

TOWARDS VISION 2030



Setting the Foundation: 2024–2025



2024-2025
Impact Report

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LYS IMPACT REPORT | 2024 - 2025

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Executive Summary



Damien Howard

Director of Education Initiatives, Together Chicago

This year marked a defining chapter in our journey toward Vision 2030—a foundation-building year that laid critical groundwork for the transformation we seek: to mentor, support, and ultimately transform Chicago by 2030 through data-driven mentoring and wrap-around care. **Our Vision** is ambitious: **to reach 15% of the city's most systemically underserved youth with the sustained support they need to thrive in education, safety, and employment.**

Over the 2024–2025 school year, we saw clear signs that this vision is possible. Together Chicago's Love Your School (LYS) Collective activated school partnerships, church mobilization, violence prevention initiatives, and mentoring efforts across the South and West Sides. With partners like MBK Chicago, SEL+, and local churches, **we mentored over 205 students** through weekly mentorship programming, and mobilized over 250 attendees at our annual Friendraiser to strengthen community ties, which includes **30 non-profit partner organizations**. Our LYS network also has grown to **50 churches**.

While the quantitative growth is notable—thousands of mentoring minutes logged, high emotional engagement, and improvements in self-efficacy—this year was about much more than numbers. It was about establishing deep trust, building collaborative pipelines, and testing scalable systems like SELvie to equip mentors with real-time data and tools. We piloted trauma-informed practices, created gender-specific spaces, and began codifying what works in community-based mentoring. We also gained invaluable insight into the evolving needs of our students. While growth mindset and belonging were strong, we saw challenges in self-management and social awareness. These findings are shaping our next phase: building stronger executive function supports and expanding SEL coaching for both mentors and educators.

Vision 2030 is bold—but this year proved that with the right foundation, it's within reach. We are just getting started, and I'm deeply grateful to every school, church, partner, and mentor who has helped build this foundation with us. Let's keep going—together.

TC Education - Vision 2030



**Mentor. Support.
Transform Chicago**

Mission: Together Chicago Education empowers mentors to offer **data-driven mentoring** and **wrap-around support** to participating youth mentees—ensuring they thrive in education, safety, and are set up for success.

Goal:

By 2030, support 15% of Chicago's most systemically underserved youth through sustained mentoring and wrap-around care.

Quantitative Success Metrics:

Academics

All grades of 80%
(B) or higher

Safety

No violent crimes
in last 2 years

Employment

Full-time
employment

TOGETHER CHICAGO MENTORING

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UCCS - Donoghue



During Spring 2025, we launched a Social-Emotional Learning (SEL) mentorship program at the Donoghue campus of UChicago Charter Schools. Located in the Bronzeville neighborhood of Chicago, Donoghue serves a majority African American student population. In partnership with Progressive Baptist Church—also based in Bronzeville—we successfully mentored 23 students from January through May.

The program was led by Ar'Monii Price, our Education Outreach Manager and a member of Progressive Baptist Church. Ar'Monii facilitated weekly SEL+ curriculum-based lessons alongside two additional mentors from the church. Sessions took place every Friday from 9:00 AM to 1:00 PM and included four small groups of 5–6 students each. Groupings included all-boys, all-girls, and mixed-gender cohorts across Kindergarten through 5th grade.

Throughout the semester, mentors and school staff observed notable growth in students' social and emotional development—particularly in areas such as peer interaction, emotional awareness, classroom participation, and responsiveness to adult guidance.

We are hopeful that, through our continued partnership with Progressive Baptist Church, this meaningful mentorship program will return in the upcoming school year.

Beasley Academic Center



In partnership with MBK Chicago and SEL-Plus, Together Chicago led a yearlong SEL-centered mentorship program at Beasley Elementary during the 2024–2025 school year. Focused on Tier 2 and Tier 3 students, the program provided weekly small group and one-on-one sessions designed to foster emotional growth, improve behavior, and build trusting relationships.

A total of 47 students were served through more than 3,700 minutes of mentorship, supported by 1,200+ intern hours from social work trainees. Mentors collaborated closely with Beasley's Behavioral Health Team and implemented individual SEL plans to track progress.

Key growth areas included emotional regulation, peer relationships, and student accountability. The program also responded to trauma disclosures with care, reinforcing the importance of safe, consistent adult support in school settings. As we look ahead, the team is focused on strengthening group cadences, expanding girl-centered programming, and creating a replicable community-based mentor pipeline.

Pirie Elementary School



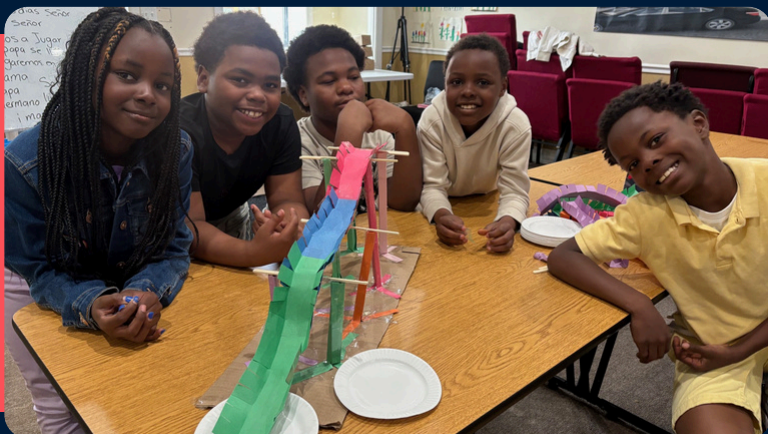
The 2024–2025 school year marked our fifth year of mentoring at Pirie Elementary, where Together Chicago has continued its commitment to building long-term, transformative relationships with 3rd–6th grade boys. This year, 16 students participated in weekly mentoring focused on the five core SEL competencies: self-awareness, self-management, social awareness, relationship skills, and responsible decision-making.

Mentorship sessions emphasized emotional regulation, leadership development, and peer accountability—leading to visible growth across the group. Standout moments included students like Darnell, who reported getting into fewer conflicts and feeling more in control, and Jove, a younger mentee who emerged as a leader by year’s end.

The year culminated in a celebratory trip to a White Sox game, a beloved annual tradition that brought together mentees, mentors, families, and school partners. While the outing was a highlight, it reflected something deeper: the trust, consistency, and brotherhood developed throughout the year.

Pirie remains a model for what sustained school-based mentorship can look like—and we look forward to another year of deepening impact ahead.

OST SITES



Since 2020, Together Chicago has led high-quality, year-round Out-of-School Time (OST) programs across the city, funded through DFSS. Operating in the West, Far South, and Near South regions, our programs provide academic support, SEL, sports, leadership, and career readiness for students ages 6–24.

In 2024, Together Chicago exceeded citywide benchmarks in enrollment, engagement, and impact. Each site surpassed its contracted student targets, with strong participation and measurable social-emotional growth.

2024–2025 Program Highlights:

- West (Austin – Hope Excel Academy):
- Served 45 students (ages 6–14) with STEM, SEL, arts, and leadership programming five days a week.
- Far South (Harlan High School):
- Served 30 students, including disengaged youth. Focus areas included credit recovery, employment, and mentoring.
- Near South (Ellis Park & Phillips HS):
- Served 72 students in sports-based and academic enrichment programs. Phillips students earned statewide honors and were recognized as school leaders.

Beyond the numbers, OST participants achieved honor roll status, secured college scholarships, and returned to serve as mentors—demonstrating the lasting impact of safe, supportive, and high-expectation environments after school.



LOVE YOUR SCHOOL EVENTS

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2025 Friendraiser



In April 2025, we hosted our 5th Annual Love Your School Friendraiser, a signature event designed to strengthen collaboration between schools, nonprofits, and community-based organizations working to support youth across Chicago.

The event brought together over 250 attendees, including representatives from more than 30 mission-driven organizations, as well as students and families from neighborhoods across the city. Held in the spirit of shared purpose, the Friendraiser served as a space to build relationships, exchange ideas, and highlight the collective impact of our work.

Rather than spotlighting one initiative or group, the day emphasized the power of collaborative partnerships, the kind that lead to real outcomes for young people: improved school engagement, safer environments, and stronger networks of mentorship and care.

Our program included networking opportunities, youth performances, and storytelling from schools and community leaders, all reinforcing the importance of relational work in long-term systems change. The event was supported by organizations such as the Greater Chicago Food Depository, BUILD Chicago, Communities In Schools of Chicago, Together Chicago, the Illinois Network of Charter Schools, and Youth Guidance.



VIOLENCE PREVENTION

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YOUR
SCHOOL



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POLICE

Violence Prevention Catalyst Team



Launched in December 2023 through a partnership between Communities In Schools of Chicago and Together Chicago, the Violence Prevention Catalyst Team works under the Love Your School Collective to strengthen school-based strategies that promote safety, belonging, and student well-being.

Grounded in the belief that safety includes emotional security, identity development, and supportive relationships, the team brings together school staff, nonprofits, and caring adults across the city.

Throughout 2024–2025, the team hosted 14 convenings with 48 participants, while developing a White Paper informed by student surveys, trusted data, and stakeholder interviews. A key milestone: 314 students from 24 schools shared perspectives on school safety and belonging, highlighting themes such as:

- Physical & Emotional Safety
- Belonging & Identity
- Relationships with Adults
- School Environment & Resources

These insights will guide tools and trainings for teachers, families, and community leaders as the team works to amplify what’s working across Chicago.

Vision:

A Chicago where every individual helps create school communities where youth feel safe, valued, and a true sense of belonging.

CHURCH MOBILIZATION HIGHLIGHTS

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New Life Covenant Church



New Life Covenant South East has been a foundational partner of the Love Your School Collective since its inception, consistently demonstrating what it means to serve schools with intentionality, joy, and consistency. Over the years, New Life has formed strong relationships with Tanner Elementary and Paul Revere Elementary, showing up as a reliable source of encouragement and support.

One of the church's signature outreach efforts is the Greenwood Fest, an annual community event held on the New Life campus to celebrate summer milestones and kick off the back-to-school season. The festival brings together families, students, and neighbors for a day filled with games, rides, crafts, food, and fellowship—fostering unity, celebration, and hope as students prepare to return to the classroom.

In 2024, Greenwood Fest had an especially meaningful impact, providing school uniforms to every student at both Tanner and Paul Revere Elementary. This generous act reflected the church's deep commitment to educational equity and their desire to remove barriers to student success.

New Life's story is a powerful reminder of how churches can be a steady and joyful presence in their school communities—meeting practical needs, creating lasting memories, and building bridges of trust along the way.

Fellowship Baptist Church



**FELLOWSHIP
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FELLOWSHIP MISSIONARY BAPTIST CHURCH
EST. 1950

After two years of intentional effort, Fellowship Chicago took a meaningful step forward in connecting with Thomas A. Hendricks Academy, the neighborhood school in the heart of Fuller Park. On Sunday, June 29, 2025, as part of their Sundays N' Joy outreach initiative, the church mobilized approximately 75 volunteers to serve directly at Hendricks instead of gathering in the sanctuary.

Volunteers of all ages participated in hands-on beautification projects—cleaning classrooms, painting the cafeteria and teacher's lounge, and refreshing bulletin boards—bringing a spirit of joy, excellence, and care to the school campus.

Launched in 2025 as part of Fellowship's "Year of Joy," Sundays N' Joy is a bold expression of church mobilization. Every 5th Sunday, the church closes its doors for traditional worship and instead sends its members into neighborhoods across Chicago and the surrounding area to serve through tangible acts of love and impact.

Fellowship's breakthrough at Hendricks is a powerful example of what happens when churches remain committed to presence—even when doors aren't easily opened at first. Their story reminds us that persistence, prayer, and a heart for service can eventually lead to lasting, transformational partnerships.

Cosmopolitan Church



Cosmopolitan Church of Prayer has long been a pillar of community outreach in Chicago's South Side. Since joining the Love Your School Collective, the church has deepened its impact by building stronger bridges between its ministry and local schools, specifically Beasley Elementary and Burke Elementary.

During the 2024–2025 school year, Cosmopolitan Church consistently showed up as a village of support for students, families, and school staff. Their commitment was visible in both word and deed; from hosting a community-wide Giving Day offering free haircuts, food, and essentials to families from Beasley, Burke, and the surrounding neighborhood, to organizing a coat drive to ensure Burke students were warm during the winter months.

At Beasley, the church not only supported mentoring efforts through Together Chicago, but also provided critical encouragement—literally walking the school's halls in prayer before the academic year began. Whether filling in gaps, meeting urgent needs, or simply being present, Cosmopolitan Church has modeled what it means to be a faithful, responsive partner within the LYS Collective.

This spirit of celebration and recognition extended to their Heroes and Sheroes Celebration, where they honored individuals making a difference in the community. Among those recognized was Damien Howard, Together Chicago's Director of Education Initiatives, highlighting the strong partnership between the church and our collective work.

Cosmopolitan's story reminds us that when churches are empowered to serve in alignment with schools, entire communities feel the difference.

LYS Prayer Corners



This past year, 21 schools were adopted by Prayer Champions who prayed weekly on street corners near their schools—bringing spiritual support and visibility to students and staff alike. Every Friday, a group of men from the collective also prayed at rotating school sites, sharing the gospel and, on one occasion, seeing over 40 teens respond to Jesus.

The Prayer Corners team was active across the city:

- Participated in Hands Across Chicago at 17 school locations during Memorial Day weekend.
- Partnered with Team Xtreme for 14 school rallies across 8 schools, including 7 in Roseland and one at McNair on the West Side.
- Co-hosted a Team Xtreme outreach at Palmer Park with CRU Inner City and Rosemoor Community Association, drawing 350+ attendees and resulting in 55 salvations.

The Summer Prayer Challenge is currently underway, with 77 schools being prayer walked from June through August. Prayer Champions also had a presence at the Friendraiser, CUIP Winter Prayer Gathering, and Building Blocks of Peace, while leading weekly Monday Zoom prayer calls for CPS.

Together, these efforts continue to bring prayer, hope, and gospel witness to schools across Chicago.

COLLABORATORS

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BE/MBK Chicago



Brilliance and Excellence (B&E) has been a valued partner of Together Chicago and Love Your School Collective for the past three years. We've helped strengthen their efforts to recruit and mobilize mentors for boys in Chicago, while also joining in community-driven events like the annual Brilliance and Excellence March—a citywide celebration of identity, excellence, and belonging.

In 2024–2025, B&E took a bold step forward by serving as the backbone organization for the Obama Foundation's My Brother's Keeper (MBK) Chicago Initiative, coordinating action across dozens of city stakeholders to drive lasting outcomes for Boys and Young Men of Color (BYMOC), ages 16–24. This work is powered by the CHI OY mentoring intervention, a data-informed, wraparound support model that tracks academic success, safety from violent crime, and employment outcomes.

Together Chicago's own Damien Howard, who serves on the B&E board and leads CHI OY's data strategy, plays a key role in aligning MBK partners, mentoring providers, and city institutions under a shared vision of population-level change.

As CHI OY enters its pilot phase with 50 youth participants, our partnership with Brilliance and Excellence continues to focus on what matters most: ensuring that every young man of color in Chicago is supported, seen, and surrounded by opportunity—at school, at work, and in life.



Empowering Adults Transforming Education



A founding partner of the Love Your School Collective, SEL+ has played a critical role in shaping how we equip adults to support students’ emotional, behavioral, and academic growth. Founded by Damien Howard, Together Chicago’s Director of Education Initiatives, SEL+ has spent the past seven years developing mentoring strategies rooted in social and emotional learning (SEL) and responsive to the realities of Chicago’s youth.

Throughout the 2024–2025 school year, SEL+ continued to support LYS partner schools and mentors by offering tools, curricula, and a data tracking system that helped quantify student growth in real time. Their framework has contributed to notable outcomes—such as increased emotional regulation, stronger peer relationships, and reductions in behavioral infractions among mentored youth.

This year also marked the early-stage pilot of SELvie, SEL+’s new AI-powered mentor support platform. SELvie is designed to empower mentors with on-demand training, individualized student SEL plans, wraparound support suggestions, and live progress tracking tools. Together Chicago is actively collaborating with SEL+ to test and refine this technology through select mentorship programs across the city.

As SELvie continues to develop, SEL+ remains a trusted partner in helping us answer a key question at the heart of our work: Are we winning? By integrating relational wisdom with smart systems and tools, SEL+ ensures that mentors aren’t just showing up—they’re showing up prepared, supported, and positioned for impact.

Thank You to Our Partners!





APPENDIX





EVALUATION SUMMARY 2024-2025

Compiled by: Amy Governale, PhD
North Park University
June 2025

Executive Summary

2025 Summary

For the 2024-2025 academic year, Together Chicago surveyed 38 elementary students to assess perceptions of, and growth in, social-emotional competencies. The students, primarily Black and male, reported strong school belonging and emotional engagement, with 92% enjoying participation in school activities and many expressing excitement about learning. While self-efficacy significantly improved over the year, suggesting increased academic confidence, self-management declined, indicating challenges with focus and preparation. In end of year perceptions, students expressed strong school identification, enjoyment of learning new things, and confidence in increasing their intelligence and earning high grades. Challenges of this academic year pertained to self-management and social awareness. Students reported mixed to lower levels than usual regarding class preparation, emotional expression and regulation, and mixed results regarding complimenting others. Of particular note is the average age of this sample, with younger children taking longer to develop self-regulation and executive functioning skills. Furthermore, one of the schools surveyed for this academic year, Beasley Elementary noted particular challenges with the social skills and behavioral regulation of their students. Together Chicago implemented several strategies, including smaller group work and more targeted social skill building, to continue developing these skills among their students.

2023 to 2025 Summary

Over the past three years, Together Chicago has steadily advanced student outcomes through mentorship, SEL training, and school partnerships. Across 3 years, Together Chicago surveyed 205 students from the ages of 7 to 18 (average age 13.33, $sd=3.32$). Approximately 40% of students were female, 81.5% identify as African American, and 12.7% identify as Hispanic/Latino. Consistently, the highest endorsement in social-emotional skills is in growth mindset and self-efficacy, reflecting growing student confidence across cohorts. Gains in emotional engagement and school identification have also been sustained. However, recent declines in self-management suggest shifting student needs, possibly tied to post-pandemic adjustments or increasing academic pressures. Overall, the program's long-term impact supports continued focus on educator support and targeted SEL strategies to meet evolving student challenges.

Recommendations

To address challenges in self-management and social awareness, Together Chicago should implement evidence-based interventions that strengthen executive functioning and interpersonal skills. Research shows that executive function skills—such as inhibitory control, working memory, and cognitive flexibility—are foundational for academic success and begin to solidify during middle childhood. Strategies such as daily routines, goal-setting exercises, and mindfulness-based practices can help students improve focus, emotional regulation, and task persistence. In addition, the lower ratings in social awareness suggest a need for more explicit instruction and modeling of prosocial behaviors, such as through role-playing, cooperative learning, and perspective-taking activities.

Program Overview

Mission and Model

The aim of Together Chicago is to improve educational outcomes for under-resourced students by fostering partnerships between schools and naturally occurring community groups, such as churches, block clubs, professional organizations, and local nonprofits. At the heart of its mission is the belief that meaningful mentorship and community engagement can support both academic success and holistic student development.

The organization focuses on key objectives:

1. Mentor students
2. Coach mentors, teachers, and teacher-mentors
3. Build community partnerships
4. Transform school culture



These objectives are grounded in the belief that changing thought patterns leads to new actions, which in turn form healthier habits for individuals and communities. Together Chicago envisions a systemic transformation in mental health and academic success for students in Chicago's most underserved schools through school-community partnerships.

Theoretical Framework: A Socio-Ecological Approach

Together Chicago's model draws from Urie Bronfenbrenner's socio-ecological theory of development, which posits that human development occurs through interactions between individuals and the multiple layers of their environment, including homes, neighborhoods, and schools. In the home environment, factors such as parenting style, family routines, and home resources shape a child's development. The school environment, including teacher training, classroom dynamics, and assessment practices, also significantly impacts academic, behavioral, and social outcomes.

Research shows that strong home-school connections contribute significantly to student success. Parents who are actively involved in their child's education—through frequent communication with teachers or engagement with other parents—help foster a stronger sense of school belonging for their children. This increased connection is associated with higher academic performance, better grades, and fewer behavioral challenges.

Moreover, home-school collaboration benefits both parties: parents gain deeper insight into classroom expectations and student behavior, while teachers become more attuned to factors in the home that may affect a student's ability to learn or complete assignments. By facilitating these interactions, Together Chicago helps ensure that both educators and families are better equipped to support students holistically.

Social Emotional Learning

Together Chicago's method to enhance social-emotional learning is purposefully aligned with Collaborative for Academic, Social, and Emotional Learning (CASEL), the leading organization dedicated to advancing the implementation and practice of social and emotional learning (SEL) in schools. CASEL's framework posits SEL can be broken down into five core competencies which reflect a combination of personal, internal abilities and understanding of the self in relation to others:

- Responsible decision-making: Making ethical and constructive choices about personal and social behavior.
- Self-management: Managing emotions and behaviors to achieve goals.
- Self-awareness: Recognizing one's emotions, values, strengths, and limitations.
- Social awareness: Understanding and empathizing with others from diverse backgrounds.
- Relationship skills: Establishing and maintaining healthy and rewarding relationships through communication, cooperation, and conflict resolution.



Students involved in SEL programs demonstrated an increased ability to manage stress and depression, improved classroom behavior, and better attitudes towards themselves, others, and school. According to a meta-analysis of eighty-two research studies involving 100,000 students worldwide, SEL programs were shown to have a positive impact up to eighteen years later on academics, emotional distress, conduct problems, and drug use. The results from a 2015 review done by Columbia University found that the average return on investment for six evidence-based SEL programs was eleven to one (CASEL, 2019). Most importantly, these interventions demonstrate statistically significant associations between SEL skills in kindergarten and key outcomes for young adults years later (CASEL, 2019).

SEL Coaching & Mentorship

While the effectiveness of SEL programs is well established, CASEL's Social and Emotional Learning report (2019) provided alarming statistics regarding its implementation. The researchers found that only 22% of teachers feel that they are "very prepared" to teach SEL. Similarly, 51% of teachers surveyed reported that the level of SEL professional development offered at their schools was not sufficient (CASEL, 2019).

In line with this thinking, CASEL found 93% of teachers want a greater focus on SEL development in the school curriculum, while 96% of school administrators believe that social and emotional learning is just as important as academic learning. There seems to be a disconnect if the majority of teachers want an SEL focus in their curriculum, yet the majority also report that the level of SEL professional development in their schools is not sufficient. Together Chicago attempts to close the gap between SEL awareness and practice among teachers and administrators by equipping the school community with effective ways to teach and apply SEL skills in a school setting.

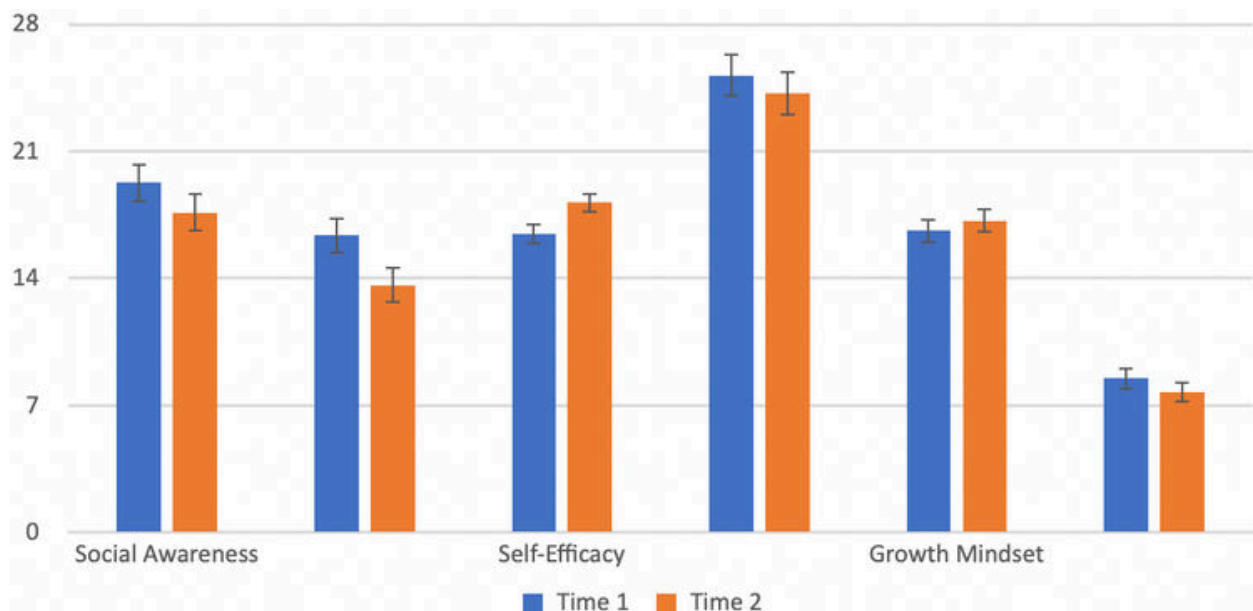
2025 Program Outcomes

Overview: The goal of this survey is to assess students' social-emotional skills, which are vital for overall development and happiness. Through annual surveys, Together Chicago gains insights into students' emotional intelligence, empathy, and social competence. This approach helps identify strengths and areas needing support so that students may be equipped with essential tools to tackle challenges, foster positive relationships, and succeed in various aspects of life. To evaluate and monitor Together Chicago SEL programming, students are surveyed on the following 6 key social-emotional components that are crucial to learning:

- **School Identification-** feeling pride in school and feeling respected by teachers
- **Emotional Engagement-** motivation and enjoyment in academic activities
- **Growth Mindset-** belief in intellectual growth through effort
- **Self-Management-** coming to class prepared and staying focused
- **Self-Efficacy-** confidence in mastering academic challenges
- **Social Awareness-** showing empathy and emotional intelligence

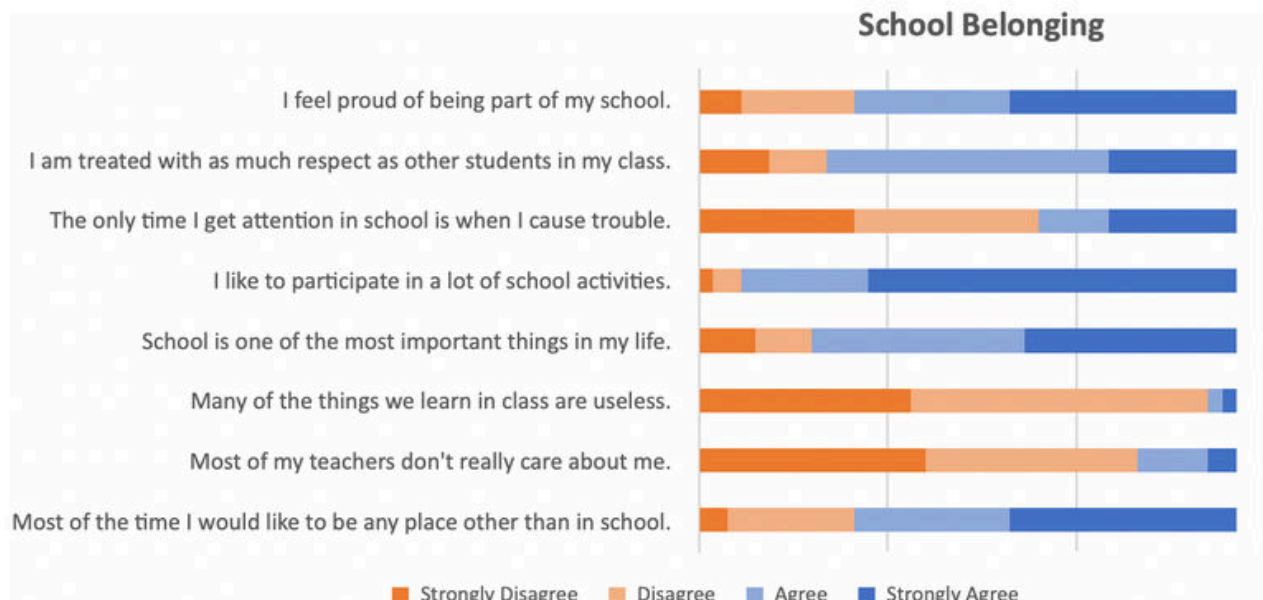
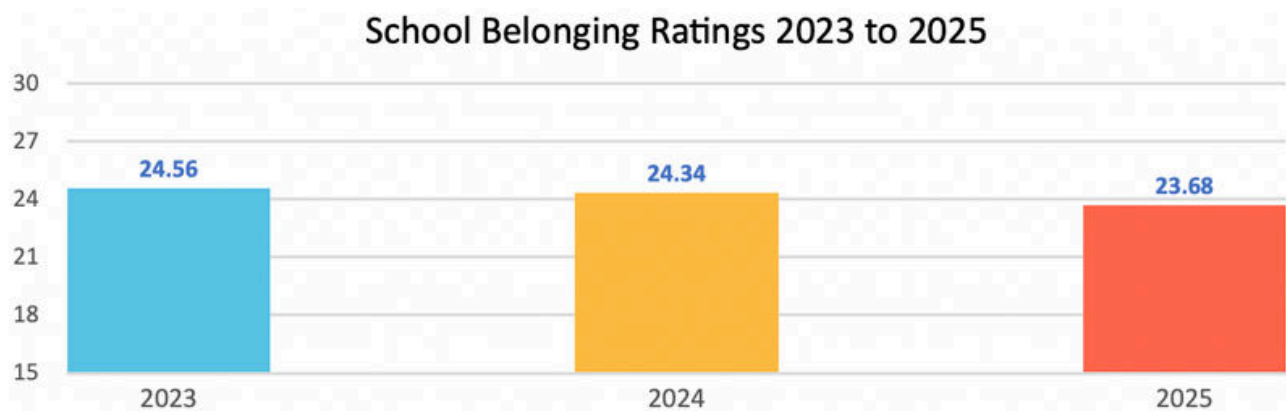
Sample: 38 students from two elementary schools participated in the end-of-year survey. Participants ranged in age from 7 to 12, with an average age of 8.97 (sd=1.55). Participants were mostly Black/African American (94.7%) and male (97.4%).

A small sample of students were surveyed at the beginning and end of year to track within-person change in social-emotional learning outcomes. Overall, two outcomes showed statistically significant within-person variability, self-efficacy, which showed significant increases from beginning to end of year, $t(10)=-3.10$, $p=.01$, and self-management, which showed significant decreases, $t(10)=2.70$, $p=.02$. All other competencies did not reach levels of statistically significant change.

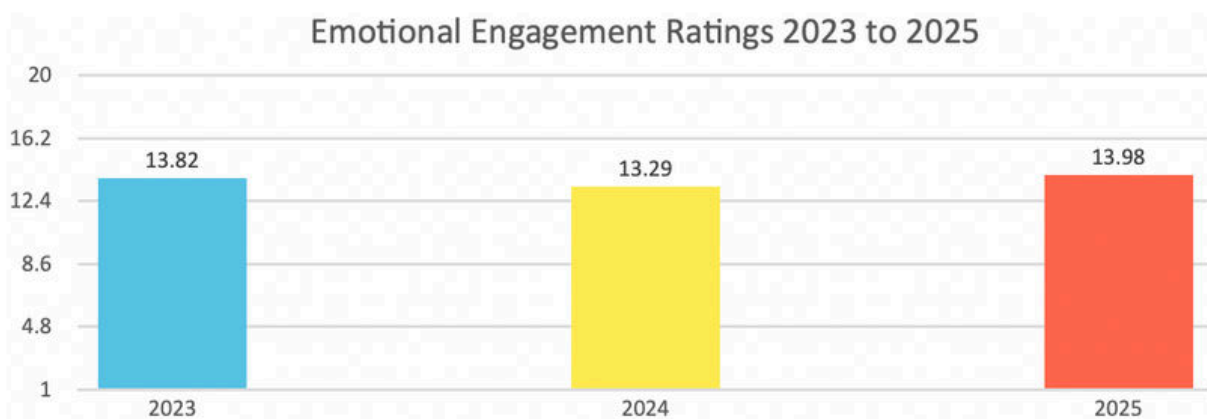
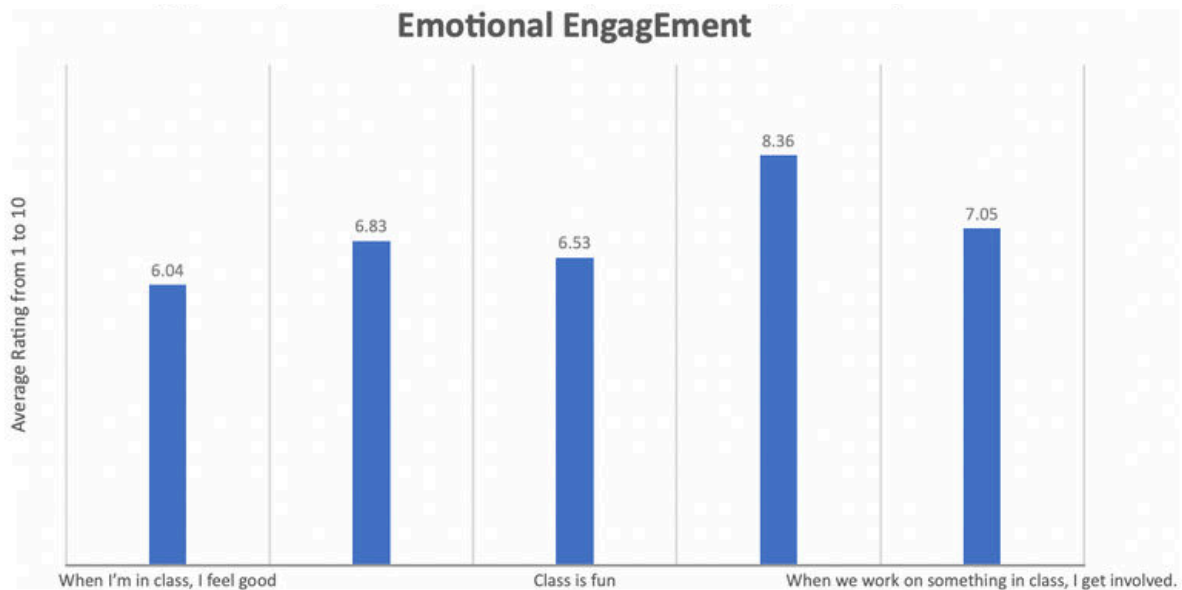


2025 End of Year Results

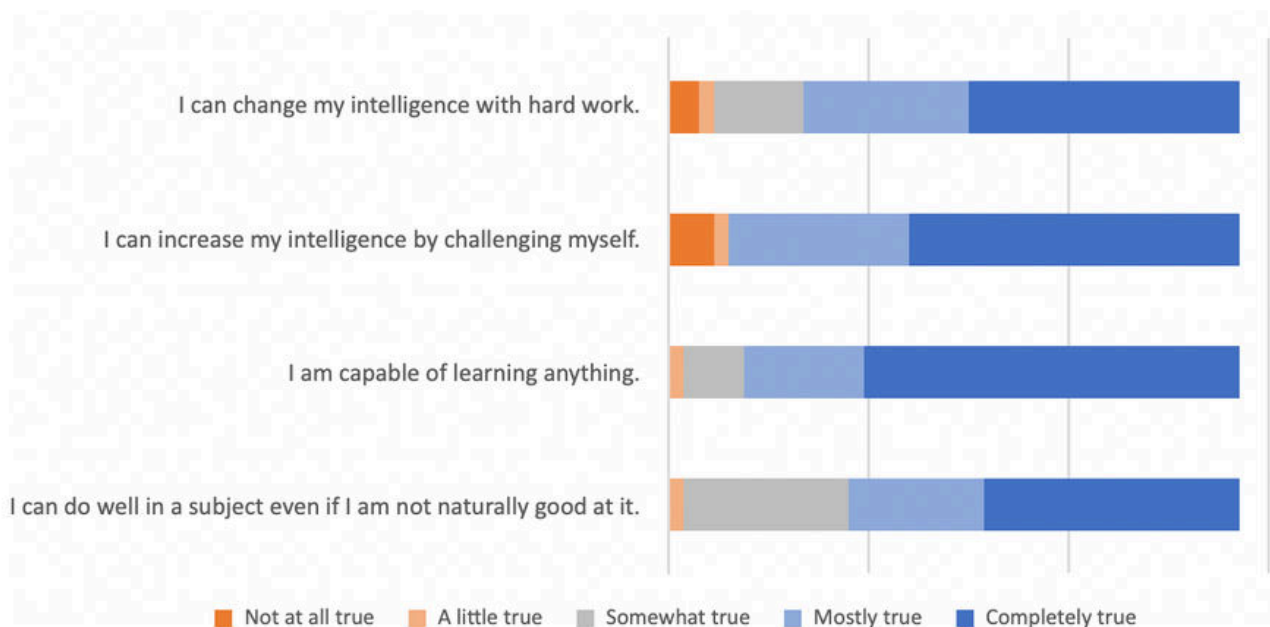
School Belonging: When students feel accepted, valued, and connected to their school community, they are more likely to develop positive attitudes toward learning and persist through academic challenges. A sense of school identification fosters emotional security and engagement in students as a primary driver of intrinsic motivation (or learning for the sake of learning rather than external rewards). Students who identify with their school are more likely to adopt school norms and internalize academic goals, leading to improved attendance, higher grades, and lower dropout rates. In 2025, Together Chicago students reported high endorsement of positive school belongingness, including 92% agreeing they like to participate in school and afterschool activities, and 70% agreeing they feel proud to be part of their school. Students also endorsed ideas that teachers care about them, and that things they learn in school are useful.



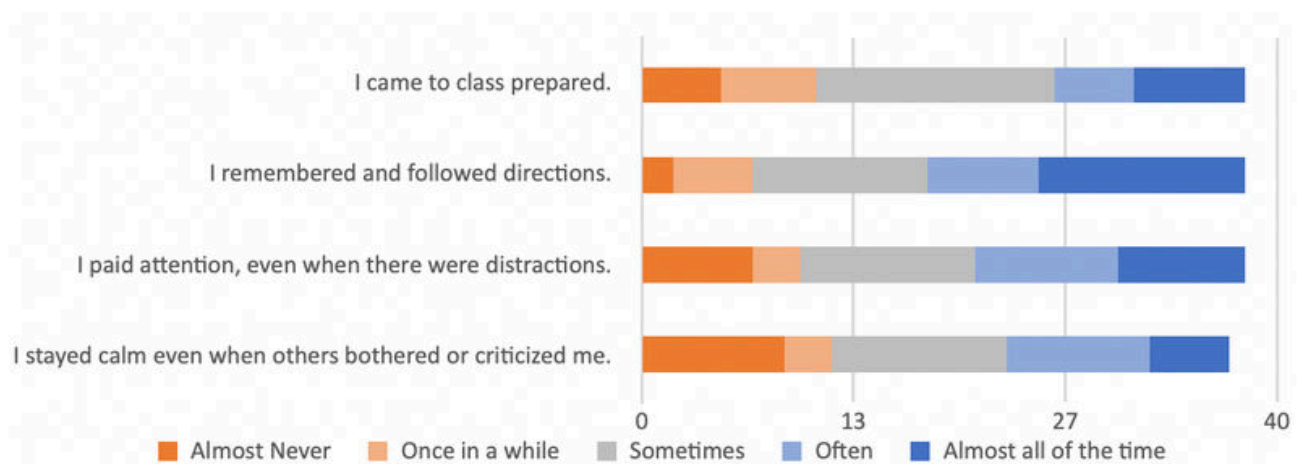
Emotional Engagement: Enjoyment and interest in learning, and positive emotional responses to the academic environment are key contributors to academic outcomes. When students experience genuine interest and excitement in what they are learning, they are more likely to invest effort, persist through challenges, and seek deeper understanding. Emotional engagement supports sustained attention and cognitive processing, which enhances learning and retention. It also plays a protective role by buffering against boredom, frustration, and academic burnout. Research in educational psychology shows that emotionally engaged students are more likely to participate in class, build stronger relationships with teachers, and maintain a positive academic self-concept—all factors that contribute to better performance and long-term academic success. Together Chicago students reported the highest level of emotional engagement pertaining to the statement, “I enjoy learning new things in class”.



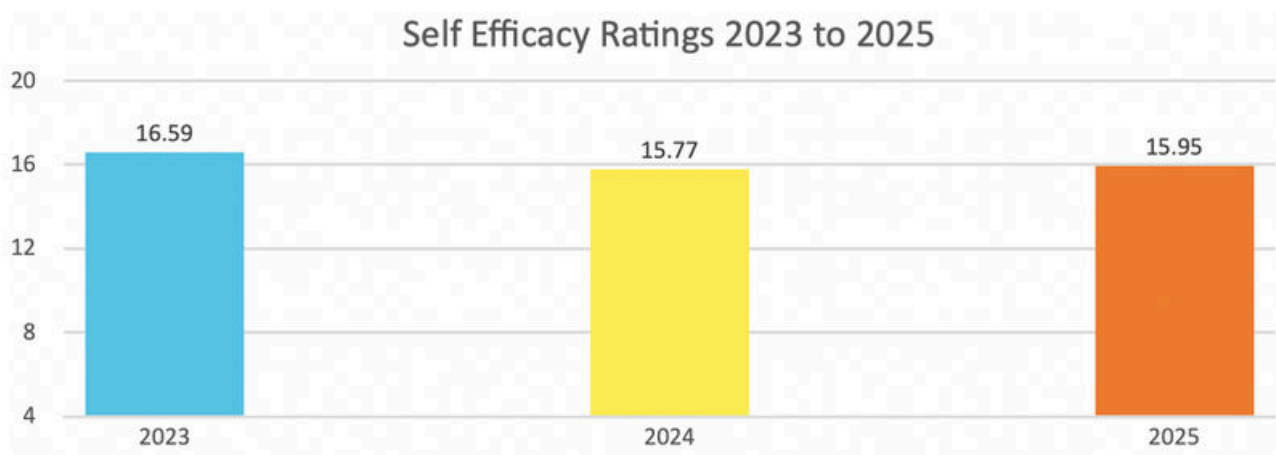
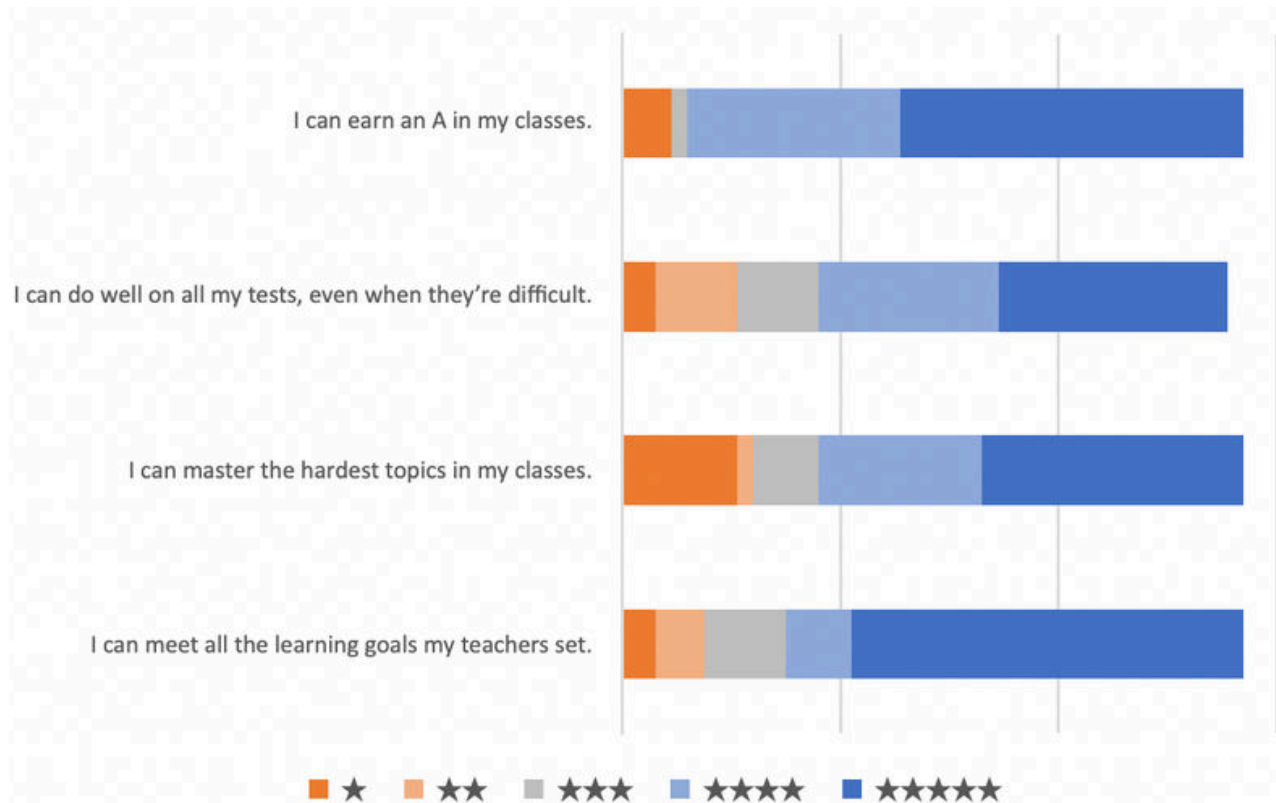
Growth Mindset: Students with a growth mindset view challenges and mistakes as opportunities to grow rather than as signs of failure, which fosters resilience in the face of academic difficulty and sets a foundation of continuous learning and improvement. This perspective encourages students to embrace effort, seek feedback, and adopt effective learning strategies, which contribute to stronger performance over time. Students who believe in the potential for growth are more likely to set goals, stay motivated, and recover from setbacks. In contrast, a fixed mindset can lead to avoidance of challenges, fear of failure, and decreased motivation, ultimately limiting academic potential. Students had particularly high endorsement of the statements, “I can increase my intelligence by challenging myself” (90% agreement) and “I am capable of learning anything” (87% agreement).



Self-Management: Self-management and self-regulation enable students to control their thoughts, emotions, and behaviors in ways that support learning. These skills are rooted in executive functioning, which includes planning, goal setting, attention control, and impulse inhibition. When students can manage their time effectively, resist distractions, and persist through challenges, they are more likely to complete assignments, study efficiently, and perform well on assessments. Over time, these habits are linked to higher academic performance and long-term success. At the end of academic year 2025, students reported mixed abilities in self-management, particularly regarding the first statement “I came to class prepared” (32% reporting often or almost all of the time) and the last statement, “I stayed calm even when others bothered or criticized me” (37% reporting often or almost all of the time).



Self-Efficacy: The belief in one’s ability to succeed in specific tasks plays a critical role in academic achievement because it influences motivation, persistence, and resilience. Students with high self-efficacy are more likely to take on challenging tasks, put forth greater effort, and persevere in the face of difficulties, because they believe their actions will lead to success. This confidence shapes how students approach learning, respond to feedback, and recover from failure. When students believe they can master academic material, they are more likely to set goals, use effective learning strategies, and engage deeply with the content. Similar to growth mindset, students had high endorsement to the first statement, “I can earn an A in my classes” (90% agreement).



Social Awareness: Social skills support positive interactions with peers, teachers, and other members of the school community, which in turn create a more supportive and effective learning environment. Strong social skills, such as communication, cooperation, empathy, and conflict resolution, help students build relationships that provide emotional support and academic collaboration. For example, students who can work well in groups are more likely to benefit from cooperative learning activities, ask for help when needed, and contribute to classroom discussions. Additionally, positive peer and teacher relationships are linked to increased school engagement, motivation, and a sense of belonging—all of which are predictors of academic success. A little more than half (55%) of students responded positively to the question, “How well do you get along with students who are different from you?”

