Framing Student Motivation

PROVISIONAL RECOMMENDATIONS FOR COMMUNICATING THE SCIENTIFIC RESEARCH AROUND MOTIVATION

FOREGROUND and **EXPLAIN** how institutional and structural factors shape student motivation to counter the idea that motivation is a product of individual traits or choices. Stress how motivation varies across time in response to students' environment.

PROVIDE examples of how inequity, marginalization, and minoritization undermine student motivation. While further research is needed to identify the best ways of explaining the relationship between inequity and motivation, examples can help concretize both the problem and appropriate solutions. Be careful to emphasize structural and systemic factors rather than personal stories, which can reinforce perceptions that motivation is an innate trait of individuals or ultimately up to individual choice. Focusing on educational resources and learning environments can also help to counter problematic "culture of poverty" thinking and racist narratives that blame disparities in outcomes on groups' values and cultures.

EXPLAIN to educators how norms and key features of the environment in a school or postsecondary institution can reinforce biases. Educators recognize that bias affects education, but they usually focus on interpersonal interactions between students and instructors. Explaining how the education system reinforces bias and exclusion through things like evaluative criteria and curriculum design is a way of broadening thinking about how bias works.

HIGHLIGHT how the learning process builds motivation to counter the assumption that student motivation is entirely a product of rewards and incentives. Emphasizing how schools and postsecondary institutions can motivate and engage students by fostering a sense of belonging, enjoyment, and involvement in the learning process will bring into view a wider range of ways that schools can promote motivation.

EMPHASIZE the importance of schools and postsecondary institutions being welcoming and inclusive. This language is likely to cue the existing idea held by educators and members of the public that school is a second home, where students should feel safe and able to be themselves. When engaging the public, provide examples of inclusive practices to expand people's existing but thin recognition that inclusion is important and to build their understanding of the connection between inclusion and motivation.

PROVIDE examples of how motivation among older students can be fostered to counter the assumption that motivation is set in early childhood. Concrete examples that illustrate how the right conditions can foster motivation in older students will help to build understanding that there are actions and environments that can make a difference with students of all ages.

EXPLAIN the full range of ways that material resources affect motivation to expand on people's existing recognition that material conditions affect learning and student motivation. Existing thinking about how socioeconomic status affects motivation centers on "basic resources" like food, school supplies, and heat. To broaden understanding of how socioeconomic status affects motivation, communicators must explicitly elaborate the range of different linkages with clear step-by-step explanations.