

# Engagement

At the basic level, engagement is becoming “immersed in an activity that is intrinsically motivating” or experiencing a state of “flow” (Falecki et al., 2018, p.106). Flow is a term coined by Dr. Csikszentmihalyi that describes a state of being in which one becomes so engaged in an activity that they seem to lose track of time, such as a musician completely losing themselves within the music (Csikszentmihalyi, 1990). Engagement is also correlated with character strengths of curiosity, zest, bravery, love of learning and leadership (Wagner, 2019). According to Dr. Peggy Kern (in press), there are three types of classroom and student engagement that we can focus on to improve student wellbeing: behavioral, emotional/psychological, and cognitive engagement.

1. **Behavioral engagement** includes attendance, coming prepared to class, following classroom rules, and participation in activities.
2. **Emotional/psychological engagement** includes enjoyment of learning, sense of belonging, and feeling of safety. For students to be engaged their fundamental needs of autonomy, relatedness/belonging, and competence must be met (Fredericks et al., 2004).
3. **Cognitive engagement** includes paying full attention, willing to exert effort, and using different learning strategies. Cognitive engagement also includes providing students with challenging activities and limiting classroom distractions. Dr. Kern says, “Flow is more likely to occur for intrinsically motivating activities, when the challenge of a situation meets

the individual's skill and ability to meet the challenge, and attention is completely focused" (Kern, in press, p.7).

The interventions in this section will focus primarily on improving emotional/ psychological engagement and cognitive engagement of your students. These activities will encourage your students to "become immersed in worthwhile pursuits" and to use and develop their own individual strengths (Falecki et al., 2018, p.104).

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