High School, leads his school on the simple belief that "it's OK to make mistakes, just be better tomorrow than you were today." This belief underpins a culture of wellbeing and growth, as he shares in this video from 2013.

Think About Thinking to Better Reach Students

The 2018 Oak Foundation "Reaching All Learners" fellow and Enseña Por Paraguay Alumnus, Emilio Rodríguez Cáceres, shares an overview of his project, objectives, and key learnings.

Other Sources

- Workshop: Trauma-Focused Teaching: Understanding Our Brains, Part 1
- Workshop: Trauma-Focused Teaching: Understanding Our Brains, Part 2
- Report: Learning Reimagined: Radical Thinking for Equitable Futures

Related Research Constructs

- Psychological (intrapersonal) wellbeing [Selligman, 2011; Kern, et al., 2016; Myers, Sweeney & Witmer, 1998; Adams & Benzer, 2000]
- Cognitive (intrapersonal) wellbeing [Pollard & Davidson, 2001; Litman & Jimerson, 2004; Bridges, 2003; Ryan & Deci, 2000]
- Social (interpersonal) wellbeing [Keyes, 1998; Fuller, 2000; Pollard & Lee, 2003; Selligman, 2011; Deutsch, 1993; Johnson & Johnson, 1982; Craig et al., 2000]

SHARE

Contribute your insights (and see others'), questions, resources, and challenges related to WELLBEING.

We know that sustained trauma in early years (0–10 years) results in stunting and failure to thrive, the effects of which can be felt for life. Children are going to carry this trauma into schools, and it is going to hinder their ability to access content, engage in learning, and build healthy relationships. As the impact of the pandemic unfolds, it is becoming abundantly clear that traditional learning models have ill-equipped our children to respond to the current crisis.

Suchetha Bhat (She/her)
CEO of Dream a Dream (India) "For every child a thriving life." (Photo taken by Prasanna H.)

A CLOSER LOOK AT...
CONNECTEDNESS

Students seek and value the perspectives and experiences of others as they work collaboratively toward a common good. Students are working collectively, helping peers to feel welcome and learn new content.

The school of the future will positively challenge students to create a bond of responsibility of personal commitment to their community, which can be physical or can be virtual, where they have a protagonist role and see themselves as part of a process of giving back and sharing their talents with others. This is important because uncertainty will continue so we need to help prepare young people to navigate complexity and see it as an opportunity for creativity.

Roberto Benes
Director of UNICEF in Tokyo, Japan, and the first Director of Generation Unlimited, UNICEF's global partnership for and with young people

Muntu ngumuntu ngabantu. [A person is a person because of the people.]

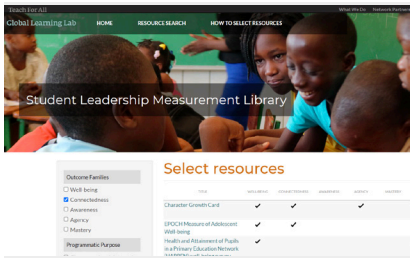
Zulu proverb

Leadership is not just one person acting from the front. All are intertwined in the way of helping each other grow, and yes it is not leadership but laddership—uplifting each other.

Sonali
Former student of Teach For India fellow

Measurable Indicators of Connectedness

- Students' increasing empathy for others
- Students' increasing capacity and skill in collaboration
- Students' increasing responsibility for others' learning
- Students' growing eagerness to contribute to their classroom and community
- What would you add?



Tools for Measuring Connectedness

Explore Connectedness

Co-constructing a Learning Community
Use this video from 2015 to (re)visit the classroom of Pooja Chopra, a former teacher with Teach For India who built a powerful connected community in and around her classroom.

Reciprocal Learning
This video from 2015 explores the Maori concept of *ako*, a reciprocal learning relationship between educator and student that affirms connection through the knowledge, experiences, culture, and identity of the student as a valuable and integral part of the learning process.

Related Research Constructs

- Empathy [Bryant, 1982; Hogan, 1969; Greif & Hogan, 1973]
- Perspective-taking [Tomasello & Hamann, 2012; Johnson, 1975]
- Respect for diversity [Gay, 2015; Balkin, Scholsser, & Levitt, 2009; Witenberg, 2007]

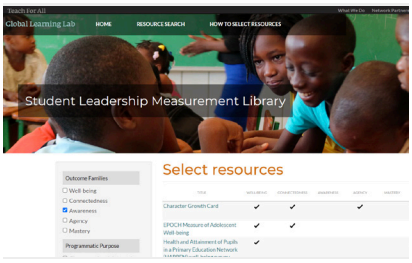
SHARE
Contribute your insights (and see others') questions, resources, and challenges related to CONNECTEDNESS.

A CLOSER LOOK AT...
AWARENESS

Students are aware and celebrate their and others' unique strengths and identities as assets for navigating challenges and inequity in pursuit of their growing sense of purpose. Students are exploring their own assets, strengths, and identities as well as systemic injustices that may devalue or inhibit them.

Measurable Indicators of Awareness

- Students' increasing appreciation of their own strengths, needs, and growth
- Students' more frequent and rigorous questions of the assumptions around (and inside them) that inhibit and enable their growth
- What would you add?



Tools for Measuring Awareness

We have to develop that critical authentic hope in young people that tells them that you can make change and that we're all in this together. And so our curriculum is built around that idea, understanding how society works, how do you play that game, and change that game? And what skills do you need in order to do that?

Ann Milne
Former Kia Aroha Principal from New Zealand. Quote taken from: "Warrior Scholars - Decolonising education", 2014

Explore Awareness

Growing Awareness

Samia Habli (Teach For Lebanon) recognized that her students were facing multiple forms of marginalization and discrimination across different lines of identity. She decided to create healing spaces to begin developing the awareness and agency they needed to understand and overcome the inequities they were facing.

Owning Your Cultural Identity

Explore through this video from 2016 how Karega Bailey at Roses in Concrete school in Oakland, California, in the U.S., helps students focus on awareness of their own cultural identities and strengths to challenge systemic injustices around them.

Contextualizing the Sense of Self

As shown in this video from 2017, at public secondary school Kia Aroha in South Auckland, New Zealand, teachers and students build a community that focuses on bilingual, critically conscious, culturally responsive, social justice education.

More Than a Number
In this video from 2013, students in Taylor's class explore history in ways that grow their awareness of the systemic challenges around them, and their power to address them.

Related Research Constructs

- Sense of identity [Schotter, 1993; Cohen & Garcia, 2008]
- Social awareness [Wegner & Giuliano, 1982; Selman, 2003]
- Metacognition [Flavell, 1979; Schraw & Dennison, 1994; Schraw, 1998; Rodgers, 2002]

SHARE

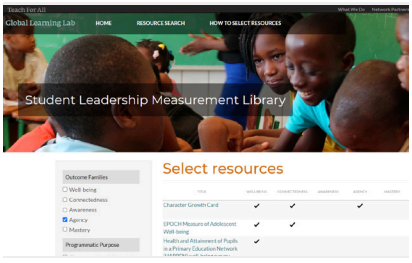
Contribute your insights (and see others') questions, resources, and challenges related to AWARENESS.

A CLOSER LOOK AT...
AGENCY

Students take independent or collective action toward shared goals to cause positive change in their own life or the lives of others. Students are finding their voice, leading learning, and connecting daily efforts to their aspirations for themselves and their communities.

Measurable Indicators of Agency

- Students' increasing proactive influence on their own and others' learning and paths in life
- Students' determination and resilience in the face of challenges and opportunities



Tools for Measuring Agency

Courage Through Autonomy

How do you inspire self-efficacy in students who have spent years believing that they have limited potential? These are the hard questions Claudia Araya (Enseña Por Chile, 2012) confronted when she first met her students. Explore them through this 2013 video.

Understandig Your Story, Understanding You

In this video from 2014, Clint Smith (Teach For America) performs a poem exploring his experience of teaching and his vision for helping students think deeply about social injustice and the ways to navigate complex power structures with a strong sense of agency.

Related Research Constructs

- Self-efficacy [Bandura, 1982, 1997]
- Creativity [Strenberg, 1999, 2006; Csikszentmihályi, 1990; Torrance, 1988; Amabile, 1988, 2011]
- Problem-solving [Mayer, 1992, 1998, 2013]
- Growth mindset [Dweck, 1999, 2008]

Student agency is closely associated with intrinsic motivation: strong teachers work to ensure students are working hard not out of fear of consequences or promise of reward, but because they see and feel the value in the hard work and learning itself. In that sense forms of "extrinsic motivation", in which students genuinely know what they want and see the connection between their hard work and that goal, are in fact indicators of strong student agency because the students are owning the choice to work hard toward mastery. For a rich and nuanced exploration of this research, check out "Self-Determination Theory and the Facilitation of Intrinsic Motivation, Social Development, and Well-Being" by Ryan & Deci.

SHARE

Contribute your insights (and see others'), questions, resources, and challenges related to AGENCY.

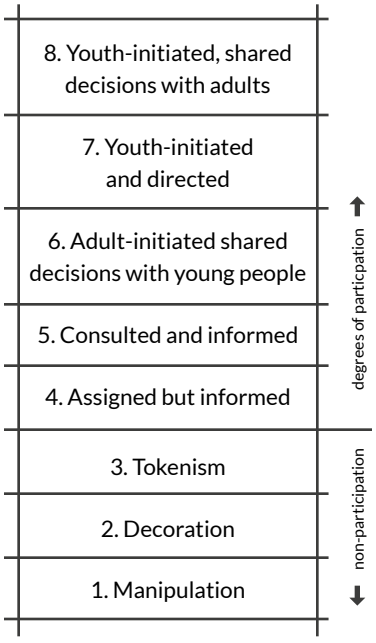
We have to equip our kids to succeed in the current system but understand that it needs changing and be willing to change it. If all we do is equip our kids to join that competition and win in it, there's always going to be other people left behind.

Sanaya Bharucha
Global Head, Student Leadership & Voice, Teach For All, 2009 Teach For India Fellow, Director, Maya musical

Sense of agency is at the heart of the school of the future.

Andreas Schleicher
Director for Education and Skills at the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD)

Hart's ladder of student participation



A CLOSER LOOK AT...
MASTERY

Students gain deep knowledge and skills as they develop critical thinking, problem solving, and creativity. Students are eagerly and productively struggling with challenging and relevant content at the edge of their abilities. Mastery is achieved through, not at the expense of, student wellbeing, connectedness, awareness, and agency.

The very processes that teachers care about most, like critical thinking and problem solving, are intimately intertwined with factual knowledge that is stored in long-term memory.

Daniel Willingham
Cognitive scientist at the University of Virginia.
Quote taken from: Op-Ed: Pandemic learning loss is real (2021)

The more you know about something the more curious you are likely to be about a question that is related to it.

Doug Lemov
Author of *Teach Like a Champion*

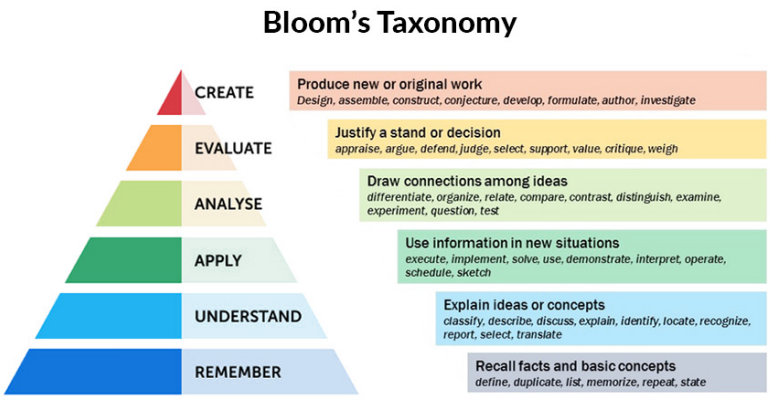


Image source: Bloom's taxonomy by Vanderbilt University Center for Teaching (adapted).

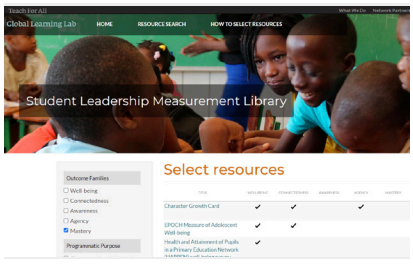
Two critical ideas about mastery emerge from the classrooms our "learning loop" participants studied. First, mastery means much more than superficial knowledge and skills (often measured on weak standardized tests). The forms of mastery that actually indicate students are growing as leaders include the full range of Bloom's Taxonomy of higher-order thinking. Mastery isn't just what you know, it is also how you think.

Second, the classrooms in our studies demolish the misperception that valuing additional outcomes must mean a dilution of mastery. Transformational classrooms are distinguished by how rigorous mastery is achieved through students' wellbeing, connectedness, awareness, and agency.

The strategies and actions of Teaching As Collective Leadership offer a map to that marriage of student outcomes. And the library of measurement tools below offers a variety of ways to define and measure those broader outcomes.

Measurable Indicators of Mastery

- Students' growth and proficiency in foundational skills such as numeracy and literacy
- Students' increasing ability to critically analyze, evaluate, and develop knowledge and skills that matter to their chosen path
- What would you add?



Tools for Measuring Mastery

Explore Mastery: Provocative Illustrations and Research

- More Than a Number: Critical Minds (Video from 2013)
- A research summary on how a holistic approach best achieves mastery
- Rise research on the importance of early foundational skills
- Why So Many Kids Struggle to Learn
- Drivers of Student Performance: Insights from Europe

SHARE
Contribute your insights (and see others'), questions, resources, and challenges related to MASTERY.

DO

This set of resources for defining and measuring student progress is for programs and educators in the Teach For All network who feel committed to helping their students on an enduring path to self-determined opportunity and leadership.

Student Leadership Measurement Library

The Student Leadership Measurement Library contains a list of resources for measuring broad student outcomes that align with the Teach For All network's Teaching As Collective Leadership (TACL) framework: wellbeing, connectedness, awareness, agency, and mastery.

This library does not offer measurement tools "off-the-shelf" but rather as one component of a holistic framework that aims to co-create a wide range of locally customized resources and tools for teachers, teacher coaches, and program designers. Through this practical exploration with partner organizations, we expect to discover new implications for Teaching As Collective Leadership that will lead to fresh cycles of research, insight, and practice in teacher training and development.

Measurement tools must align with partners' vision of student success so that assessment links with teaching and learning (see here for a visualization of the cycle from vision-setting to teaching and learning, to measurement, and programmatic improvement, which then informs back on vision-setting).

Best Practices in Measurement

- Contextualize and adapt the measurement tools to specific contexts
- Pilot newly developed or adapted measurement tools to ensure quality control
- Use multiple sources of data and/or different measurement formats (see a resource on data triangulation)
- Plan, design, and implement a systematic measurement and monitoring strategy (*accessible exclusively for Teach For All partner organizations and staff*)

How Teach For All Partner Organizations Are Contextualizing These Outcomes

At the risk of repeating ourselves: The global patterns in this Teaching As Collective Leadership model are to provoke your thinking about your students' needs in your context.

Consider a few examples of that contextualization from around the network:

Teach for Nigeria

Reflecting on students' strengths, needs, and futures, Teach For Nigeria has chosen to emphasize (alongside academic achievement) students' self-efficacy, growth mindset, social awareness, and school belonging. The organization monitors these student outcomes using student self-reported questionnaires based on validated survey items from international assessments and piloted this survey to ensure reliability in their context. Explore more of this journey of alignment between purpose, vision, curriculum, and measures here. You can read more about this study here (*accessible exclusively for Teach For All partner organizations and staff*).

Enseña por Colombia

Concerned that current systems are not measuring what's most important, Enseña Por Colombia is collaborating with Teach For All to design and test TACL-inspired measures of student academic and social, and emotional skills. The adaptations are focusing on 1) wellbeing strategies for teachers and teacher coaches; 2) the relevance of students' social and emotional learning skills (SEL) in teacher training and support processes. These adaptations are being designed and adjusted through focus groups, quick feedback rounds with different stakeholders, piloting of the changes, surveys, and collection of other sources of information. Then, the group will analyze the effects of the adaptations on the students' outcomes through a mixed-method evaluation.

Seeking Help with Defining and Measuring Student Growth and Development?

For additional learning opportunities related to student outcomes measurement and monitoring, evaluation, research, and learning from Teach For All, make sure to check out the Teach For All Partner Learning Portal (*accessible exclusively for Teach For All partner organizations and staff*).

SHARE

Make your voice heard: Help us evolve and improve these ideas and resources

Teaching As Collective Leadership is a collective effort. It has been developed through contributions from thousands of people—teachers, coaches, students, families, researchers, and others from all around the world. Please join us in continuing to evolve this work by sharing your perspective.

Below is our "digital bulletin board" which we are constantly updating with the input of generous readers who share their ideas. Please take a moment to click here on our **Co-learning Padlet** to contribute your thoughts, questions, challenges, illustrations, and links.

OUTCOMES GENERAL INPUT

The critical need for measurable outcomes to fight inequity

The first is the importance of irrefutable evidence. And I don't say that lightly only because, of course, the idea that evidence is irrefutable is difficult in itself. But one of the things that we've learned over time is that the mighty force of oppression is going to gasp until its last breath. And so it's incredibly important for us to be armed and equipped to respond to the cries of "Oh, that's just a special group of highly motivated people" or "That's just a special group of students who broke out of the norm." We have to be armed and build the systems within our organization and communities to collect evidence.

Nedgine Paul Derolyû
Anseye Pou Ayiti (Haiti)

The power of centering student leadership

Every single big issue that has been solved in our country has been done by young people. The civil rights movement, the peace movement, the LGBT movement, the women's movement–they've always been done by the young. They can be the change makers. They have the power to do it. . . . We have to face history to make history.

Dolores Huerta
Leader in the farmworkers' rights movement, U.S.

Contribute to our "Outcomes" Digital Bulletin Board (Here)

WELLBEING

Mindsets are the biggest predictor of success

Student mindsets have more influence on outcomes than socioeconomic background.
https://www.mckinsey.com/industrives/education/our-insights/drivers-of-student-performance-insights-from-europe

The OECD 2021 Study on Social and Emotional Learning

The OECD's 2021 Study on SEL demonstrates that both teachers and their school communities can support these skills and speak to the importance of student wellbeing in order for students to thrive as leaders in their context, in particular during times of uncertainty and instability such as the global pandemic.

Robbie Dean
Teach For All

Self-determination theory

These researchers focus on three core psychological needs: relatedness, autonomy, and competence. Which map pretty perfectly to our connectedness, agency, and mastery. Through the ways they create the conditions for self-determination, they make a powerful case for how these are essential for wellbeing.

Jude Heaton
Teach For All

Contribute to our "Wellbeing" Digital Bulletin Board (Here)

CONNECTEDNESS

Leadership is not just one person acting from the front. All are intertwined in the way helping each other grow, and yes it is not leadership but laddership—uplifting each other.

Sonali
Student of Teach For India fellow

Intersection of connectedness & agency

The concept of autonomy has often been portrayed as being antagonistic to relatedness or community, in fact, some theories equate autonomy with concepts such as individualism and independence (e.g., Steinberg & Silverberg, 1986), which do indeed imply low relatedness. But, within SDT, autonomy refers not to being independent, detached, or selfish but rather to the feeling of volition that can accompany any act, whether dependent or independent, collectivist or individualist, in fact, recent research in Korean and U.S. samples has found a more positive relation between autonomy and collectivistic attitudes than between autonomy and individualistic attitudes.

Kim, Butzel, & Ryan–1998

Contribute to our "Connectedness" Digital Bulletin Board (Here)

OUTCOMES

AWARENESS

Fighting sexual abuse through education
Luis Bermudez Gutierrez
Colombia

The critical importance of examining power and privilege to foster collective change
Swastika Shrestha
Teach For Nepal

Ego vs. Eco-centric
The reductionist approach to success has led to an economic and ecological crisis that we are experiencing today. What would it mean for us to see ourselves as custodians of life, custodians of this planet, and move from an EGO-CENTRIC definition to an ECO-CENTRIC definition of success?
Vishal Talreja
Dream A Dream, India

Contribute to our "Awareness" Digital Bulletin Board (Here)

AGENCY

Students helping students learn
Suchita charged his Student Council with a mandate to improve the school, and shared with the group data from weekly tests of 9th graders. When the Student Council members saw how far behind the students were despite all the online learning that took place when schools were shut, they were concerned and took the initiative to create a plan. They met with each teacher to prioritize the content taught, and provided extra support for students who needed it during and after the school day. With the help of these interventions, the school was able to achieve more than 90 percent of the students passing the high-stakes test and moving on to grade 10.
Suchita Mohan
A school leader with iTeach schools in Pune, India

What if student agency became the most important measure of learning?
Learner-centered mindsets and social-emotional development become a new critical measure of learning success. Meanwhile, standardized tests become obsolete. Fed up with practicing for life, kids build real solutions—merging ideas, perspectives, and contributions to tackle global problems as the world drifts toward climate disaster. Kids democratize learning. As personalized project-based learning and real-world experiences become the norm, learning becomes blended, flexible, and personal. Schools pivot: learners define learning goals for the year, work with mentors/teachers to find and structure curriculum from across the internet or lived environment, build work plans for themselves or form working groups.
https://www.imaginablefutures.com/learning-reimagined/

Contribute to our "Agency" Digital Bulletin Board (Here)

MASTERY

Best thing you'll watch today. Teacher in Pittsburg (40 miles east of San Francisco) uses @ lizzo to inspire and teach her kids.
Raj Mathai

Academic Rigor according to Walter Doyle
Taylor Delhagen
Relay Grad School of Education

Mastery: Using agriculture to build rigorous learning
Stephen Ritz (U.S.)
Teaching kids to count is cool, but teaching them what counts is also critical.
[listen and envision, community, pure zany energy]

Contribute to our "Mastery" Digital Bulletin Board (Here)

Contribute to our "Digital Bulletin Board" by sharing your thoughts, questions, challenges, validations, illustrations, and links by creating a note in our Co-learning Padlet (here).