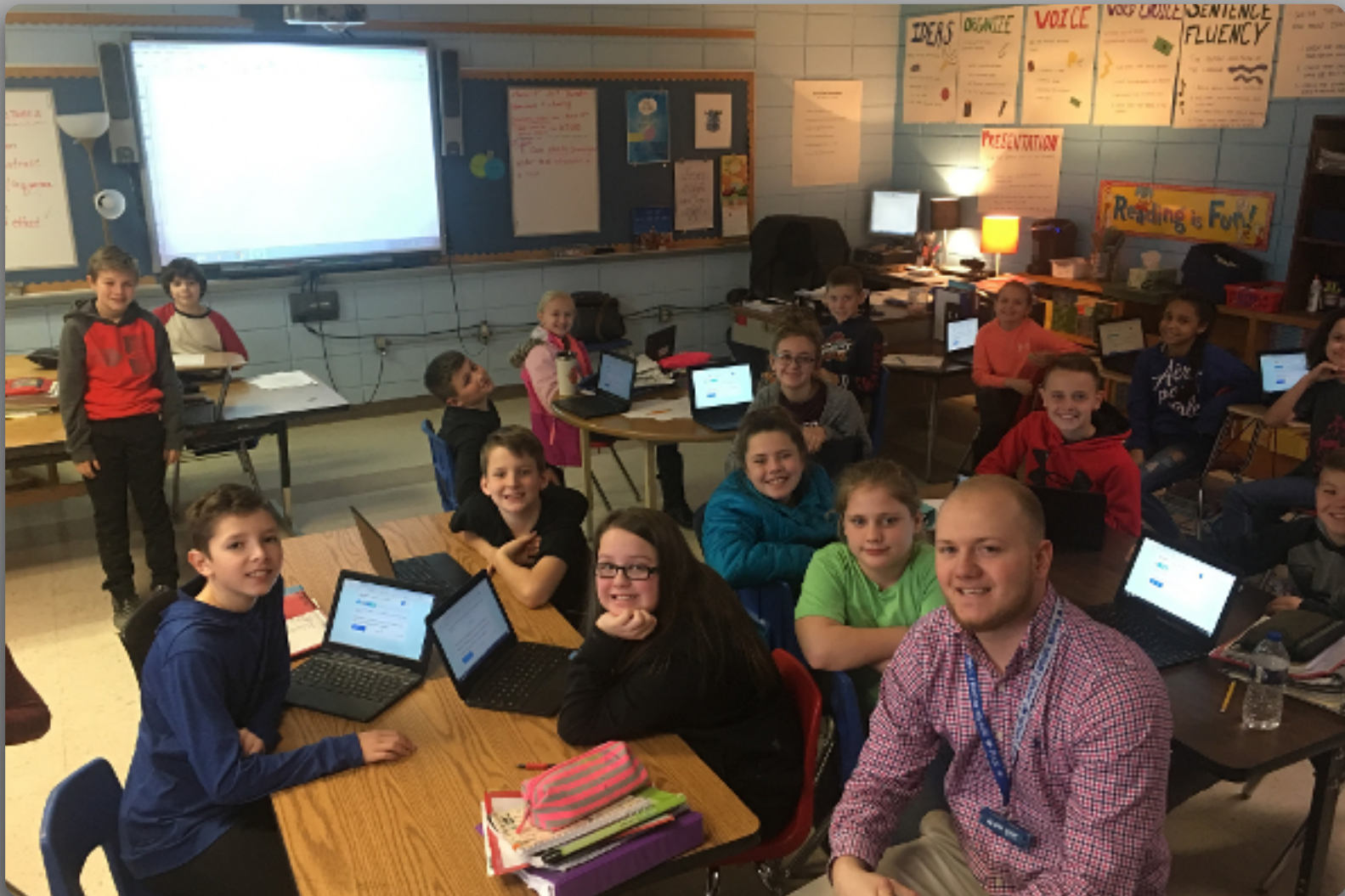


# IN THE MIDDLE

OHIO MIDDLE LEVEL ASSOCIATION



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OHIO MIDDLE LEVEL  
ASSOCIATION

**IN THE MIDDLE**

**Spring 2018-2019**

**Volume XLIII Number 3**

*In the Middle* is the official newsletter of the Ohio Middle Level Association and is published three times per year. Submissions on topics relevant to middle level education are encouraged and should be submitted to newsletter co-editor KristenMSmith223@gmail.com.

**Thank you to our Business Partners for their support of middle level education!**



## *President's Message*

**Nicki Bertke**  
OMLA President



The theme for this edition of the OMLA Newsletter is “Spotlight on Success.” As you read through the articles, I am sure you will find many success stories outlining the amazing work of middle level educators throughout Ohio. Your tireless work and efforts to meet the needs of middle level students each and every day are applauded and appreciated. Some of these middle level educators and OMLA individual and building members may have been recognized with an award at #OMLA2018. Awards were presented for outstanding middle level practices and to middle level educators, support staff, students, and parents. In all, there were a total of 27 awards presented during the conference! Thank you to all of our members who took time to nominate a deserving person or middle level practice. Congratulations to all who received an award!

I would also like to shine the spotlight on and give a shout out to the OMLA Executive Board. The all-volunteer board is comprised of 36 middle level educators representing the 8 OMLA regions throughout the state. These individuals give up time with their families throughout the year to attend OMLA board meetings, workshops, regional events and the OMLA Annual State Conference. It is amazing what a committed group of educators can accomplish while doing what is best for middle level students and keeping the students at the center. I am so proud and honored to work alongside such a passionate and dedicated group of educators!

We are looking forward to #OMLA2019 November 7-8 at Hilton Easton Columbus! Keynotes Todd Whitaker (@ToddWhitaker) and Dave Burgess (@burgessdave) and featured presenter Jack Berckmeyer (@jberckmeyer) are sure to leave you feeling energized and ready to tackle any challenge! Presentation proposals for break-out sessions are currently being accepted. Submit your proposal to highlight a classroom practice or school program! Presentation proposals must be postmarked by June 1st and can be found at [www.ohiomla.org](http://www.ohiomla.org).



# Student Leadership Summit a Huge Success

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## Central Region

Central Region of OMLA supports the principle, “We are all leaders.” This is something we believe is true for both staff members, as well as students. A group of approximately 100 students recently attended the Student Leadership Summit at Hastings Middle School to enhance and celebrate their leadership skills.

Through this summit, students came together to discuss how to make their school a better place to live and learn. Roy Hall, president and founder of the Driven Foundation, served as the keynote speaker. Following his presentation, the Hastings Middle School BEARS (Bringing Empathy, Acceptance, and Respect Schoolwide) student group took the reins. Students from central Ohio schools participated in team building and problem solving activities and were introduced to resolution strategies. Each school then had the chance to come together at the end to plan next steps for their school.

“Seeing the students from central Ohio collaborate, identify areas for growth, and participate in team building activities was both inspiring and an affirmation that there is a need for leadership skill development,” Hastings principal, Robb Gonda said.

According to Teays Valley West principal, Michael Kauffeld, not only did he encourage his students to attend to strengthen their leadership skills, but he sees value in providing the students an opportunity to collaborate with other student leaders from other schools.

“You discover each school has its own set of challenges. Together, we can identify those challenges and brainstorm strategies for improvement,” he said. “They were inspired and excited to discuss how we can be a better school for all students.”

Scott Burre, principal at Lancaster said, “The Ohio Middle Level Association’s Student Leadership Summit with keynote speaker Roy Hall was a big success. So many times teachers and administrators from other schools are able to get together and collaborate and this provided an opportunity for middle school students from different schools to do the same.”

“They were able to build on Roy Hall's words on servant leadership and work with other middle school students to take back ideas to their own schools to implement. There is no better time to start building leaders than in middle school,” Burre continued.

“At this age students are finding out all kinds of new things about themselves. One of them needs to be that they can lead positive change,” Kauffeld said. “They also learn from other students that leadership takes many forms and they can explore their own talents and gifts as leaders.”

The students who attended agreed it was a positive experience that provided them with tools to bring back to their home school, including Teays Valley West seventh grade student Simon Lupfer. “I learned how to be a person of significance, stepping out and showing myself as a leader. I am glad that I attended because I learned how to put myself out there, show myself as a leader and influence others to be leaders too,” he said.

Shannon Helser, from Teays Valley East, wrapped it up this way, “The students enjoyed the day, loved the speaker and enjoyed sharing suggestions on how we can improve our school building and culture.”

# From Student to Teacher:

## A Caldwell Success Story

Rachel Klinger

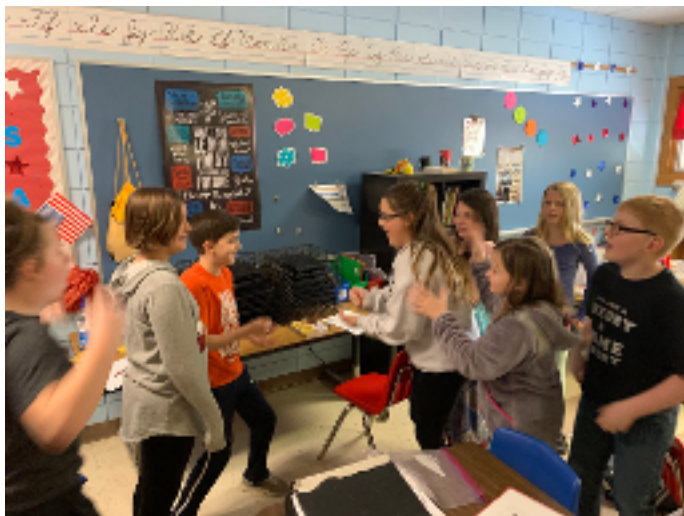
Caldwell Elementary School

East Region

The definition of success is dependent on a person's quantitative measure and their point of view. To my youngest daughter, success is nothing less than a 4.0. To a school district, success may be determined by their state report card. To a coach, success may be a winning season or an overall improvement of their team. As educators, we are subjected to many different success "labels".

Personally, I feel successful when I see students, both past and present, doing what they love and striving to become their best self. One such former student is Eli Svercek. I was fortunate to have Eli in class for two consecutive years, for both 7th and 8th grade ELA. He was a wonderful addition to any classroom; always an eager contributor to class discussions, he has a delightful sense of humor and is truly a compassionate young man. Fast forward ten years, and I now have the privilege of calling Eli my colleague. Eli started teaching 5th grade ELA in our district three years ago. As an alumnus of our district, he is invested in our community and students. He is a positive role model for all middle school students in our building. He is also the head basketball coach for the girls' varsity team.

Eli's influence and teaching style is evident both on and off the court, and his students and players are the beneficiaries of his strong work ethic and desire to succeed. Two years ago, I suggested to Eli that he attend our OMLA annual state conference. He accompanied me to the conference and has been hooked since.



When asked what he enjoyed most about the OMLA conference Eli replied

"For me, the most memorable moments from the OMLA conference are the break-out sessions. I enjoy listening to each presenter and working alongside and collaborating with other teachers from districts across the state. My favorite sessions were ones lead by Kim Campbell and Jack Berckemeyer because they kept us up, moving and laughing, all while learning more about what we need to do to best serve the kids that we teach. I have found a lot of useful vocabulary instructional strategies and writing strategies at

the conferences. A few strategies that I use are list-group-label, word walls, point of view guides, using brain breaks, and choice boards. As well as classroom management strategies to keep students focused and engaged. Some useful educational websites I have learned about the conferences include Edpuzzle, Edulastic, NoRedInk and Google applications. There have been few break-out sessions in which I haven't been able to come back to school and implement right away. The online applications have been a hit in my class and have enhanced students use of technology and their motivation. The vocabulary strategies I've implemented have increased understanding and academic conversations between students. I have taught English language arts and Reading at Caldwell EVSD for three years. I have been a member of OMLA for two years and have attended the annual conference each of those years. I appreciate the work that those who volunteer at OMLA put in and think it's one of the best professional organizations around!"



## Ohio Middle Level Association

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Nick Discenza	<i>NE Associate Rep</i>	Tom Burton	<i>SW Associate Rep</i>		



# Edgewood Middle School PBIS: One Family

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Alaura Brown, Josh Stapleton, Beci Wiggins, Nikki Heupel, and Dave Slamer  
Southwest Region

Middle school can be a tough and trying time for many students. It can also be one of the most rewarding and exciting time for students. As our students move through their middle school years, they will experience tremendous change and growth. In many ways, students come in as children and leave as young adults. Our goal at Edgewood Middle School is to provide a foundation for students to feel empowered about themselves as they move through and beyond their middle school years.

PBIS stands for Positive Behavior Intervention System. Here at Edgewood Middle School this takes the form of our House System. Our student population is divided into four “Houses:” the Courageous Bears, the Respectful Owls, the Optimistic Foxes, and the Loyal Wolves. Each individual teacher’s group of students is comprised of 6th, 7th, and 8th grade students in order for them to meet more people and feel more connected with our whole student population. House groups meet once a week on Fridays to conduct activities and lessons focusing on our district character traits: honesty, acceptance, determination, bravery, and kindness, and district expectations: being respectful, responsible, safe, and together. In addition, our houses will partner with charities throughout the year to demonstrate to students the importance of being involved in our community

Two teachers, who are called House Leaders, lead each house. These teachers meet once a month to plan lessons and activities for house meeting days. They also facilitate meetings for our student house captains. The house leaders will pass off lessons and materials to the classroom teachers who conduct the activities with their students. As mentioned above students also have a leadership role in our house system. Each house has between 2 and 4 student captains per grade level. They meet once a month and help the House leaders plan and come up with new ideas.

For exhibiting positive behavior, our students are rewarded with point tickets. The tickets have two parts. The first being they are able to visit the house store once a month and use them to purchase rewards (providing an incentive to act in a positive manner). The second being students turn in part of their house ticket to be tallied toward the house cup. At the end of the year, the house with the most points is earns a whole-house reward.

We are now in our second year of this program at Edgewood Middle School and it has been a contributing factor to improved overall discipline in the building as well as a more positive culture for students and staff alike. Our overall goal for this program is that it will continue to improve school climate and culture and help our students become productive citizens when they leave us.

## **Character Traits for Each Month**

**August/September – Honesty**

**October/November – Acceptance**

**December/January – Kindness**

**February/March – Determined**

**April/May – Bravery**

# Tips for Promoting Social Emotional Success in the Classroom

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Ashley Woords

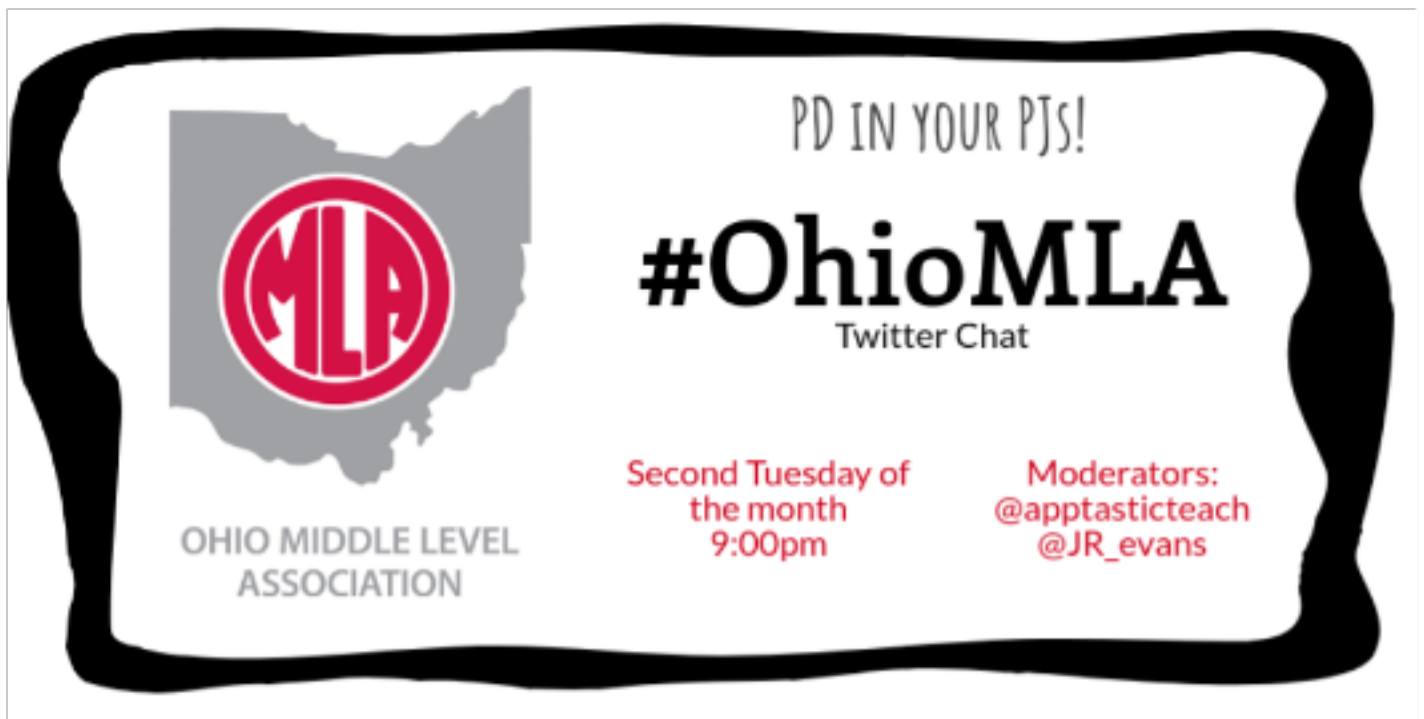
Guidance Counselor, Trimble Middle School

Southeast Region

- Service Learning Projects :
  - Examples can include having students get involved in programs such as Pennies for Patients, collecting canned goods for a food drive, etc.
- After School Programs:
  - Kids on Campus is a local example of an after school program that promotes social emotional learning. They have lessons that are geared towards social emotional learning.
  - Girl Power is another local example of a program that promotes social emotional success in the classroom.
- Advisory Programs:
  - Can create a mentor type program in order to allow students to feel connected to an adult in the building. This can help with a student to feel a sense of belonging.
  - Students and teachers can work on team building activities in order to connect with one another
- Positive Behavioral Interventions and Supports:
  - Create a PBIS team
  - Implement PBIS tier I strategies building wide
    - Teach school wide expectations (in the classroom, during assemblies, re-teach every 9 weeks and as often as needed)
    - Can utilize think sheets for reflection on a specific behavior
    - Model school wide expectations
    - Acknowledge desired behaviors (positive feedback, immediate praise, etc.)
    - Create a character program (teach a different character trait each month during advisory, acknowledge those students demonstrating those traits throughout the school year)
  - Implement PBIS tier II strategies
    - The use of a check in check out program for students that are still having behavioral referrals, but have not at a tier III level.
    - The use of social/academic instruction groups (these could include small lunch groups with the school counselor to work on social skills, problem-solving skills, time management skills, study skills, homework club, etc. )
  - Implement PBIS tier III strategies as needed
- Resources
  - Utilizing the resources that are available to students in order to promote social emotional learning.
  - School Counselors can deliver classroom guidance lessons on a variety of topics (character traits, communication skills, problem solving, career awareness,

coping skills,) They can also deliver specific SEL curriculum specifically designed for social emotional learning. Can also create school wide programs to promote social emotional skills. Examples can include programs such as Kindness challenges, monthly character trait lessons, college and career readiness programs.

- School Based Social Workers / Outreach Workers can help students in many ways. They can serve as a link between the family and the school in order to better help serve the student's social / emotional needs. Can possibly help to meet the student's basic needs.
- School Resource Officers
- School Based Mental Health Counselors and Case Managers can help with student's mental health needs. Some schools now have counselors and case managers from outside agencies that work in the school building. Utilize this resource and find out the referral process for each of these agencies.
- Food Programs
  - Some schools now have backpack food programs. This a step to help meet student's basic needs in order to promote social emotional success.
- Trauma and the Classroom
  - Professional development for school staff for trauma informed approaches can be very helpful with promoting social emotional success.
  - Building teacher/student relationships
  - Utilize sensory items when needed for students (this can include a sensory room, chair bands, breathing exercises, yoga balls, etc.)
  - Build positive relationships with students and their families.
  - Calming Approaches





# Principal, Be Your School's Optimist-in-Chief

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Jack C. Berkemeyer and Dr. Debbie Silver

Authors, Humorists, and Sought-After Consultants

Resource: *Deliberate Optimism: Reclaiming the Joy in Education*, (2015, Corwin Press)

*Principal, assistant principal, or headmaster* might be your official job description. But that's just an umbrella label for a slew of jobs, isn't it? You're expected to be a data analyst, cheerleader, PR expert, parking lot attendant, production manager, public speaker, educational leader, problem solver, conflict resolver, curriculum coordinator, chief hand-holder, and polished liaison to parents, community, and higher powers in the educational system—to name only a few. And, oh, you're also the person who gets all the perks of suspending a student from school.

Yours is a formidable job. Most of the skills you need to do it well are not likely found in textbooks. More likely, you've learned them from trial and error and practice. (Speaking of "errors," we're sure you remember all of the errors you've made on the job: such bumbles as badly mispronouncing a student's name over the PA system, falling down the stairs while chasing after a student, or finishing a speech to a parents' group and, during the applause, discovering that your pants are unzipped.)

There are endless "top 10" lists of what makes a good school leader. As we look over several, we notice that most have this at the core: the skills of optimism. In the midst of the realities of paperwork, media cynicism, parent complaints, a host of educational demands, and meager budgets, **effective school administrators lead with optimism**. Principles and actions of optimism are embedded in their lives and schools.

What does this mean? *Optimism* is more than encountering each day or situation with a positive attitude. It goes beyond just hoping everything will turn out all right. It involves a bundle of skills; these include such capabilities as acceptance, curiosity, knowledge seeking, empathic listening, problem solving, caring, openness to new ideas, risk taking, honesty, persistence, coping, taking responsibility, and heaping quantities of courage and hope. All its skills flow from these understandings:

**Optimism is realistic.** To lead with optimism, the administrator has eyes wide open. She or he does not minimize, hide from, or sugar coat a situation—but acknowledges the actualities, no matter how messy or severe.

**Optimism is intentional.** An optimist is realistic about current circumstances, yet deliberately chooses hope. This is not a blind hope, however. It is a mindset that faces challenges squarely and responds to them as opportunities. It follows a planned process of examining facts, viewpoints, background, and possible effects of a situation—and then figuring out what can be done about it. And this mindset includes purposefully choosing to fight hard, find a solution, and envision positive outcomes.

**Optimism is active.** An optimistic leader doesn't wallow in despair. Nor does the leader sit still and think positive thoughts. This leader learns everything possible about a situation, identifies options for response, makes a plan, and takes action.

We cringe when educators are demeaned or excoriated in the media. What's worse is the bashing that individuals or groups within the school community dish out to each other. We've all watched this—the eye rolling of staff members when someone else is speaking or the sidebar conversations where colleagues look for ways to put each other down. This can be passive or aggressive, but it goes on all the time. In our roles as consultants to educators, we have visited hundreds of schools and assure you that we (and surely others) can sense a school's climate within minutes of walking in the door. We can see it on the faces of the staff members. We also can see what happens when a leader effectively builds

optimism: The school culture changes. Optimism curbs the negativity. It replaces cynicism and distrust with hope and trust.

Good-News Flash! Optimism can be learned. As the leader of your school, you can develop and maintain it in yourself, spread the benefits of optimism around your school community, and help others build it. Here are a few suggestions of strategies to adopt in your role as the chief optimist. These will help to interrupt negative thought patterns, supplanting pessimism and fear with joy and confidence in working together for better possibilities.

**We're all in this together**—Adamantly believe in the philosophy: OUR kids, OUR school, OUR team, OUR class—and show that you believe it. Commit to helping students, staff members, and parents think of themselves as co-owners. We know a fantastic principal in Ohio who walks into the school cafeteria every day and shouts, “Whose school is this?” and the students shout back, “Our school!” Follow this example and encourage teachers, coaches, team leaders, and everyone in the school community to keep asking and answering this question. Lead the parade in taking the “our school!” answer beyond lip service and into visible action.

**Promote the “Five Principles of Optimism.”** Regularly teach and strengthen the following principles. Print them on laminated cards or posters for each staff member. Share them with parents and students. With your staff, choose a school-wide issue (start small) and use the principles to attack the issue. Work through each principle together. Practice this often.

1. **Before acting or reacting to a situation, gather as much information as possible about it from as many varied sources (and people) as possible.** Get the real facts! Dissect the possible impacts of the situation (on students, staff, school, parents, and community) as it is now and as it will be if a change is involved.
2. **Determine what is beyond your control and strategize how to minimize its impact on the lives of the people involved.** Wringing hands over things you cannot change is a waste of time. Instead of whining or being paralyzed, figure out how to go around the uncontrollable factors.
3. **Establish what you can control.** Seek tools and strategies to maximize your power. Remember, even when you can't change a circumstance, you can always change the way you deal with it.
4. **Actively do something positive toward your goals** (from #2 and #3 above). Fight hard for the students, your school, your colleagues, and each other. Choose to assume that the bad won't last long; interpret the possibilities optimistically. Put your power to work on a realistic, clear plan.
5. **Take ownership of your plan and acknowledge responsibility for your choices.** Stop any blaming, bickering, or excusing. Combine forces; take responsibility for your decisions; live with the outcomes; learn from your mistakes.

Encourage staff members to practice these principles individually and on teams or committees. Work together in various configurations to imagine ways out of problems and make (and follow) plans to act with optimism. Teach this to your students. With enough practice, these will become habits!

- **The Head Optimist**—As the leader, you are the number one model for optimism. Show your staff members, students, and parents what deliberate optimism looks like. For decisions that you have to make, everyone around should be able to watch you facing trouble or choices realistically and without panic, gathering information from many sources, identifying what you can't control and showing attitudes and actions to minimize its impact, identifying what you can control and planning strategies to do so, actively following a plan of action, and owning the decision and its results. Above all, let your actions point away from defeatism and toward hope.
- **No to “Us-Them” Thinking**—Us-them thinking is a roadblock to optimism. It breeds helplessness against forces that we think are out to get us. At a faculty meeting, practice this activity focused on RELATEDNESS: Have small groups brainstorm a list of 10 ways in which they are related to or need each other. Share those lists with the larger group. Then have groups

make and share a second list: 10 ways to uplift each other and acknowledge each other's gifts and competence. Don't stop with just writing the lists. Set goals and plans to act on the ideas from the lists. Check back soon to discuss the outcomes of the activity.

- **The Gift of Showing Up**—Make sure you are visible in the hallways, at the front entrance, on the playground. Show up during passing periods and other times students are coming, going, or gathered. Greet people. Say, "Hi! I hope you're having a good day." Add their names, if you know them. (Try to learn all their names.) Avoid starting a conversation with anything like this: "Is this where you are supposed to be?" Your cheerful, encouraging presence, in itself, spreads optimism and helps everyone in the school feel safe.
- **Donut Drop-off**—Use the morning rush to turn hurried chaos (and sometimes grumpiness) into a warm welcome. Once in a while, surprise each parent with a donut during drop-off time in the parking lot or in front of the school. Add a quick, "Hello" and "Thanks for being a part of our school community." Turn the event into a rally by adding the pep band and staff members dressed up in school colors. Use any available staff members and volunteers to help. Involve your kitchen and custodial staff. It's a simple but strong gesture of appreciation that will boost school pride and raise parents' spirits. (You might contact a company that makes energy bars for a one-time donation. Who can't use an energy bar just about any morning?)
- **Staff Morale Revival**—As chief optimist, designate yourself as a key morale booster. In that role, know that the way to increase morale for your staff is to treat each one as the professional that he or she is. Serve as the head example of respect for their skills, insights, abilities, and ideas. Morale flourishes when individuals are able to use their own power to make decisions that affect their professional lives, when leadership is shared with them, and when they feel valued and in control. Consistently craft opportunities for these things to happen. Get staff input for ways to do this. Cover a wall in the teacher's lounge with mural paper to create a "Morale Graffiti Wall" where they can write or draw suggestions for actions that will show that they are valued as professionals. Pay attention to their graffiti. Put as many suggestions as possible into action.
- **More (of the Principal) Is Better**—When you visit a classroom, does the teacher stop instruction? or ask, "Is there something you need?" or change posture or tone of voice? or suddenly develop various nervous tics? Do the students whisper (or even shout), "Ooooooh"? Or suddenly clam up? Or uncharacteristically misbehave? A building principal friend of ours told us that she started a practice of visiting each classroom a few times a day. Amazingly, before long her entrance was hardly noticed. In joyful schools, the momentum is unchanged when an administrator enters the room. Everyone is comfortable when he or she joins in on the fun. Think of how much connection you will build for yourself and everyone else when you become the familiar (and welcomed) figure in classrooms! The more you visit, the more you will see the real life of the classroom instead of "principal-presence anxiety" or "Let's impress the principal" performances. Your presence, when nonthreatening, breeds optimism.
- **Lightening the Load**—Surprise teachers by taking something off their plates instead of adding to them. Find something they are required to do that is dispensable (or could at least be suspended for a while) or a program that hasn't been that successful. Even if you can't remove a requirement, surprise them (individually, or in groups) once in a while with a long lunch, an extended planning period, or time to go for a walk. Enlist the administrative team and other non-teaching staff members to fill in. Drop in and take over a class yourself when you see that a break is needed for the teacher.
- **Snippets of Appreciation**—Use the platform of any school event (such as athletic games, theater presentations, talent shows, assemblies, or parent nights) to thank staff and students that are in attendance. Make this a quick announcement to let them know how important they are. If possible, include some humor so that it is memorable. The perfect time to do this is right before the National Anthem or Pledge of Allegiance. Be sure to thank the coaches and other folks who planned and orchestrated the event.



- **Bragging, Not Whining**—Create a “brag board” in the teachers’ lounge using pictures of the teachers’ own children or grandchildren. Ask them to add captions with an accomplishment or trait to celebrate. These faces help remind us that educators are a part of shaping the children in our families to become good citizens, as we are for our students. How we hope for them all to have ethical, kind, optimistic educators in their lives! This brag board can expand to include pictures of classes in our school, with captions bragging about some optimistic actions of the class members. Perhaps having these children looking over shoulders in the teachers’ room and reading about their optimistic actions will cut down on complaints or cynicism that can sometimes be heard in this room.
- **More Laughter, Please**—Try to use humor in your faculty meetings. Build your own collection of funny video clips or memes that will make staff members laugh while uplifting, not demeaning, educators or students. (Search for “funny teacher videos” or “funny principal videos” on YouTube.)
- **Small But Powerful Notes**—Write occasional notes to staff members telling them what you value in them and thanking them for how they contribute to the optimism in your school. Do the same for students and parents: write a personal note when you see an accomplishment or great act of kindness or when you hear of a student’s success or loss. Make this a consistent habit. It may seem simple and ordinary, but its impact is extraordinary.
- **Surprise Prizes**—Randomly (and without notice), recognize a student or staff member who has done something noticeably optimistic (or selfless, kind, brave, or remarkable) by giving a \$5 or \$10 gift card. Present this as a surprise in the student’s or teacher’s class. There’s no need for a school wide announcement. The word will spread by itself. (Do a few on the same day, or spread out the event to unexpected days during the school year.)
- **Real Help for Parents**—Offer get-togethers, brief “courses” on the school website, or handouts that give parents concrete help for pressing concerns in their lives. Such topics as these can help parents build needed understanding and skills: how to raise a pre-adolescent, how to deal with your high schooler’s social media obsession, how to help your child get homework done without screaming or doing it yourself, the top ten traits of elementary students, characteristics of middle schoolers and how to live with them, or how and when to pull the plug (or confiscate the battery) on technology.
- **Classroom Visits That Matter**—See that your classroom visits of any length are both informal and useful. Make sure your purpose is not just to evaluate or do a walkabout; instead intend to be curious. With every visit, learn something that helps you appreciate the teacher and students. Ask students to tell you about their work or demonstrate something they are learning. Give open-minded attention to the instructional strategies and ways the teacher is addressing different student needs. Don’t let the students or teacher see you as a note-taking critic. Take the stance of a fan. Nothing promotes optimism like the realization that your principal is a fan of you and your students!
- **Listen Before You Leap**—A key skill of optimism is listening instead of jumping to conclusions. Take the time to get all sides of the story and dig deeper to understand the motivations of all parties and possible effects of a situation. A blanket negative directive from the administrator deals a blow to morale and impedes optimism. For example, if you know who is always late to duty, don’t send out an email or text reminding staff to be on time for duty. This action just instigates hostility toward the “perpetrators” and is unlikely to improve the behavior. Speak honestly and kindly to the persons individually. Find out why this is happening, and work together to choose a constructive plan.

Optimism is alive and well within hundreds of schools. It is not dependent on your school’s demographics or staff longevity. It flows from the leader’s ability to demonstrate optimism in action, to inspire others to join in, and to teach them how to do it. When members of the school community have hope and confidence in favorable outcomes—even from difficult situations—a school culture becomes one of vibrant, joyful optimism.

# Students Recognized at Breakfast of Champions 2019

Becky Reese

Hudson Middle School

Northeast Region

This year, the Northeast Region hosted our 3rd Annual Breakfast of Champions. We invited all OMLA building members to nominate two student leaders who demonstrate leadership, scholarship, character and service. Schools submitted nominations and on Wednesday, March 13 approximately 40 students were honored. Students were joined by their parents, grandparents, teachers and administrators.

Flo Brett, of the Effective Leadership Academy, spoke about the importance of positive leadership and charged the students in the room to continue being fantastic dynamic leaders by challenging themselves to develop their most important asset: themselves.

All students were presented with a certificate and a starfish pin in addition to a framed photograph of themselves at the breakfast. The breakfast was generously sponsored by The Legend Group and Interstate Photography. This was a fantastic celebration of middle school students from the Northeast Region of Ohio.



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