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My Journey to Positivity and Its Influence on Creativity and Education

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My Journey to Positivity and Its Influence on Creativity and Education

Jennifer Youngblood

**An Abstract of a Project
in
Creativity and Change Leadership**

**Submitted in Partial Fulfillment
of the Requirements
for the Degree of
Master of Science**

May 2022

**Buffalo State
State University of New York
Department of Creativity and Change Leadership**

Abstract of Project

This project is about positivity and its impact on education and creativity. This Master's Project in Creative and Change Leadership is aimed to investigate, comprehend, and apply positively in the fields of creativity and learning. Our learning and creativity suffer when we lack positivity. One may even argue that without positivity, our lives deteriorate. My objective is to cultivate positivity in both my personal and professional lives, thus transforming myself into an unconsciously talented individual.

Key words: positivity, creativity, optimism



Jennifer P. Youngblood

May 22, 2022

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Dates of Approval:

August 08, 2022



**Dr. Susan Keller-Mathers
Associate Professor**

August 08, 2022



**Jennifer P. Youngblood
Student**

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SECTION ONE: BACKGROUND TO THE PROJECT

Background for the Project on Positivity's Impact on Learning and Creativity

In my youth, positivity was a natural mindset for me. If the Disney movie, *Polly Anna* was set in a small town in Western New York in the 1970s, I would have been her. However, as my life has progressed, I have lost some of the natural positive mindset. At first, I was not sure when it occurred. It was a gradual process. As I pondered and reflected upon when and where this occurred, I realized that it began after I graduated college and got married to a man named Shane. Shane's personality and viewpoints were often opposite of mine. He was a republican and I was a democrat. He did not enjoy reading or education, I loved these activities. He was a pessimist and I was an optimist. I remember after we had split up, that I began looking at the world in a more positive light. We had dated for five years, but were married only a year and a half. Once we had separated and he had moved out, I began feeling more like myself. As time

passed my positive mindset began returning, however, it never flourished to the level it was before our marriage. My positive outlook rose to about 80% of its previous level.

Six years later, I unknowingly married another pessimist. When we were dating, Ernest had friends, enjoyed going and doing things outside of the house, and presented a nature that was, if not as positive as my own, at least neutral. Whereas I had dated Shane for five years before we got married, I married shortly after knowing him for five months. In both cases I had picked individuals with negative natures. As time went on my positivity began to be weathered and eventually eroded from my life. Whereas in the past my friends would say I was a very positive and kind person. After being in my marriage with Ernest for more than ten years, they would have still considered me kind, but not necessarily as a positive person. Just like creativity can be learned, pessimism can also be learned. After I had been married for 16 years, my mindset was as easily pessimistic one moment and optimistic the next. My first response tended to be pessimistic, but upon reflection, I often saw the optimistic view. The negative/pessimistic responses were expressed or thought of first, so more energy was put in than the positive/optimistic thoughts. So, my outlook wasn't balanced or neutral, it was a sliding slope of negativity that leveled into a valley of optimism/positivity. Thus, my initial negative thoughts had more energy behind them and the following optimistic thoughts were marginalized. I may

have appeared balanced in my responses and views, however, the optimistic view kicked in after I had expressed the pessimistic thoughts/ideas.

When I enrolled in Buffalo State, I did not realize how much my choice of a higher education institution would impact my life and the lives of my students. I originally enrolled in Multidisciplinary Studies. The two areas that I chose to concentrate on were Leadership in Education and Creativity and Change Leadership. The two disciplines shared several core courses (they just had different course numbers). I took my first two courses at Buffalo State U, they were Educational Leadership, EDL 613, and Creativity and Change Leadership, CRS 559. I learned a great deal in both courses; however, I found a love and passion for Creativity and Change Leadership.

This was the spring of 2020. My first course was Principles in Creative Problem Solving. During the same time period I began watching a program on Netflix called *100 Humans*. During the process of Creative Problem Solving (CPS) we are taught to look at the positive and to defer judgment. While watching an episode of *100 Humans*, episode 5 which dealt with how criticism and praise impact people. I began to realize how important positivity impacted creativity and education.

During my first few semesters in Creativity Change Leadership I thought that I would do my Master's Project on the topic of general studies special education students and their enhanced level of creativity. However, as I continued my educational journey in Creativity and Change Leadership, I began to realize the strong impact positivity has on both creativity and learning. I need to move my positivity mindset to an unconsciously skilled level.

Rationale for Selection

The word "Positivity" has been used in the English language for 350 years. The earliest known use was in 1659. The definition of positivity by Oxford Dictionary is "Noun, the practice of being or tendency to be positive or optimistic in attitude." "Pupils draw power from their teachers". (Oxford Dictionary, 2022) There has been a dramatic increase in the use of the word since 1959. Alex Osborn's book *How to Think Up* was published in 1948. I feel there is a correlation between positivity and the increase of creativity and learning in others. In addition, I think that Alex Osborn may have impacted the increased use of the word positivity. If people do not present positivity and openness to new ideas, creativity and positivity are much less likely to flourish.

A Model for the Development of Creative Change Leaders (See Figure 1) was created by Dr. Puccio and will assist you in understanding what I am referring to as you the remainder of

this section. When I entered the Creative Change Leadership Graduate Program, I was in the spectator stage of the curriculum and in positivity. I had previously thought of myself as being a positive person, however upon reflection, I realized that having two long term relationships with pessimists had impacted my responses to situations. I also compared my own relationship with my students and compared it to how my teachers at Buffalo State University approached the education of their students. I realized that I needed to adjust and change the way I teach, interact and react to my students. We both want our students to be happy, productive, creative and learn, however, I noticed that Buffalo State University instructors' approaches differed from my own. This was due to a stunted positive mindset. Due to this my relationship between my students, their creativity and learning was stunted. I NEEDED to make some changes.

A Model for the Development of Creative Change Leaders

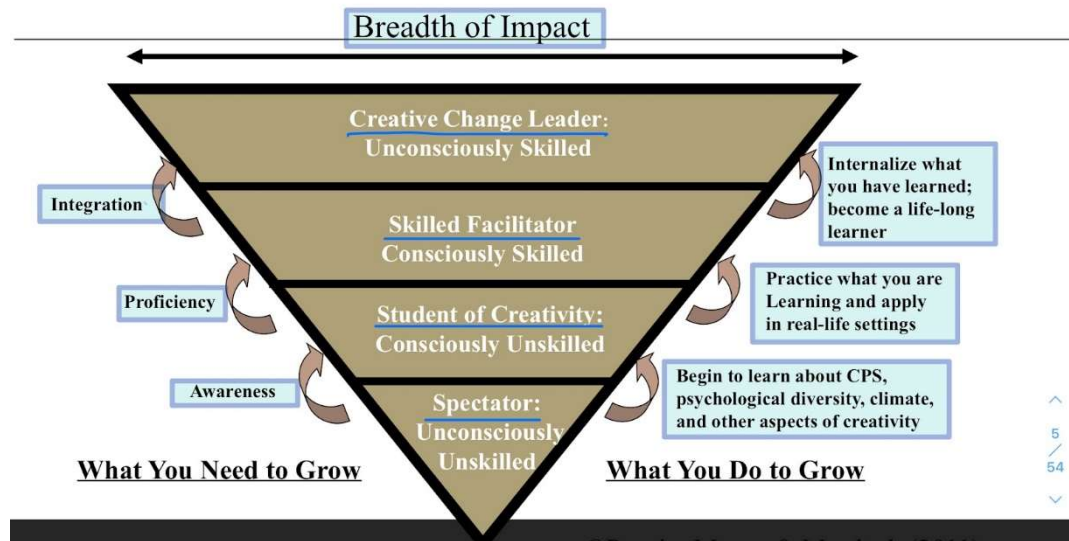


Figure 1 Reproduced with permission from Puccio et. al (2005)

At this time I believe that my level of impacting my students and their creativity and learning with positivity varies from situation to situation on *The Model for the Development of Creative Change Leaders*. When discussing the topic I feel I am on a facilitator’s level of ability. However, when I am in the classroom or confronted with a situation, I do not always act or respond with optimism and positivity. This lowers my ability to assist my students to reach their goals. My goal throughout the project is to move beyond the Student of Creativity/Skilled Facilitator to the Internal/Unconsciously skilled in the positive mindset. I will be developing in

my positive mindset in both my personal and professional lives. By approaching this endeavor in all aspects of my life I will be enlarging my breath of impact for everyone in my life. Through the development of my positivity mindset, my creativity will grow, the relationship with my students will be improved, my students' creativity will grow and my students' learning will grow. When asked how they feel about making changes in the world that they live in, my students tend to be apathetic. They don't feel that they can have a positive impact on the world they live in. By creating a Creative Problem Solving Course, at the high school I teach, my students will:

- about creativity
- how everyone has creativity
- creativity can be learned
- creativity covers more than dance, music, art, etc.
- how the CPS process can assist them in reaching their goals
- that problems can equal opportunities

Through learning the CPS process my students' lives will be able to improve their outlook in life, realize that they can make positive changes in their lives, and they will realize creativity is a learned and developed skill.

Overall, The Buffalo State Creativity and Change Leadership Master's program and project is instrumental in the changes in my educational viewpoint, making me understand that creativity is not just in the humanities areas, and that through positivity I can improve my relationships with my students and thus impact their learning and creativity. By completing my Master's Project, I will be utilizing the education I have received at Buffalo State College, and it will make my life and those that interact with me more positive and creative and the more successful I am in completing my Creativity and Change Leadership project, the more people are impacted positively and the more creativity that is released into the world.

Throughout this project I will be working on developing positivity and creativity within myself through self care, creative opportunities, and journaling. The journal will include entries on gratitude, teaching reflections, and my learnings. I will also be completing a positivity mood meter. Another part of the project will be developing positivity during my teaching day through various means. Some of the ways I will be doing this include: Affirmation boxes, being mindful of HOW I speak to the students, making sure that I talk with my students and not to or at, reflections to how I am adjusting my teaching to be more positive and reflections from my students. I will also be developing a new class at my school for Creative Problem Solving. My goal for this class is to develop a procedure that teaches my urban students how to utilize

Creative Problem Solving Strategies so that their apathy about life's problems turns into creative ways to approach and solve their predicaments (opportunities).

Throughout our daily lives we have the opportunity to see situations in a positive, neutral, or negative light. Negative thought and actions can be destructive and harmful to teaching and creativity. Being neutral with creativity and learning is unimaginative, stagnant and also can be damaging. By being positive, one does not dismiss the negative, and neutral aspects, instead it acknowledges that they are there, but by being positive and focusing on the strengths of a situation and persevering, more creativity and learning occurs.

SECTION TWO: PERTINENT LITERATURE

Pertinent Literature

This Creative and Change Leadership Master's Project is designed to explore, understand and utilize positivity in the areas of creativity and learning. Without positivity our both learning and creativity suffers. One might even go as far to say that our lives suffer without positivity. It is my goal to develop positivity in my personal and professional life, thus becoming an

unconsciously skilled individual. The research presented in this document will show validation to my concept.

Positivity has been used in the English language for 350 years. The earliest known use was in 1659. There has been a dramatic increase in the use of the word positivity since 1950 to today. Alex Osborn's book *How to Think Up* was published in 1948. Positivity is an important aspect of creativity. Without positivity there would be less people who were willing to step out of the proverbial box. Osborn was instrumental in making others realize the importance of creativity in the workplace. He encouraged others to speak up and feel comfortable in sharing unique and useful ideas. He along with Sidney Parnes were co-creators of the Creative Education Foundation and the Creative Solving Process. Another important leader in education and creativity was E. Paul Torrance. He created the (TIM) Torrance Incubation Model of Creative Teaching and Learning.

I feel there is a strong correlation between positivity and the increase of creativity and learning in others. Without positivity creativity and learning are limited. Positivity also known as optimistic attitude is important to both creativity and learning. "According to the Oxford English Dictionary definition, positivity is: The practice of being or tendency to be positive or optimistic in attitude." (Smith, 2019). Throughout this project I will be working toward developing my personal positivity, positivity in my classrooms, research on how positivity

impacts learning and how it impacts creativity. References to various articles that support my hypothesis That positivity has a positive impact on creativity and learning. Positivity is something that is practiced, just like creativity. We can develop our creativity and we can develop our positivity. Positivity does not have just one meaning. Just like any skill we need to to practice it until we become unconsciously skilled.

Creativity is a difficult concept to define and can vary from person to person. For the purposes of this paper, I will be utilizing the definition from Amabile. Creativity is the production of novel, useful and appropriate ideas by either an individual or group. Novel ideas are those

that are unique compared with other known ideas. Useful and appropriate ideas are those that have the potential to add value to products, processes or procedures.” (Amabile, 1983)

Learning is the ability to understand and link concepts. It is forming connections between previous and new information. Learning is utilizing independent and critical thinking, and the ability to transfer knowledge to new and varied situations.

The article, *How Positive Thinking Can Improve Your Focus and Creativity* by Melanie Pinola, once again indicated that positivity is a benefit to creativity. She wrote about Dr. Paul Hammernes and Margaret Moore research indicating that our brains become sabotaged by

negative emotions. It makes problem solving more difficult and also causes an inability to ignore distractions. Whereas positive emotions meliorate and enhance the brain's executive function. One should work towards a ratio of three to five positive to one negative for a change to a more positive outlook.

A Positive Mood Allows Your Brain to Think More Creatively is an article that puts forth the correlation between a positive mindset and creativity. Ruby Nadler said, "Generally, a positive mood has been found to enhance creative problem solving and flexible yet careful thinking," (Nadler, 2010, p. 1) This study utilized music and videos to influence the participants of the study to different emotional moods. The moods that were studied were sad, neutral and happy (positive). After watching/listening to particular videos that influenced the moods of the participants, they were asked to learn and classify patterns. The study indicated those in a happy (positive) mood were more capable. Nadler indicated that when there is a project in which to innovate or a problem that needs to be considered carefully, a positive mood is an asset. Music was one of the easiest ways to change an individual's mood to be more positive. Although it was noted that an individual's positive influencing music choice may vary from individual to individual.

The Dissertation written by Fjóla Björk Hauksdóttir, titled *Positivity: a Key for Enhancing Creativity - Enhancing Organizational Creativity Through Positive Leadership*

provides information on ways leaders can help develop, enhance and promote creativity in organizations. As a teacher I am a leader in my classroom and I can apply many of these concepts in my classroom to not only help my students develop their creativity, but also their education.

Intrinsic Motivation may not seem to be part of positivity, however when we have autonomy (which is self-government as a right or condition), mastery which is a broad understanding or ability in a certain task, and purpose (a comprehensive grasp of or capacity to do a certain activity) we are more positive. “Intrinsic motivation that arises from the positive reaction of the individual to the project at hand (curiosity, positive challenge, interest, etc)” (Hauksdóttir, 2011). In a video on YouTube, Creativity and Motivation, featuring Teresa Amabile supports that intrinsic motivation produces positivity and that workers are more productive, have happier inner work, creative, kinder to each other, are more committed to their work, and proud. She stated, “If you're teaching kids, putting them in that kind of an environment and leaving them to have those kinds of experiences will enhance their creativity and when creativity happens people feel great. They feel like they're making progress. They can see that they've done something nice, something interesting and that leads to even more positive inner work life. Which in turn leads to even more positive experiences with creativity. So for people that you're managing or people that you're teaching. Whether they're little kids or high

school students.” (Amabile, 2017). So it matters not if you are in a business situation or an educational setting, positivity, promotes creativity and learning.

It must be noted that an optimistic (positive) perspective does not mean that there will be no adversities. Positive people see the difficulties, but instead of giving up, they endeavor to address the difficulties and move through them to accomplish their goals. Positive individuals do not allow fear to interfere with their creativity. They reframe the situation to enable themselves to continue to create. Small children tend to be more positive; it is only after life experiences that they learn to fear others' judgment. In education we need to work towards being positive and supportive of our students. By modeling positivity, we as teachers are validating positivity. The students experiencing positivity are more likely to be more positive towards each other. By being more positive, creativity is boosted and learning is more enjoyable and easier.

In several studies it was noted that positivity should not become over inflated. In situations where there is a ratio of positivity higher than 5:1 creativity suffers. So, when dealing with positivity don't go to the extreme. Even small amounts of positivity can be more beneficial than negativity or ingenuine positivity.

Here are some strategies that can assist you in your journey to develop a more positive outlook on life.

- **Being mindful** about our reactions and moods. Being mindful means that you need to be aware of how you are reacting to a situation, otherwise you will revert to previous habits. Some ways to be mindful when you are starting to focus on the negative you can look around you and search for things you love through your five senses. You can search for your favorite colors around you. Listen to the wind blowing through the trees or hearing your cat purr as you pet him or her. Savoring a cup of coffee or tea. Just for a while focus on the things that bring you joy.
- **Plan:** Plan for success. Plan for how you are going to react to common situations. This makes you more likely to react to a stimulus in the manner you want to.
- **Practice being thankful:** Write down things that you are thankful for. They can be small things. Being aware of the good things in your life makes you more likely to have a positive attitude. Journaling is a way to do this and provide you with an active opportunity to practice positivity.
- **Limit negative news and media:** Sometimes taking a break from the negativity of the media can boost your positivity. News outlets know that sensational news sells and

negative media tends to be more sensational. By taking a break from it, you allow yourself to be more positive.

- **Add positive components to your routine:** This can be done through practicing gratitude through journaling, as mentioned earlier. Listening to music you enjoy influences your mood. Add positive behaviors such as eating a balanced diet or exercise.
- **Look for positivity around you:** In social situations don't internalize your fears and past situations where you have felt negative or ineffective. Be mindful of who you are with and where you are. Look for the best in those around you. See the opportunities that are present or could be created. Be willing to try new things. Compliment others and learn something new about them.
- **Look for positive words of encouragement:** Be willing to look for positive affirmations. Write your favorites in your journal, share them with others. People enjoy positive people and thoughts.
- **Practice positive habits:** Positive people are aware of their strengths and weaknesses. They don't tear themselves down when they make a mistake, they learn from it. Be forgiving and compassionate. Build people up. Positive people don't engage in behaviors that hurt others to gain self esteem. Positive people don't ignore problems,

they realize that they are opportunities for change or improvement. Be joyful towards yourself and others. Talk to yourself gently. We often say things to ourselves that we would never say to another person. If it is too mean, judgmental, or negative to say to someone else, it is too mean judgmental or negative to say to yourself. Make plans on how you are going to deal with negative self-talk. “Scientists say that 95% of your emotions are determined by how you talk to yourself throughout the day” (Smith, 2018)

- **Smile**: There is support that it takes more effort to frown than it does to smile. Smiling not only resets your face, it can reset your attitude. Smiling has a great deal of health benefits, it relieves stress, lowers your blood pressure, raises your immune system. . It boosts your mood. It does this because “smiling stimulates your brain through neural messages. Smiling makes you more attractive to others and look younger. Smiling lifts your facial muscles, frowning makes them move downward and ages you. Smiling is contagious. You not only lighten your mood but those around you.

SECTION THREE: PROCESS PLAN

Plan to Achieve Your Goals and Outcomes

- Start Gratitude Journal (at least 3 entries per week) and reflections
- Read articles to assist me in becoming more positive (at least 2 per week)
 - Adjust and evaluate my progress as I go.
- Use the CPS process as I go to assist me in being successful.
- Make plans on how to assist students in a positive manner.
 - Survey of students
 - Correlation between students grades first semester and second semester
 - Reflection as part of my journaling
- Start a framework for a Creative Solving Problem Curriculum for the high school
 - Talk to our Academic Administrator about the program.
 - Contact Dr. Cabra for resources
 - Create time-line
 - Create lesson plans

Concrete products:

- Journal
 - Gratitude
 - Ways I have been creative.
 - Reflections
 - My learnings
- Student Survey and/or Student reflections
- Positivity mood meter
- CPS class timeline and sample lesson(s)

Project Timeline

January 31, 2022

- Found the Website: Healthyplace.com
- Started Gratitude Journal

February 7, 2022

- Concept Paper discussion in class.
- Spoke to Ms. Officer (Curriculum Specialist) about having a Creative Problem Solving Class in the 2022-2023 school year.

February 21, 2022

- Submitted Concept Paper
- Creation of Affirmation Boxes

Week of February 21, 2022

- Spoke with Ms. Officer about the CPS class.
- Update my gratitude journal (at least 3 entries per week.)
- 2 resources on positivity.

- Reflections and how I can approach the situations
- Choose a positive mood meter differently.

- Choose affirmations for my classrooms (for Students) and Post
- Update my gratitude journal (at least 3 entries per week.
- 4 resources on positivity.
- Reflections and how I can approach the situations differently.
- Daily mood meter (positivity)
- Start Pacing Guide
- Work on Sections 1-3

March 16, 2022

- Contact Dr. Cabra about permission and access to his slides and resources
- Choose new affirmations for my classrooms (for Students) and Post
- Update my gratitude journal (at least 3 entries per week.
- 2 resources on positivity.
- Reflections and how I can approach the situations differently.
- Daily mood meter (positivity)

- Complete Pacing guide
- Draft Sections 1-3 Review
 - Working Zoom Meeting

March 21, 2022

- Recontacted Dr. Cabra about permission and access to his slides and resources
- Handed out affirmations to my Living Environment Class.
- Update my gratitude journal (at least 3 entries per week.
- 2 resources on positivity.
- Reflections and how I can approach the situations differently.
- Daily mood meter (positivity)
- Start Lesson Plans

Spring Break March 28, 2022

April 4, 2022

- Update my gratitude journal (at least 3 entries per week.
- 2 resources on positivity.
- Reflections and how I can approach the situations differently.

- Daily mood meter (positivity)
- Continue Lesson Plans

April 11, 2022

- Share affirmations for my classrooms (for Students) and Post
- Update my gratitude journal (at least 3 entries per week.
- 2 resources on positivity.
- Reflections and how I can approach the situations differently.
- Daily mood meter (positivity)

April 18, 2022

- Update my gratitude journal (at least 3 entries per week.
- 2 resources on positivity.
- Reflections and how I can approach the situations differently.
- Daily mood meter (positivity)
- Submission of Sections 4-6 for Instructor Review

April 25, 2022

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Choose new affirmations with my students (for Students) Update my gratitude journal (at least 3 entries per week. • 2 resources on positivity. • Reflections and how I can approach the situations differently • Daily mood meter (positivity)
<p>May 2, 2022</p> <p>Final Submission Paper</p>
<p>May 9, 2022</p>
<p>May 16, 2022</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • One outcome of the project • One area of learning for yourself • What I see myself doing is...

Evaluation Plan

My evaluation plan:

- Positivity Mood Meter: I anticipate that the mood meter will raise

- Journal: Gratitude/Reflection/Learning Journal: By completing the journaling, it will increase my positivity, It will influence my outlook in life. On reflection portions of the journal: I will come up with concepts to assist my students to be more positive and assist them in their academic endeavors. In the learning sections of the journal I will indicate my growth in the knowledge of how positivity impacts learning and creativity.
- Pacing Guide for CPS high school course
- Sample Lesson Plan(s): that are creative, fun, and teaches the concept of CPS process.

SECTION FOUR: OUTCOMES AND LEARNINGS

During my Buffalo State College Creativity and Change Leadership Master's Project, I completed several different components. One portion of my project included a journal. This journal included several sections. These sections were gratitude, my creative endeavors, teaching reflections and positivity mood meter.

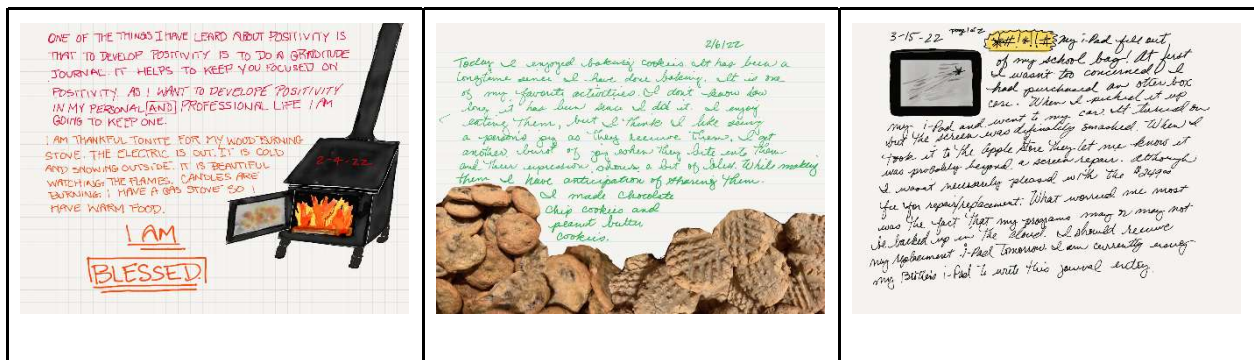
Gratitude Journaling was very impactful and enjoyable. I started my gratitude journaling on February 2, 2022. Throughout the process of completing my gratitude journal entries, I realized that not only was I journaling about the things I am grateful for, I was also utilizing my creativity. Topics that I wrote about varied from day to day. My first pertained to being thankful

for my wood stove during a cold winter night. We had lost power in the house due to the inclement weather. I have been in a home that did not have a fireplace or wood stove without electricity. It is not a comfortable situation or safe to be in. As time went on, I realized that when I journaled in my gratitude journal, I had a more positive outlook. I perceived the world in a better light. I was happier and thankful. See Table 1 for examples.

I enjoyed being creative while working on this project. I utilized creativity while cooking. I also worked on writing different fonts while I wrote affirmations. Drawing and writing in my gratitude journaling enabled me to be creative through drawing and writing.

Figure 2

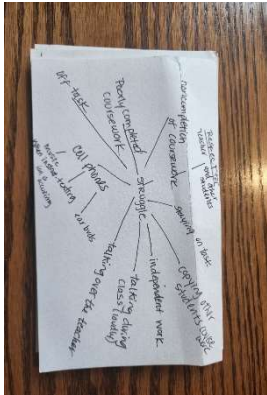
Gratitude Journal Examples



As I have completed more courses in Creativity and Change Leadership, I have found that my view of creativity has expanded immensely. Even the CPS approaches creativity in a positive nature. One is to defer judgment when brainstorming. The way we don't look at situations as problems, rather we look at them as opportunities or challenges. The restating of opportunity stems as "How might...", "In what ways might'...!', In what ways might..." What might be all the..." are ways to change negative stems into more positive aspects. When in the classroom I have utilized these same strategies when reflecting on how I am going to handle a situation. Table 2 has samples of teaching reflections. By reflecting on my teaching, I could change how I approach a challenge and or adjust how I am going to approach a situation in the future.

Figure 3

Teaching Reflection Examples

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Give grades for formative assignments. • If their grade is 70 or better, they may use headphones during independent work. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Utilize time for myself before responding to challenging behaviors. • Talk to colleagues to see what strategies work for them.
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How might we get the students to learn more in Earth Science while allowing them to have freedom.

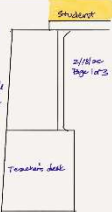
- Provide hands on Learning
- Create more experiments for the students
- Providing more structure to the classroom by adding agendas and times for completion.

- Observe the same students in other classes that the students are being successful in. Providing opportunities for the students to achieve success. (Providing them opportunities to make corrections on bell ringers).
- Create more experiments
- First ten minutes of instruction are the teachers

- Shorten assignments but cover the material well.
- Create independent Quizlet/Quizzes to engage learning.
- Create more engaging Ed puzzles so students can learn at their own pace.
- Provide hands on Learning
- Provide “think time” to students after a request has been made.

Back Wall and Cabinets


Reflection of Student behind the wall when you have been teaching for a while you realize that the day before Winter Vacation and the day before Spring Break are days that you don't want to schedule a test or important lessons. Students are already checked out and focused on the upcoming holiday. This is seen that for the teacher. This event occurred on the day before Christmas break. I was in my third period class and I noticed a student who was standing in an aisle between the



Back wall and Cabinets

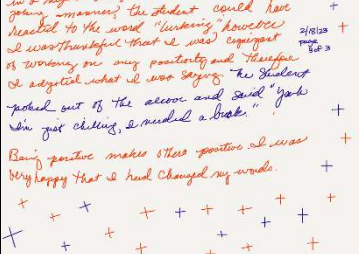
Teacher's (backing) area and the side wall of the classroom is colored in yellow

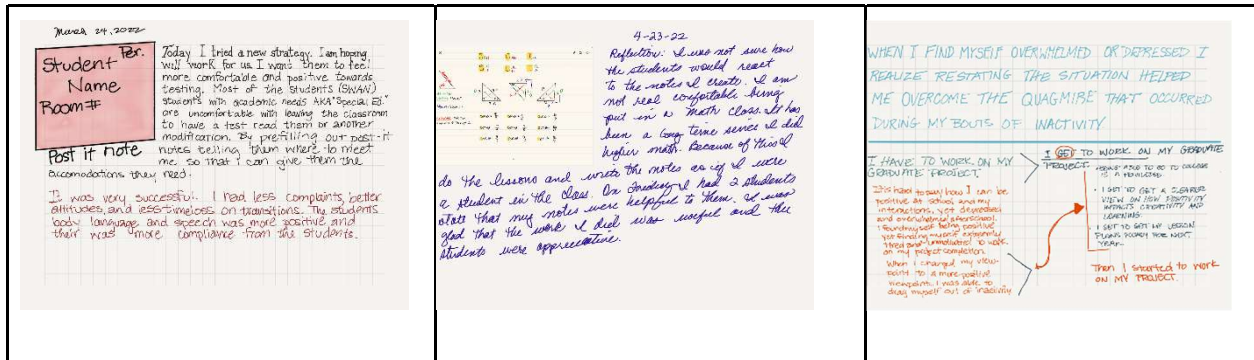
Since most of the classroom the above contains a desk spot for the teacher. My first instinct was to ask "Who is that looking over there? (is part of my grade's project) is an example on strengthening my productivity. Do "Who is that looking over there? did you get out of my reach quickly followed by "are you not taking break" or "chill" or "the world is off my mind" or "hey" or "hey" and the thinking over there how a repetitive conversation. (Even though I didn't mean it)



in a negative way. I was saying it so a funny manner the student could have reacted to the word "looking" however I was thankful that it was equipment of worry on my productivity and therefore I adopted what I was saying. The student "poked out of the above and said "yep" "in just chilling, I needed a break."

Being positive makes other positive. I was very happy that I had changed my words.



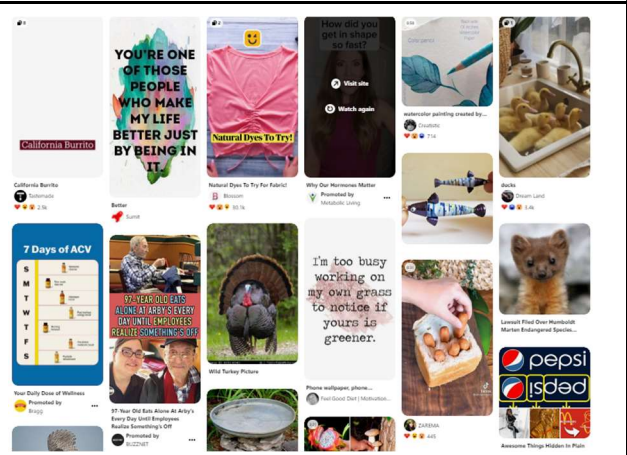
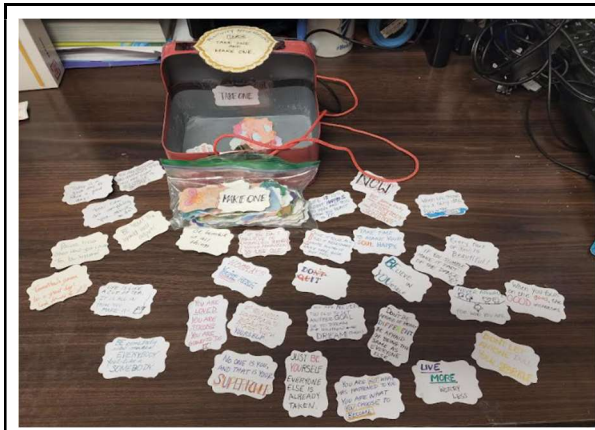


I created Positivity Affirmations Boxes to enable positivity to be spread throughout the school. It was placed in several locations in the school. I also had a teacher request one for her classroom. When the students selected one, they would often smile and share the affirmation with those around them. When they were offered to the whole class $\frac{2}{3}$ of the students kept the affirmation that they selected. Several students chose to make one. I know that during the time that I write out the Affirmations I felt more positive. I would find myself smiling as I think of how the people would feel as they read them and how they might be impacted by the affirmations. I know that I was impacted by them. I often visit the site Pinterest.com. When attempting to explain to another person what Pinterest is and how they might benefit from utilizing it. I give the comparison of Pinterest being similar to a corkboard in which you have decided to create a "Vision Board". On a "Vision Board", you pin the things that you want to

accomplish. You might pin a picture of your dream house, or locations in the world that you would like to visit, or recipes for a dinner party you would like to throw for your friends and family. In the same way, Pinterest allows you to share and pin ideas by pinning them to your virtual “corkboards”. You name each board by topic and can even have subcategory virtual boards underneath each main topic. The users of Pinterest have personal boards, but also usually follow boards of individuals that have similar interests/ideas. When you log into the site you will have lots of ideas from those you follow and additional ideas. When I started my Creative Studies and Leadership Graduate Project, I created a board called positivity, in which I began pinning positive affirmations that I found inspiring or wanted to use in my positivity affirmation boxes. Now I have positive affirmations popping up in my Pinterest feed. It Makes me smile when I see them and I pin those that inspire me. I plan to keep making positive affirmations to share with others. I have also started making them onto more sturdy surfaces (small pieces of precut wood), so that if people wanted to keep them for inspiration, they could.

Figure 4

Positive Affirmations Box Examples



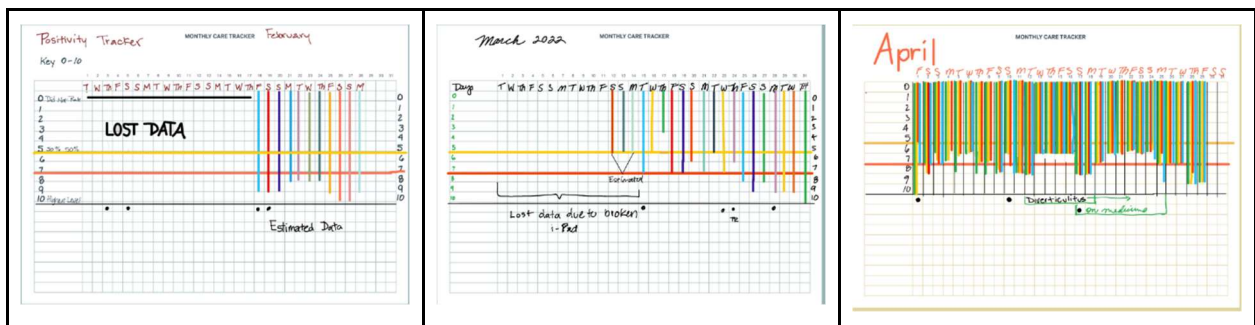
Pinterest feed sample

Focus on the step in front of you, NOT the whole staircase.	Be so positive that negative people don't want to be near you.	If yesterday was heavy, put it down.	Growth is Growth, no matter how small.
BE the reason someone smiles today.	Focus on what you can control AND let go of what you can't.	A negative mind will never give you a positive life	What you do today can improve all your tomorrows.
BE YOU! The world will adjust.	HOORAY!!! You're here!	DON'T QUIT!!!	LIVE MORE, worry less.
Don't be afraid of being DIFFERENT, be afraid of being the same as everyone else.	If you don't believe in miracles, perhaps you've forgotten you are one.	BE somebody who makes EVERYBODY feel like a SOMEBODY	Just BE YOURself . Everyone else is already taken.
You are LOVED. You are STRONG. YOU are going to do it!	Life is tough my darling, but so are you.	The EXPERT in anything was once a BEGINNER.	Don't let anyone dull your sparkle.
There is no failure. It is just a pause in your journey to success.	If you need something to believe in, start with yourself.	Life is 10% what happens to you, & 90% how you react to it.	No one is you, and that is your SUPERPOWER!

During my project I completed a daily mood meter to ascertain how successful I was becoming in my efforts in making positivity an unconsciously skilled. Unfortunately, I lost some of my data because my i-Pad was broken. See Figure Five to see the data. I originally started

noting the information in a day as a whole. During April I began to chart positivity in four sections. Green represented morning, yellow represented afternoon, orange represented late afternoon, and blue represented evenings. This I found to be more effective in understanding when I needed to change my behaviors. I found that when I was not feeling well, I struggled more with my positivity. I also struggled with my 7th period class. I am continuing to work on responding on a positive manner. This is an ongoing process. Overall, there was a growth in my positivity and I have become more unconsciously skilled.

Figure 5
Positivity Mood Meters



The final portion of my Creativity and Change Leadership Project was to encourage my school to initiate a Creative Problem-Solving Class (CPS) for the 2022-2023 school year. This goal was accomplished. The reason I was inspired to create, initiate and teach a CPS class was that I had witnessed my students express an inability to make change in their world. The seniors at my school were given a writing project, "This I Believe." Many of the students did not believe that they could impact their communities. In other areas the students are frustrated, lack self-confidence, and give up easily when presented with challenges. Not only will a CPS class assist them in realizing that they are capable of making changes in their communities/lives, turning challenges into opportunities, and being able to utilize the strategies in their everyday curriculum. Ironically, the creator of brainstorming, Alex Osborne, was on an episode of the radio show *This I Believe* in August of 1955. You can listen to the broadcast if you click the following link: [Alex Osborn "This I Believe"](#)

My school, Health Sciences Charter School, has put a CPS on the master schedule for next year. Woot!!! Woot!!! The reason I felt that Dr. Carbra has also very generously shared his PowerPoint4 slides that he created for CRS 559. Dr. Keller-Mathers provided me with information about the site: <https://creativityandeducation.com/the-creative-thinking-course/>. I plan to combine the information provided by Dr. Puccio and Dr. Keller Mathers throughout the semester. The CPS course at HSCS will be a full year course that is taught on AB schedule. An

AB schedule is where the students attend the course on either “A” days or “B” days. They take another course on alternate days. During the first semester I am going to teach the CPS concepts and strategies. The students will practice utilizing them and gain knowledge. During the second semester the students will begin utilizing the CPS process in larger and more impactful challenges. They will be able to see that they do have the ability to make change for the good, in their lives and the lives of their communities. The second semester will be split up into three projects. The first CPS project will be completed as a whole class endeavor. The students will address a challenge/opportunity they feel is important for the school. The second project will be a project that they feel strongly about that impacts their communities. The second project will be a small group project. The third project will be a personal project. They will only be required to share the project with me. The students will be told about the various projects at the beginning of the semester and thus be able to think about what opportunity they would like to do for their community and personal projects. They will be given the opportunity to start their projects at the beginning of the semester and I will provide assistance as they need it. Below are some of the slides I will be utilizing in one of my lessons for the CPS class next year. Links are included for the student pages and the pacing guide for the course.

Figure 6

Lesson Plan

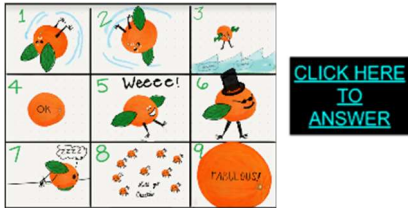



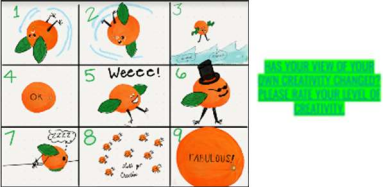
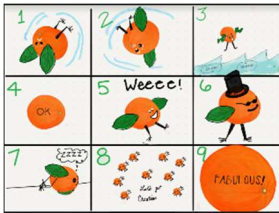
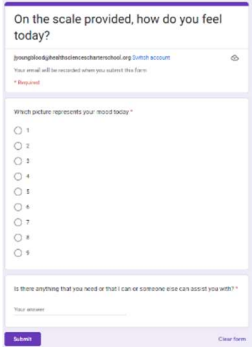

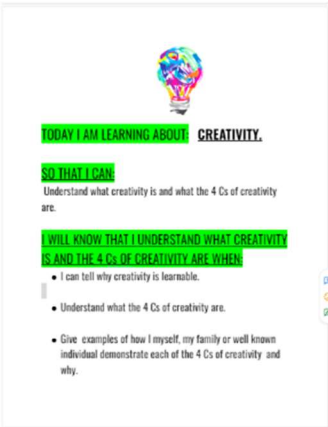
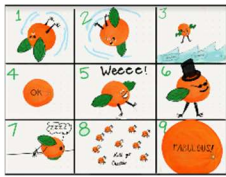
	<p style="text-align: center;">CREATIVITY: WHAT IS IT?</p> <p>TODAY I AM LEARNING ABOUT <u>CREATIVITY</u>.</p> <p>SO THAT I CAN: Understand what creativity is and what the 4 Cs of creativity are.</p> <p>I WILL KNOW THAT I UNDERSTAND WHAT CREATIVITY IS AND THE 4 CS OF CREATIVITY ARE WHEN:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • I can tell why creativity is learnable • Understand what the 4 Cs of creativity are. • Give an examples of how I myself, family or well known individual demonstrate each of the 4 Cs of creativity and why. 	
 <p>Provide YOUR definition of what you think creativity is. There is no RIGHT or WRONG ANSWER. Do not GTS (Google That Stuff) Google is not you :)</p> <hr/> <hr/> <hr/>	<p style="text-align: center;">Are you creative?</p> <p>HOW would you rate your level of creativity?</p> <p>Tell Why you would rate yourself at that level?</p> <hr/> <hr/>	
<p>Page 18 <i>Create in a Flash</i></p>		<p>HSCS CPS Pacing can be found in Appendix A</p>

Figure 7

Student Pages

<p style="text-align: center;">Mood Meter:</p> 		 <p style="text-align: center;">Creativity What is it?</p>
	<p style="text-align: center;">Page 18 of</p> <p style="text-align: center;"><i>Create In A Flash</i></p> <p style="text-align: center;">What is creativity?</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Write YOUR definition of what you think creativity is in the yellow box.</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. YOU WILL NOT BE GRADED AS IF YOUR ANSWER IS RIGHT OR WRONG. 2. Do not GIVE credit (That Stuff! Google is not YOU.) 3. Do not give the friend, classmate or teacher. That is not YOU. 4. This is a safe place. This is just a baseline information. <p>ANSWER IN THE BOX PLEASE:</p> <div style="border: 1px solid black; height: 40px; width: 100%;"></div>	<p style="text-align: center;">Are you creative?</p> <p style="text-align: center;">HOW would you rate your level of creativity?</p>  <p>Tell me you would rate yourself the way you did and what it means.</p> <p>ANSWER IN THE BOX PLEASE:</p> <div style="border: 1px solid black; height: 40px; width: 100%;"></div>



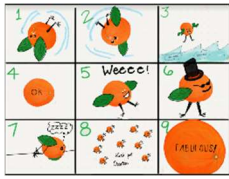
 <p>Tell 3 things you learned from the video, found interesting, examples of how you have deferred judgment in the past, or how the video influenced your thinking.</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 	<p>Provide at least one example for each of how you see yourself, your family or a well known individual demonstrate each:</p> <p>mini-c: _____</p> <p>Pro-c: _____</p> <p>Provide at least one example for each of how you see yourself, your family or a well known individual demonstrate Big-C and little-c:</p> <p>Big-C: _____</p> <p>little-c: _____</p>	 <p>Where do I see myself 10 years from now?</p> <p>Big-C: _____</p> <p>little-c: _____</p> <p>mini-c: _____</p> <p>Pro-c: _____</p>
<p>EXIT TICKET</p> <p>HAS YOUR VIEW OF YOUR OWN CREATIVITY CHANGED?</p> <p>PLEASE RATE YOUR LEVEL OF CREATIVITY</p>		<p>Untitled Question *</p> <p><input type="radio"/> ONE</p> <p><input type="radio"/> TWO</p> <p><input type="radio"/> THREE</p> <p><input type="radio"/> FOUR</p> <p><input type="radio"/> FIVE</p> <p><input type="radio"/> SIX</p> <p><input type="radio"/> SEVEN</p> <p><input type="radio"/> EIGHT</p> <p><input type="radio"/> NINE</p> <p><input type="radio"/> Other: _____</p> <p><input type="button" value="Submit"/> <input type="button" value="Clear form"/></p>

Table 1

Synopsis of Artifacts

Journal	Gratitude	Creating gratitude journal entries have been shown to lift both depression and positivity.	Figure 2
Journal	My Creative Endeavors	I have noticed that my creative endeavors have dwindled as I have	See Table 1

		gotten older. Since I have started the Department of Creativity and Change Leadership Master’s Program, I have felt my creativity spark becoming relit.	See Table 2 See Table 4
Journal	Teaching Reflections	These are reflections on how my journey with developing my positivity has impacted my teaching, my students learning, and my relationships with my students	Figure 3
Journal	Positivity Meter	I completed a positivity meter to enable me to see I am becoming more positive.	Figure 5
Box	Positive Affirmations	Created to instill and inspire positivity in those that read it.	Figure 4
Curriculum	Creative Problem Solving Class for high school	Pacing Guide and Sample Lesson Plans	Figures 6, 7 & Appendix 1

SECTION FIVE: CONCLUSIONS AND NEXT STEP

Conclusions

The conclusions that I was able to make from the completion of my Creativity and Change Leadership project are that it was a worthwhile endeavor, keeping a journal was beneficial, and that I will be able to impact the lives of others not only with my positivity, but also through teaching the Creative Problem Solving class next year.

I found that when I kept up with my journal and wrote entries on gratitude, logged my mood meters, reflected on my teaching I was more productive, creative and positive. It made me think of creative ways in which to teach my students. As I kept my journal entries, my relationship with several students has improved. I am still working on my positivity and creativity. This I think will be a lifelong journey. Unfortunately, due to a broken and I lost some journal entries and data for my positivity meters, I do remember that my positivity meters started around 5-6, I do not have the work samples to show the impact my journaling has helped. During the process my positivity meter rose. I have depression and anxiety. I realized that even during my episodes of depression, my positivity meter was higher.

My future Creative Problem Solving class is well on its way. Through the use of the website provided by Dr. Keller-Mathers, the instruction I have received from the Creativity and Change Leadership Master's program, and instructional slides provided by Dr. Cabra. I am

looking forward to my students being able to develop their creativity and realize that they can make a change in their school, community, and lives.

Next Steps

My next steps are to continue my journal entries on gratitude and reflections. I will also be developing additional lesson plans and curriculum for the Creative Problem Solving Class I will be teaching. Through the class, the students will be impacted and their lives improved. In addition, I will be continuing to develop my positivity to an unconscious level. This is an ongoing process. I am more unconsciously positive, but it is still an area that I want to continue to develop.

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Jennifer P. Youngblood

Date 05-023-2022

Appendix A

SEPTEMBER 2022						
MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY	SUNDAY
29 All Staff PD	30 All Staff PD	31 All Staff PD	1 All Staff PD	2 All Staff PD	3	4
5 NO SCHOOL	6 Mood Meter + G2KU#1 + NORMS INTRODUCE 1 RULE CLASSR	7	8 Mood Meter + G2KU#2 + NORMS FIND A QUOTE THAT REPRESENTS YOUR IDEA OF WHAT RESPECT IS.	9 CREATE/CHOOSE A DEFINITION FOR RESPECT WITH TAG IT PROCEDURE	10	11
12 MM + G2KU + NORMS INTRODUCE HAVING A VISION	13	14 MM + G2KU + NORMS PRACTICE CREATE THE START OF A VISION BOARD	15	16 Each Day: MM + NORMS PRACTICE + WU Creativity Students will be initially asked if they feel they	17	18
19 Throughout the week the	20 MM + WU Lessons will focus on CPS history and how the process started and what CPS can help you accomplish.	21	22 Why We Create	23	24	25
26 MM + WU 4Ps of Creativity	27	28 4 Ps of Creativity	29	30 Crativity Crushers	1	2

OCTOBER 2022						
MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY	SUNDAY
26	27	28	29	30	1	2
3	4	5	6	7	8	9
Creativity Crushers	4Cs of Creativity		4Cs of Creativity			
10	11	12	13	14	15	16
NO SCHOOL	Tools for Divergence	REMOTE LEARNING DAY	Tools for Divergence	Tools for Divergence		
17	18	19	20	21	22	23
Tools for Divergence	Tools for Divergence	Tools for Divergence	Tools for Divergence	Tools for Divergence		
24	25	26	27	28	29	30
Tools for Divergence	Tools for Divergence	Tools for Divergence	Tools for Divergence	Review of Divergence		
31	1	2	3	4	5	6
Review of Divergence						

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NOVEMBER 2022						
MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY	SUNDAY
31	1	2	3	4	5	6
	Tools for Converging	Tools for Converging	Tools for Converging	Tools for Converging		
7	8	9	10	11	12	13
Tools for Converging	REMOTE LEARNING DAY	Tools for Converging	Tools for Converging	NO SCHOOL		
14	15	16	17	18	19	20
Tools for Converging	Tools for Converging	Tools for Converging	Tools for Converging	Tools for Converging		
21	22	23	24	25	26	27
Tools for Convergence	Tools for Convergence		NO SCHOOL	NO SCHOOL		
28	29	30	1	2	3	4
What is CPS?	What is CPS?	What is CPS?				
Clarify	Clarify	Clarify				

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DECEMBER 2022						
MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY	SUNDAY
28	29	30	1 Clarify	2 Ideate	3	4
5 Ideate	6 Ideate	7 Ideate	8 Develop	9 Develop	10	11
12 Develop	13 Develop	14 Impliment	15 Impliment	16 Impliment	17	18
19 Impliment	20 Review	21 Review	22 Review	23	24	25
26 NO SCHOOL	27 NO SCHOOL	28 NO SCHOOL	29 NO SCHOOL	30 NO SCHOOL	31	1

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JANUARY 2023						
MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY	SUNDAY
26 NO SCHOOL	27 NO SCHOOL	28 NO SCHOOL	29 NO SCHOOL	30 NO SCHOOL	31	1
2 NO SCHOOL	3 Choosing a School Goal/Wish/Challenge	4	5 Choosing a School Goal/Wish/Challenge	6	7	8
9 Utilizing CPS Divergent HSCS Goal/Wish/Challeng	10	11 Utilize CPS HSCS Goal Divergent Goal/Wish/Challenge	12	13 Utilizing CPS Clarify HSCS Goal/Wish/Challenge	14	15
16 NO SCHOOL	17 Utilizing CPS Clarify HSCS Goal/Wish/Challenge	18 Utilize CPS HSCS Goal Clarify HSCS Goal/Wish/Challenge	19	20 Utilize CPS HSCS Goal Ideate	21	22
23 INTERIMS / REGENTS	24 INTERIMS / REGENTS	25 INTERIMS / REGENTS	26 INTERIMS / REGENTS	27 INTERIMS / REGENTS	28	29
30 Utilize CPS Ideate	31 Utilize CPS HSCS Goal Ideate	1	2	3	4	5

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FEBRUARY 2023						
MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY	SUNDAY
30	31	1	2	3	4	5
		Utilize CPS HSCS Goal Ideate	Utilize CPS HSCS Goal Develop	Utilize CPS HSCS Goal Develop		
6	7	8	9	10	11	12
Utilize CPS HSCS Goal Develop	Utilize CPS HSCS Goal Develop	Utilize CPS HSCS Goal Implement	Utilize CPS HSCS Goal Implement	Utilize CPS HSCS Goal Implement		
13	14	15	16	17	18	19
Utilize CPS HSCS Goal Implement	Utilize CPS HSCS Goal Implement	Utilize CPS HSCS Goal Implement	Utilize CPS HSCS Goal Implement	Utilize CPS HSCS Goal Implement		
20	21	22	23	24	25	26
NO SCHOOL	NO SCHOOL	NO SCHOOL	NO SCHOOL	NO SCHOOL		
27	28	1	2	3	4	5
Utilize CPS For Community Goal Clarify	Utilize CPS For Community Goal Clarify					

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MARCH 2023						
MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY	SUNDAY
27	28	1	2	3	4	5
		Utilize CPS For Community Goal Clarify	Utilize CPS For Community Goal Clarify	Utilize CPS For Community Goal Ideate		
6	7	8	9	10	11	12
Utilize CPS For Community Goal Ideate	Utilize CPS For Community Goal Ideate	Utilize CPS For Community Goal Ideate	Utilize CPS For Community Goal Develop	Utilize CPS For Community Goal Develop		
13	14	15	16	17	18	19
Utilize CPS For Community Goal Develop	Utilize CPS For Community Goal Develop	Utilize CPS For Community Goal Implement	Utilize CPS For Community Goal Implement	Utilize CPS For Community Goal Implement		
20	21	22	23	24	25	26
Utilize CPS For Community Goal Implement	Utilize CPS For Community Goal Implement	Utilize CPS For Community Goal Implement	Utilize CPS For Community Goal Implement	Utilize CPS For Community Goal Implement		
27	28	29	30	31	1	2
Utilize CPS For Personal Goal Clarify		Utilize CPS For Personal Goal Clarify		Buffer Day		

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APRIL 2023

MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY	SUNDAY
27	28	29	30	31	1	2
3	4	5	6	7	8	9
NO SCHOOL	NO SCHOOL	NO SCHOOL	NO SCHOOL	NO SCHOOL	NO SCHOOL	
10	11	12	13	14	15	16
NO SCHOOL	Utilize CPS For Personal Goal Clarify	Clarify	Utilize CPS For Personal Goal Ideate			
17	18	19	20	21	22	23
	INTERIMS	INTERIMS	INTERIMS	INTERIMS		
24	25	26	27	28	29	30
	Utilize CPS for Personal Goal Ideate		REMOTE LEARNING DAY	Utilize CPS for Personal Goal Ideate		

Notes:

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MAY 2023

MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY	SUNDAY
1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Utilize CPS for Personal Goal Ideate	Utilize CPS for Personal Goal Develop		Utilize CPS for Personal Goal Develop			
8	9	10	11	12	13	14
Utilize CPS for Personal Goal Develop		Utilize CPS for Personal Goal Implement	REMOTE LEARNING DAY	Utilize CPS for Personal Goal Implement		
15	16	17	18	19	20	21
Utilize CPS for Personal Goal Implement	Utilize CPS for Personal Goal Implement		Utilize CPS for Personal Goal Implement			
22	23	24	25	26	27	28
Utilize CPS for Personal Goal Implement		Utilize CPS for Personal Goal Implement		Utilize CPS for Personal Goal Implement		
29	30	31	1	2	3	4
NO SCHOOL		Utilize CPS for Personal Goal Developing Creativity				

Notes:

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JUNE 2023						
MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY	SUNDAY
29	30	31	1 Developing Personal Creativity	2 Developing Creativity	3	4
5 Dev elo Developing Creativity	6 Developing Creativity	7 Developing Creativity	8 Developing Creativity	9 Developing Creativity	10	11
12 REGENTS REVIEW DAY	13 REGENTS	14 REGENTS	15 REGENTS	16 REGENTS	17	18
19 NO SCHOOL	20 REGENTS	21 REGENTS	22 REGENTS	23 REGENTS	24	25
26	27	28	29	30	1	2

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