

SchoolKit Implementation

CASE STUDY

SCHOOL PROFILE

Farmington is home to about 300 students K-6 in a rural area near Hillsboro, Oregon. It boasts an historic one-room school house history and tight connection to the community. Even as a small school, Farmington supports its diverse population with myriad programs and enriching student clubs.

OVERARCHING GOAL

At Farmington the staff was striving to create a growth mindset school culture that addressed student mindsets, educator mindsets and also included a school-to-home connection whereby parents learned about a growth mindset and how they can support it at home.

NEEDS ASSESSMENT

As a staff there was a sense that students perceived hard work and increased effort as evidence that they had low intelligence. Students felt “dumb” if they had to work hard and if the learning did not come easily to them. Staff was searching for strategies to apply in their classrooms to keep students engaged, even when learning became a little more challenging for them. Staff also was seeking a curriculum to help them to teach a growth mindset (one’s abilities and intelligence is malleable) and to teach self-management and effective learning strategies that the students could apply to their school efforts.

ACTION PLAN

There were several moves that the administration made to realize these goals and address these needs.

After applying for a small grant to fund the work, the administration proceeded to strategically pursue growth mindset culture change.

One move, was taking the staff purposefully through the MindsetMaker™ educator course. Here, staff watched some of the modules as a whole staff, in addition to each having

access to the modules to view individually. In the whole group setting, staff were able to discuss the research they were learning about praise and feedback and how changes to our language and messages about intelligence can impact student motivation in a very positive way. Staff were supported throughout to completion of the MindsetMaker™ by periodic whole group discussions and sharing of how their application of the information and downloadable tools in the modules were impacting behavior and learning in their classrooms.

Another move was to enroll all 4th, 5th, and 6th grade students in Brainology®. In this way, not only were the staff learning about their own mindsets and how to incorporate practices that cultivate growth mindsets in students, but also the students own mindsets were being supported with knowledge that they can grow their brain and strategies for how to do so.

Finally, after communicating with the community about the school’s growth mindset goals during Back-to-School Night, administrators held monthly book study chats with parents using the book *Mindset: The New Psychology of Success*. Parents read the book and came to school to discuss the ideas with school staff as it related to their children’s learning and also to parenting more generally.

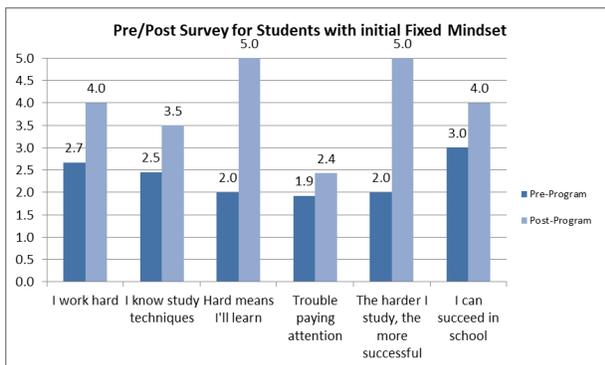
RESULTS

Staff completed MindsetMaker™ in the first two months of school. This online course and tool kit provided extensive support to the school’s work in building a growth mindset culture in each classroom by providing practical tools for staff to use. Thus, even

though the grant targeted 4th-6th graders, all students at Farmington were exposed to growth mindset practices from their teachers.

The school reports that growth mindset culture has permeated to about 75% of the staff. The principal, Roger Will, used classroom observations to examine how the language and concepts from the MindsetMaker™ and Brainology® were being used in everyday classroom settings. For example, in April 2015 during a principal directed follow up professional learning session, teachers re-watched one of the educator videos about how to use praise in the classroom. Teachers commented that it's important to continue watching and re-watching the modules to examine their mindset practices until the concepts truly become part of their core belief.

The online Brainology® curriculum for 4th-6th grade students was instrumental in allowing students the opportunity to learn about their own mindset, along with what a growth mindset looks like. After completing Brainology, students completed a survey about their beliefs. The data is conclusive that students who had a fixed mindset were able to develop more of a growth mindset.



Here is something the school found when reviewing the data with students: When students completed the pre-test regarding their current mindset, many students were seen as having a growth mindset

already. After completing Brainology and the post-test, many students told the school counselor that their pretest was inflated because after going through Brainology, they realized they actually behaved with more of a fixed mindset.

Teachers report that students now use growth mindset language and many are choosing to tackle more difficult tasks because working hard isn't a sign of being "dumb" but as an opportunity to grow their brain.

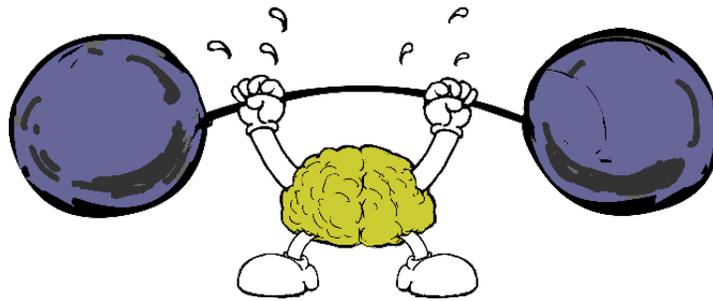
Farmington provided every family in the school with the book *Mindset* by Carol Dweck. Even though some families were unable to attend the monthly chapter book chats, many families reported that they had indeed read the book and how helpful it was for them both with their child and also with their own mindset.

These monthly book chats were very beneficial to the parents who attended. Over the course of six sessions, over 50 parents attended. Parents talked openly about how the book, especially the focus on praise was transforming their parenting style.

CONCLUSION

Principal Will says: "Using the Mindset online tools and Brainology made the content digestible and usable. I couldn't imagine creating a growth mindset culture without these tools."

Moving forward, the school plans to continue Brainology in the 4th grade and make it accessible to incoming 5th and 6th graders who are new to the site. New staff will complete the MindsetMaker™ so they can begin understanding the concepts and be brought in to this exciting school culture. This work will continue to be a focus in the school's professional development and in a workshop series for parents.



About Mindset Works

Mindset Works was co-founded by one of the world's leading researchers in the field of motivation, Stanford University professor Carol S. Dweck, Ph.D. and K-12 mindset expert Lisa S. Blackwell, Ph.D. The company translates psychological research into practical products and services to help students and educators increase their motivation and achievement. Mindset Works and Brainology are registered trademarks of Mindset Works, Inc.

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