

Enhancing Self-Determination for Students with Intellectual and Developmental Disabilities: Using the *Self-Determined Learning Model of Instruction* in Research and Practice

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Being self-determined means acting or causing things to happen as you set and work toward goals in your life.



DEFINITION

Self-Determination is...

...a dispositional characteristic manifested as acting as the **causal agent** in one's life.

Self-determined people...

...act in service to freely chosen goals (i.e., causal agents).

People who are causal agents...

...make, or cause, things to happen in their lives. They are “goal chasers.”

When student self-determination is promoted, they achieve:

OUTCOMES



Greater academic achievement

- Progress in general education curriculum
- Academic goal attainment

Increased postsecondary outcomes

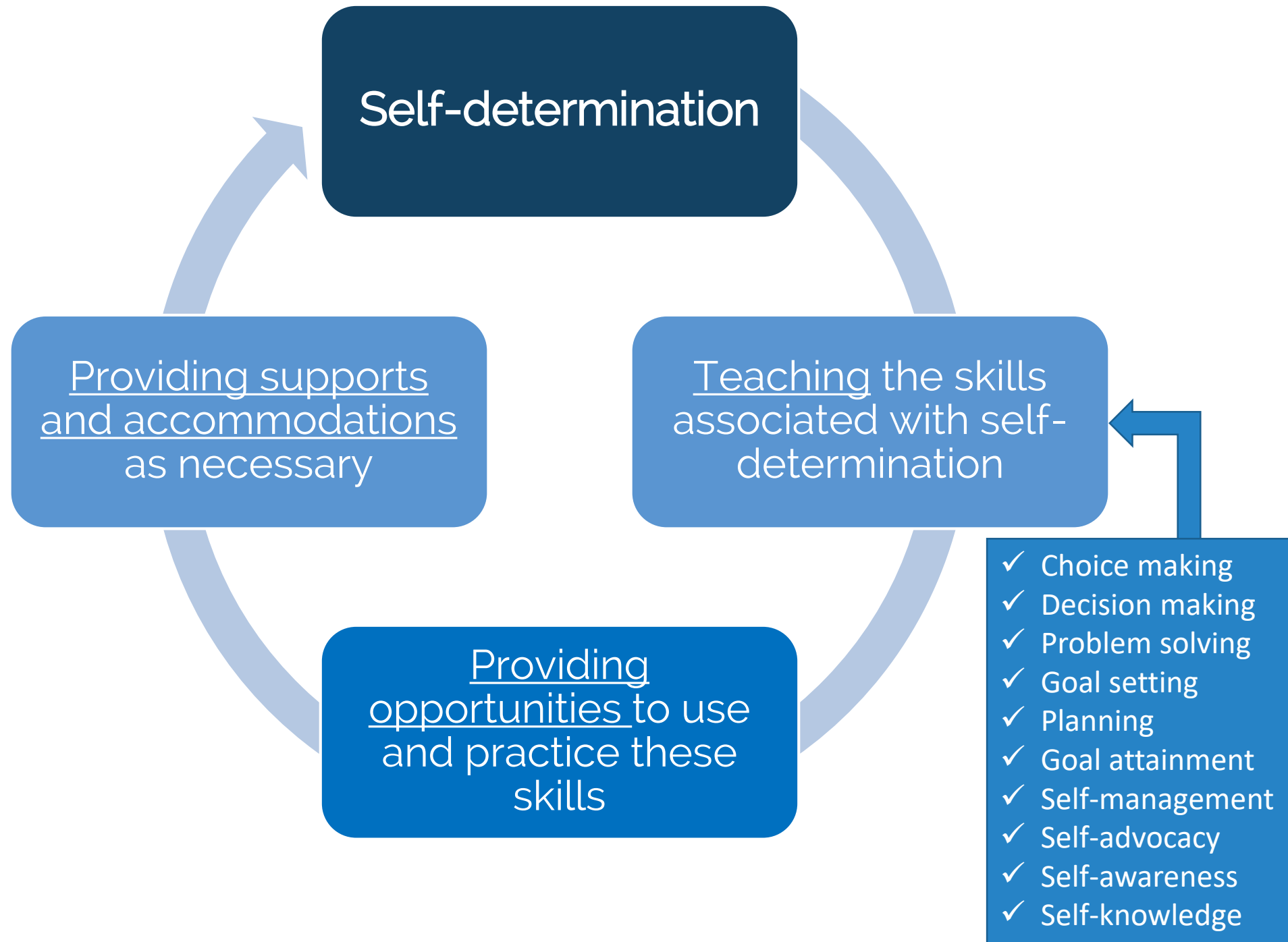
- Postsecondary education
- Employment
- Community Participation

Shogren, K. A., Palmer, S. B., Wehmeyer, M. L., Williams-Diehm, K., & Little, T. D. (2012). Effect of intervention with the Self-Determined Learning Model of Instruction on access and goal attainment. *Remedial and Special Education, 33*, 320-330.

Shogren, K. A., Wehmeyer, M. L., Palmer, S. B., Rifenbark, G. G., & Little, T. D. (2015). Relationships between self-determination and postschool outcomes for youth with disabilities. *The Journal of Special Education, 48*, 256-267.

Wehmeyer, M. L., Shogren, K. A., Palmer, S. B., Williams-Diehm, K. L., Little, T. D., & Boulton, A. (2012). The impact of the Self-Determined Learning Model of Instruction on student self-determination. *Exceptional Children, 78*, 135-153.

IN PRACTICE



Skills associated with Self-Determined Action

- Choice making
- Decision making
- Problem solving
- Goal setting and attainment
- Planning
- Self-management
- Self-advocacy
- Self-awareness
- Self-knowledge

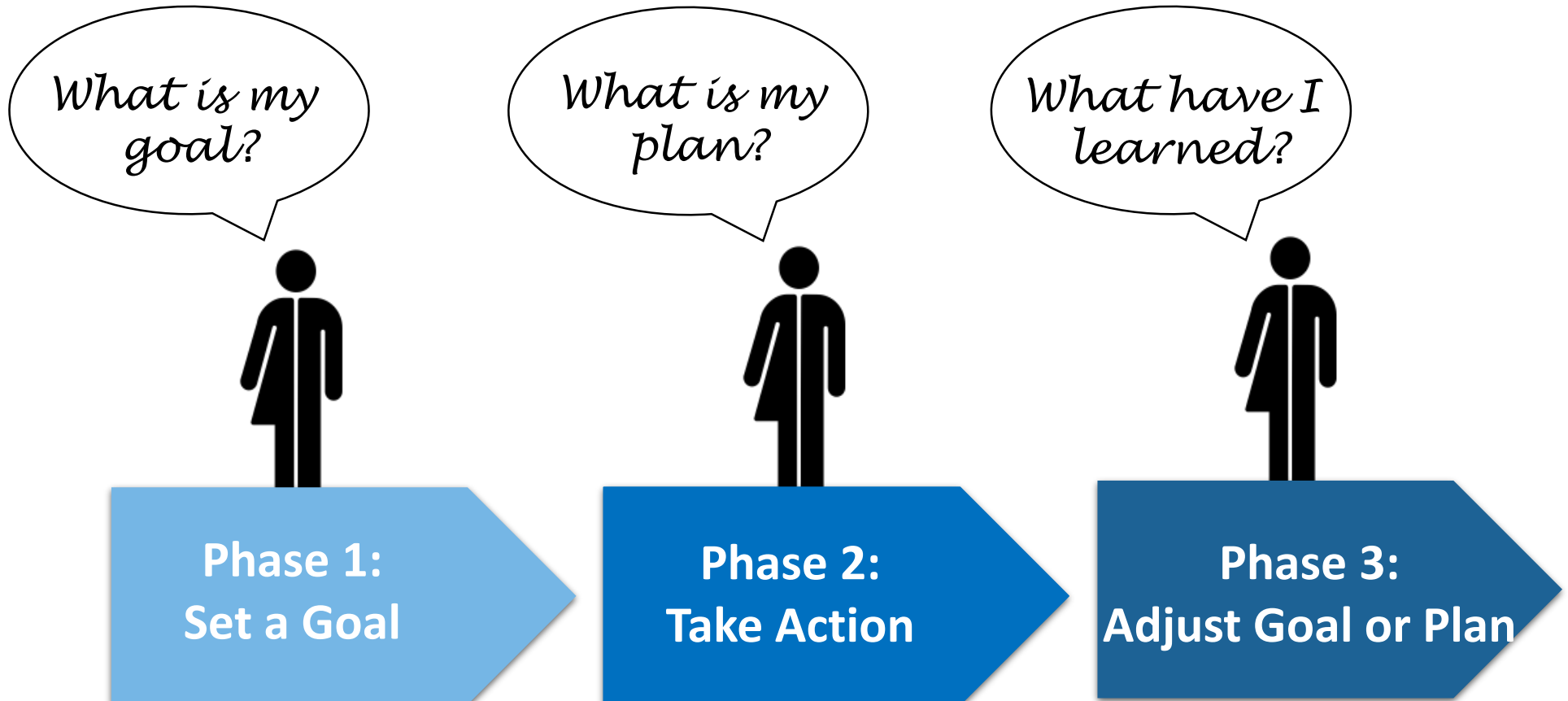
Also referred to as:

- Executive functioning skills
- 21st century skills
- College and career readiness skills
- Metacognitive skills

The *Self-Determined Learning Model of Instruction* is a teaching model that **enables teachers to teach students to:**

- Make **choices** and **decisions** about setting a goal
- Develop action **plans** for academic goals
- **Self-monitor** and **self-evaluate** progress toward academic goals
- **Adjust** the goal or plan

WHAT IS THE SDLMI?



- Self-determination skills increase **academic engagement and progress**
- These are skills that teachers are often already targeting indirectly
- Instruction on self-determination skills formalizes the process

CCSS English skills

- Providing an objective summary of text with a central theme
(CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.RL.10.2)
- Determining the meaning of words
(CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.RL.10.4)
- Tying together complex ideas
(CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.W.9-10.1.A)
- Writing persuasive college application essays
(CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.W.9-10.10)

Self-Determination Skills

- Problem-solving skills
- Decision-making skills
- Choice-making skills
- Self-scheduling skills

ACADEMIC FACILITATORS

KEY DOMAINS ADDRESSED DURING TRANSITION PLANNING

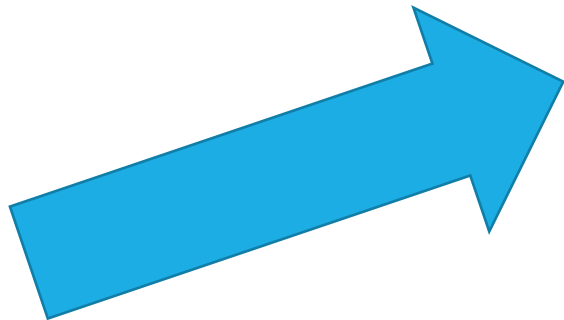
Goal areas that students can
select from (with support)

Vocational Education
and Integrated,
Competitive
Employment

Post-Secondary
Education and
Continuing and Adult
Education

Community Living &
Participation

Adult Services and
Supports



GOAL BUCKETS EXAMPLE

Domain

Math

Preparedness

Note-taking

Math-specific
strategies

Goal example:

I will put my math book in my backpack every night before going to bed.

Goal example:

I will write down everything the teacher writes on the board and 3 things she says during class.

Goal example:

I will circle key ideas in word problems.

GOAL BUCKETS EXAMPLE

Domain

Transition: Community
Living & Participation

Transportation

Community
Involvement

Goal example:

I will investigate and
choose an appropriate
method of transportation.

Goal example:

I will identify 3 potential
leisure, recreation, or
community activities.

Pre/post measure of student self-determination: *Self-Determination Inventory: Student Report (SDI:SR)*

- The SDI:SR asks students questions about how they feel about their ability to be self-determined; that is, to make choices, set and go after goals, and make decisions.
- 21 items (takes only 10 minutes to finish)
- Validated for people aged 13 to 22
- Online with accessibility features:
 - ✓ In-text word definitions
 - ✓ Audio playback
 - ✓ Tablet compatibility
 - ✓ Average grade reading level: 2.8

SDI:SR

STUDENT REPORT

VISUAL ANALOG SCALE

Computer-scored, slider scale system (0-99)

SELF-DETERMINATION.ORG

Student Survey

Amount of the survey you've completed:

I have what it takes to reach my goals. ▶

Disagree Agree ✓

I think of more than one way to solve a problem. ▶

Disagree Agree ✓

I consider many possibilities when I make plans for my future. ▶

Disagree Agree ✓

IN-TEXT DEFINITIONS



Student Survey

Amount of the survey you've completed:



I consider many possibilities when I make plans for my future. 

Disagree

Agree 

Possibilities — noun

a. Something that might happen

Scroll over, plain language definitions of potentially challenging words

AUDIO PLAYBACK



SELF-DETERMINATION.ORG

Student Survey

Amount of the survey you've completed:



I have what it takes to reach my goals. 

Disagree

Agree



I think of more than one way to solve a problem. 

Disagree

Agree



SDLMI LONGITUDINAL PROJECT



Context

Multiple school districts across Maryland, Delaware, and Pennsylvania

General and special education teachers

9th, 10th, and 11th grade students with and without disabilities

Across 3 academic years (2018-19 – 2020-21)

Intervention

Evidence-based intervention, the ***Self-Determined Learning Model of Instruction*** (SDLMI), designed to promote student self-determination

Includes **two levels of support** (online support, online support + coaching) to examine the impact on implementation of the SDLMI

Outcomes

Student: Increased self-determination, academic achievement, and access to general education curriculum → post-school outcomes: postsecondary, employment, and community access

Teacher: Enhanced knowledge, skills, and fidelity in using the SDLMI

KEY INFORMATION

■ TIME

- ✓ **15-minute lessons twice a week** on skills on how to identify a goal, how to solve problems, etc.
- ✓ Teacher embeds instruction throughout content instruction as well

■ STUDENT GOALS

- ✓ Goals related to core content academic achievement:
 - Building content-specific skills (e.g., writing organization)
 - Being prepared for class (e.g., organizing notes before coming to class)
 - Improving general academic skills (e.g., increasing quantity of notes taken)

■ WHEN

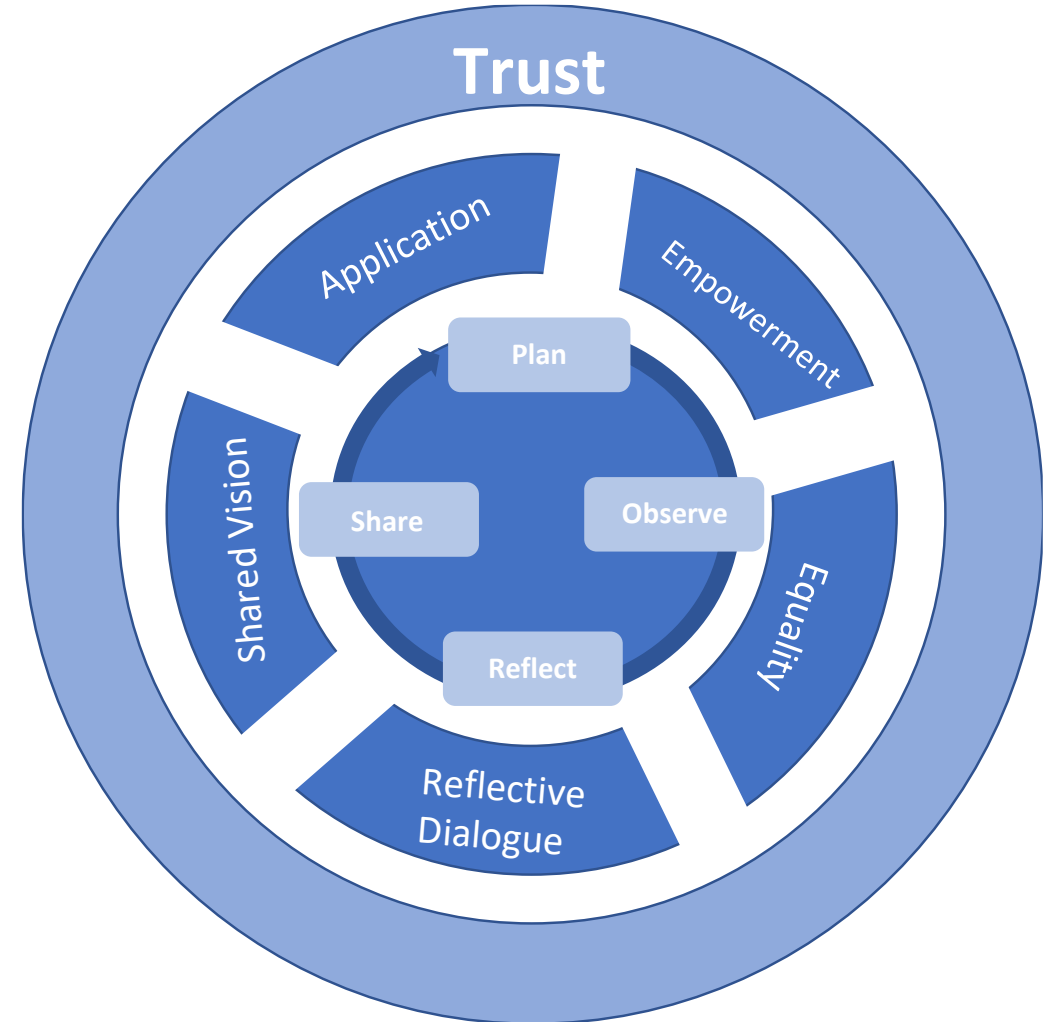
- ✓ Embedded during regular content instruction
- ✓ The teacher supports students, but students self-direct the process

■ WHO

- ✓ Mini-lessons taught by both general and special education teachers

SDLMI COACHING SUPPORTS

- In addition to receiving online modules, teachers in schools randomly assigned to coaching receive **monthly, in-person coaching** from trained SDLMI coaches
- Coaches observe and then complete the SDLMI Fidelity Measure and provide additional support during a **coaching session (30 minutes)** after the observation



Year 1 Project Update



17
General &
Special Education
Teachers



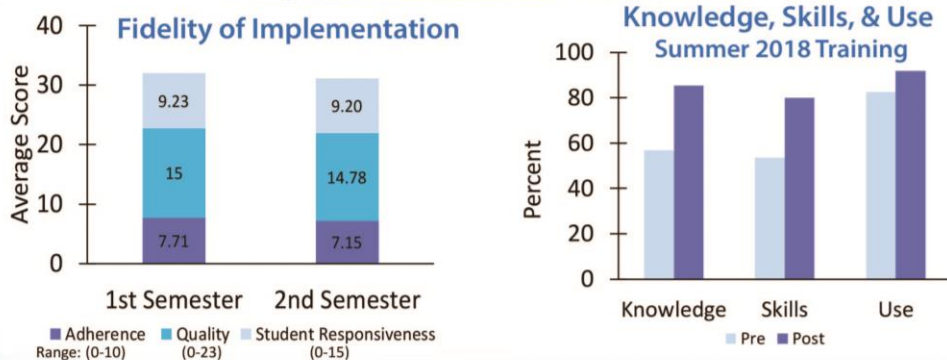
899 Students

16% have Individualized
Education Programs

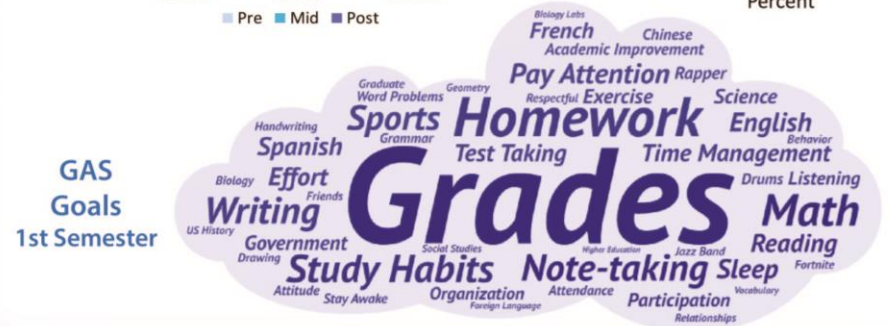
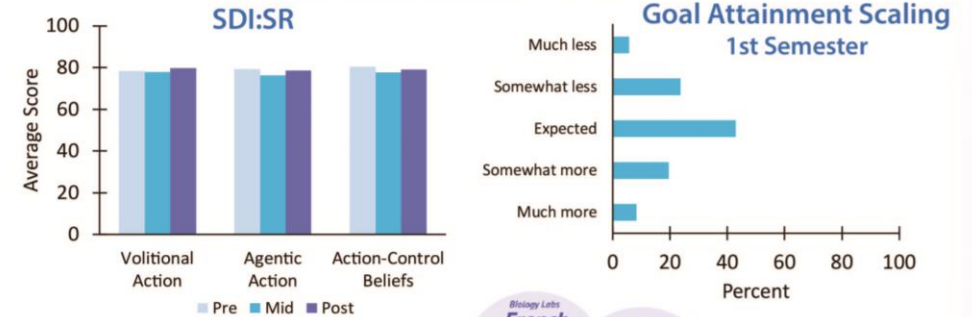
Implementation Supports

- 15 Online Modules Disseminated
- 26 Coaching Sessions

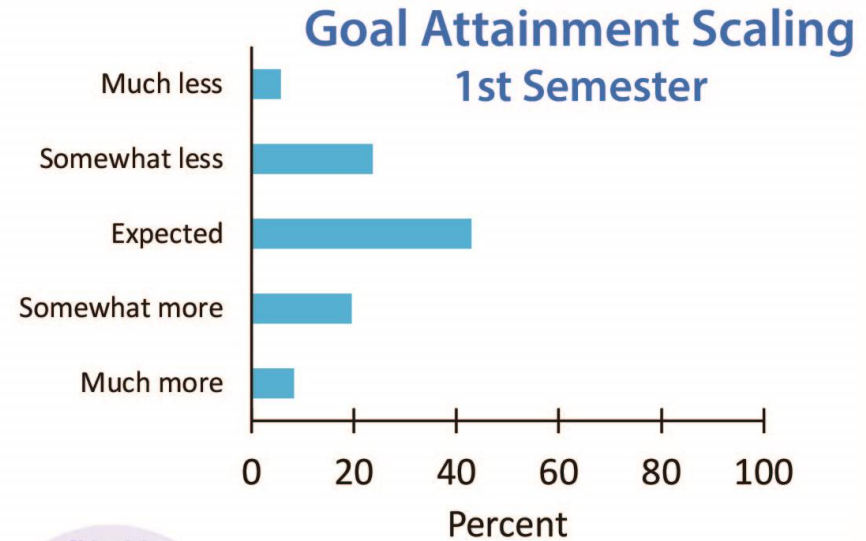
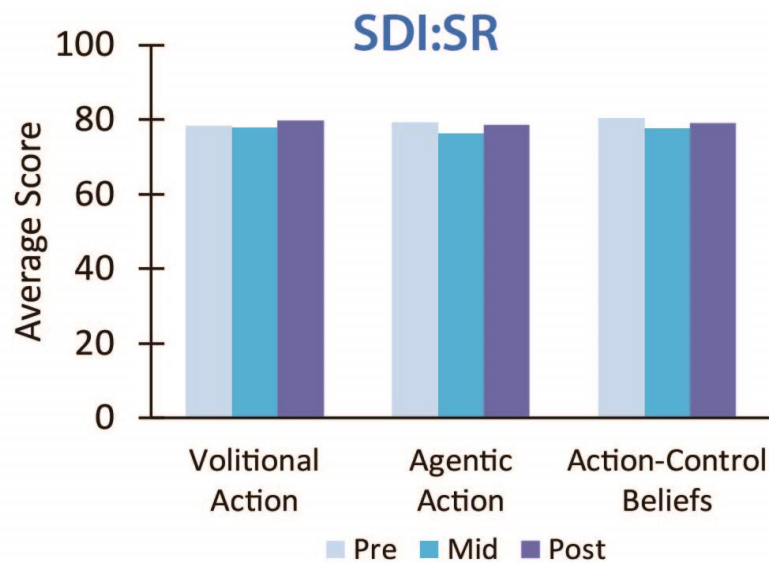
Teacher Results



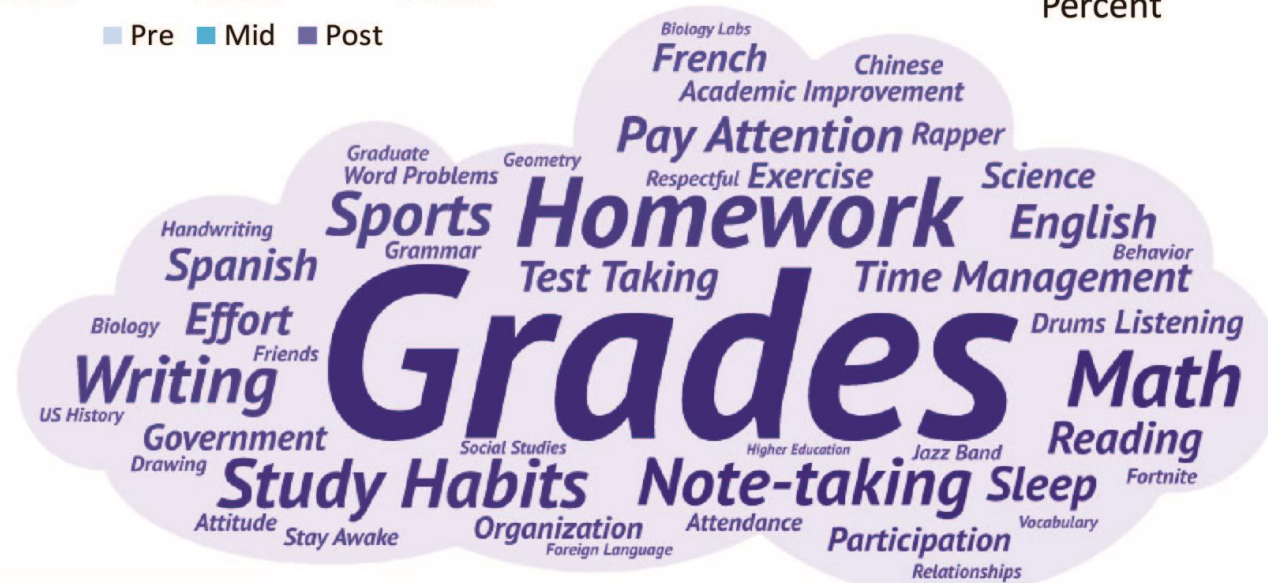
Student Results



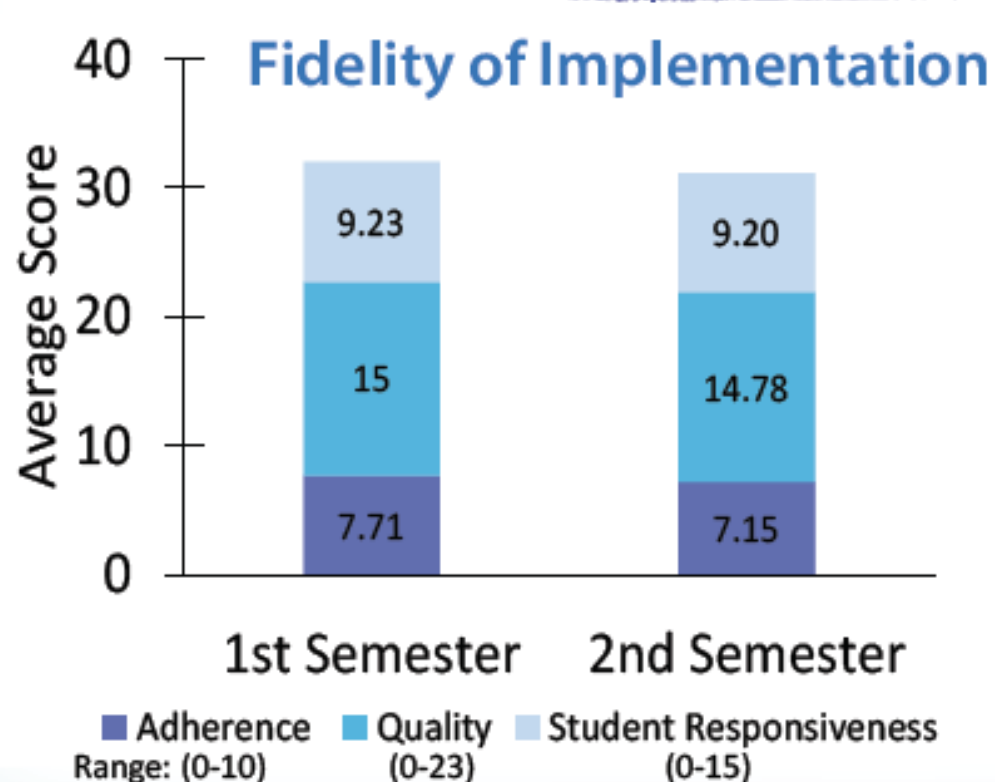
Student Results



**GAS
Goals
1st Semester**

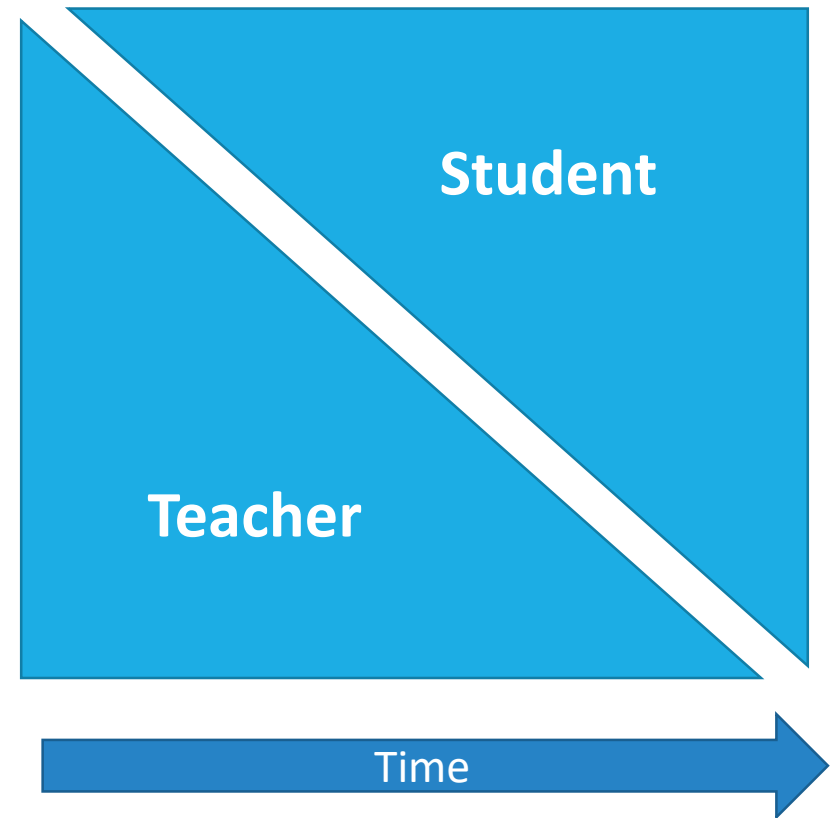


Teacher Results



Setting the Stage

- Establish high expectations
- Give opportunities to fail in a safe environment
- Create learning opportunities
- Build a partnership
- Develop and provide supports



Thank you!

For more information, visit:



SELF-DETERMINATION.ORG

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