

Positive Relationships Matter: How can we build positive relationships to increase student success?

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The Background Leading to this Inquiry



- Based on data collected from IPLI surveys
- Teacher Dialogue
- Assessment of student needs



SOCIAL EMOTIONAL LEARNING (SEL) FRAMEWORK



Stress Load

The energy required to keep thinking and learning "online" by managing emotional, physical, and environmental stress. Stress load can impact thinking and learning at every level. (Shanker, 2016)

21st Century Skills



When students self-regulate they are able to strengthen their 21st century skills including communication, collaboration, problem solving, critical thinking and creativity. The development of 21st century skills will equip students to be learners, leaders and to contribute positively to their families and community.

Self-Regulation



When students and adults achieve optimal self-regulation, they are calm, alert and ready to learn. Optimal self-regulation requires students and adults to use their social, prosocial, cognitive and emotional skills to respond effectively to everyday challenges and stressors (Shanker, 2013).

21st Century Content



Students must be engaged in 21st century and social emotional content to increase breadth of knowledge and support student ownership of their learning.

Executive Functions



When students have positive relationships and are physically and emotionally healthy, their executive functions can be developed and strengthened. This includes working memory, focused attention and self-control.

Physical & Emotional Health



To optimize learning and healthy brain development, children need to be well-rested, have an appropriate sensory diet, opportunities for movement and physical activity during the day, positive school environments, adequate hydration and healthy food choices.

Positive Relationships



Having positive relationships is essential to student learning, positive well-being, healthy brain development, and flourishing throughout life.

Helping Kids
with Social
Emotional
Needs

The Purpose of this Inquiry

- Develop positive relationships to optimize physical and emotional health to increase student success
- Focus on opportunities to build positive staff relationships amongst one another
- Implement activities and programs that will increase positive relationships between staff and students and student to student

Our Wondering



In order to
increase student
success, how do
we intentionally
focus on
relationship
building?



What activities can we implement that helps support a positive environment between staff members?

What activities and programs can we implement that fosters a positive, well-being relationship between staff and students?

What activities and programs can we implement to create a healthy physical and emotional learning environment between students?



How is student success defined?





Team Building ActivitiesCounselor Newsletter

Staff Celebration Days

Meet the Teacher

Social Groups

Kindness Activities

Staff Book Study

Breathing Techniques

Summer Staff Retreat

Social/Emotional Activities

Counseling Themes/Talks

BRT (Building Relationship Time)

Daily School Pledge

Pictures

Documents



Videos

**Feedback
from surveys**

**Data
trends**

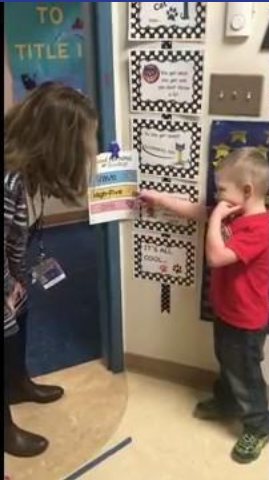
Staff to Staff Relationships



*Staff to
Student
Relationships*



BRT: Building Relationship Time



More Staff to Student Relationships

VOLUME 2 • MARCH 2019

COUNSELING CORNER

COUNSELING NEWSLETTER



WHAT ARE MY TRIGGERS?

If we can identify certain things that make us angry ahead of time, we have a better chance of handling our anger well when it comes. Talk about this first with your kids to help them identify situations that might make them upset.

I GET ANGRY....

- When things are not fair
- When others cheat
- When someone tells me "no"
- When I have to wait
- When I am ignored
- When I am left out
- When I am bullied
- When others are bullied
- When someone tells me what to do
- When I don't understand
- When others misunderstand me
- When someone criticizes me
- When I am hurt
- When I am scared
- When I am tired
- When I am hungry
- When someone touches me
- When I lose a game
- When I am embarrassed
- When things don't go my way
- When plans change
- When people don't do what they say they will do
- When people don't listen to me
- When someone hurts me
- When someone laughs at me
- When someone doesn't want to hang out with me
- When others talk about me
- When I don't have the things I need

DEALING WITH ANGER

BY JULIE WARREN

More often than not, students that are in my office or come to see me struggle to cope with his/her anger. Anger is a tricky beast. We feel it so intensely and struggle to control it. Emotions in and of themselves are not bad, but it's how we deal with them that is the important part.

Anger has long reaching effects on our bodies and minds as well as on our relationships. Here are some ways uncontrolled anger can affect us and those around us:

ANGER'S EFFECTS	BODY & MIND	ON RELATIONSHIPS
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Increased heart rate • Increased blood pressure • Faster breathing • Increased body temperature • Increased sweating • Headaches • Stomachaches • Trouble sleeping • Feelings of sadness • Hard to focus 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Others feel threatened • Others feel frustrated or angry too • Others feel afraid • Hard to maintain friendships • Difficulty getting along with friends and family 	




ANGER SCALE

Talking with your kids ahead of time about what they can do when they are angry sets them up for success! Talk with your kids about gauging their anger on a scale of one to ten. Then, come up with coping skills they think would help them calm down as they slide up and down the anger scale.

Healthy Ways to cope with Anger:

- Write about your feelings in a journal
- Focus on or set a goal
- Think of a funny thing you've seen on TV
- Say what you need
- Listen to what others say without interrupting
- Avoid words like "never" and "always" when expressing anger
- Think of a happy memory
- Read a book, poem, or news article
- Listen to or sing a song that helps you feel calm
- Picture a relaxing place
- Talk to someone you trust
- Breathe deeply from your belly
- Take a break
- Choose a calming word or phrase and repeat it to yourself
- Squeeze a stress ball or play with a fidget
- Avoid making assumptions or "jumping to conclusions"
- Do a simple, slow exercise like stretching
- Count to 20 before you respond to a trigger
- Think of a funny joke

10



I'm out of control with anger! I need to calm down ASAP

5



I'm frustrated! I need to calm down a little bit.

1



I feel great! No need to calm down!

These coping skills I need to use

These coping skills I could help

Rules of Anger



- DO NOT HURT OTHERS
- DO NOT HURT MYSELF
- DO NOT HURT PROPERTY



MEET the TEACHER

A LITTLE BIT ABOUT ME

Hello! My name is Mrs. Anderson. I am a third grade teacher at South Elementary. I have been teaching for 24 years. I taught one year in kindergarten, four years in 1st grade, eighteen years in 2nd grade, and I am starting my second year in 3rd grade. I am married and have two children. I am super excited about this upcoming school year!

MY HISTORY

I have lived in Martinsville my entire life. I attended Poston Road where my 1st grade teacher inspired me to want to become a teacher. I was a cheerleader throughout school and still enjoy supporting Artesian athletics. My birthday is June 22.

MY EDUCATION

I graduated from Indiana University in 1994 with a Bachelors of Science in Elementary Education and a Kindergarten Endorsement. I received my Masters Degree from Ball State.

MY CONTACT INFORMATION

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A FEW OF MY FAVORITE THINGS

Subject: Reading
Color: Purple
Sport: Cheerleading
Season: Summer
Food: Mexican
Drink: Mountain Dew
Music: Country
Animal: Koala
Candy: Chocolate



*Student to
Student
Relationships*

Counseling Talks/Social Groups

Guidance lessons on a variety of topics

Empathy

Managing Anger

Friendship

Anti-Bullying

Kindness

Safety

Careers

Small group counseling

Respect

Anger

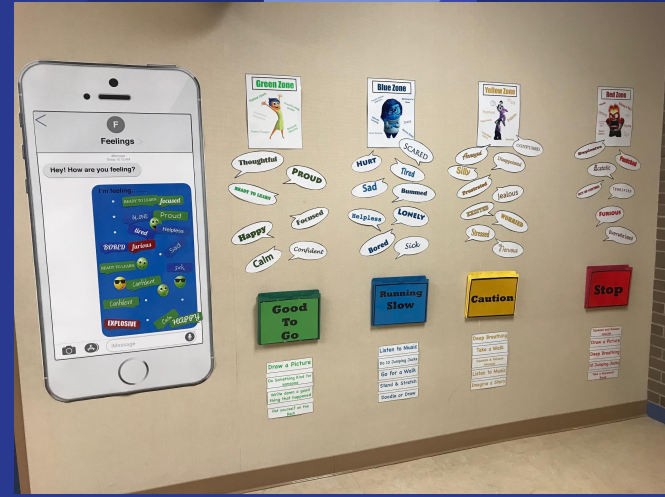
Leadership

Following Directions

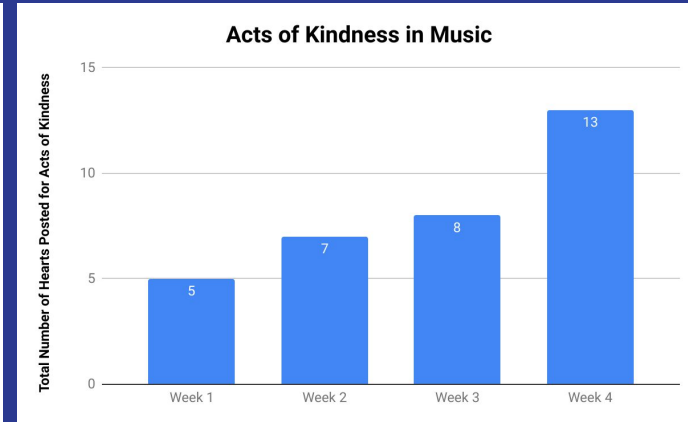
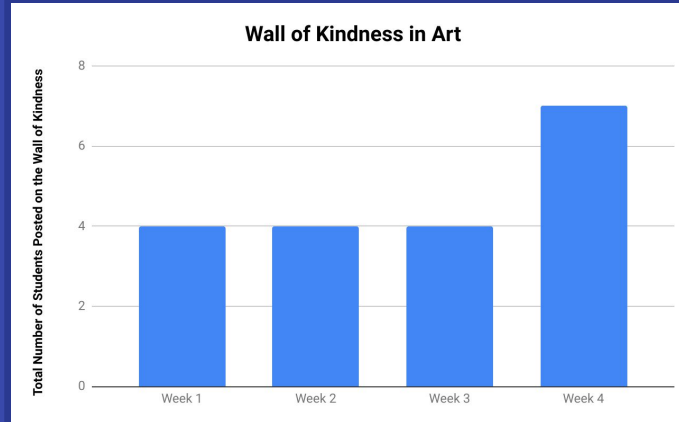
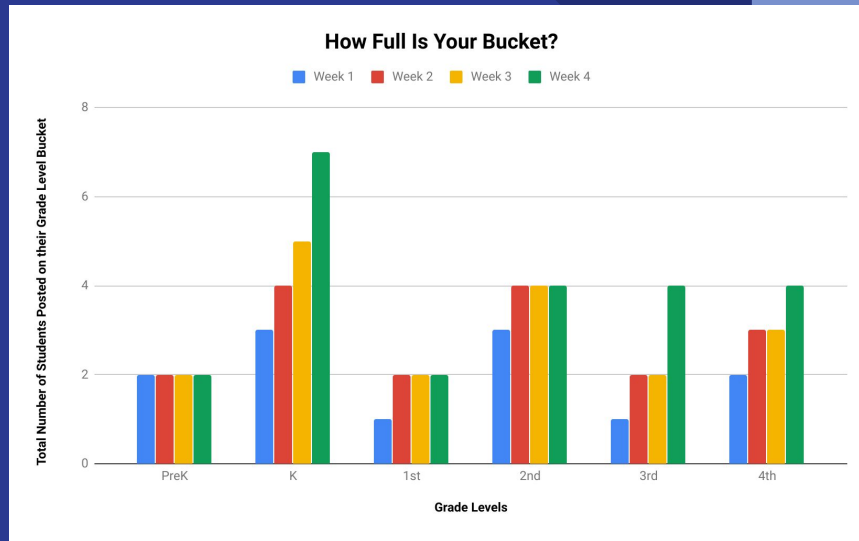
Social Skills

Self-Esteem

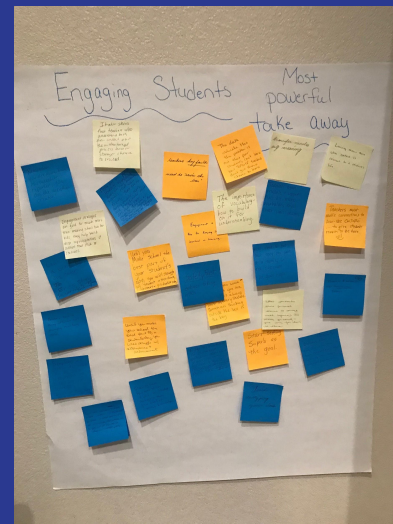
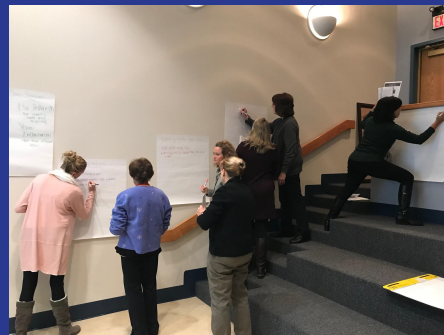
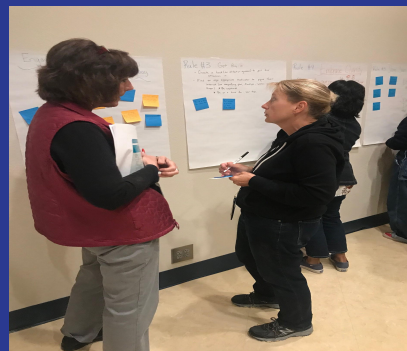
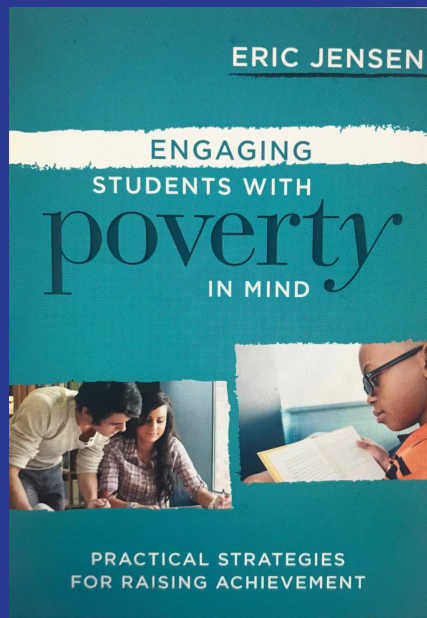
Student to Student Relationships



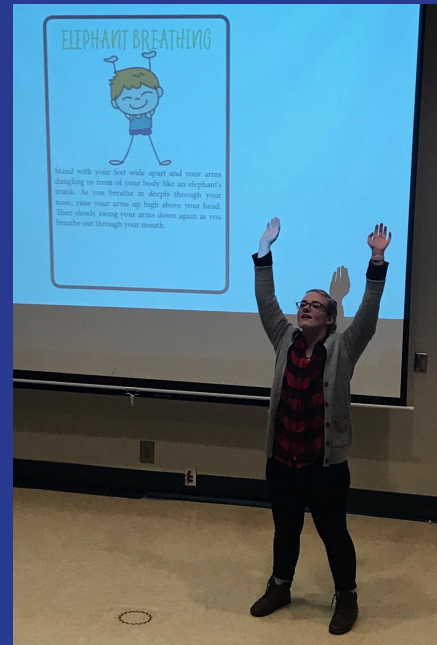
Student to Student Relationships



Building All Relationships through a staff book study



Building All Relationships through learning breathing techniques



IT'S ALL ABOUT RELATIONSHIPS



More Videos

<https://t.co/OFfdy9SBYL?ssr=true>

<https://t.co/bZ6PR3p4w3?ssr=true>



Empowering Students
Through Communications

Dolphin Daily Pledge

Today is a new day!

I will act in a safe and healthy way.

I will do the right thing and be polite.

I will respect others and treat people right.

I will take responsibility for me.

Today I will be the best I can be.

Staff Survey Results

Question	Score of 5	Score of 4	Score of 3	Score of 2	Score of 1
Summer retreat	66.70%	33.30%	0%	0%	0%
BRT with Morning Greeting	44.40%	44.40%	11.10%	0%	0%
Staff Spirit Days	55.60%	33.30%	11.10%	0%	0%
Meet the Teacher Flyers	33.30%	33.30%	33.30%	0%	0%
Kindness Activities during Specials	22.20%	33.30%	33.30%	11.10%	0%
Social Groups by Counselor	22.20%	0%	44.40%	22.20%	11.10%
Book Study	33.30%	55.60%	11.10%	0%	0%
Effectiveness of Breathing Techniques	22.20%	33.30%	44.40%	0%	0%
	Yourself	Students	Both		
Use of Breathing Techniques	11.10%	22.20%	66.70%		

Activities making the biggest impact on Building Positive Relationships

- Morning greeting with students
- Staff retreat
- Staff Spirit Days

Our Discoveries

- By implementing breathing techniques at staff meetings and with students, we are seeing the start of self regulation for students
- By implementing relationship building activities students come to rely on and expect those activities that are building relationships to be a part of their day
- By implementing a variety of relationship building activities, a balance of all types of relationships can be supported



What's Next



- Continued activities such as the retreat, book study, breathing techniques, and social groups
- Implementation of Kindness Challenge
- Implementation of Morning Meetings
- TBRI Training



Positive Relationships Matter: How Can We Build Positive Relationships to Increase Student Success?

Principal Name: Melody Meyer

School Name: South School of Communications

Team Members' Names: Rita Richards and Tricia Anderson

Principal's Email Contact: melody.meyer@msdmartinsville.org

Background Leading to Our Inquiry (Slides 2-3)

The following background information led to our wondering in hopes that we can develop positive relationships to optimize physical and emotional health to increase student success.

- Based on data collected from IPLI surveys
- Teacher Dialogue
- Assessment of student needs
- During an inservice, the Social Emotional Learning Framework was shared with staff and this led to conversations about the importance of positive relationships to increase physical and emotional health before other educational needs can be met

The Purpose of Our Inquiry (Slide 4)

Therefore, the purpose of our action inquiry was to:

- Develop positive relationships to optimize physical and emotional health to increase student success
- Focus on opportunities to build positive staff relationships amongst one another
- Implement activities and programs that will increase positive relationships between staff and students and student to student

Our Wondering (Slides 5 & 6)

With this purpose, we wondered:

In order to increase student success, how do we intentionally focus on relationship building?

- **SubQuestions:** With our main wondering came other questions that we sought answers for during our action research process.
 - What activities can we implement that helps support a positive environment between staff members?

- What activities and programs can we implement that fosters a positive, well-being relationship between staff and students?
- What activities and programs can we implement to create a healthy physical and emotional learning environment between students?
- How is student success defined?

Our Actions (Slide 7):

We implemented a variety of activities throughout the year to foster building positive relationships. Each of these actions will be discussed in more detail with the data findings.

- Team Building Activities
- Staff Celebration Days
- Summer Staff Retreat
- BRT (Building Relationship Time)
- Meet the Teacher
- Counselor newsletter
- Social Groups
- Counseling Themes/Talks
- Kindness Activities
- Social/Emotional Activity
- Staff Book Study, Engaging Students with Poverty in Mind, Eric Jensen
- Breathing techniques
- Daily School Pledge

Data Collection (Slide 8):

The following methods were used to collect the data for this action research project:

- Pictures/Videos
- Document artifacts
- Feedback from teachers through a survey
- Data trends for kindness activities

Our Data (Slide 9):

One focus of the project was to improve positive relationships between staff members. This was accomplished by providing team building activities throughout the school year. One activity was having a photo scavenger hunt at our summer retreat. This allowed for staff members to collaborate in a fun way while identifying their different learning styles. In addition, we offered staff celebration days weekly to increase school spirit and morale. Some examples of these celebration days include wearing your favorite holiday sweater, “Don’t Sweat it Wednesday” by wearing sweats or a sweatshirt, crazy sock or slipper day, and wearing cool colors to support that “We are a C.O.O.L. School (Care for Ourselves and Others in Life).”

Our Data (Slide 10):

Another focus of the project was to increase positive relationships between staff and students. One initiative was to start each morning with BRT (Building Relationship Time). Teachers found their own approach to greeting the students each morning to get the day started on a positive note. Ideas were shared at staff meetings to encourage continued implementation of various greetings. The three videos show various ways that teachers greet their students each morning. One approach is that the student chooses an option from a chart such as Wave, High Five, or Hug. Two other teachers show that they use different handshakes to greet their students in the morning.

Our Data (Slide 11):

Other actions implemented to enrich the staff to student relationships were to send home Counseling Corner Newsletter from our counselor. The newsletter gives information on various emotions, their triggers, and coping strategies. A "Meet the Teacher" flyer with information and fun facts about the teacher was created by each teacher and given to parents and students at Open House.

Our Data (Slide 12):

Our third focus was to look at building positive relationships between students. Our counselor implemented guidance lessons during library specials throughout the year on various topics such as empathy, friendship, kindness, managing anger, anti-bullying, safety, and careers. Our counselor also implemented small group counseling sessions for those students that teachers felt would benefit the most on topics such as respect, leadership, social skills, anger, following directions, and self-esteem.

Our Data (Slide 13):

In addition, activities were carried out during special area classes such as library, music, and art to promote kindness. In library, the book How Full Is Your Bucket? was read to students and as students showed an act of kindness it was added to their grade level bucket. Some examples of acts of kindness from this activity that have been posted in the hallway are "picked up several books that were on the floor," "helped check in books," and "using manners such as thank you." During music, students were recognized for demonstrating kindness by having them place a heart with their name and act of kindness on the "Be the Reason Someone Smiles" bulletin board in the hallway. Some examples of how students earned a heart was, "helping without being asked," "making the teacher smile," "leading by example." In art class, the Wall of Kindness bulletin board has students' names that have displayed acts of kindness. These students will also get to paint a kindness pebble to go in our pebble path. Our social emotional piece was used during technology class based off the movie, *Inside Out*. Students are able to go out and choose how they are feeling, "Good to Go," "Running Slow," "Caution," or "Stop" and place their feelings on the phone bulletin board. Concerns can be taken up with the counselor as a follow up.

Our Data (Slide 14):

These graphs present the results in growth from the three kindness activities during special area classes. In all the activities implemented we have seen an increase in student success over time.

Our Data (Slide 15):

Our final focus was looking at building all relationships. Staff members participated in the reading of, Engaging Students with Poverty in Mind. Staff met monthly to collaborate on a different chapter and take ideas back to the classroom to implement. Some of the most powerful takeaways were “Until you make school the best part of a student’s day, you will struggle with student attendance, achievement, and graduation rates,” “Engagement is the key to keeping students involved in learning,” and “Start setting superb as the goal.”

Our Data (Slide 16):

Actions such as teaching staff and students breathing techniques help meet the individual needs for staff and students while increasing the social/emotional connections. The pictures provide examples of the breathing techniques introduced this year by our counselor. The video shows one class implementing a breathing technique, “The Elephant,” during a part of their daily routine.

Our Data (Slide 17):

To continue our efforts on increasing all relationships, fun videos were created by staff and shared with students and parents throughout the year. This worked on team collaboration, morale, and students enjoyed seeing teachers in this capacity. Some examples are a Welcome Back to School video, a Rockin’ Back to School Open House, and JibJab Holiday video. We also incorporated the Dolphin Daily Pledge as part of our school-wide morning announcements.

Our Data (Slide 18):

The staff was given a survey in regards to the actions implemented this year to build positive relationships. They rated the activities on a scale of 1 to 5 with 5 having the largest impact on relationships. The results show that the activities making the biggest impact are the morning greeting with students (BRT), the staff retreat, and staff spirit days.

Our Discoveries (Slide 19):

We have learned through this action research project that:

- By implementing breathing techniques at staff meetings and with students, we are seeing the start of self regulation for students.
- By implementing relationship building activities students come to rely on and expect those activities that are building relationships to be a part of their day
- By implementing a variety of relationship building activities, a balance of all types of relationships can be supported

These discoveries are supported by our data collection. With about 67% of staff using the breathing techniques taught for themselves and their students, we are seeing the start of self regulation by students by using these techniques. Therefore, we are seeing student success because we are seeing steps towards meeting their basic needs. In addition, as more students are being added to the various kindness bulletin boards and BRT having one of the largest impacts on relationships from the perspective of the teachers, these actions are becoming a part of the routine that students become to expect as part of their day. This modeling and practice of these actions lend itself to continue to build positive relationships. Finally, the data from the staff survey shows the largest impact are from actions that focus on staff to staff relationships and staff to student relationships. Therefore, we can conclude that it does take a variety of activities or actions to implement to build all types of relationships.

Where We Are Headed Next (Slide 20):

We feel like our actions have been beneficial in building the positive relationships in the building.

We will continue to implement the following activities:

- Retreat
- Book Study
- Breathing Techniques
- Social Groups

We would like to implement the following activities to continue our efforts towards increasing positive relationships that will lead to student success.

- Implementation of Kindness Challenge
 - Displaying QR codes around the school with different kindness challenges for students and staff to complete. Some examples are: Do a happy dance to make someone smile, Give a fellow student a compliment, and Encourage a friend.
- Implementation of Morning Meetings
 - Offering a time for students to share about a particular topic or to share something they are feeling or share something about their day. An example would be using Roses and Thorns where the students greet each other and share something good that is happening and something that is not going so well or they are not feeling good about.
- TBRI Training
 - Our staff will participate in Trust Based Relational Intervention this summer. We will implement this approach next year.

Bibliography:

Borba, Michele (2016). *Unselfie*. New York, NY: Touchstone

Jensen, Eric (2013). *Engaging students with Poverty in Mind*. Alexandria, VA: ASCD

Rath, Tom & Reckmeyer, Mary (2009). *How Full Is Your Bucket?* Gallup Press