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CONTENT LINK



# LEADERSHIP

## Is a Life Skill

Preparing Every  
Student to Lead  
and Succeed

Mariam G. MacGregor, M.S.

Praise for

LEADERSHIP

Is a Life Skill

“I have had numerous coaches throughout my athletic and business careers; however, very few individuals have been as clear and profound in their coaching as Mariam MacGregor. Leadership is in her DNA. You will get timely insights from her book *Leadership Is a Life Skill*. This content is essential for anyone interested in unleashing leadership potential within our children. Mariam’s work has made measurable improvements in both my personal and professional lives.”

—**Cedric James**, director of TCU IdeaFactory, K-12 student mentor, and former NFL athlete

“*Leadership Is a Life Skill* is a great resource for anyone who works with children and teens. Mariam brilliantly demonstrates the need for teaching and modeling leadership skills, and her process for performing an audit to find the missing pieces in each school or group working with adolescents is easy to do and applicable across the board. As the executive director of an organization who has benefited firsthand from Mariam’s insight and coaching, her tools and guidelines are relevant in preparing students, educators, and schools for necessary skill sets personally and professionally. When students are taught that everyone has a place at the table, it shifts the dynamic to value and collaboration.”

—**Kristin Steadman**, founder and executive director of Night Lights

“*Leadership Is a Life Skill* is a thoughtful guide for cultivating a leadership culture that will benefit students of all abilities. As a mother of a child with multiple disabilities, I am encouraged by the inclusive strategies and activities Mariam presents to support and develop confident, tolerant, and empathetic current and future leaders in our schools and communities.”

—**Jocalyn Briggs**, certified teacher for students with visual impairments, inclusion specialist, and disability advocate

“If you are looking for a book to transform your school system, this is it. Practical, thoughtful, comprehensive, informative, helpful, positive, and personal, *Leadership Is a Life Skill* will help you make a difference at the ground level whether you are a student, teacher, staff, administrator, parent, or board member.”

—**Barry Z. Posner, Ph.D.**, professor of leadership, Leavey School of Business, Santa Clara University, and coauthor of *The Leadership Challenge*

“*Leadership Is a Life Skill* provides the blueprint to develop leadership as a school-wide focus, which will yield ongoing benefits to individuals and to communities. Launching young people on a lifetime of effective leadership is a game changer.”

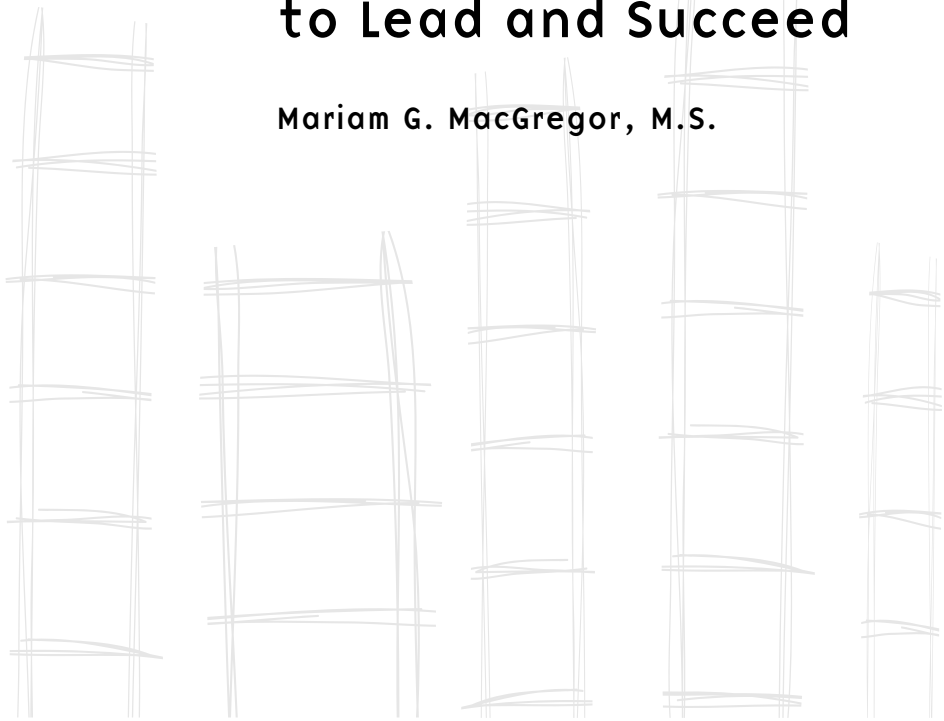
—**Dr. Julia Link Roberts**, Mahurin Professor of Gifted Studies, Western Kentucky University

# LEADERSHIP

## Is a Life Skill

Preparing Every Student  
to Lead and Succeed

Mariam G. MacGregor, M.S.



free spirit  
PUBLISHING®



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“It’s not about me!”

Carry on with integrity, civility, and grace to develop next-generation leaders who continue to positively change the world.

And deep appreciation to the educators and students who so generously shared their stories.

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### Digital Content Only

Squeeze

Puzzle

Campaign Teams

What's in a Name?

House of Cards

Olympic Rings

Floating Pipeline

Zapping Maze

Candlestick Relay

## INTRODUCTION

# Why Leadership Matters



Nothing had prepared me for my first day at an alternative school in Colorado, teaching leadership to kids who considered themselves “shadows” in society. Thirty-two students sat in front of me, having been selected by the principal because of their leadership potential. Within the first ten minutes of launching the lesson, half of them stood up and walked out. A few dropped f-bombs as they exited the room, in disbelief about having to “do work” on the first day and seeing no value in the class. My heart dropped like those curse words!

*What have I gotten myself into?* I calmly responded to each student who left, “I appreciate the short time we spent together.” From the corner of my eye, I saw smirks on the faces of a few of the students who stayed.

I quickly realized that those who left perceived “leaders” as students who ran for (and won) student council positions, led athletic teams, or were chosen to help adult leaders in the school or community: goody-goodies, sellouts, and conformers. To them, the idea that someone (and the principal of all people) considered *them* leaders—and really, the overall idea of leadership—was *not* a good thing!

These teens, who for various reasons felt disengaged from school experiences, considered peers who were athletes and joiners and popular or, rather, campus social influencers, as anti-*everything* to their own experiences. For them, being considered a leader reduced their credibility—not with adults or the popular or typical crowd—but with others who were struggling in life, the ones who partied the hardest or shared their pain and brokenness. The ones causing trouble because they thought it was cool or believed they had nothing to lose. Participating in a class to make them better leaders was a waste of time.

By the end of the hour, the sixteen students who’d stayed sat in small groups, engaged in the activity I’d created for the first day—defining *leadership*. As we closed the discussion, one of the students looked at me earnestly and

said, “Those people who left—they don’t know what they’re missing.” She went on to explain that although students like her (and them) didn’t fit the stereotype they associated with being a leader, after just one hour in the class, she realized how wrong she had been. Her reaction has stayed with me all these years.

The class didn’t only teach leadership content. Students were invited to serve on school committees, run “Possibilities” (a weekly all-school motivational assembly), influence school policies, and participate in unique leadership-related activities like visits with local mayors and mentoring at-risk middle schoolers. Over the next few academic quarters, each of the sixteen students who had walked out at the start of that first day returned to take what became known as the “Leadership I” class after seeing what their peers got to do. When compared to the overall student population at the school, students who enrolled in the leadership class at any time over the three years I taught it had higher GPAs, a greater likelihood of graduating on time, and an increased sense of civic duty (read about an ambitious student-led community event at this school on page 97). By the time I left that school, there were four leadership classes initiated by student demand: Leadership I, Leadership II, Community Leadership (focused on social change and civic responsibility), and Advanced Leadership (focused on community impact projects).

When that student told me that she and her peers were wrong to think they couldn’t be leaders, she was barely scratching the surface of how right she was. Looking back on my time with that group of students—their desire to explore leadership despite feeling overlooked and undervalued in school and in the community—I see that it changed me too. It shaped my perspective on the importance of cultivating leadership in every student, every educator, *everyone* seeking to bring his or her best self to life.

## Every Student Can Lead

I’ve been heavily immersed in the field of leadership development for many years now, from many different angles. I’ve taught leadership classes to middle and high schoolers, selected and trained youth volunteers ages 10 to 17, and coordinated annual leadership events and mentoring programs in elementary schools. I’ve advised college students serving as organizational leaders and college students embarking on their first internships and full-time jobs. My

position in higher education includes coaching college students, staff, and faculty to maximize personal awareness, build team leadership skills, and implement organizational strategies toward a leadership-driven, engaged campus and workplace. I continue to work as a leadership consultant dedicated to helping K–12 schools, colleges, and organizations develop better leadership programs for their people.

Beyond helping organizations design better programs that reach, teach, and support more leaders, my commitment to developing lifelong leaders has resulted in the Building Everyday Leadership curriculum series (for kids and teens at every grade level) and the *Teambuilding with Teens* activities guide. I reference these resources occasionally throughout this book because they provide practical, easy-to-execute sessions for a variety of classroom and student activities sessions. *Leadership Is a Life Skill* came about because the questions administrators and classroom educators most often ask me are about how to go beyond teaching a lesson or two or five throughout the year to finding ways to address leadership development for all ages across the academic spectrum in an enduring way.

Because I have one foot in K–12 education and another in higher education and career development, I see how important it is for educators to teach for life beyond academics. I'm talking about teaching leadership skills starting with our youngest citizens. By creating settings that value and promote behaviors associated with inclusive everyday leadership, we prepare kids and young adults to be effective 21st-century leaders who get things done and engage others along the way. Treating leadership as a life skill helps young leaders learn that listening, relating, understanding, and creating personal connections with others can help them make decisions that affect the greater good of organizations, schools, businesses, communities, and countries in positive ways.

While certain students often stand out because of their natural leadership abilities, focusing leadership efforts only in their direction misses the point. Students who excel as leaders absolutely deserve access to additional opportunities inside and outside the classroom, but *all* students benefit from leadership development. School environments that “call up” every student gain long-term payoffs by nurturing the next generation of leaders in industry, education, politics, the arts, and society. And by holding grown-ups equally accountable!

While it might feel impossible, there are plenty of ways to find time and resources during school days and co-curricular activities to build everyday leaders. This book shows you how it's possible and how you can do it in your school or district.

## **Creating Leadership Cultures in Schools**

*Leadership Is a Life Skill* is primarily for K–12 administrators and district leaders, but classroom teachers and instructional leaders can use it to great effect on a smaller scale. Those of you in these important groups are front-and-center influencers and role models, and you are the ones in a position to inspire leadership behavior and attitudes in students, teachers, colleagues, and parents.

It's common knowledge that 21st-century education models in the United States rely too heavily on compliance and standardized testing, both of which limit student engagement and voice. The drill-and-kill culture fails to ignite valuable critical thinking skills and squeezes out opportunities to promote strong interpersonal skills needed to equip young people as citizen leaders. Developing socially and emotionally mature leaders relies on encouraging young people to act with conviction, compassion, and resourcefulness to reach goals—on their own and with teams. These benchmarks are measured by students' abilities to color outside the bubbles, not fill them in!

Research from TalentSmart, a recognized expert on emotional intelligence (EQ), shows that 90 percent of top performers have high EQs. In other words, top performers know how to use their own emotional awareness and awareness of others to successfully manage interactions. These are the “soft skills” of leadership in action. People with high EQs make \$29,000 more annually than people with low EQs, and increasing one's EQ even a little can add thousands of dollars to a person's salary.<sup>1</sup>

While young people might not grasp the importance of EQ for their futures, as adults we recognize that developing leadership skills can serve as the conduit for demonstrating EQ (sometimes also referred to as social intelligence), and therefore deserves the same time and attention we give to athletics, music, and any other talent area, because it pays off. And unlike athletics—where

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1. “About Emotional Intelligence,” TalentSmart (2011), [www.talentsmart.com/media/uploads/pdfs/About%20Emotional%20Intelligence.pdf](http://www.talentsmart.com/media/uploads/pdfs/About%20Emotional%20Intelligence.pdf).

many kids envision becoming professional athletes despite the reality that only “1 percent of 1 percent” will succeed—when it comes to leadership, there’s no NFL to strive for. *Everyone* has the potential to “go pro” in this arena.

On a small scale, building leadership cultures in schools launches individuals who understand the greater good into a future of leading in their homes, careers, or communities. On a larger scale, these individuals will lead school districts, large companies, cities or states, and occasionally countries.

It may feel overwhelming to be encouraged to create leadership classrooms when standardized testing and reform so heavily drive educational accountability and short-term decisions. But a culture of leadership builds competencies that inspire students to more consistently achieve their best. This means student learning and school enjoyment improve regardless of test scores.

Good educators know that students of every age and ability thrive when their “whole person” is nurtured and engaged throughout the day. A school with a leadership culture is a school with a stimulating, whole-person environment. Students enjoy school more—and get more out of it—when characteristics of leadership cultures like the following are present:

- Students can express their voices and feel heard.
- They have choices.
- They have opportunities to learn from hands-on, brain-stimulating experiences.
- Lessons relate to real-life application.
- Time is spent pondering innovative ideas.
- Time is allocated for applying critical thinking in non-rushed ways.
- Students can engage in thoughtful problem-solving with room for mistakes.
- Students feel connected to subject matter content as well as a shared sense of community with classmates.
- They have mutually respectful relationships with peers and adults who support success.
- They are challenged to strive regardless of circumstances.
- They are encouraged to do more for others.

By working to establish a leadership culture in school, we not only prepare students for a more successful future, we also make school a more positive, fulfilling, meaningful, and pleasant place to be—for everyone.

## How to Use This Book

*Leadership Is a Life Skill* is divided into three parts. Part 1 prepares you for the hard work of transforming your school into a place where leadership is built into the foundation. Chapter 1 defines leadership and describes how leadership skills benefit your school in the short and long term, and how they benefit students for a lifetime. Chapter 2 leads you through an inventory of everything you're already doing with leadership education at your school, from classroom academics to student government, from leadership classes to SEL instruction, from athletics to clubs, and more. With that information in hand, chapter 3 leads you through the process of deciding exactly where and how you will work to make change. Your school will certainly be doing some things well already and need work in others. The Leadership Blueprint you create will include immediate changes as well as longer-term changes that will affect students in all grades. You'll find the "Leadership Blueprint at a Glance" form on pages 52–53 that you can use to help you plan it out. I recommend you read all three chapters because you'll be guided to honestly evaluate what your school is doing well and where current efforts fall short.

Once done with defining and evaluating, part 2 provides strategies, tips, and guidance for making changes in a particular area of your school. While you may already have certain programs in place, these chapters provide guidance on how to integrate leadership more intentionally into classes and activities.

- **Chapter 4: School Climate and Environment** addresses some of the questions posed during your inventory, like preparing teachers as change agents, creating a school mission or motto, and revamping orientation.
- **Chapter 5: Subject Academics and Classroom Dynamics** covers ways to infuse leadership into existing content areas.
- **Chapter 6: Teams, Clubs, and Student-Driven Leadership** explores methods for putting leadership development at the forefront of students' outside classroom activities.

- **Chapter 7: Student Support Programs and General Social-Emotional Learning (SEL)** looks at how to strengthen SEL through leadership development and vice versa.

You can read the chapters and sections of part 2 as you need them. If proposing a comprehensive and complete transformation, you'll want to read every chapter, but you can do so in any order. For example, if through your Leadership Blueprint you identify an immediate and pressing leadership need associated with student clubs and organizations, jump to Chapter 6: Teams, Clubs, and Student-Driven Leadership first.

Part 3 is full of tips and ideas to help you be a more effective leader of students and other stakeholders. It can be helpful to read both chapters early in your process and refer to them regularly as you make your way through the stages of change at your school or schools.

- **Chapter 8: Helping Students Link Leadership to Life** helps educators help students see the connection between the leadership they learn at school and their future life choices.
- **Chapter 9: Tips to Be a Transformative Leader** also includes tips geared to helping you stay organized, sharp, focused, and open-minded during what can be a big (and sometimes resisted) change. These are my tried-and-true tips for personal success as a transformational leader.

The additional resources included at the end of the book provide an example of a parent/community member handout you might send to families explaining why your school or district is choosing to prioritize leadership education. Instructions for creating a leadership sticker chart are included to help integrate leadership behaviors and expectations in classrooms with younger students. You'll also find an outline for an annual Leadership Day and a small collection of leadership lessons aligned with different academic content areas.

In addition to weaving leadership into daily lessons, discussions, behavior standards, and decision-making, what differentiates schools where leadership shapes the day from other schools? Are different core subject areas being taught? No. Are educators allocating instructional minutes differently? Maybe. Are the culture, atmosphere, and outcomes of student engagement and



self-advocacy different? Yes. Are adults working in that environment being mindful as leaders and bringing their personal best every day? Yes.

When we take on the challenges of developing leadership cultures in our schools, we embrace a long view in which everyone has leadership capabilities. Kids who learn early in life the importance of relationship-building, while also gaining skills in communication, ethical decision-making, problem-solving, creative thinking, appropriate risk-taking (and mistake-making), and resourcefulness, are well on their way to building social-emotional confidence today for college and career competence later.

I hope this book inspires you to spread the lessons of leadership and that you'll reach out to me with questions or stories you want to share. You can reach me at [help4kids@freespirit.com](mailto:help4kids@freespirit.com).

**Mariam G. MacGregor**





**PART 1**

**GETTING  
STARTED**

## CHAPTER 1

# A Hard Look at Soft Skills



More than 55 million students are enrolled in public and private K–12 schools in the United States. That’s a lot of young humans having to interact with one another every day! It’s hard to get along with others daily, but learning to get along *well* is important for long-term success, whether at college or in the workplace. Getting hired, promoted, or fired often depends on what it’s like to work with or be with you—on teams, during meal times, during social events, as a roommate, and more.

Imagine a teenager in her first job wanting to show initiative but lacking confidence in her ability to speak up. Imagine selecting a CEO based only on contributions to the bottom line despite that person being difficult to work with or behaving in ways that make others uncomfortable. Or putting a high school quarterback into a game when team members don’t trust or respect him off the field. What’s missing for each of these individuals is soft skills, which can hold back even those with the brightest gifts in other areas. In our schools, we spend many hours teaching technical and academic content, yet we spend very little time developing soft skills—the important combination of social-emotional awareness and leadership skills.

Soft skills separate a book-smart person who’s uncomfortable engaging in everyday conversations from an intelligent leader who makes *others* feel like the smartest person in the room. Soft skills can open doors for young leaders,

even—and sometimes *especially*—if they make mistakes along the way, because people still feel valued when they interact. Soft skills represent a combination of interpersonal skills and character traits that help people successfully navigate working with others. Sometimes these skills are obvious, like when a person is a natural group leader or a magnetic public speaker. Sometimes people demonstrate soft skills in intangible ways just by their nature—they seem at ease with themselves and interact so effortlessly with others.

To many, the phrase *soft skills* may not truly capture the importance of all the proficiencies it represents in the social-emotional arena. In fact, even executives struggle with this submissive-sounding phrase. The term *leadership* sounds beefier, more quantifiable, and more tangible. Whatever we call them, this book is about developing lifelong interpersonal skills that help prepare students to work well with others over their lifetimes. Colleges, companies, and communities are seeking students who possess these skills and who can contribute positively to teams.

When I use the term *leadership skills* in this book, I am referring to a broad range of soft skills that includes social-emotional competency and interpersonal skills with an emphasis on the ability to use those skills in any social or formal situation to bring people together, find solutions as part of a team, and succeed personally. More specifically, this book is about preparing students to feel confident using their skills to serve as leaders in the wide range of situations they'll encounter in school and life.

## The Connection Between Leadership Skills and Future Success

Research supports the connection between leadership skills and success. Students who build leadership skills tend to have higher attendance rates, increased empathy, greater confidence to speak up, and increased interest in postsecondary or vocational training programs. The Collaborative for Academic, Social, and Emotional Learning (CASEL), an internationally recognized organization focused on integrating academic, social, and emotional learning in the K-12 experience, identifies five core competencies that coincide directly with characteristics of socially intelligent leaders: self-awareness,

self-management, social awareness, relationship skills, and responsible decision-making. CASEL's research reinforces that skills in these areas are learnable. Therefore, creating a whole-school culture of leadership makes sense if we want to develop socially competent students.

Research done by organizational development powerhouse Deloitte Consulting indicates that adaptive leadership skills and “leadership agility” (the ability for teams to innovate at high speed) are critical skills to develop when preparing for the workforce. This research, conducted biannually and consisting of a survey of more than 10,000 business and HR leaders from 140 countries, shows that 42 percent of companies surveyed in 2017 claimed leadership development is important.<sup>2</sup> Millennial employees agree: A majority start work seeking mentorship and flexible, on-the-job opportunities to engage and lead teams. Knowing this, educators must commit to better preparing current students for a rapidly changing workplace.

Though the workplace surely feels far off to kids, teaching them to develop and refine their leadership skills *now* will help them be ready *later*—which will come sooner than they know it. For kids who go on to college, leadership skills will help them excel there. For some kids, high school is the last of their formal education. If we want to prepare them to compete in the workplace with college graduates, they deserve sufficient leadership development early on. My interactions with thousands of students from kindergarten through college has revealed one thing—young people who master these skills do better in college and careers than those who don't.

The *Future of Jobs* report issued by the World Economic Forum—the international expert on state-of-the-world research—pointedly shows development areas where we may be falling short in preparing kids for their future workplaces. This data comes from a survey of human resources and other “senior talent and strategy executives of leading global employers, representing more than 13 million employees across nine broad industry sectors in fifteen major developed and emerging economies and regional economic areas.”<sup>3</sup>

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2. “2017 Deloitte Global Human Capital Trends,” Deloitte University Press (2017), [www2.deloitte.com/us/en/pages/human-capital/articles/introduction-human-capital-trends.html](http://www2.deloitte.com/us/en/pages/human-capital/articles/introduction-human-capital-trends.html).

3. *The Future of Jobs*, World Economic Forum (2016), [www3.weforum.org/docs/WEF\\_Future\\_of\\_Jobs.pdf](http://www3.weforum.org/docs/WEF_Future_of_Jobs.pdf).

<b>Top 10 Workplace Skills Needed (ranked by most important first)<sup>4</sup></b>	
<b>2015</b>	<b>2020</b>
Complex Problem-Solving	Complex Problem-Solving
Coordinating with Others	Critical Thinking
People Management	Creativity
Critical Thinking	People Management
Creativity	Coordinating with Others
Quality Control	Emotional Intelligence
Service Orientation	Judgment and Decision-Making
Judgment and Decision-Making	Service Orientation
Active Listening	Negotiation
Creativity	Cognitive Flexibility

Both columns clearly indicate the need for educators to help students develop leadership skills. For both 2015 and 2020, complex problem-solving remains at the top. (Most educators might agree, though, that our national reliance on multiple-choice, bubble-in assessments does the opposite of encouraging critical thinking.) “People management” and “coordinating with others,” leadership skills associated with the ability to influence, inspire, and transform (individually and as groups) to help organizations succeed, are in the top five for both lists.

Expecting people to possess “emotional intelligence”—new to the list for 2020—suggests a need to pay more attention to social-emotional learning in general, which is echoed by the CASEL research. “Cognitive flexibility” is the ability to mentally switch tasks or think about two different ideas at the same time. Its addition to the 2020 list inspires thoughts of growth mindset—a love of learning and the belief that gaining knowledge isn’t finite—as well as adaptability and agility when faced with change. Emotional intelligence and cognitive flexibility are just two behaviors we associate with effective leaders.

4. *The Future of Jobs*, World Economic Forum (2016), [www3.weforum.org/docs/WEF\\_Future\\_of\\_Jobs.pdf](http://www3.weforum.org/docs/WEF_Future_of_Jobs.pdf).



You can imagine why traits like critical thinking and creativity will be important in the future: The workplace is changing at a rapid pace. Some jobs that existed ten years ago are gone, while others yet to be imagined hover on the horizon. Expansion of the global economy and new start-ups continue to create fast-paced job opportunities for people with adaptable leadership skills as well as technical knowledge. Amplifying kids' natural empathy and comfort with connecting with others will help them emerge as trustworthy, credible, and effective leaders in a wide range of workplaces.

## More Benefits of Leadership

From 1990–1998, the W.K. Kellogg Foundation funded thirty-one projects that emphasized leadership development in young adults. Several of the programs served high schoolers or younger. In 1998, the foundation published a retrospective evaluation of the projects that is still considered seminal in leadership research. The evaluation, *Leadership in the Making: Impact and Insights from Leadership Development Programs in U.S. Colleges and Universities*, affirmed these outcomes of leadership development:<sup>5</sup>

- increased commitment to service and volunteerism
- improved communication skills
- higher sense of personal and social responsibility
- increased sense of civic/social/political efficacy
- improved self-esteem
- improved problem-solving ability
- increased civic/social/political activity
- increased sense of being galvanized for action
- increased desire for change
- improved ability to be issue-focused
- improved conflict resolution skills
- improved likelihood of sharing power

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5. Zimmerman-Oster, Kathleen and John C. Burkhardt, *Leadership in the Making: Impact and Insights from Leadership Development Programs in U.S. Colleges and Universities. Executive Summary*, W.K. Kellogg Foundation (2004), [www.wkkf.org/resource-directory/resource/2004/01/leadership-in-the-making-impact-and-insights-from-leadership-development-programs-in-us-colleges-and](http://www.wkkf.org/resource-directory/resource/2004/01/leadership-in-the-making-impact-and-insights-from-leadership-development-programs-in-us-colleges-and)

More than twenty years later, outcomes associated with leadership education aren't too different from the Kellogg research. For many years, I've collected information from middle and high school youth leadership programs and classes that shows students engaged as resources and partners in leadership activities at school or in their communities have:

- better attendance rates
- higher achievement and graduation rates
- greater confidence in resolving conflicts without adult intervention
- increased involvement in decision-making processes
- greater understanding of diversity and social inclusiveness
- greater confidence when speaking in (as a member) and to a group
- increased interest in and follow-through for service and “giving back” to others
- strong sense of ownership for school-related projects, programs, and efforts

These outcomes will benefit students in many ways in the long term, but they also will help students perform better in the short term—and improve the climate of your school.

## Skills Associated with Leadership

You can probably find a thousand definitions of leadership, but among thought leaders, authors, and researchers on the subject, there is general agreement about the skills associated with effective leaders. The list on pages 19–22 organizes some of these within seven main categories. Though many of these leadership skills read as character traits, they are all learnable as *skills*. With practice, training, and opportunities to use them, kids of all ages can learn to be more adept with these skills.

When kids learn these leadership behaviors and characteristics early in life, the benefits are long lasting. Kids help others feel valued and connected. They create relationships and meaningful connections with others. They help others feel as if someone “gets them,” so others are more willing to trust and follow them.

When you prioritize lessons, activities, programming, and campus culture efforts that address these seven categories of leadership, you'll see these skills change the immediate culture of your school while influencing people long term. That's the "why" of leadership skills training. And the more situations young people are put into where they can practice empathy as leaders, the more successfully we reinforce leadership lessons throughout the K-12 experience. That's the "how."

## Next Steps: Bringing Leadership Culture to Your School

*Creating* leadership cultures in our schools hinges on the premise that we can teach students the qualities of socially intelligent leaders just like we can teach the lessons of any academic subject. But because life's best leadership lessons come from interacting with others, we need to go beyond classrooms and lessons and integrate leadership into social interactions, co-curricular activities, and more.

Your school or district may have teachers and programs already in place that teach leadership. Becoming a "whole leadership" school or district means reimagining it as a "Leadership School" or "Leadership District," one where leadership is built into the foundation. This takes hard work and firm commitment from you and other professionals in your school or district.

Leadership programming and education can't be done in a vacuum—constructive conversation involving multiple stakeholders along the way leads to greater programmatic and decision-making success. Integrating leadership development school- and community-wide is not fix-it-quick reform; it's forward-thinking educational redesign.

# LEADERSHIP SKILLS

## SELF-AWARENESS

**Benevolent**—approaches circumstances with trust and optimism rather than suspicion and maleficence (assumes people are motivated by good rather than evil)

**Coachable**—accepts guidance and feedback with an open mind

**Confident**—possesses an internally driven sense of self-worth; able to view self independently from others; uses introspection to gain understanding of own personality, strengths, weaknesses, motivations, and role in relationships; speaks up for one's self; communicates needs and focuses on strengths

**Governing**—able to control behavior and emotions in age-appropriate ways

**Humble**—maintains perspective on one's own importance; understands that others may be wiser, more experienced, more informed, and might disagree on a subject

## WORKING WITH OTHERS

**Approachable**—viewed by others as friendly, warm, and agreeable

**Collaborative**—works well and productively with others; respectfully communicates alternate views without putting personal agendas above group goals or the common good

**Engaging**—attracts and involves others by modeling active participation; possesses the intuitive ability to motivate and encourage others to join an effort or cause

**Encouraging**—finds opportunities to promote the strengths of others, leading for success and learning rather than leading through competition, judgment, or limitation

**Harmonious**—learns the difference between disagreement and conflict; learns to recognize conflict; interacts with others to resolve conflicts to continue to be productive by encouraging cooperation and compromise

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