



Promoting high academic expectations for students starts with the teacher believing in student success. Subconsciously, teachers who believe students can succeed, behave in ways that help them succeed (Marzano, 2007). Work Hard, Get Smart encourages students to work hard towards mastering the lesson objectives and to persist when faced with difficult material. Also known as the Growth Mindset, this approach creates a love of learning and a resilience that is essential for great achievement (Dweck, 2012). Work Hard, Get Smart is a daily reminder that students control their own learning. The teacher uses a mantra that students repeat and internalize to bolster their confidence and reinforce their ability to learn new and difficult content. The teacher praises, acknowledges, and rewards effort and hard work. It is crucial that we encourage students to believe in malleable intelligence, empower them to take control of their learning and build their self-esteem.

- Help students persist in the face of failure by offering support throughout the lesson. Make this a part of daily practice.
- Promote a culture where mistakes are encouraged in order to succeed. Have students answer the following questions: What do you want? What do you need?
- Explicitly communicate the expectations and the pathways created to reach those goals. Have students answer the question: What point do you want to reach? Students will take their own path to reach their goal.
- Make a visual that communicates the importance of working hard to achieve success.
- Ask students to chart their growth on each learning goal to take ownership of the process.



## Additional Tools

### *Motivational Chants:*

This strategy provides opportunities for the teacher to communicate expectations and get students engaged with the work in a positive way. It also builds confidence in oral language, promotes a sense of community, and helps change the pace and mood to improve student motivation.

### *Community Circle:*

Community Circle is a way to build a team culture within your classroom. Students gather in a circle to have a structured, student-centered discussion with each other and the teacher. This practice builds a sense of community, develops problem solving skills, strengthens bonds between student and teacher, and provides an opportunity for students to practice their listening, speaking, and interpersonal skills.

For more strategies and/or resources, visit [houstonisd.org/EffectivePractices](http://houstonisd.org/EffectivePractices)



## ALERTS

Generic encouragement directed at the whole class is ineffective in providing meaningful encouragement to Work Hard, Get Smart. Use specific encouragement that appeals to the student's individual interests, values or dreams.



## QUICK TIPS

Try creating progress charts or posters where students can visually track their growth. Post it in a place where everybody can see it as a way to celebrate achievement.