

Our belief in our ability as a learner has a huge impact on how well we learn. It either opens us up for learning, or shuts us down. Our self-expectations are also shaped by beliefs of others. "Notes to Myself" are gentle reminders of ways we can keep our own self-expectations high and those of our classmates. But, we can't do it alone. When you turn this page over you will see "Notes to Others Who Care" - teachers, parents and community members. These are ways they can also help every young person in our community believe in his or her potential and worth. It takes a community to build "Great Expectations"!

Notes to myself about how I can build & keep my expectations high

Remember that my effort always increases my learning potential; my abilities are not "fixed"

When people say "why?" to me, I will say "why not?"

Surround myself with people who believe in me and support my goals

Believe in myself!

- Set goals for myself that challenge me but are also within my reach
- Be clear about what I want, create a plan, and go make it happen
- Remember how important practicing is, even though it might be boring sometimes
- Take something that seems unreachable & break it down into doable steps
- When I am discouraged, find someone who believes in me and share my doubts and fears
- Leave my comfort zone and take risks
- Be my own person: do not compare myself to siblings or friends to define my worth or potential
- Be willing to keep reworking something until I get it right
- When I am feeling bad about myself, take a walk or get exercise

Ways I can build high expectations with my classmates

- Remember that everyone learns differently and has different interests and passions
- Encourage my peers to ask teachers questions
- Remind discouraged classmates of their accomplishments & share my faith in them
- Make learning mutual: help peers and allow peers to help me
- Know each person for who they are, not based on what group they hang around with, what they look like, or any other reason
- Push each other to do our best, try something new, pursue a passion
- Respect others, even if I don't agree or someone's question seems obvious
- Notice when someone is working hard & tell them I notice
- Give each other honest and caring feedback

Remind classmates that mistakes are just part of learning, not something that measures "smartness"

Celebrate each others' good efforts and successes

Withhold my judgment!



Notes to my parents - ways you can help me build high expectations

- Help me discover my interests and passions and let me pursue them
- Value when I am working hard, even when I don't get a great grade
- Check in every day; even if I don't say much, it matters
- Know me for myself; don't compare me to siblings or others
- Allow room for risk-taking
- Give me responsibilities and count on me to complete them
- Expect me to make mistakes as I learn - don't judge me as a person by them
- Let me take charge of my own learning
- Listen to what I have to say—really listen—before you speak
- Spend quality time with me
- Come to school events or things I am involved in

Be positive, supportive and caring

Help me set high expectations, then support me to reach them

Do not make your love for me or belief in me tied to grades in school

Never give up on me!

Believe in me as a learner

Notes to my teachers - ways you can help me (and ALL students) build high expectations

- Believe in me
- Get to know me, my interests and passions
- Include me in setting goals and expectations and support me to reach them
- Set clear expectations (and check in to make sure I understand)
- Let me make and learn from my mistakes without being punished or judged
- Assume my best intentions, even if some days that is hard
- Notice when I am struggling and reach out to me if I don't ask for help
- Notice when I am working really hard & value this effort
- Challenge me to learn independently
- Know me for myself: don't stereotype me based on my siblings or who I hang around with or any other reason
- Teach me HOW to learn
- Be passionate and compassionate
- Teach me to break down big goals into small steps, and celebrate each step with me
- Give me options to re-do assignments or re-take tests until I "get it"
- Don't give up on me!

Make learning engaging, challenging, interactive and fun

Notes to community members ways you can help me (and ALL students) build high expectations

- Remember how much it meant to you when an older person believed in you—and pass it on
- Provide ways for me to have a meaningful voice in community decision making
- Work with the school to offer real-world learning opportunities
- Publicize accomplishments of all young people, big and small, in and outside of school
- Attend student-run events, student performances, athletic games
- When our paths cross, don't be afraid to look me in the eye.
- Help me learn from my mistakes; don't judge me by them
- Know that the most powerful factor influencing my life is how many caring adults are there for me—and choose to be one of them
- Model the same values and behaviors you want to see in me
- Ask questions and listen carefully

Share talking time when we work together

Believe in my best of intentions—most of the time you will be right!