



**Bill Daggett**

*Nominated by Kirt Hartzler*

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## Union Public Schools

*Independent District #9*

**Kirt Hartzler, Ed.D.**  
*Superintendent*

September 4, 2019

Brock International Prize in Education,

It is an honor to recommend Dr. Bill Daggett as my nominee for the 2020 Brock Prize. As an urban superintendent of Union Public Schools in Tulsa, Oklahoma, I find his passion and ideas for transforming today's education to be groundbreaking and essential in creating viable learning environments. Dr. Daggett's ideas are making a difference for Union Public Schools – and many others globally – as we aspire to graduate students, college and career ready. Creating optimal learning environments – rich in creativity, high relevance and steeped in personalization – are vital to ensuring we are maximizing learning for all.

Dr. Daggett's System of Effective Instruction and Rigor/Relevance Framework have served as a catalyst for school improvement nationally and internationally. Thousands of school districts have embraced his concepts as they plan and implement systemic change in order to enhance effective instruction that will ultimately lead to greater rigor and relevance. Dr. Daggett's message is to challenge assumptions about the purpose, benefits, and effectiveness of current practices. Above all, his message is inspiring and challenges educational leaders to think and be courageous in making the necessary modifications required to meet the needs of all 21<sup>st</sup> century learners. Besides the many books, textbooks, research reports, and journal articles he has authored, he is the founder and chairman of the International Center for Leadership in Education.

The Brock Prize is built upon the belief that the most important thing we do in life is to educate the next generation in order to build a better future for all. Furthermore, a quality education is essential to the preservation of our democracy, remains the greatest equalizer regarding the conditions of mankind, and must continue to be one of the most basic civil rights worth fighting for. Dr. Daggett has made it his life's work to inspire and be a champion in helping us preserve the world's greatest commodity – a quality education for ALL!

Respectfully,

Kirt Hartzler, Ed.D.  
Superintendent



## **ABOUT BILL DAGGETT, Ed.D.**

**Bill Daggett, Ed.D.**, Founder and Chairman of the International Center for Leadership in Education (ICLE), is recognized worldwide for his proven ability to move preK-12 education systems towards more rigorous and relevant skills and knowledge for *all* students. For over 25 years, he has crisscrossed our nation, as well as the industrialized world, to lead school reform efforts to effectively prepare students for their future.

While an avid supporter of public education, he also challenges all of us to be more focused on our children's future than on maintaining the schools of our youth. His insights and leadership has caused nearly every major education association in the country, hundreds of school districts, numerous political and business leaders, publishers, and others to seek out his advice and guidance.

Before founding and now serving as Chairman of ICLE, Dr. Daggett was a teacher, local administrator, and a director with the New York State Education Department.

He is the creator of the Rigor/Relevance Framework® which has recently become the cornerstone of much of the nation's school reform efforts. He is also the author of numerous books about learning and education, textbooks, research reports, and journal articles.

Dr. Daggett has been recognized as a distinguished alumnus by both Temple University and the State University at Albany.

Dr. Daggett has a special commitment to individuals with disabilities. He and his wife, Bonnie, volunteer their time and lend their support to Wildwood Programs in upstate New York. Wildwood serves the needs of people of all ages who, like their daughter Audrey, have neurological impairments/learning disabilities or autism, by enabling them to become the best that they can be.

**Willard R. Daggett, Ed.D.**  
International Center for Leadership in Education  
1587 Route 146, Rexford, NY 12148  
(518) 723-2057 | [WDaggett@LeaderEd.com](mailto:WDaggett@LeaderEd.com)

***PROFESSIONAL EXPERIENCE***

**Founder and Chairman, International Center for Leadership in Education**

1587 Route 146, Rexford, NY 12148  
January 2012–present

Provide consultant services and research on employment and education issues to education and business organizations in North America, Europe, and Asia.

**Founder and Chairman, Successful Practices Network**

1585 Route 146, Rexford, NY 12148  
2002–present

**CEO, International Center for Leadership in Education**

1587 Route 146, Rexford, NY 12148  
January 2010–January 2012

**President, International Center for Leadership in Education**

1587 Route 146, Rexford, NY 12148  
September 1991–January 2010

**Director of Curriculum and Instruction**

New York State Education Department, Albany, NY  
June 1986–August 1991

**Director, Division of Occupational Education Instruction**

New York State Education Department, Albany, NY  
August 1982–June 1986

Coordinated and supervised four bureaus and eight instructional programs for career and technical education and community colleges.

**Chief, Bureau of Occupational Education Program Development**

New York State Education Department, Albany, NY  
August 1980–August 1982

Coordinated and supervised the State's Occupational and Practical Arts Futuring Project, Curriculum Development, and Economic Development.

**Chief, Bureau of Business Education**

New York State Education Department, Albany, NY  
June 1978–August 1980

Coordinated the State's Business Education program.



## ***DISTINGUISHED ALUMNI AWARDS***

Albany State University Excellence in Education Award, 2000  
Temple University Gallery of Success Award, 2007

## ***ADVISORY COUNCILS***

- Chair, American Association of School Administrators and International Center for Leadership in Education's study of the nation's most innovative school districts, 2017–present
- National Dropout Prevention Center Advisory Council, 2017–present
- Senior Advisor, Association of Career and Technical Education and International Center for Leadership in Education Institute for 21<sup>st</sup> Century Leadership, 2009–2016
- Chair, Council of Chief State School Officers and International Center for Leadership in Education study of the nation's most rapidly improving schools, 2010–2015
- U.S. Department of Education National Assessment of Career and Technical Education Advisory Panel (NACTE Independent Advisory Panel), 2009–present
- NASA Education Advisory Board, 2008–2015
- Texas Education Reform Foundation, 2010–2014
- USA Today (national newspaper) Education Advisory Board

## ***PRESENTATIONS***

Delivered more than 3,500 presentations in every state in the country and 29 nations since 1991. An abbreviated list of keynote presentations to national organizations includes:

- National School Boards Association
- American Association of School Administrators
- National Secondary School Principals Association
- National Association of Elementary School Principals
- National Career and Technical Education Association

## ***PUBLICATIONS***

### ***Books and Textbooks***

*Making Schools Work: A Vision for College and Career Ready Learning*, International Center for Leadership in Education (Houghton Mifflin Harcourt). (November 2016)

*Rigor, Relevance, and Relationships in Action*, International Center for Leadership in Education (Scholastic). (June 2015)

*The Daggett System for Effective Instruction: Alignment for Student Achievement*, International Center for Leadership in Education. (June 2012) (updated and reprinted 2017)

*What Brain Research Teaches about Rigor, Relevance, and Relationships*, International Center for Leadership in Education. (June 2008) (updated and reprinted 2016)

*Rigor and Relevance from Concept to Reality*, International Center for Leadership in Education. (June 2008) (updated and reprinted 2012 and 2018)

*Education as a Business Investment*, Leadership Media. (June 2001)

*Achieving Civility at School: A Case Study*, Leadership Press. (2000)

*Taming the Educational Dinosaur*, Leadership Press. (1999)

*Facilitating Learning*, Leadership Press. (1998)

*Education is Not a Spectator Sport*, Leadership Press. (1997)

*Electronic Information Systems*, South-Western Publishing Company. (1991)

*Dynamics of Work*, 2<sup>nd</sup> Edition, South-Western Publishing Company. (1990)

*Electronic Office Systems*, South-Western Publishing Company. (1990)

*Technology at Work*, South-Western Publishing Company. (1986)

*Occupational Mathematics*, South-Western Publishing Company. (1985)

*Computer and Information Technology*, South-Western Publishing Company. (1985)

*Careers: Plans and Choices*, South-Western Publishing Company. (1984)

*Technology for Tomorrow*, South-Western Publishing Company. (1984)

*Dynamics of Work*, South-Western Publishing Company. (1983)

*Decision-Making/Problem Solving*, South-Western Publishing Company. (1983)

### **White Papers**

*Addressing Whole Child Growth through Strong Relationships: The Evidence-Based Connections between Academic and Social-Emotional Learning*  
June 2019

*Meeting the Challenge: Envisioning Schools That Can Address Both Academic and Non-Cognitive Skills*  
April 2019

*Innovation: The Key to the Nation's Most Rapidly Improving Schools*  
June 2018

*Preparing Our Students for Their Futures: HOW We Change and Innovate Instruction, Part 1*, June 2017

*Preparing Our Students for Their Futures: HOW We Change and Innovate Instruction, Part 2*, June 2017

*Preparing Our Students for Their Futures: WHAT Needs to Change for Innovative Instructions*

March 2017

*Preparing Our Students for Their Futures: WHY Innovative Practices are Needed*  
January 2017

*Innovation: The Key to the Nation's Most Rapidly Improving Schools*  
December 2016

*Success Beyond State Tests: Preparing Students for Success in Real Life*

*Rigor/Relevance Framework*

*Effectiveness and Efficiency Framework – A Guide to Focusing Resources to Increase Student Performance*

*The Daggett System for Effective Instruction: Where Research and Best Practices Meet*

*Living in Quadrant D*

*Improving Student Performance in Times of Declining Resources*

*Achieving Academic Excellence through Rigor and Relevance*

*Reforming American High Schools – Why, What, and How*

### **Articles and Research Reports**

*“Preparing Students for Their Future—Not Our Past”* [Virginia School Boards Association Newsletter, 2018 Issue 7]

*“The Nation's Most Rapidly Improving Schools”* [Idaho Professional Journal,] February 2017

*Op-Ed Narrative* [New York State Education Department], March 2014

*“Relevance, Rigor and Relationships: Bill Daggett's Three R's for American Schools* [Educator: Temple University College of Education], Winter 2010

*“Differentiation That Works”* May 2008

*“The New 3 R's for a New Generation,”* *Instructional Leadership* [Texas Elementary Principals and Supervisors Association], March 2007

*“A Central Role for CTE in High School Restructuring,”* *Techniques* [Association of Career and Technical Education], April 2005

*“Why, What, and How of School Reform,”* North Central Association Commission on Accreditation and School Improvement (NCA CASI) Newsletter, November 2004

*“Reforming American High Schools – Why, What, and How,”* *Leadership* [Association of California School Administrators], November/December 2004.

*“School Counselors and Information literacy from the Perspective of Willard Daggett,”* *Professional School Counseling*, Vol. 6, no. 4, April 2003

*21<sup>st</sup> Century Literacy – The Challenge to Schools.* International Center for Leadership in Education (June 2002)

*“Vocational and Technical Education.”* Entry in the *Encyclopedia of Education*, Second Edition. Macmillan Reference USA, 2002

*“A Fork in the Road for Career and Technical Education: A New Foundation for Career and Technical Education Programs,”* October 2002

*The 21<sup>st</sup> Century Classroom: A New Focus on Learning.* International Center for Leadership in Education. (June 2001)

*“Technology in Education – Striving for Excellence and Equity,”* [Community College Article], October 2000

*“Moving from Standards to Instructional Practice,”* *National Association of Secondary Schools Principals Bulletin*, Vol. 84, no. 620, December 2000

*A Total Solution Approach to School Reform,* International Center for Leadership in Education. (June 2000)

*Organizing for Learning,* International Center for Leadership in Education, (June 1998)

*Developing Guiding Principles in Students: The Role of Schools,* International Center for Leadership in Education. (June 1996)

*The Challenge to American Schools: Preparing Students for the 21st Century,* School Business Affairs. (April 1996)

*Break the Mold,* Vocational Education Journal. (March 1996)

*Ready for Takeoff?* The American School Board Journal. (August 1995)

*On Preparing Students for the World of Work: A Conversation with Willard Daggett,* Educational Leadership, Volume 52, Number 8. (May 1995)

*Make Curriculum Fit the Future.* The Education Digest. (December 1994)

*A Conversation With...Willard R. Daggett,* California School Boards Association Quarterly Magazine, Volume 53, Number 2. (Winter 1994)

*Defining Excellence for American Schools,* International Center for Leadership in Education. (June 1994)

*Today's Students, Yesterday's Schooling,* The Executive Educator, Volume 16, Number 6. (June 1994)

*Answering the Call for School Reform,* LDA News, Learning Disabilities Association of New York State, Volume 33, Number 1. (Winter 1994)

*High Schools Take the Wrong Road,* IEEE Spectrum, Volume 30, Number 9. (September 1993)

*Quality in Education: A New Collaborative Initiative,* Focus, National Center for Manufacturing Sciences. (August 1993)

*The Skills Students Need for Success in the Workplace,* Administrator, South Carolina Association of School Administrators, Volume 7, Number 2 (Winter 1993)

*Answering the Call for School Reform,* The Balance Sheet, South-Western Publishing Company, Volume 74, Number 2. (Winter 1993)

*The Changing Nature of Work: An Educator's Definition of Technological Literacy*, IBM Exchange, Volume 6, IBM Canada, Ltd. (1990)

*Business Education in the 1990s – A Window of Opportunity*. Strategic Planning for the 1990s, National Business Education Yearbook, No. 28. (1990)

*The Future of Business Education*, Business Education Yearbook, National Business Education Association. (1989)

*Vocational Education – The Second Wave of Educational Reform*, American Vocational Association Journal. (April 1989)

*Projections and Implications of Social, Economic, and Demographic Changes for Business Education*, Business Education Yearbook, National Business Education Association. (1987)

### ***CIVIC RESPONSIBILITIES***

FOUNDED — Wildwood\* Institute 1995

PUBLISHED — *The Best They Can Be: The Wildwood\* Story*, 1998

FOUNDED — Wildwood\* Pet Therapy Program, 1999

MEMBER — Wildwood\* Advisory Group, 1999

CHAIR — Wildwood\* Major Donor Capital Campaign, 2006

MEMBER — Bishop Committee, United Methodist Church, 2000

MEMBER — Niskayuna Central School District Budget Committee

CHAIRPERSON — Board of Trustees, Shenendehowa United Methodist Church

CHAIRPERSON — Council on Ministries, Shenendehowa United Methodist Church

MEMBER— Finance Committee, Shenendehowa United Methodist Church

MEMBER — Board of Directors, Shenendehowa Nursery School

\*Wildwood Programs is *A Lifeline for a Lifetime*. Working collaboratively with families, Wildwood Programs empowers and enables children and adults with neurologically-based learning disabilities, autism and other developmental disorders to lead independent, productive and fulfilling lives.

Dr. Willard Daggett founded the International Center for Leadership in Education (ICLE) in 1991. Between 1978 and 1991, Dr. Daggett held key leadership roles at the New York State Education Department (NYSED) where he led ambitious efforts to restructure the PreK–12 instructional program in New York. Prior to his work at NYSED, he worked as a teacher, and later, as an administrator.

In the later part of the 20<sup>th</sup> century, forward looking educators began to call on schools to teach a new set of basic skills—a combination of hard and soft skills that the younger generations would need to acquire and master to be successful in a rapidly changing world. Even before smart phones and artificial intelligence, these educators could see the direction that advancements in technology were taking. It also became clear that business and industry leaders would be instrumental in identifying and defining the relevant skills needed to be proficient entry-level employees.

Bill Daggett became the national leader in addressing this challenge. He was a rare educator who also had a firm grasp on the demands of the workplace. Subsequent to the 1983 report on the state of American schools, *Nation at Risk*, Dr. Daggett assumed the lead for New York State to redirect PreK–12 education in a way that would focus on preparing students for success in a society and workplace that was shifting rapidly.

Working with business, education, union, and political leaders in New York, Dr. Daggett created and later chaired the 18-month-long “Futuring” initiative, which was a collaboration of ten interlocking commissions. Dr. Daggett’s work with the Futuring Committee led to the several policy and program changes in New York State, as well as a series of national initiatives in which he played a central role as an advisor and/or consultant:

- Repositioned Vocational and Occupational Education policy in New York and later renamed it Career and Technical Education (CTE).
- Restructured old vocational programs that were focused on a limited number of entry-level jobs to a broader set of career-focused programs, thus preparing students for entry and potential advancement in economically viable careers.
- Created the first technology education requirement for all students in New York State.
- Developed a series of required applied academic requirements for the new CTE programs.
- Rewrote the teacher certification requirements for all CTE programs to include a stronger background in applied academics.
- Led the rewriting of the state CTE curriculum and initiated statewide testing requirements around the more rigorous technical and applied academic requirements.
- Guided several national organizations to rewrite their mission statements and rename themselves to reflect this philosophical shift, including:

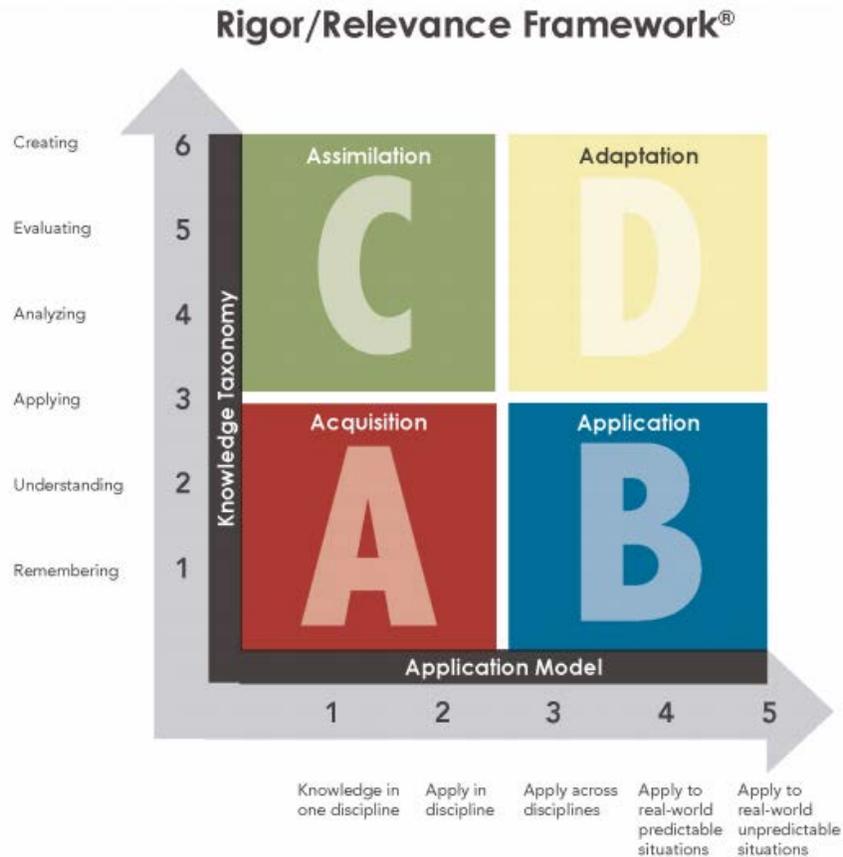
- Association of Career and Technical Education (ACTE); formerly known as American Vocational Association
- Technology Education Association (TEA); formerly known as American Vocational Association

Following his success in restructuring vocational programs into ones that were career-focused, Dr. Daggett assumed a leadership role in remodeling the entire PreK–12 instructional program in New York State through a comprehensive initiative named the Regents Action Plan. Working with education, business, union, and political leaders, the Regents Action Plan led to an increase in the rigor and relevance of these instructional programs, as well as the number of statewide assessments in reading, writing, and mathematics. Dr. Daggett led the writing of state policies and regulations and managed the curriculum development and testing of the new requirements.

In 1991, based upon his work in New York State, Dr. Daggett was asked by the Council of Chief State School Officers (CCSSO) to assist many states across the country in restructuring both their CTE and academic programs. To seize this opportunity to effect change in education more broadly, he left the New York State Education Department and founded ICLE.

In his work with CCSSO, and nearly half of the state education departments across the country, he was regularly asked to identify schools, states, and countries that were most successful at implementing more rigorous and relevant academic and CTE programs. To meet this demand, Dr. Daggett organized the first Model Schools Conference, which for 27 years has showcased the most successful school practices in the United States and abroad to attending school, district, and state leaders. The first conference was held in 1993 in Raleigh, North Carolina, and drew more than 1,300 senior school officials to the four-day event. By 1996, the Model Schools Conference had grown to 4,000 attendees. Since 2000, Model Schools Conference has drawn 5,000-8,000 education stakeholders each year. Since the inception of Model Schools Conference, ICLE has showcased only those schools that have been successful at moving ALL students to a more rigorous and relevant instructional program. Dr. Daggett is a firm believer that all means ALL.

To help guide schools in moving toward a more rigorous and relevant instructional program, Dr. Daggett created the Rigor/Relevance Framework®, which has become a cornerstone of school reform in hundreds of districts across the country:



The Rigor/Relevance Framework is a tool used to examine curriculum, instruction, and assessment. The Rigor/Relevance Framework is based on two dimensions of higher standards and student achievement.

First, there is the Knowledge Taxonomy, a continuum based on the six levels of Bloom's Taxonomy, which describes the increasingly complex ways in which we think. The low end involves acquiring knowledge and being able to recall or locate that knowledge. The high end labels the more complex ways in which individuals use knowledge, such as taking several pieces of knowledge and combining them in both logical and creative ways.

The second continuum, known as the Application Model, is one of action. Its five levels describe putting knowledge to use. While the low end is knowledge acquired for its own sake, the high end signifies use of that knowledge to solve complex real-world problems and to create unique projects, designs, and other works for use in real-world situations.

The Rigor/Relevance Framework has four quadrants. Each is labeled with a term that characterizes the learning or student performance at that level. The aim of the Rigor/Relevance Framework is to promote learning that is both high in rigor and relevance, which signifies Quadrant D – Adaptation. In Quadrant D, students have the competence to think in complex ways and apply knowledge and skills they have acquired. Even when confronted with perplexing

unknowns, students are able to use extensive knowledge and skill to create solutions and take action that further develops their skills and knowledge.

The Rigor/Relevance Framework is easy to understand. With its simple, straightforward structure, it can serve as a bridge between school and the community. It offers a common language with which to express the notion of a more rigorous and relevant curriculum. The Rigor/Relevance Framework is also versatile; it can be used in the development of instruction and assessment. Likewise, teachers can use it to measure their progress in adding rigor and relevance to instruction and to select appropriate instructional strategies to meet learner needs and higher achievement goals.

To further this mission, Dr. Daggett and his wife, Bonnie, donated profits from ICLE to establish the Successful Practices Network in 2000. Since then, SPN has assisted more than 600 schools nationwide. The Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation has contributed more than \$10 million to the work of SPN.

Dr. Daggett continues to be meet with and speak to school districts, state and national associations, and state education departments who seek assistance in creating the positive and supportive culture that is critical to student and teacher success and the appropriate instructional programs to move ALL students to a more rigorous and relevant instructional program.

Dr. Daggett has presented in every state numerous times, as well as 29 nations around the world. Each year he presents to approximately 60,000 people, delivering about 125 presentations annually. Since founding ICLE, he has spoken to approximately 1.5 million people.

Dr. Daggett has been a featured or keynote speaker for key education groups/events including:

- National School Boards Association National Conference
- American Association of School Administrators National Conference
- State Superintendent's and State School Boards Annual Conferences in nearly every state over the past 27 years. In just the last three years he has spoken in:
  - West Virginia
  - Alaska
  - Ohio
  - Massachusetts
  - Maryland
  - Kansas
  - Missouri
  - North Carolina
  - Georgia
  - Oklahoma
  - Montana
  - Wyoming
  - Vermont
  - Arizona
  - New Jersey
  - Oregon
  - Idaho
  - Connecticut
- State School Board Association Conventions in approximately 30 states over the past 27 years. In just the last three years he has spoken in:
  - West Virginia
  - New York
  - Wisconsin
  - Missouri
  - Kansas
  - Kentucky
  - Montana
  - Virginia
  - Arkansas

- State Principal Association Annual Conferences – keynoted for both elementary principals’ and secondary principals’ association conferences in approximately 30 states over the past 27 years
- National School Boards Association – Conducted a day-long leadership training to executive directors and state presidents from all 50 states
- Association for Career and Technical Education (ACTE) – keynoted national conference and state conferences
- Model Schools Conference – founded and keynoted this national 4-day event for the past 27 years.

In addition, Dr. Daggett has written more than 22 textbooks and professional books and more than 100 white papers and articles in professional journals. He has also served as chair of the following national studies:

- The Council of Chief State School Officers and Successful Practices Network national study of the nation's most rapidly improving schools, funded by The Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation (2005-2010)
- The AASA, The School Superintendents Association, and Successful Practices Network study of the nation’s most successful innovative districts (2017-2019).

Education Advisory Boards:

- NASA Education Advisory Board
- USA Today Education Advisory Board
- National Dropout Prevention Center Advisory Council

Advisor on Education:

- Young Presidents Organization (Corporate Chief Executive Officer under the age of 45)
- National Manufactures’ Association

Advisor to Foundations:

- The Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation
- The J.A. and Kathryn Albertson Foundation
- Raise Your Hand Texas Foundation
- The Burroughs Wellcome Fund

Recognition:

Dr. Daggett has received the Excellence in Education Award from the University of New York at Albany and recognized in Temple University’s Gallery of Success.



THE STATE EDUCATION DEPARTMENT / THE UNIVERSITY OF THE STATE OF NEW YORK

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Commissioner of Education  
President of the University of the State of New York  
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Albany, New York 12234

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August 19, 2019

Kirk Hartzler, Ed.D.  
Superintendent  
Union Public Schools  
8506 E. 61<sup>st</sup> Street  
Tulsa, OK 74133

Dear Dr. Hartzler:

It is a privilege to write this letter of recommendation in support of Dr. Willard (Bill) Daggett for the 2020 Brock International Prize in Education Award. Bill's influence and dedication to guarantee K-12 students from all backgrounds and circumstances a more rigorous and relevant education is unparalleled.

In 2005, I was appointed superintendent of Hillsborough County Schools in Florida. As the 7<sup>th</sup> largest district in the country at the time, we shared many of the challenges of large urban districts in regard to improving student performance. Knowing Bill's ability to communicate complex messages to varying audiences, I asked him to address more than 20,000 district staff at Amalie Arena in Tampa. During that presentation, Bill illustrated to all staff—from teachers to custodians to the central office and everyone in between—the importance of building on everyone's own experiences to create a culture that supports student achievement.

Over the next 10 years as superintendent, I continued to rely on Bill's guidance as a thought leader to develop and later sustain a districtwide culture that was both future-focused and empowering. His Rigor/Relevance Framework was central in our effort to improve student engagement, teacher instruction and ultimately student performance while preparing our graduates for success in career and life.

In 2015, I was appointed Commissioner of Education and President of the University of the State of New York. My senior staff and I continued to seek Bill's counsel in how to best educate children to use technology to be successful in the modern economic landscape. Among our efforts was our work with the New York State School Board Association to conduct six regional summits for school administrators and school boards. Bill and I co-presented at these summits but, again, it was Bill's ability to motivate decisionmakers to commit to improvement strategies that made the summits successful.

From both a district- and state-level, I have witnessed Bill's unique ability to communicate the importance of looking critically at instructional practices and being entirely future-focused, which requires an unwavering devotion to raising levels of rigor, relevance, and relationships for all students.

Any agency that has engaged with Bill during his 27 years of examining the nation's most rapidly improving schools and sharing their best practices has surely benefited from his knowledge and insight. I extend my highest support of his nomination for the 2020 Brock Prize.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "MaryEllen Elia". The signature is written in black ink and is positioned above the printed name and title.

MaryEllen Elia  
Commissioner



August 12, 2019

Kirt Hartzler, Ed.D.  
Superintendent  
Union Public Schools  
8506 E. 61<sup>st</sup> Street  
Tulsa, OK 74133

Dear Dr. Hartzler,

I am writing to you in support of the nomination of Dr. Willard (Bill) Daggett to receive the 2019 Brock Prize. I cannot think of a more deserving recipient of this prestigious award. When I think of the most influential and dedicated champions of public education in our country Bill Daggett clearly stands out. He has no peer when it comes to the impact he has had on policy and practice across k-12 education. From the most rural isolated districts to the largest urban districts one can see his influence.

He truly is a thought leader who is sought out by governors, business leaders, and educators. I suspect there is not a single district across the 15,000 in our country that has not utilized his Rigor and Relevance Framework. His influence can be seen in federal policy as it relates to standards, growth measures and the importance of college and career readiness. He was championing these issues long before No Child Left Behind and our current Every Students Succeeds Act.

Bill's emphasis and vision of educating every child can be seen in his passion for special needs children. He has inspired thousands of educators every year to re-examine how they educate the "whole child" and every child. And Bill knows this community of children not only as an educator but as a parent who has lovingly dealt with a severely handicapped child.

For as long as I have known Bill he has been a fearless warrior in the educational reform movement. No matter how small the school or district and no matter how difficult it is to get to, Bill will meet with them and support their efforts to improve. He is the consummate change agent that is always pushing educators to improve. I hate to imagine the educational community without Bill Daggett. He is a national treasure and I sincerely hope that he receives the Brock Prize.

Sincerely,

Malbert Smith

**Malbert Smith III, Ph.D.**  
CEO, President & Co-Founder  
MetaMetrics  
919-547-3403

Research Professor  
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## North Carolina School Superintendents' Association

Jack Hoke, Executive Director  
PO Box 6188  
Hickory, NC 28603  
(828) 320-6767  
jackhoke12@gmail.com

August 16, 2019

Kirk Hartzler, Ed.D.  
Superintendent  
Union Public Schools  
8506 E. 61st Street  
Tulsa, Ok 74133

Dear Dr. Hartzler,

I am honored to submit this letter of recommendation on behalf of Dr. Willard (Bill) Daggett for the 2019 Brock Prize. I have reviewed the criteria for the award, and I believe Dr. Daggett embodies all the characteristics described in the qualifications section. Below are a few of the many attributes that make Dr. Daggett an exemplary candidate for the award. I welcome additional conversation if needed.

I have worked with Dr. Daggett over the past eight years as Executive Director of the North Carolina School Superintendents' Association (NCSSA.) He assisted NCSSA in the development of the Next Generation Superintendent Executive Leadership Program: A Blueprint for Supporting and Building Transformational Education Leaders. As a result of his work, 225 superintendents have attended the leadership development program and have effectively been able to serve their schools and our state's 1.5 million students.

Dr. Daggett also assisted in the creation of the Future Focused Schools Network in North Carolina. The Future Focused Network engages NC superintendents and district teams by keeping them apprised of the new and emerging technologies and education research across the nation. In addition, the network allows time for reflection and problem solving regarding the challenges and needs of each school district. This program enables North Carolina schools to plan for all our student's future, not our past. Dr. Daggett's belief that ALL students need an academically rigorous and relevant curriculum based on positive relationships has become the focus of change and continuous school improvement for North Carolina districts.

The Brock Prize is about innovative ideas that evoke meaningful change in how individuals or organizations think and act. Dr. Daggett has devoted his career to what the Brock Prize honors - innovative ideas that help educators advance school improvement and increase student achievement.

I am honored to highly recommend Dr. Bill Daggett for the 2019 Brock Prize. If you would like to discuss my support for Dr. Daggett and his nomination for the Brock Prize, please do not hesitate to contact me.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Jack Hoke".

Jack Hoke, Executive Director  
North Carolina School Superintendents' Association

Letter of Recommendation for Dr. Willard (Bill) Daggett

August 19, 2019

To Whom it May Concern,

I am honored to offer this letter of support for The Brock International Prize in Education award on behalf of Bill Daggett. I have known, admired and experienced Bill's work for over 25 years. Drawing on my experiences as a superintendent, the Commissioner of Education in Vermont, President of ASCD, Program Director for the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation, President for the International Center for Leadership in Education, Dean for the School of Education at Southern New Hampshire University and now as President of the Successful Practices Network/National Dropout Prevention Center, I can state confidently that Bill ranks in the top 1% of educators I have known and worked with throughout my career. In particular, I have valued so much of Bill's continuous focus on two key areas, the Rigor Relevance Instructional Framework, and his relentless push to educate the children we have today for the world they will live in, rather than the children we use to have and the world we use to live in. Stated simply, Bill pushes educators and systems to be future focused rather than forward focused. Most systems are forward focused, meaning, they look back at what they did the previous year to build and improve upon their new year's work. As Bill would say, "You can't build the future by perfecting the past!" Future focused systems look to where we are going (the future), and drive system change based on those future indicators.

Dr. Daggett as many call him, doesn't get lost in the talk, jargon, politics, or flavor of the month when it comes to educational transformation and reform. Bill is about action and he has stayed true to the importance of rigor, relevance and relationships in driving powerful learning to enhance the future for every student.

The core of all great leaders is driven by connecting their voice (beliefs) to their touch (competence). Bill's voice is strong and influential, having authored 22 books and speaking annually to approximately 66,000 educators. His touch can be seen through the numerous school districts, state departments of education and national associations he has been asked to advise.

The Brock International Prize in Education is built upon the belief that the most important thing we do in life is to educate the next generation. The focus of this unique award is designed around an idea impacting education and not on a career, clearly Dr. Daggett's future focused agenda is well aligned to the belief driving the Brock award.

So, I'd like to share a story about Bill that I wrote for the foreword of his latest book. I believe it speaks to the attributes for this award:

Here's a secret that few people know about Bill Daggett. Since he and his wife, Bonnie, founded the International Center for Leadership in Education, Bill hasn't worked a day in his life. Not one day. I know because, as someone once said, if you love and believe in what you do for a living, you will never have to "work" a single day in your life. Bill absolutely and wholeheartedly believes in and loves what he does for the future of educational systems and the youth in our country. Bill passionately believes that given the

support and encouragement, every child can learn and achieve to their fullest potential, and he lives out this belief every day.

His commitment to the future of our children and to the educators who work with them is why I decided to join the International Center in 2003; to have the opportunity to assist, work with, and most importantly, to learn from Bill.

To help illustrate Bill's internal drive and what he is all about, let me share a recollection.

In any given year that I was working with Bill in those years we both would travel a lot. We calculated something upwards of 125,000 miles a year each, and each trip included the typical disruptions, cancellations, and frustrations that are a part of the daily life of a traveler. Travel isn't always exciting, and it isn't always pleasant, especially after a 10-hour day of mentally demanding work.

Well, as often happens, one night my 9 p.m. connecting flight out of Chicago to Seattle for an important presentation was delayed to 11 p.m., then 1:30 a.m. ... and then 2:30 a.m. I was stuck sitting at Gate 66 for hours - aggravated and worried about my commitment in Seattle the next day. As I sat there at midnight feeling sorry for myself and wondering why I chose this profession as a researcher/speaker, my cell phone rang, and it was Bill.

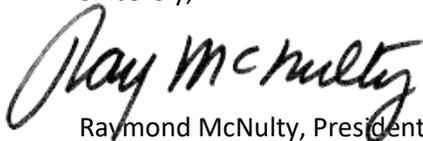
Bill, too, was stuck in an airport waiting for his delayed flight from Indianapolis to Orlando, where he was scheduled to speak the next morning. He was as frustrated and as nervous about getting to his destination and audience as I was, but instead of complaining, Bill wanted to talk to me about an idea that had been shared with him by some teachers who had attended his keynote presentation at a conference that afternoon in central Indiana. The teachers had got him thinking about a way to build leadership capacity for school improvement by engaging more staff in decision making. He wanted to bounce the idea off me.

Don't forget, this was midnight for Bill, too - after an equally long and grueling day. But rather than letting his travel setback get him down, Bill was in his element, in creative-thought overdrive (yes, that would be Quadrant D of the Rigor/Relevance Framework), thinking through an innovative idea and potentially an effective and efficient new practice that could assist educators in their teaching. His reflections and probing questions diverted my attention from my travel plight and rescued me, sending me back to remembering why I love working in education.

This is a side of Bill that few people see. He never stops thinking about the future and ways to improve our schools for our children, all our children. This story reflects who Bill Daggett really is, a profound leader in education who thoughtfully connects his voice with his touch. I believe that the Brock International Prize in Education is best manifested by Bill's constant charge to educators to look ahead to the future not the past to shape the learning for all our children.

Therefore, I am so honored to support Dr. Willard R. Daggett for this prestigious award.

Sincerely,



Raymond McNulty, President  
Successful Practices Network, Inc.  
National Dropout Prevention Center



North Carolina Science, Mathematics, and Technology Education Center

August 8, 2019

Kirt Hartzler, Ed.D.  
Superintendent  
Union Public Schools  
8506 E. 61<sup>st</sup> Street  
Tulsa, OK 74133

Dear Dr. Hartzler,

I am pleased and excited to write this letter of recommendation for Dr. Willard Daggett (Bill) for the 2019 Brock Prize. I have reviewed the criteria for the award, and I believe that Bill models all the characteristics described in the qualifications needed to be considered as a nominee for this prestigious honor.

I have known Bill for more than 30 years and have worked with him all over the country and internationally. His influence is vast, and he has advanced educational improvement in districts, schools, and classrooms where his design theory has been implemented. The “Daggett” systems work for school and instructional improvement everywhere implemented.

The Daggett Rigor and Relevance Framework leads to an understanding of the relationship of content to application. The Framework developed an easily understood vision of how what is learned in the classroom translates to useful skills that are critical and essential in becoming college and career prepared. His Rigor and Relevance Framework is used in thousands of schools and classrooms.

The Daggett System for Effective Instruction is another example of his ability to make theory understandable and useful for school and instructional improvement. The model offers a pathway to address organizational leadership, instructional leadership, and teaching to improve effectiveness which results in rigorous learning for all students. The high value or return on investment derived from the implementation of the Daggett System is the improved learning environment for ALL students. Learning for All has always driven Bill’s innovative designs and work.

The Brock Prize is not intended to recognize an exemplary career or meritorious teaching, administration, or service with a primary local impact. If it did, Bill would meet

those criteria as well. The Brock Prize is about innovative ideas that make meaningful changes in how individuals or organizations think and act.

Bill has devoted a lifetime to precisely what the Brock Prize honors – developing systems and tools that can improve the behavior of educators in a manner that gives them the skills and knowledge needed to give all students an opportunity to become all that they can be in life as adults.

I am pleased to make this recommendation without reservation.

Respectively,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Sam Houston".

Sam Houston, Ed.D.  
President and CEO  
North Carolina Science, Mathematics, and Technology Education Center  
21 T. W. Alexander Drive  
Research Triangle Park  
Durham, NC 27709



NATIONAL  
DROPOUT  
PREVENTION  
CENTER

713 East Greenville Street, Suite D, #108  
Anderson, SC 29621

Email: [ndpc@dropoutprevention.org](mailto:ndpc@dropoutprevention.org)  
[www.dropoutprevention.org](http://www.dropoutprevention.org)

August 17, 2019

Dr. Kirt Hartzler, Superintendent  
Union Public Schools  
8506 E. 61<sup>st</sup> Street  
Tulsa, OK 74133

Dear Dr. Hartzler:

It is my pleasure to recommend Dr. Bill Daggett as a most deserving recipient of the Brock International Prize in Education. I make this recommendation from my perspective as a former principal, professional development director, and intermediate unit director, and from my current positions as Director of the National Dropout Prevention Center and as a local school board member.

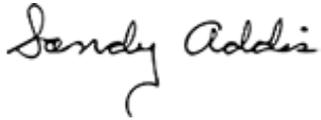
Dr. Daggett has significantly influenced education across the United States and internationally through his development, delivery, and continued support of the Rigor, Relevance, and Relationships Framework. This innovative and forward-thinking approach to school improvement and leadership has influenced the thinking and practice of countless educators and has equipped them with common language, understandings, and skills to significantly improve school quality and student outcomes. The Rigor, Relevance, and Relationships Framework has unified educators, given them focus, and helped them to generate thousands more graduates who are better prepared for life and employment.

I am one of the countless school leaders whose thoughts, practices, and productivity have benefited from Dr. Daggett's work. I used the Rigor, Relevance, and Relationships Framework to guide me as a principal. I have incorporated the concepts into professional development offerings for other school leaders and used the Framework as a foundation of school system strategic plans that I've facilitated. I have utilized the Framework to shape the school improvement services of a 14-district intermediate unit and saw those districts make significant gains in student outcomes as a result. Just last year, Dr. Daggett shared strategies with and inspired the work of 1,500 educators and support staff members in the district where I serve as a school board member.

It is significant that Dr. Daggett did not simply develop and popularize an innovative school improvement model that changed the landscape of education. Since launch of the Rigor, Relevance, and Relationships Framework, he has creatively worked to improve the model, to communicate it, and to create services, mechanisms, and supports for educators to best utilize it in their local contexts. When Dr. Daggett identified the need to increase focus on and supports for the Relationships segment of the Rigor, Relevance, and Relationships Framework, he orchestrated the merger of the National Dropout Prevention Center (NDPC) with the Successful Practices Network, a non-profit that he founded several years earlier, and has since supported and guided NDPC's work to develop and deliver tools and supports that help schools create relationship-based cultures for improved graduation outcomes.

In my work across the nation with educators, schools, districts, intermediate units, and state departments, I find few educators who are not utilizing and benefiting from the Rigor, Relevance, and Relationships Framework. I find that while many school leaders know of Dr. Daggett and associate him with this body of work, all know and utilize the Rigor, Relevance, and Relationships Framework. In 46 years as an educator, I have seen no research, practice, or innovation that has had a more significant impact on the direction and improvement of schools and student outcomes than the work of Dr. Bill Daggett.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Sandy Addis". The signature is written in black ink and is positioned above the typed name and title.

Sandy Addis, Ed.D.

Director, National Dropout Prevention Center



# New York State School Boards Association

*Better School Boards Lead to Better Student Performance*

24 Century Hill Drive, Suite 200  
Latham, New York 12110-2125

Tel: 518.783.0200 | Fax: 518.783.0211  
[www.nyssba.org](http://www.nyssba.org)

August 12, 2019

Kirt Hartzler, Ed.D.  
Superintendent  
Union Public Schools  
8506 E. 61<sup>st</sup> Street  
Tulsa, OK 74133

Dear Dr. Hartzler:

I have been afforded the honor of writing a recommendation in support of Dr. Willard Daggett's nomination for the 2019 Brock International Prize in Education Award.

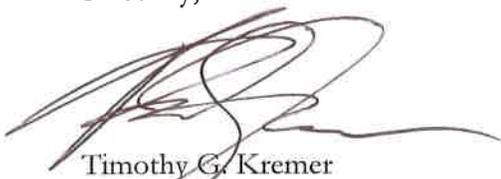
I have known Bill for decades. Our paths first crossed when I hired him to keynote the annual convention for the Ohio School Boards Association. His message regarding educational rigor and relevance was truly inspirational. From then on, I was a Daggett disciple.

Years later, I moved to New York to lead the New York State School Boards Association. I came to learn that Bill's home and office were a short distance from my own, giving me ready access to one of the most compelling thinkers and presenters in the country.

Over the years, I have invited Bill to keynote the NYSSBA Annual Convention, where he was a huge hit. He has also headlined two highly successful series of NYSSBA summits held throughout New York, one regarding learning standards and a second projecting what the world will be like for the graduating class of 2030. He has also assisted my Board of Directors in focusing on the future for the benefit of NYSSBA members and the students we serve. Bill is a trusted advisor, a can't-miss presenter and my secret weapon when my members need to be reminded of the purpose and function of public education going forward.

In my forty years in the business, nobody has influenced my thinking more than Bill Daggett. I highly recommend him for the 2019 Brock International Prize in Education Award.

Sincerely,



Timothy G. Kremer  
Executive Director



National School Boards Association  
1680 Duke St. FL2, Alexandria, VA 22314-3493  
Phone: (703) 838.6722 • Fax: (703) 683.7590  
www.nsba.org

August 12, 2019

Kirt Hartzler, Ed.D.  
Superintendent  
Union Public Schools  
8506 E. 61<sup>st</sup> Street  
Tulsa, OK 74133

Dear Dr. Hartzler,

It is a special honor for me to write this letter of recommendation for Dr. Bill Daggett, one of the premier educational leaders in the country. His work on redesigning schools for the future is well known and, more importantly, it is serving to transform how education is delivered in a growing number of districts across America.

Bill Daggett is a popular and persuasive public speaker, as evidenced by the number of times we, our state associations of school boards and many other educational organizations have invited him to keynote major conferences. He does a masterful job of helping an audience appreciate why schools need to change, and how. He presents his case with data and examples, and with humor. Invariably, I am impressed not only by the attention being paid to him during his speech but by the many hallway conversations of attendees afterwards, discussing his message. His impact is palpable.

I usually do not write letters of support like this, given the number of requests received. But, in this case, I was eager to offer these words on behalf of a person whom I admire greatly. Bill Daggett is worthy of the Brock Prize because he has, in many ways, had a significant impact on both the practice and understanding of education. His work is making an enormous difference, and the students in public schools are the true beneficiaries.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Thomas J. Gentzel".

Thomas J. Gentzel  
Executive Director and CEO



*The leading advocate for public education*

### **Selected White Papers:**

- [Innovating for Impact - Five-Part White Paper](#)
- [Reading Skills and the Career Readiness Gap: A Study of High School Students' Preparedness for College and Career](#)
- [Successful Practices in Addressing Disproportionality: A Process for Reversing Unconscious Bias in Education](#)
- [Classroom Observations Designed to Work: Better Instructional Support. Better Teachers. Better Student Outcomes](#)
- [National Dropout Prevention Center: Trauma-Skilled Schools Model](#)
- [Meeting the Current Challenges - Five-part white paper](#)
- [VSBA Newsletter 2018](#)
- [Temple Univ. College of Education: \*Better Teachers, Better Students\*](#)
- [Meeting the Challenge: Envisioning Schools That Can Address Both Academic and Non-Cognitive Skills](#)
- [The Daggett System for Effective Instruction: Where Research and Best Practices Meet](#)
- [Rigor/Relevance Framework®: A Guide to Focusing Resources to Increase Student Achievement \[also included later in portfolio\]](#)
- [Addressing Whole Child Growth through Strong Relationships: The Evidence Based Connections between Academic and Social-Emotional Learning \[also included later in portfolio\]](#)
- [The Tipping Point: Developing a strategic plan for addressing social/emotional learning systemwide \[also included later in portfolio\]](#)

### **Model Schools Conference Resources:**

- [Clip: Troup County Success Story](#)
- [Clip: Doubling Down on Proficiency](#)
- [Clip: The Whole Child](#)
- [Clip: Future Focus](#)
- [2019 Model Schools Conference Program](#)

- [Videos of Full-Length MSC 2019 Keynote Presentations](#) (four keynotes, including Dr. Daggett's)

### **Selected Blog Posts**

- [25 Years, 552 Model Schools, 100,000+ Educators: What Have We Learned?](#)
- [3 Things Educators Should Expect This Year in Their Schools](#)
- [The Ripple Effect: Small Changes Can Have a Big Impact on Your District](#)
- [How Can School Leaders Remain Objective When Discussing Politics?](#)
- [Redefining Literacy](#)
- [5 Things the Nation's Most Rapidly Improving Schools Have in Common](#)

### **Selected Vlog Posts: *Rigor & Relevance with Bill Daggett***

- [Vlog: Boardroom to Classroom: Rigorous Learning for ALL](#)
- [Vlog: Preparing Students for the 4<sup>th</sup> Industrial Revolution](#)
- [Vlog: Social and Emotional Development: Focusing on Kids](#)
- [Vlog: Are We Preparing Students for Non-Existent Jobs?](#)
- [Vlog: Why Academic Excellence Isn't Enough to Achieve Equity](#)

### **Other Resources**

- [CCSO/Gates Grant Final Report](#)
- [AASA Case Studies](#) (19 completed case studies; six more to be completed and posted this fall, for a total of 25)
- [ICLE Case Studies](#)
- [Dr. Daggett Photo Collage](#)

# Rigor/Relevance Framework®

## A Guide to Focusing Resources to Increase Student Performance



**Willard R. Daggett, Ed.D.**  
Founder and Chairman, International Center for Leadership in Education



A division of Houghton Mifflin Harcourt

## Rigor/Relevance Framework

The Rigor/Relevance Framework® is a tool developed by staff of the International Center for Leadership in Education to examine curriculum, instruction, and assessment. The Rigor/Relevance Framework is based on two dimensions of higher standards and student achievement.

First, a continuum of knowledge describes the increasingly complex ways in which we think. This Knowledge Taxonomy is based on the six levels of Bloom’s Taxonomy:

6. Evaluation
5. Synthesis
4. Analysis
3. Application
2. Comprehension
1. Knowledge/Awareness



The low end of this continuum involves acquiring knowledge and being able to recall or locate that knowledge in a simple manner. Just as a computer completes a word search in a word processing program, a competent person at this level can scan thousands of bits of information in the brain to locate that desired knowledge.

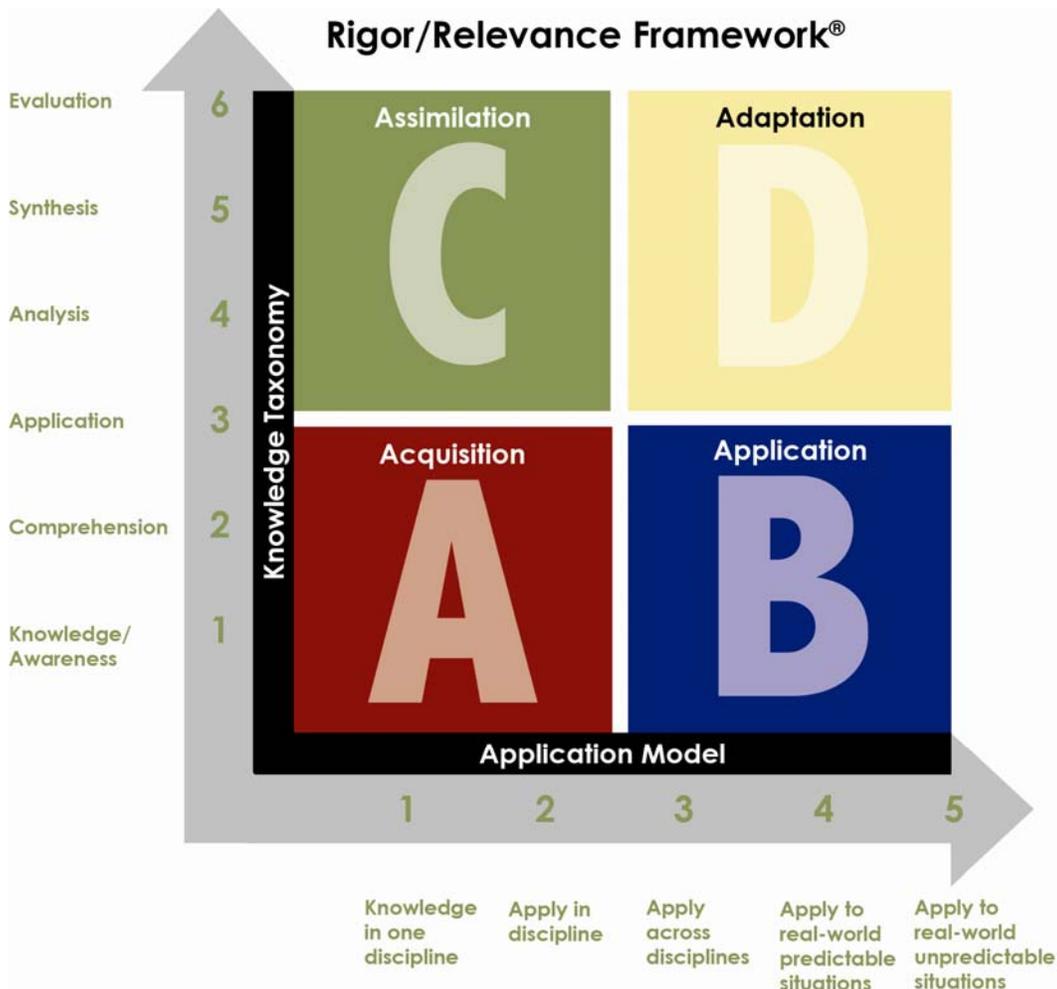
The high end of the Knowledge Taxonomy labels more complex ways in which individuals use knowledge. At this level, knowledge is fully integrated into one’s mind, and individuals can do much more than locate information—they can take several pieces of knowledge and combine them in both logical and creative ways. Assimilation of knowledge is an accurate way to describe this high level of the thinking continuum. Assimilation is often a higher order thinking skill: at this level, the student can solve multi-step problems, create unique work, and devise solutions.

The second continuum, created by Dr. Bill Daggett, is known as the Application Model. The five levels of this action continuum are:

- |                                |                        |                             |   |   |
|--------------------------------|------------------------|-----------------------------|---|---|
| 1. Knowledge in one discipline | 2. Apply in discipline | 3. Apply across disciplines | 4. Apply to real-world predictable situations | 5. Apply to real-world unpredictable situations |
|--------------------------------|------------------------|-----------------------------|---|---|



The Application Model describes putting knowledge to use. While the low end is knowledge acquired for its own sake, the high end signifies action—use of that knowledge to solve complex real-world problems and create projects, designs, and other works for use in real-world situations.



The Rigor/Relevance Framework has four quadrants.

**Quadrant A** represents simple recall and basic understanding of knowledge for its own sake. Quadrant C represents more complex thinking but still knowledge for its own sake. Examples of Quadrant A knowledge are knowing that the world is round and that Shakespeare wrote *Hamlet*.

**Quadrant C** embraces higher levels of knowledge, such as knowing how the U.S. political system works and analyzing the benefits and challenges of the cultural diversity of this nation versus other nations.

**Quadrants B and D** represent action or high degrees of application. Quadrant B would include knowing how to use math skills to make purchases and count change. The ability to access information in wide-area network systems and the ability to gather knowledge from a variety of sources to solve a complex problem in the workplace are types of Quadrant D knowledge.

Each of these four quadrants can also be labeled with a term that characterizes the learning or student performance.

**Quadrant A — Acquisition**

Students gather and store bits of knowledge and information. Students are primarily expected to remember or understand this acquired knowledge.

**Quadrant B — Application**

Students use acquired knowledge to solve problems, design solutions, and complete work. The highest level of application is to apply appropriate knowledge to new and unpredictable situations.

**Quadrant C — Assimilation**

Students extend and refine their acquired knowledge to automatically and routinely analyze and solve problems as well as create unique solutions.

**Quadrant D — Adaptation**

Students have the competence to think in complex ways and apply knowledge and skills they have acquired. Even when confronted with perplexing unknowns, students are able to use extensive knowledge and skill to create solutions and take action that further develops their skills and knowledge.

**Technical Reading and Writing Example**

Quadrant A—Recall definitions of various technical terms.

Quadrant B—Follow written directions to install new software on a computer.

Quadrant C—Compare and contrast several technical documents to evaluate purpose, audience, clarity.

Quadrant D—Write procedures for installing and trouble-shooting new software.

The Rigor/Relevance Framework is a fresh approach to looking at college- and career-ready standards and assessment. It is based on traditional elements of education, yet encourages movement from acquisition of knowledge to application of knowledge.

The framework is easy to understand. With its simple, straightforward structure, it can serve as a bridge between the school and the community. It offers a common language with which to express the notion of a more rigorous and relevant curriculum and encompasses much of what parents, business leaders, and community members want students to learn. The framework is versatile; it can be used in the development of instruction and assessment. Likewise, teachers can measure their progress in adding rigor and relevance to instruction and select appropriate instructional strategies to meet learner needs and higher achievement goals.

**Defining Rigor**

A versatile way to define the level of rigor of curriculum objectives, instructional activities, or assessments is the Knowledge Taxonomy Verb List (see page 6). The Verb List can be used either to create a desired level of expected student performance or to evaluate the level of existing curriculum, instruction or assessment.

An example of student performance at various levels follows. Notice each statement starts with a verb that comes from the appropriate section of the Verb List. The expected achievement level for teaching about nutrition can vary depending on the purpose of the instruction. If a teacher only wants students to acquire basic nutritional knowledge, a student performance set at level one or two is adequate. If the instruction is intended to have a more significant impact on nutritional habits, then some of the objectives need to be similar to levels four through six.

### Basic Nutrition

Level	Performance
1 Knowledge/Awareness	Label foods by nutritional groups.
2 Comprehension	Explain nutritional value of individual foods.
3 Application	Make use of nutritional guidelines when planning meals.
4 Analysis	Examine success in achieving nutritional goals.
5 Synthesis	Develop personal nutritional goals.
6 Evaluation	Appraise results of personal eating habits over time.

Note that each of the levels requires students to think differently. Levels four through six require more complex thinking than levels one through three.

When creating lesson plans and student objectives, selecting the proper word from the Knowledge Taxonomy Verb List can help describe the appropriate performance. Simply start with a verb from the desired level and finish the statement with a specific description of that skill or knowledge area.

The Verb List can also be used to evaluate existing lesson plans, assessments, and instructional experiences. Looking for verbs and identifying their level will give a good indication of the level of student performance in that instruction.

#### **Defining Relevance**

Defining the level of relevance of curriculum objectives and instructional activities is a little more difficult than determining the Knowledge Taxonomy level because there is no verb list. However, just as the Knowledge Taxonomy categorizes increasing levels of thinking, the Application Model describes increasingly complex applications of knowledge. Any student performance can be expressed as one of five levels of the Application Model. The Application Model Decision Tree (see page 7) can assist in setting the desired level of expected student performance in application by asking the questions: **Is it application? Is it real world? Is it unpredictable?**

The Basic Nutrition example that follows is similar to the one above in that it uses nutrition to describe student performance at various levels. Each level requires students to apply knowledge differently.

### Basic Nutrition

Level	Performance
1 Knowledge in One Discipline	Label foods by nutritional groups.
2 Application in One Discipline	Rank foods by nutritional value.
3 Interdisciplinary Application	Make cost comparisons of different foods considering nutritional value.
4 Real-World Predictable Situations	Develop a nutritional plan for a person with a health problem affected by food intake.
5 Real-World Unpredictable Situations	Devise a sound nutritional plan for a group of 3-year-olds who are picky eaters.

Similarly, the expected achievement level for teaching about nutrition can vary depending on the purpose of the instruction. If a teacher wants students only to acquire basic nutritional knowledge, a student

performance set at level one is adequate. If the instruction is intended to have a significant impact on nutritional habits, then some of the objectives need to be at levels four and five.

Use of the Decision Tree can help describe desired performance. Start by writing draft statements of student objectives and then use the Decision Tree to reflect on and revise these statements. The Decision Tree focuses on the three key characteristics that distinguish levels of the Application Model: application, real world, and unpredictability. The Decision Tree offers additional criteria to determine whether an objective meets the test of application, real world, and unpredictability.

The Decision Tree can also be used to evaluate existing lesson plans, assessments, and instructional experiences. Answer the questions to identify at which level of student performance that instruction or assessment is.

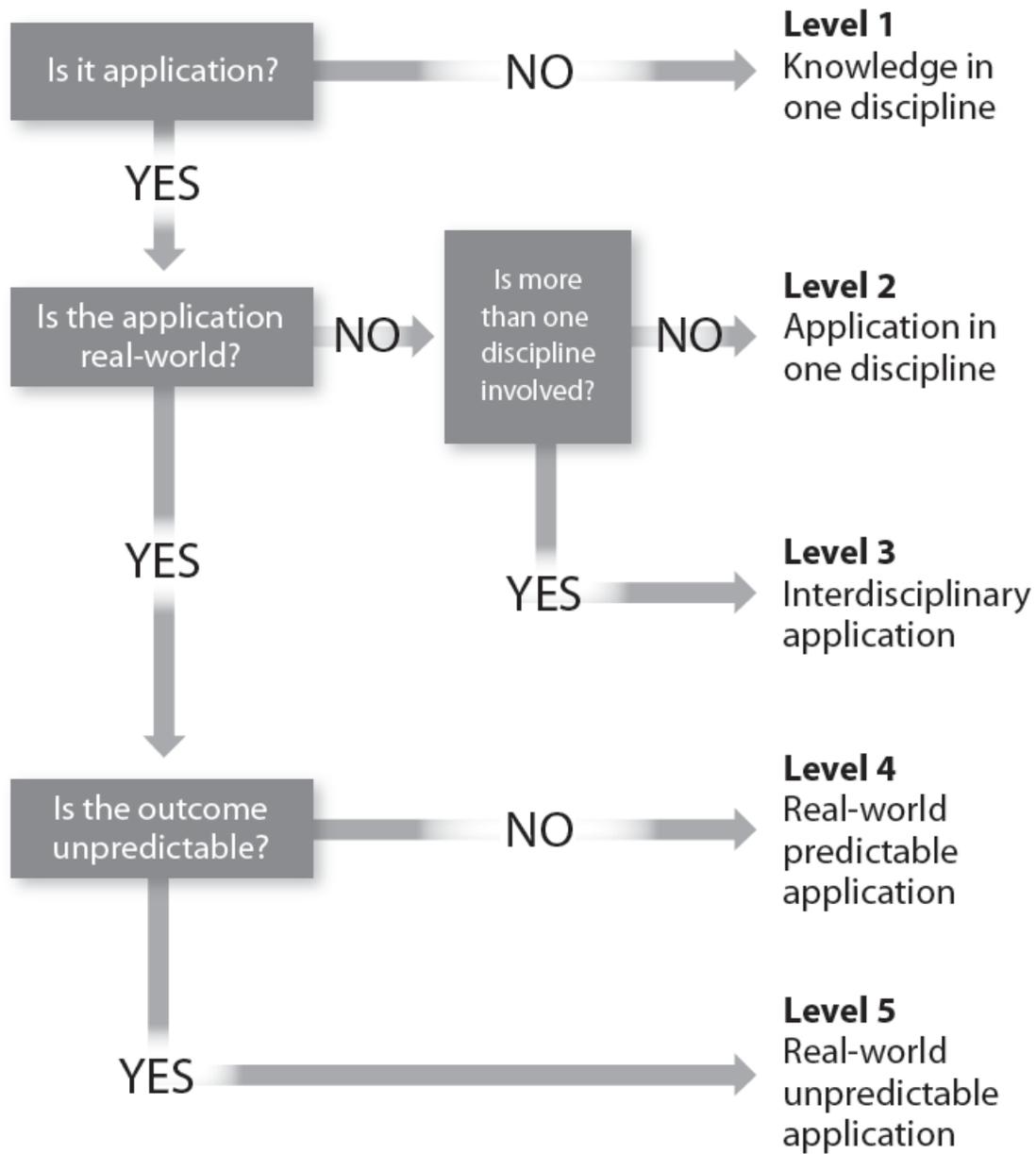
# Verb List by Quadrant

Use the Verb List by Quadrant to define the level of rigor. You can use this list to either create a desired level of expected student performance or to evaluate the level of existing curriculum, instruction, or assessment.

Quadrant A	Quadrant B	Quadrant C	Quadrant D
Calculate	Adjust	Analyze	Adapt
Choose	Apply	Categorize	Argue
Count	Build	Cite	Compose
Define	Collect	Classify	Conclude
Describe	Construct	Compare	Create
Find	Demonstrate	Conclude	Design
Identify	Display	Contrast	Develop
Label	Dramatize	Debate	Discover
List	Draw	Defend	Explore
Locate	Fix	Diagram	Formulate
Match	Follow	Differentiate	Invent
Memorize	Illustrate	Discriminate	Modify
Name	Interpret	Evaluate	Plan
Point to	Interview	Examine	Predict
Recall	Look up	Explain	Prioritize
Recite	Maintain	Express	Propose
Record	Make	Generate	Rate
Say	Measure	Infer	Recommend
Select	Model	Judge	Revise
Spell	Operate	Justify	Teach
View	Play	Prove	
	Practice	Research	
	Produce	Study	
	Relate	Summarize	
	Role-play		
	Sequence		
	Show		
	Solve		

# Application Model Decision Tree

Select a task, application, or activity. To determine the level of relevance, use the Application Model Decision Tree to reflect on it by answering the following questions.



# Addressing Whole Child Growth Through Strong Relationships:

The Evidence-Based Connections between  
Academic and Social-Emotional Learning

## Dr. Bill Daggett

CHAIRMAN AND FOUNDER, INTERNATIONAL CENTER FOR LEADERSHIP IN EDUCATION

## Dr. Stephanie M. Jones

DIRECTOR OF THE ECOLOGICAL APPROACHES TO SOCIAL EMOTIONAL LEARNING (EASEL) LAB  
AND PROFESSOR OF EDUCATION, HARVARD GRADUATE SCHOOL OF EDUCATION;  
THOUGHT LEADER, INTERNATIONAL CENTER FOR LEADERSHIP IN EDUCATION

June 2019



## Addressing Whole Child Growth Through Strong Relationships

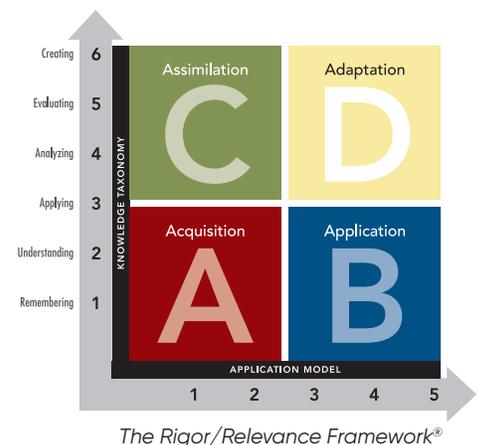
*Like you, we at the International Center for Leadership in Education (ICLE) have grown alarmed by the mental health issues we see plaguing our children. Given the amount of time students are in our care and the reality that mental health issues prevent students from engaging fully in their learning, we have been committed to developing supports for schools as they integrate social-emotional learning into their culture. To achieve this in the most effective way possible, we knew we needed a partner with area expertise and someone who knows the research inside and out. Even better, we are so pleased to be partnering with [Dr. Stephanie Jones](#), Director of the Ecological Approaches to Social Emotional Learning (EASEL) Lab and Gerald S. Lesser Professor of Early Childhood Development at the Harvard Graduate School of Education.*

*In recent years, Dr. Jones has been pioneering research focused on the impact of social-emotional learning interventions on behavioral and academic outcomes and classroom practices in preschool and elementary school, including new strategy development, implementation, and testing. We are grateful and honored that she is joining our effort to reach more educators in need of evidence-based and cost-effective SEL instructional tools and interventions. – Dr. Bill Daggett*

In 1991, ICLE created the Rigor/Relevance Framework, which overlays Bloom's Taxonomy, and its increasingly complex levels of thinking, with increasingly complex levels of relevant doing, i.e. work that is useful to the unpredictable real world in order to help students prepare for it. The result is a framework with four quadrants representing possible combinations of rigor and relevance. The Framework was designed as a simple yet robust tool to help educators plan for and assess higher levels of rigor and relevance in the classroom .

We have a common refrain: relevance makes rigor possible, and rigor makes life success possible. That is, by making the work we ask our students to do relevant to their lives and interests, they will engage in more rigorous thinking and learning tasks. If the work feels irrelevant to them, they will usually be unwilling to engage rigorously.

As we guided more and more educators to use the Rigor/Relevance Framework to its greatest potential, it became clear that positive, high-quality relationships make relevance possible—ones characterized by connection, support, and reciprocity. In other words, the Framework's greatest potential comes when it is underpinned and encompassed



**Relationships make  
relevance possible.**

**Relevance makes  
rigor possible.**

**Rigor makes  
life success possible**

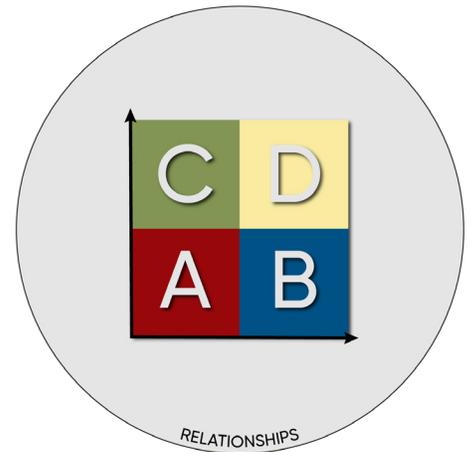
## Addressing Whole Child Growth Through Strong Relationships

by relationships. If a teacher is to make learning for her students relevant, then she has to know what her students—each of them—find interesting, fun, and meaningful. She must earn their trust so that her students, in turn, open up to her, share their lives, and become vulnerable learners. This is made possible only through relationships.

For years, we at ICLE have been talking about “the third R,”—relationships as a stepping stone to relevance and then to rigor. We began banging the drum of relationships more and more frequently and more passionately. As we collaborated with educators to increase rigor and relevance, we emphasized the importance of forming trusting relationships with all of their students. We witnessed as relationships “unlocked” ever more rigor and relevance in their classrooms. We could see again and again the power of relationships to encourage students to go deeper with their learning, take more learning leaps of faith, develop resilience and persistence, and contribute to their self-confidence and belief in their own potential.

More recently, and at a macro level, we have watched as so many of our children descend into a mental health crisis. So we have banged the drum of relationships louder still. We have incorporated into the conversation the importance of social-emotional learning (SEL) as both a conduit to and outcome of high-quality interactions and relationships. We know that if a child is suffering with anxiety, depression, or low self-worth, she cannot begin to climb out of this if she feels uncared for and unseen by the adults in her life. The need for caring relationships in schools has grown only more critical and for reasons that extend beyond rigor and relevance and into our students’ wellbeing and capacity to engage in school in the first place.

All of us know that relationships in schools are powerful. We know it intuitively. And we know it from experience. Yet it is only recently that the research has begun to catch up with what we know to be true. Not only is this validating our collective hunch that we must devote real time to cultivating relationships with ALL of our students, it is also beginning to show us why, specifically, and how.



*High-quality relationships make rigor and relevance possible.*

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### The Latest in Brain Development Research

Until recently, our understanding of the brain has been that it is broken into three distinct parts with three distinct functions thought to be layered upon each other: 1) the low-level, primitive brain, which manages our survival instinct (e.g., respond to threat); 2) layered atop that is the social, affective brain, which was understood to generate emotions that steer the survival process (e.g., see threat, feel fear, run); 3) layered on top of that is the prefrontal cortex, the part of the brain divided into left and right hemispheres that does all our high-level, abstract thinking. In the old paradigm, the prefrontal cortex was thought to be mostly separate from the survival/affective mechanisms of the brain.

*“learning does not only happen in the thinking brain; it also happens in the feeling and surviving brain.”*

However, the latest neuroscience is finding otherwise. The prefrontal cortex—where we contemplate math and philosophy, invent solutions, feel compassion, plan our future, admire someone’s virtue, etc.—is both a function *and* a driver of the survival/affective mechanisms of the brain. All three are codependent processes; how we think not only relies on our survival/affective mechanisms, but these mechanisms also reorganize themselves in service of how we think.

This means that how we think can change how we feel and change our survival mechanism—for better or worse. But what does this mean for educators? It means that learning does not only happen in the thinking brain; it also happens in the feeling and surviving brain. To teach is to consider and address all three parts of the brain and how they all work together to either support or undermine learning. We can teach in ways that literally augment intellectual capacity in the moment, or squash it.

### Whole Brain Learning—and Whole Child Development—Starts With Relationships

How do we augment intellectual capacity? We prioritize relationships—through research-validated social-emotional learning opportunities—to help students perceive themselves as capable of reaching for more rigorous and relevant thinking and doing. Stepping back, the kinds of relationships that best optimize the interplay between all three parts of the brain are learning relationships.

**Learning relationships**, which exist between the adults, student – adults and students – students:

1. Are derived from care, trust, and safety such that students believe teachers and peers see them as valuable; in turn, the student cultivates a positive sense of self, grows motivated to learn, and develops social-emotional skills that are further reinforced through caring relationships. (Wentzel, 2012; Martin & Dowson, 2009)
2. Enable the teacher to get to know all students’ interests and circumstances as a means to make relevance possible and, in turn, make rigor possible to promote students’ lifelong learning and success.

3. Help students learn how to cultivate healthy and appropriate relationships in their lives to support their overall wellbeing and mental health.
4. Help teachers fine-tune their own social-emotional skills and promote collaboration with colleagues, such that adults can model healthy relationships and work together to personalize SEL to all students, respectively.

John Hattie [says](#) of relationships, which he found to have a .72 effect size on achievement: “It is teachers who have created positive teacher–student relationships that are more likely to have the above average effects on student achievement” (Hattie, 2009). If every educator in a school is purposefully creating moments that reinforce learning relationships with all students on campus, then a school is pointed towards whole brain learning and whole child development. The entire school is working together to enhance all students’ learning potential and their wellbeing. For SEL to achieve its greatest impact on students, a school must take learning relationships a step further.

### A True Culture of Learning Relationships

For a true culture of learning relationships to take hold, learning relationships must exist among the adults in the building, too. This must include all classified staff—lunchroom monitors, bus drivers, librarians, specialists, and so on. Learning relationships are the purview of every adult on campus, and every adult on campus must understand why relationships are so critical and her role in reinforcing them. Therefore, every adult on campus needs and deserves professional development and support to this end. Professional development must be in place to guide teachers and staff on the effective use of research-backed SEL instructional strategies and tools.

Research also indicates that all adults on campus need to serve as models of social-emotional skills and healthy relationships (Jennings & Greenberg, 2009). A true culture of relationships, then, will help educators fine-tune their own social-emotional capacities and positive relationships with colleagues. Leadership must have a plan in place to support the emotional needs of all staff, including working with them to address the stressors and challenges they are facing as educators. Not only will this attention help adults reduce stress so that they can focus on what matters most—their students; it will also help nurture professional relationships in the building. In turn, morale is improved and collaboration is more commonplace and fruitful. When teachers collaborate, their support for students can be delivered in a more consistent, personalized, and personal way.

***“Professional development must be in place to guide teachers and staff on the effective use of research-backed SEL instructional strategies and tools.”***

## **Integrating Social-Emotional Learning Successfully: What the Research Says**

In a positive sign, many in the field are attempting to design SEL curriculum for schools. This indicates that the industry grasps the urgency in supporting our students' SEL and its growing importance to the world beyond school. However, what we are learning is that these programs are too often rigid and generic, in that they lack the flexibility to meet the needs of specific students in front of specific educators. They are also often divorced from academic learning, which results in the missed opportunity to capitalize on the augmented learning that results when all three parts of the brain work together.

As the SEL programming field develops, so too does the research about what works. And when SEL works, it really *works*. Research shows that even relatively low-cost SEL tools can yield an impressive return; [per one study](#), for every \$1 invested in SEL, \$11 is returned in long-term benefits, in the form of: students' potential to gain in earning power and maintain long-term employment; students' potential to generate more income tax revenue for governments; reduced need for government services that result from violence, drugs, delinquency, and mental health issues.

The latest research (Bailey et al, 2019; Jones & Kahn, 2017) says that for SEL to generate its maximal benefit, it should:

1. Incorporate social-emotional skills in a specific order based on when students are developmentally ready for them.
2. Be flexible and depend on light-weight, easy-to-apply strategies, not a full curricula. We call these "kernels," as they are small but powerful SEL opportunities that can be sprinkled throughout the day to help students grow a range of social-emotional skills.
3. Be responsive to individual student needs in real time. If SEL is truly real-time, it will take place not just in the

### **KERNEL Sample:**

Turtle technique for calming down

### **Description:**

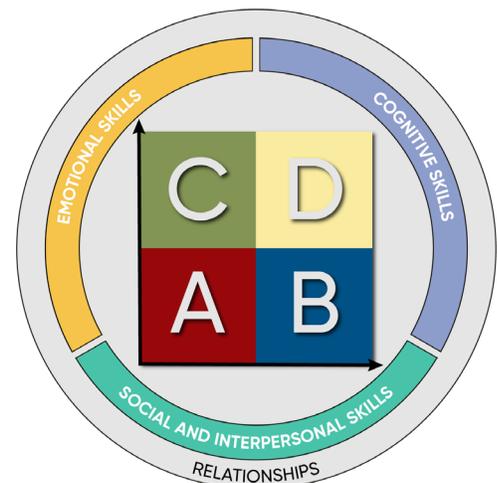
Using a turtle metaphor, child holds self, breathes through nose, and engages in verbal or sub-verbal self-coaching to calm down

### **SEL Domain:**

Managing emotions and behavior

### **Behaviors affected:**

Reduces arousal and aggression against peers or adults



*Relationships Framework*

classroom but also anywhere a need for SEL kernels arises—the cafeteria, the sports field, hallways, etc. This means that SEL must be the responsibility of every adult on campus.

When built on these three features of successful SEL, SEL optimizes the interplay between all three parts of the brain because how students' *feel* about themselves as learners is addressed and enhanced. It is also integrated into the full school learning environment. It is responsive to the ever changing and real-time needs of all the students in the building, and not simply "adding one more thing" to educators' already overflowing responsibilities.

### Meeting You Where You Are: Our Approach to Learning Relationships & SEL

The brain research is unequivocal: SEL is academic learning and vice versa. Whether we are aware of it or not, our children are in a constant state of SEL, where their perceptions and experiences either support or undermine their healthy social-emotional development and capacity to learn in general. For educators, this means that we can act with intention to foster learning relationships and integrate SEL into academic learning to simultaneously enhance rigor and relevance, develop healthy social-emotional skills, and prevent mental health issues for our students.

To that end, we have been committed to developing a plan that can support schools in an intentional effort to address SEL through the strategic implementation of evidence-backed SEL opportunities. And we have been committed to doing this in a way that doesn't lose sight of rigor and relevance. Only in the presence of all three—rigor, relevance, and SEL—will students gain all the skills necessary to thrive in an ever-changing working world: cognitive skills, emotional skills; and social and interpersonal skills. To achieve this, a school must focus on that which underpins these skills: a culture of learning relationships.

With neuroscience, learning relationships, and SEL research in mind, we have designed an integrated approach that supports whole brain and whole child development. We guide schools through the data collection and analysis process so that together we can design a strategic plan that addresses specific schools needs. Together, we craft an SEL strategy that outlines when and how to incorporate which social-emotional skills based on the developmental readiness of the students in a school, remains flexible and highly utilitarian, and allows all educators in the building to respond to student needs in real time. We also ensure that SEL is used to promote relevance, which can in turn promote rigor. Ultimately, the plan will integrate SEL into a school's specific learning environment, not just into core content areas or at specific times of day.

We also work with schools to achieve a true culture of learning relationships. We collaborate with leaders to design professional development that supports every adult on campus to fine-tune her own social-emotional skills, address individual stressors, and practice appropriate and effective application of SEL at every moment it's needed. We also help schools to carve out the space and time for adults to listen

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to and learn from each other, problem-solve collaboratively, and reflect and plan in the name of both boosting professional relationships and delivering more personalized and personal SEL to all students.

At this point, we are ready to walk schools through the SEL integration process. At this point, we function as coaches, providing ongoing guidance to educators as they practice implementing tailored SEL kernels both as a part of a flexible academic curriculum and in response to needs as they arise in real time. We remain available to coordinate and collaborate to ensure successful implementation. When issues arise, we work with schools to troubleshoot effectively. Our aim is not simply to provide a tool; our aim is also to be of service so that everyone in a school is supported in this urgent, crucial effort to become intentional conduits for healthy social-emotional development for *all* students.

Our competence is in the prevention and development of social-emotional issues and skills, respectively, while still elevating rigor and relevance in the classroom. While we are not experts in intervention and treatment programs to address more severe social-emotional and mental health issues, we help schools connect with those who are (e.g. Effective School Solutions). We proactively consider the SEL needs of staff, recommending additional ways leaders and administrators can support teachers and staff.

Importantly, our approach ensures that SEL is delivered to ALL students, not just those with acute mental health issues. While the need for SEL is more dire and obvious for students with known and severe mental health issues, SEL improves learning outcomes and futures for all students; it can also prevent mental health issues from arising or growing even more entrenched. As a result, when all students receive integrated, consistent, and effective SEL strategies, resources are freed up to deliver more targeted, timely support and interventions to students who need them most.



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Educators worldwide recognize Dr. Bill Daggett, the creator of the Rigor/Relevance Framework, for his proven ability to lead school reform and help Pre-K–12 educators effectively prepare students for the future. A former teacher and administrator, as well as director with the New York State Education Department, Bill has a special commitment to individuals with disabilities and has written numerous books, reports, and articles about learning and education.



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