

Introduction

We know that educational success is correlated with students' perception of being connected to their teachers and that there are many different ways to measure this. In analyzing the dozen or so indicators of connectedness in Youth Truth, three stand out as not only statistically significant, but also as strong predictors of students' self-reported GPA:

Summary

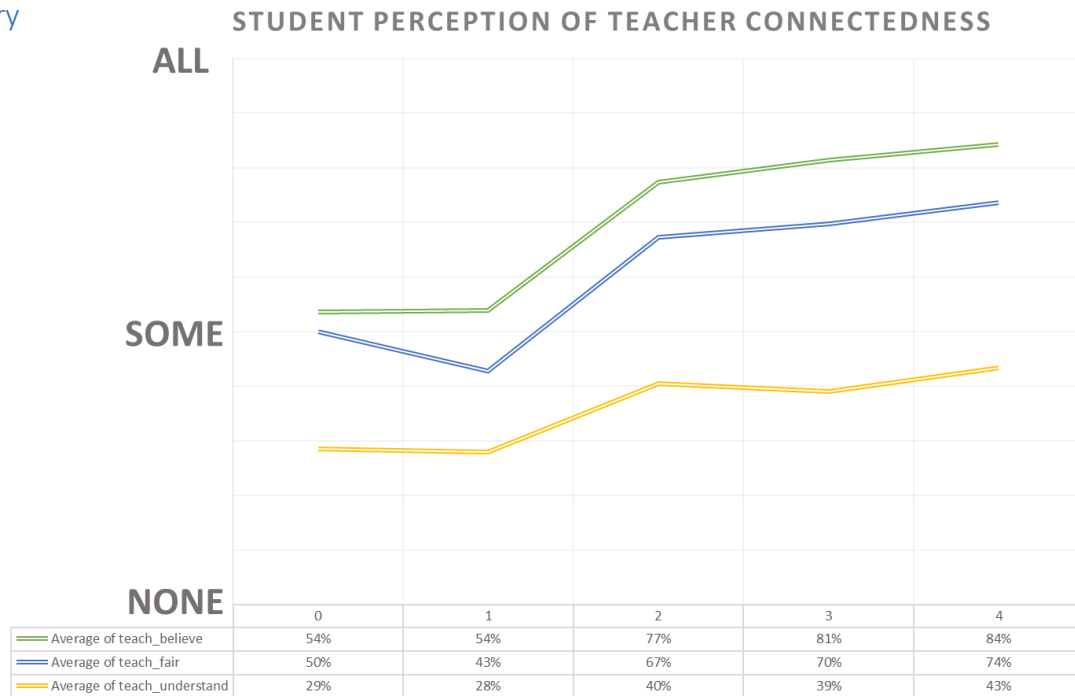


Figure 1: Levels of most impactful teacher-connectedness variables, grades 8-12, Youth Truth October 2016 DJUSD

An increase in the value of these particular indicators is correlated with the biggest increase in GPA. For example, going from None to Some in teach_understand is correlated with about a 0.68 increase in a student's GPA. This is also what makes them the most impactful of the teacher connectedness indicators: a change in these indicators has the biggest impact on the prediction of students' grades.

The specific questions for each are:

teach_believe *How many of your teachers are not just satisfied if you pass, they care if you're really learning?*

teach_fair *How many of your teachers try to be fair?*

teach_understand *How many of your teachers make an effort to understand what your life is like outside school?*

Teach_understand is the most impactful of all factors, as well as the measure with the most room to improve. This pattern persists across ethnicity, gender, and grade level as well: students' perception that their teachers truly want them to learn and are fair are above 50% most of the time while their perception that teachers understand their lives outside of school is consistently lower.

Implications

While most students report high levels of connectedness with their teachers (i.e. believe their teachers are fair, are willing to give them extra help if asked, care if they are really learning) there exists a gap when it comes to students perceiving their teachers making an effort to understand their life outside school. These observations bear more exploration, especially by students and teachers, with support from administration, and with particular attention to devising and testing interventions that may affect these factors.