



# UNC

## Center for Urban Education

### Leadership Council Chronicle

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### Why We Should Treat School Like a Job—In a Good Way

How is school like a job? It sounds like a riddle, but there's a simple answer. What employees need to thrive at work is the same as what students need to thrive in school: They need to feel like someone cares about them, and they need to be engaged.

#### Engagement and Hope, Defined

Gallup, a well-known research organization, defines student engagement as "the involvement in and enthusiasm for school." They define student hope as "the ideas and energy students have for the future."

They measure the level of engagement and hope by asking students to rate their level of agreement with statements such as, "My school is committed to building the strengths of each student," and "I have at least one teacher who makes me excited about the future."

*Students who "strongly agree" that their school is committed to building the strengths of each student and that there is at least one teacher who makes them excited about the future are 30 times more likely to be engaged at school compared with students who strongly disagree.*

#### Thinking about Becoming a Teacher?

We are enrolling new students for the fall 2022 semester.

Call Dr. Rosanne Fulton, Director, UNC Center for Urban Education, at 303-637-4334 or [email](#) for more information.

Watch our [short video](#) to learn more about the CUE teacher-preparation program.

[Watch Video](#)

Gallup uses a total of nine measures of engagement. The first depends on identifying and focusing on strengths and having the opportunity to use their strengths and do what they do best every day. Here are the measures as presented to students:

- At this school, I get to do what I do best every day.
- My teachers make me feel my schoolwork is important.
- I feel safe in this school.
- I have fun at school.
- I have a best friend at school.
- In the last seven days, someone has told me I have done good work at school.
- In the last seven days, I have learned something interesting at school.
- The adults at my school care about me.
- I have at least one teacher who makes me excited about the future.



### The Bottom Line

Gallup asserts that schools should take the opportunity to proactively build a positive culture through "specific actions that increase student engagement and hope." They recommend implementing your own [student poll](#) to start the process.

Changing the culture is an intensive process and requires a sustained effort, Gallup readily admits. But if you focus on the outcome—students who are prepared for and have hope for their future—it's worth every ounce of energy you put into it. Interested in learning more? Gallup has additional [recommendations](#) about how to keep kids excited about school.

At the [Center for Urban Education](#), we value high levels of student engagement. Our mentors and professors continuously work to ensure that our teacher candidates have a high level of hope for their future.



### CUE Students Remedy Spring Fever with Field Trips

Students at the [UNC Center for Urban Education](#) had the opportunity to celebrate Colorado's feathered friends this spring. Over the course of the three Saturdays, they visited [Denver Audubon Nature Center](#), [Chatfield State Park](#), [Barr Lake State Park](#), [Rocky Mountain Arsenal Wildlife Refuge](#), and [Waneka Lake Park](#).



With the award-winning curriculum from [Project WILD](#) and [Flying WILD](#), CUE professors Jessica Feld and Brandon Grossman tied environmental education topics to what students were learning in their classrooms. Participants also learned how to apply the curriculum to field investigation studies and visited sites where they will be able to take their own studies on field trips in the future.

Jennifer Stanley, the Northeast Regional Education Coordinator for Colorado Parks and Wildlife, organized all three Saturday trips and hosted an amazing array of activities, resources, and guest speakers. Students followed part of the [Colorado Birding Trail](#) and learned about bird behavior and the biology, bird habitats, and the science of flight. One highlight a live presentation with hawks and eagles given by [HawkQwest](#).



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