Valuing Education

A student’s ability to set educational goals and see the value in their education all the way through college has a major impact on whether or not that student can overcome challenging academic obstacles. So what can we do in our classrooms to strengthen this Resiliency Skill?

Classroom Activities

Have College Days where staff are encouraged to wear college gear on certain days. Likewise, allow students to wear college gear on assigned days.

Personal Interest Inventories or Career Focus Surveys can be administered and used by counselors to help middle school students register for specific classes in high school—and help high schoolers think about majors and schools for post-secondary education.

University Research Projects assigned to certain classes or Advisory groups can highlight different colleges/universities for students. These can be presented as gallery walks and kept on display throughout the hallways.

Schools can continue to provide information about different schools each month, focusing on different post-secondary options.

What is a Diploma Worth? is an activity where students write an essay to explain their position about the value of a diploma. They are asked to analyze factors including the costs involved in earning specific degrees, and the ultimate payout of the career chosen.

A Career Research Project gives students the opportunity to research a specific career—the education level and courses required, salary, experience required, etc. They can then present their project, allowing their peers the chance to see possible career options as well.

Letter to Future Self is an activity where students bring in a self-addressed, stamped envelope. They write a letter to their future self four years after graduating high school. Ideally, these are written with the understanding that they will be mailed out at that time.

Field Trips / School Visits

Young Ameritown / Junior Achievement is a field trip that has students role play the experience of living in a post-education world. They are assigned a career, and during the field trip, they will go through scenarios having them manage their budget based on their job and income.

College Tours are never too early in high school. Provide opportunities for 9-12th graders to attend various colleges in the area.

A Freshman Academy held prior to the beginning of the school year gives middle schoolers transitioning to high school the opportunity to prepare for high school and develop an understanding of the impact the next four years will have on their lives. You might even invite high school alumni to share their experiences and lessons learned.

Career Education like career fairs, career days, guest speakers who have different careers, careers displayed on bulletin boards, etc. can all help create a culture focusing on students' futures.