

## About our project

Impact Florida produced a podcast focused on “Prioritizing Building Relationships.” The series centered teacher and student voice and was paired with facilitated reflection with 105 math teachers. Impact was assessed through focus groups, podcast analytics, and PERTS Elevate surveys.



Listen to *What Counts*

## Top learnings about impact

Our most effective messages were those that treated relationship-building as foundational to mathematics learning and delivered that message through authentic teacher and student voices and stories. Teachers resonated with the idea that math is deeply emotional and identity-shaping, and that trust and teacher language shape whether students engage and persist. In focus groups, teachers described increased empathy for students’ lived experiences and greater awareness that intent and impact are not always aligned in teacher communication.

Teachers also identified specific practices they intended to implement, including more intentional relationship-building throughout the year, more inclusive and affirming language, increased listening and student voice routines, and shifts from control and compliance toward connection and care.

In addition to qualitative evidence, student perception data from PERTS Elevate showed modest positive shifts across nearly 10,000 students, including gains in comfort sharing ideas (+2) and teacher responsiveness to student suggestions (+3), suggesting incremental improvements in classroom community and student voice aligned with relationship-building goals.



## Top learnings about process

Messaging was most effective when it was embedded in PL that included discussion and collective problem solving. Teacher and student voice increased credibility. Investing in message development and partnering with measurement experts strengthened analysis. The biggest challenge was measuring belief and behavior change, given social desirability and the time need for instructional shifts.