

Thrively Logic Model:

Study Type: ESSA Evidence Level IV

Prepared for:
Thrively

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Thrively engaged Cathleen Beachboard, an independent psychological researcher, to develop a logic model for their comprehensive online strengths-based platform focused on a students psychological strengths, well-being, and hope. The following logic model was designed to satisfy Level IV requirements (Demonstrates a Rationale) according to the Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA).¹

LOGIC MODEL

A logic model provides a program roadmap detailing program inputs, participants reached, program activities, outputs, and outcomes. Cathleen Beachboard collaborated with Thrively to develop and revise the logic model (Figure 1).

STUDY DESIGN FOR THRIVELY EVALUATION

Thrively, in partnership with Cathleen Beachboard, is currently developing a research design for a study to meet ESSA Level III, as informed by the Thrively logic model. The proposed research will draw on data from participating districts.

CONCLUSIONS

This study provides results to satisfy ESSA evidence requirements for Level IV (Demonstrates a Rationale).

¹ Level IV indicates that an intervention should include a “well-specified logic model that is informed by research or an evaluation that suggests how the intervention is likely to improve relevant outcomes; and an effort to study the effects of the intervention, that will happen as part of the intervention or is underway elsewhere...” (p. 9, U.S. Department of Education, 2016).

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INTRODUCTION

Thrively engaged Cathleen Beachboard to develop a logic model for its asset-based learning platform, which supports student and staff social and emotional development and well-being while cultivating psychological hope in schools to satisfy Level IV requirements (Demonstrates a Rationale) according to the Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA).²

Thrively recognizes that many asset-based, well-being and SEL options may have equity, cost, and scalability limitations. However, an individualized asset-based Social Emotional Learning program grounded in the science of learning and development can be a powerful tool for improving mental well-being, and executive functioning, and can contribute to closing persistent learning gaps exacerbated by the pandemic.

The study had the following objectives:

- Define the foundational research base for Thrively.
- Document the Thrively program logic model.
- Define the aim of impact on learners according to research.

PREVIOUS RESEARCH

The design of this logic model was guided by previous research examining the effects of individualized asset-based Social Emotional Learning (SEL) programs on student outcomes. Individualized asset-based SEL programs are defined by their focus on identifying and building upon the strengths and assets that a student already possesses rather than focusing solely on deficits or challenges. These programs aim to empower students, build resilience, and promote positive development while developing students' social and emotional skills. These programs help students develop self-awareness, self-management, social awareness, relationship skills, and responsible decision-making skills to support student well-being and success. (Corcoran et al., 2018; Lawson et al., 2018; Mahoney et al., 2021).

Prior research suggests effective individualized asset-based SEL programs interweave social and emotional standards for well-being, align asset-based SEL efforts with the academic curriculum, provide professional development around SEL and assets to staff, and incorporate student Social Emotional Competence (SEC) measures into the school system. These programs have clear goals, evidence-based practices, family and community engagement, and assessment and evaluation practices that positively impact the school community when implemented with fidelity (Lawson et al., 2018; Li et al., 2023; Mahoney et al., 2021).

² Level IV indicates that an intervention should include a “well-specified logic model that is informed by research or an evaluation that suggests how the intervention is likely to improve relevant outcomes; and an effort to study the effects of the intervention, that will happen as part of the intervention or is underway elsewhere...” (p. 9, U.S. Department of Education, 2016).

Research studies suggest that individualized asset-based SEL programs can result in a wide range of measurable results, including improved mental health, increased attendance rates, sizable learning gains for a wide range of students, reduced disciplinary problems, increased student engagement, improvements in student-teacher relationships, and increased graduation rates (Corcoran et al., 2018; Denham & Brown, 2010; Flint & Jagers, 2021; Hart et al., 2020; Hunt et al., 2020; Li et al., 2023; Ura et al., 2019). In addition to the significant positive impact individualized asset-based SEL programs have, researchers have found that these programs tend to be the most effective for elementary and middle school students from low socioeconomic backgrounds when compared with several other interventions (e.g., character-based education, peer mediation, and peer mentoring) (Corcoran et al., 2018).

ASPECTS OF ASSET BASED PROGRAMS

STRENGTH-BASED LEARNING

Strength-based learning focuses on knowing and using students' unique traits, interests, and cultural backgrounds rather than their deficits or weaknesses. By recognizing and leveraging students' assets, such as their skills, talents, and experiences, schools can create more engaging, relevant, and personalized learning experiences that empower students to take ownership of their learning and succeed academically. Strength-based education can foster a sense of belonging, pride, and cultural identity among students, especially those from marginalized or underrepresented communities. This can lead to higher academic engagement, motivation, achievement, and improved social and emotional well-being (Flint & Jagers, 2021; Hinnant-Crawford et al., 2023).

WELL-BEING AND SEL

Well-being monitoring with targeted SEL support can significantly benefit students' academic performance and mental health. Research-validated asset-based well-being programs assess students' emotional states, stress levels, and overall well-being. The data collected from these assessments are used to identify students who may be struggling and to provide them with appropriate support and resources. Additionally, based on data, SEL activities and interventions are targeted to promote positive social and emotional development, such as mindfulness exercises, divergent thinking activities, and emotional regulation tools. By focusing on student well-being, the program reduces stress and anxiety, improves academic performance, and enhances students' overall quality of life (Corcoran et al., 2018; Mahoney et al., 2021; Darling-Hammond et al., 2019).

PSYCHOLOGICAL HOPE

Measuring and increasing psychological hope is an asset-based psychological intervention that promotes students' positive thinking, goal-setting, and problem-solving skills. Psychological hope has been shown in the brain to reduce amygdala responses and decrease the impact of anxiety on the brain, promoting healing from trauma and improving resiliency. Psychological hope is one of the most robust predictors of academic achievement. Psychological hope can improve academic performance, reduce stress and anxiety and enhance overall well-being by enhancing students' sense of hopefulness, optimism, and resilience. Studies indicate that psychological hope programs can lead to higher academic achievement, lower absenteeism, and improved mental health outcomes in students (Day et al., 2010; Munoz et al., 2020).

Effective asset-based SEL programs follow several fundamental principles, as outlined below in Table 2 (Corcoran et al., 2018; Darling-Hammond et al., 2019; Mahoney et al., 2021; Ura et al., 2019). The table documents each principle and how Thrively incorporates each into its learning solution:

Table 1. Key principles of an asset-based whole child development program

Component	More information
<p>1. An effective Strengths-based approach: The program focuses on identifying and building upon students' strengths.</p>	<p>Thrively's Strength Assessment tool, designed by leading pediatric neuropsychologists, helps students identify their strengths and guides how to use them in different contexts. The platform allows students to discover and develop their strengths through personalized activities and resources.</p>
<p>2. Holistic perspective: The program takes a holistic approach to student development, recognizing that academic achievement is just one aspect of a student's overall well-being. The program aims to support students' social, emotional, and physical health as well as their academic growth.</p>	<p>Thrively supports students' social, emotional, and physical health through personalized skill-based playlists and teaching resources, increasing psychological hope and academic success. The program promotes well-being through personalized SEL lessons and intervention planning based on student data.</p>
<p>3. Student-centered learning: The program promotes student agency and choice in their learning, allowing students to set goals, identify their own interests, and take ownership of their learning.</p>	<p>Thrively's program measures and promotes psychological hope, empowering students with a positive outlook, confidence, and motivation to pursue their goals. This mindset fosters a sense of agency and choice, enabling students to actively participate in their learning and make decisions that align with their interests and strengths.</p>
<p>4. Collaboration and partnership: The program engages and collaborates with families, community organizations, and other stakeholders to support students' overall well-being and success.</p>	<p>Thrively offers email communication and support for families, enabling them to stay informed and engaged in their child's learning journey. In addition, Thrively connects students with learning opportunities within their local community, promoting real-world learning experiences that complement classroom learning.</p>
<p>5. Continuous improvement: The program uses research and feedback to support continuous improvement practices and outcomes and to ensure that it meets students' needs.</p>	<p>Thrively uses research and feedback to continuously improve its program and ensure it meets students' needs. By gathering data and feedback from psychological research, students, families, and educators, Thrively tailors its approach to better serve students, providing a high-quality and effective program.</p>

The American Academy of Pediatrics, The Children's Hospital Association, and The American Academy of Child and Adolescent Psychiatry declared a state of emergency in child and adolescent mental health due to COVID-19, which is still in effect.³

Schools are turning to SEL and asset-based programs to tackle student well-being and academic performance issues. Early studies indicate that asset-based SEL programming and psychological hope boost well-being, life satisfaction, academic performance, student equity, and mental well-being (Corcoran et al., 2018; Denham & Brown, 2010; Flint & Jagers, 2021; Hart et al., 2020; Hunt et al., 2020; Li et al., 2023; Ura et al., 2019).

LOGIC MODEL

A logic model is a program or product roadmap. It identifies how a program aims to impact learners, translating inputs into measurable activities that lead to expected results. A logic model has five core components: inputs, participants, activities, outputs, and outcomes (see Table 2).

Table 2. Logic model core components

Component	Description	More Information
Inputs	What we invest	What resources are invested and/or required for your product to function effectively in schools?
Participants	Who we reach	Who receives the product or intervention? Who are the key users?
Activities	What we do	What do you do with the resources identified in Inputs? What are the core/essential components of your program? What are you delivering to help students /teachers achieve the program outcomes identified?
Outputs	Products of activities	What are numeric indicators of activities? (e.g., key performance indicators; allows for examining program implementation)
Outcomes	Short-term, intermediate, long-term	Short-term outcomes are changes in awareness, knowledge, skills, attitudes, and aspirations. Intermediate outcomes are changes in behaviors or actions. Long-term outcomes are ultimate impacts or changes in social, economic, civil, or environmental conditions.

³ American Academy of Pediatrics. (2021, October). Declaration of a national emergency in child and adolescent mental health. Center for Disease Control and Prevention. <https://www.aap.org/en/advocacy/child-and-adolescent-healthy-mental-development/aap-aacapcha-declaration-of-a-national-emergency-in-child-and-adolescent-mental-health/>.

THRIVELY LOGIC MODEL COMPONENTS:

Thrively invests several resources into its program, including psychological experts, researchers qualified, vetted, and trained well-being experts; daily well-being measures and teacher dashboard, including SEL lesson playlists for small group or individual intervention; administrator dashboards; training for school site leads, department heads, and teachers; parent support sessions; professional development for staff, support for onboarding and implementation, student data privacy, and support for navigating federal funding. Ultimately, the Thrively program aims to reach K-12 students, teachers, administrators, and district superintendents.

Using these program resources, students, teachers, and administrators can engage with the Thrively platform in the following activities:

Students:

- Have a daily mental well-being check-in with their teacher
- Receive targeted learning and instruction for their social and emotional needs
- Receive interventions and monitoring for their psychological hope to improve student resilience and provide healing and psychological support for mental wellness
- Work in groups and have an asset-based platform for learning
- Career counseling and asset-based advice and tools for individual student strengths
- Strengths assessment with learner feedback to improve academic success

Teachers:

- Access the dashboard for data on student engagement with Thrively
- Review daily, weekly, and monthly reports, which include student highlights and trends

Administrators review the admin dashboard for school-level insights into well-being, usage, and data trends. Additionally, assessments that measure the support built into a school's culture are available to help schools discover new ways to support their students and staff to thrive.

Thrively can examine the extent to which core activities were delivered and participants were reached by reviewing the following quantifiable outputs:

- Daily, weekly, and quarterly well-being scores for students
- Completion of individual intervention-level playlists
- Utilization trends on lesson program materials
- Completed work and learning groups
- Quarterly hope scores for students and staff to gauge implementation and monitor overall culture and well-being
- Number of times teachers access the dashboard
- Number of times trends in well-being and hope are accessed by teachers
- The number of times administrators and school officials access the dashboard



Problem Statement: The American Academy of Pediatrics, The Children's Hospital Association, and The American Academy of Child and Adolescent Psychiatry announced a state of emergency in child and adolescent mental health due to COVID-19, which is still in force. Schools are turning to SEL and asset-based initiatives to address student declines in mental health, executive functioning, and achievement. Thrively's educational support system provides schools with cost-effective research-based, research-validated tools and programs to increase well-being with verifiable results.

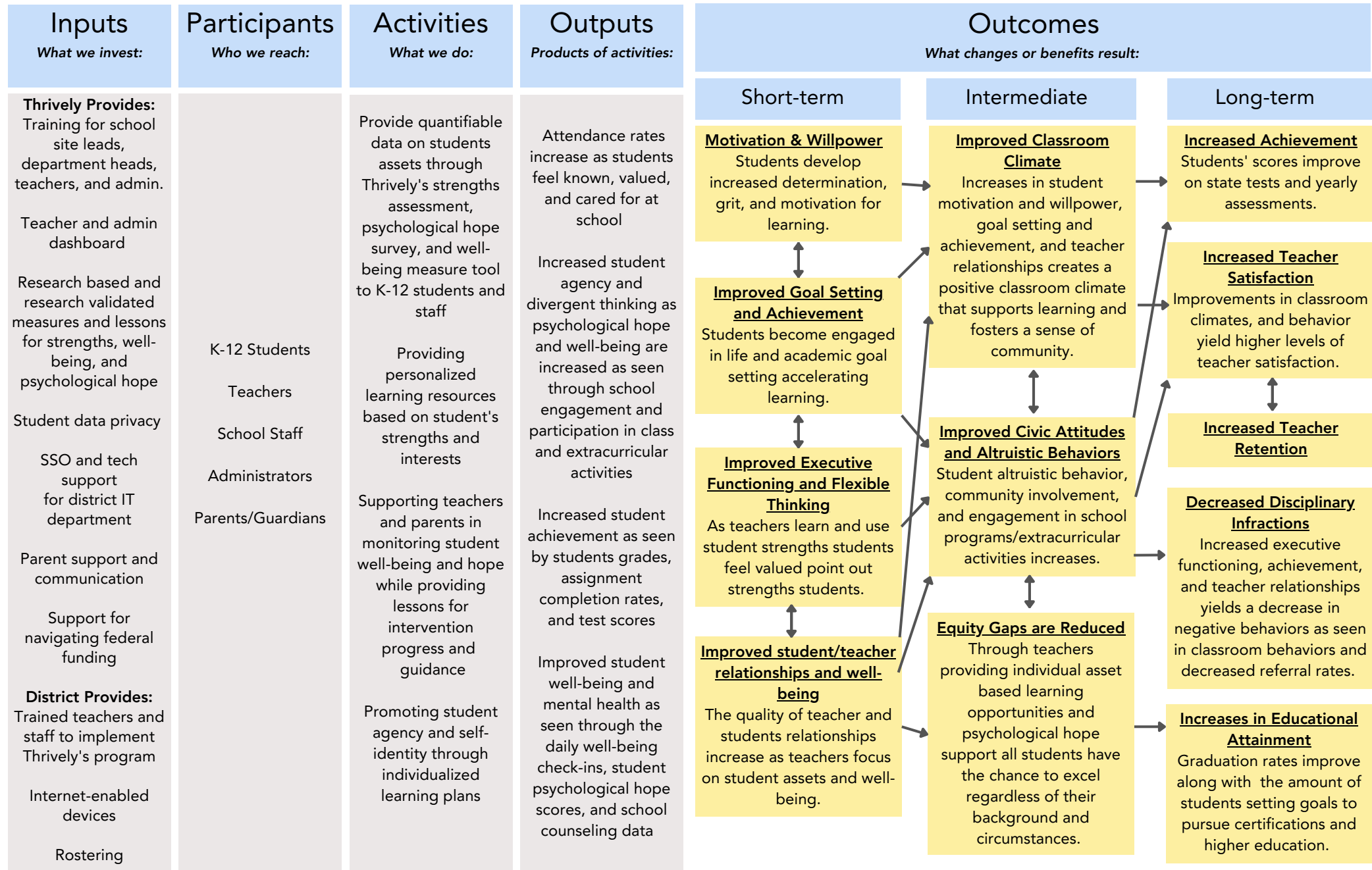


Figure 1 Thrively Logic Model

With the successful implementation of the program, based on a review of program outputs, schools that utilize Thrively can expect the following short-term outcomes: student engagement and motivation will increase, and as they interact and feel known and valued, the relationship between students and teachers will improve. Additionally, as well-being is checked and monitored, teachers can target interventions and SEL learning to improve executive functioning and psychological hope levels resulting in improved academic performance and better goal setting from students. Furthermore, as schools focus on monitoring and enhancing psychological hope, students with trauma and anxiety will have additional support levels so they can heal and have the psychological resilience to learn.

As students learn to utilize their strengths and are given individualized support for their well-being, they will gain confidence to participate in class and develop increased interest and motivation in their learning and academic success. Teachers will then be able to focus more on individual student needs and less on classroom management. Finally, administrators will have reports to support student well-being and set up support systems for student and teacher well-being. They will also be able to monitor resource usage and utilize the tools in Thrively to assess their systems of support using the hopeful culture assessment tool to improve targeted interventions for their school.

Students in the intermediate term will develop increased confidence, agency, self-efficacy, awareness, and management in learning, and their overall participation in school will increase, resulting in the following long-term outcomes:

- improved academic performance and achievement,
- improved attendance as students feel known and valued,
- improved scores on standardized assessments,
- reduction in student equity gaps, and
- reduction in disciplinary infractions

Teachers and schools in the intermediate term will have the tools to provide for the well-being of their students and the means to get to know their learner strengths and SEL needs right away, improving relationships. Additionally, students with various mental well-being needs would receive targeted intervention support at school through Thrively's administrator-tiered groupings. Ultimately, Thrively aspires to be the educational support system that aids schools in improving the well-being of students and staff, effectively reducing teacher turnover and improving educational outcomes for all students.

STUDY DESIGN FOR THRIVELY EVALUATION

To continue building evidence of effectiveness and examine the proposed relationships in the logic model, Thrively is collaborating with Cathleen Beachboard to develop a study design to evaluate the use of Thrively as it relates to outcomes from the logic model. The proposed study will draw on data from participating districts, and data collection is underway.

CONCLUSIONS

This study satisfies ESSA evidence requirements for Level IV (Promising Evidence). Specifically, this study met the following criteria for Level IV:

- ✓ Detailed logic model informed by previous, high-quality research
- ✓ Study planning and design are currently underway for an ESSA Level III study

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