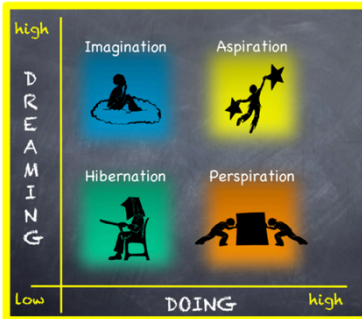


Aspirations: *the ability to dream and set goals for the future while being inspired in the present to reach those dreams.*



Students of all ages should set short- and long-term goals. However, goals are meaningless unless action is taken in the present to reach those goals. The Aspirations Profile can help us better understand how to support children in reaching their aspirations.

In which quadrant does your child spend most of their time? It is natural to drift in and out of all four quadrants. No one can live in the land of Aspiration all the time; they would likely hit a point of exhaustion and burnout. It is also important not to become stuck hibernating, imagining, or perspiring!

ASPIRATION: Students in the Aspiration quadrant think about their futures and set goals for themselves. If this is your child, continue to support their aspirations, but also be cognizant of the potential for overstress and burnout.

HIBERNATION: In the Hibernation quadrant, students struggle to think about the future, set clear goals, and put forth effort in daily life. If this describes your child, help them find a passion or interest and support their efforts to become engaged.

PERSPIRATION: Students in Perspiration work exceptionally hard and put forth effort, but they do not always understand why they are working so hard. If this describes your child, encourage them to dream more and help them connect their hard work to those dreams. Rather than setting goals for your child, allow them to determine their own goals and provide appropriate support throughout the process.

IMAGINATION: In the Imagination quadrant, students have big dreams, but struggle to take action in order to make those dreams a reality. If this describes your child, help them to establish small steps they can take toward reaching their big dreams.

Five Ways Parents Can Support Aspirations

1. *Share* your accomplishments and what you did to achieve your dreams. Remember that while your aspirations are not your children's, sharing your journey (including setbacks) will help them understand dreaming and doing.
2. *Realize* that children in Hibernation are not simply lazy or bad students. They may find inspiration outside of the classroom, in a club, through a community organization, or from another caring adult. The more children can be exposed to different opportunities, the better chance they have to identify a dream they are motivated to work toward achieving.
3. *Allow* your child to develop their aspirations. Parents have big dreams for their children and ultimately want them to be happy and successful at whatever they chose in life. Discovering this path takes time, and it may be a different path than the one envisioned by parents. A child's future should be theirs to create and own.
4. *Involve* your child in school conferences, academic planning, and extracurricular opportunities.
5. *Listen* to your students when they express who they are and who they want to become. It can be challenging to refrain from immediately judging or giving advice, yet it is important to allow children the space to develop their own ideas and take responsibility for their decisions.