

QUANTITATIVE RESEARCH: HARVARD STUDY FINDS SIGNIFICANT STUDENT IMPACTS



Study of Segue Career Mentors, December 2011

It is well established that students who exhibit Mastery Orientation, College Intentions, and Future Talk are more likely to achieve academic success and graduate high school. Multiple scholarly studies have found that increasing student impacts in these three core areas also increases attendance, willpower, and "Grit." In the example of Mastery Orientation, students were twice as likely to complete their assigned homework.

Findings noted below are from a 2011 study of 466 mostly low-income high school students in Oxnard and Ventura, California, over 50% of which are of Latino heritage. The study was led by Dr. Ronald Ferguson of Harvard University (Graduate School of Education, Kennedy School of Government, Pathways to Prosperity co-author, and Director of Harvard's Achievement Gap Institute). The study isolated the variable of speaker presentations in two like populations of 10th and 11th graders, one that had experienced 5 or more Segue career mentor speaker presentations during the year, and one that had experienced 1-2 speakers. Students were significantly more likely to indicate that the statements below were "Mostly true" or "Totally true" if from the group that had 5 or more speakers than if from the group that had 1-2 speakers. These findings were statistically significant at a 95% confidence level.

Mastery Orientation

- ❖ I am highly motivated to do well in school.
- ❖ I work very hard to learn as much as I can in school.
- ❖ I want to learn as much as I can in school.
- ❖ When teachers give homework I finish it.

Future Talk

- ❖ I talk with adults about my plans for after high school
- ❖ I spend time asking adults questions about future jobs and career options
- ❖ My friends and I talk about what we want to be when we grow up
- ❖ I know people I can talk to who can help me decide what to do after high school

College Intentions

- ❖ When I grow up, I am likely to have a job that requires a college education
- ❖ I am interested in going to college