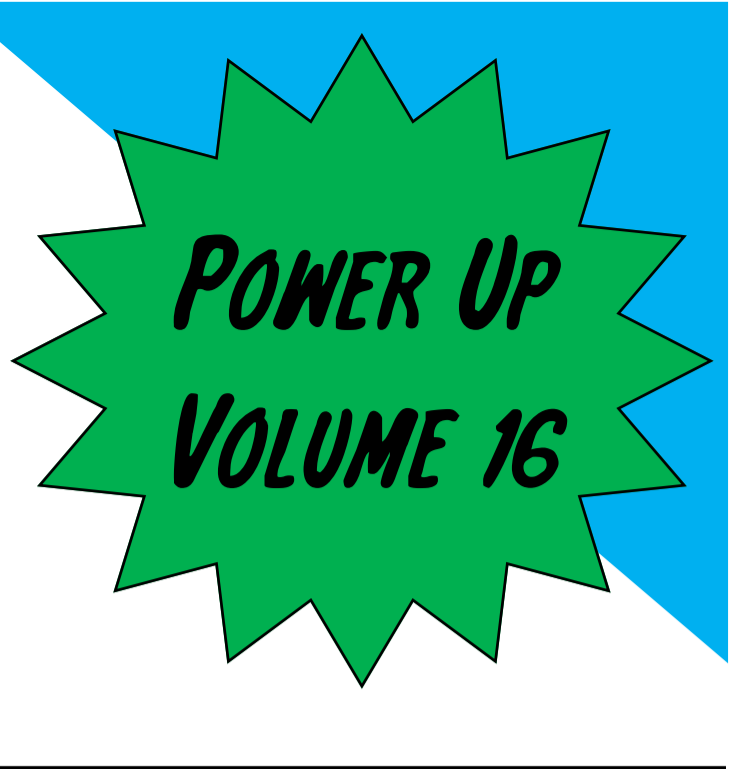




Welcome to the new and improved POWER UP WEEKLY. Based on the results of our recent survey, we will be moving our newsletter to a monthly edition and will continue to focus on building student relationships, positivity and hope, grit and brain based learning. Don't forget to answer the contest question for a chance to win!

-The Office of Acceleration & Innovation




Brain-Based Strategies

The role of the arts in schools continues to be under great scrutiny. But five neuroscience departments at five universities (University of Oregon, Harvard, Univ. of Michigan, Dartmouth, and Stanford) have recently completed projects studying the impact of arts on the brain. *Arts and Neuroscience* is a new journal that tracks the connections being made by researchers.

The recent results suggest that arts are far better than earlier believed. They show that certain arts boost attention, working memory, and visual spatial skills. Other arts such as dance, theater and drama boost social skills, empathy, timing, patience, verbal memory and other transferable life skills.

Practical school application:

Make arts mandatory and give students the choice of several, support with expert teachers and the time to excel at it. Right now, evidence suggests that you get the most value from 30 to 60 minutes a day three to five days a week. Arts support the development of the **brain's academic operating systems in ways that provide many transferable life skills.**



Tips on Building Relationships

- 1. I greet students at the door every morning.** This is one small thing that speaks volumes—it lets my students know that they are important enough that I am going to stop whatever I am doing to speak to them before we even start.
- 2, I have a “family meeting” with my classroom.** Several times a week for 10-15 minutes, I let students share what is going on in their life and I also share with them what is going on with me. This is one of my favorite parts of the day because their stories remind me that they are not a number or a score and they have real successes and struggles. I see this time as an investment and feel it pays in dividends in the end.
- 3. I use a class social media posting site through [SeeSaw](#).** This is a great place for students to share and post pictures and interact with each other. This is safe because it all goes through me before it makes the “wall.” It gives everyone a chance to see the new puppy or game ball and builds relationships within the class as we celebrate with each other.
- 4. write positive notes and make positive phone calls home.** This may be one of the most powerful things I do. It takes just a minute and it will make a student's (and parent's) day. This lets a child know that I value and see the good in them.

Continued on page 2.

SOMETIMES THE THING YOUR STUDENTS NEED MOST, HAS NOTHING TO DO WITH WHAT'S ON YOUR LESSON PLAN.

FAB LAB FUNDRAISER IDEA: Mini Garden Stakes

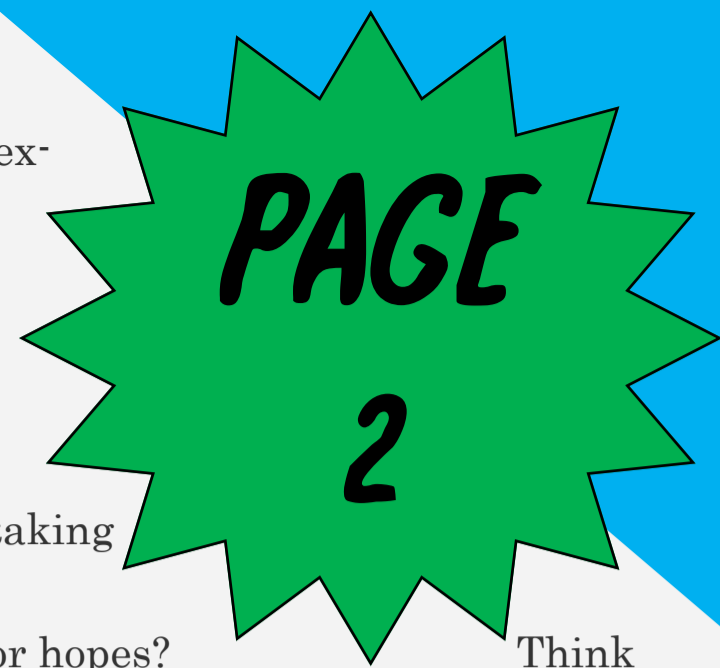
Have students create Spring & Easter Mini Garden Stakes for small potted plants (99¢ at local stores). Students can create the garden stakes using wood or acrylic, & advertise to local businesses to build a customer base for future projects! Sell for \$4.50—\$2.00 (est. product cost) means \$2.50 PROFIT! *Be sure to include your school name on the stake for future customer needs!

For more detailed assistance call Marci at 534-0631.




Positivity and Hope

- 1. Recognition that you have a choice.** Perhaps a class isn't quite what you expected, or a project didn't turn out as you'd hoped. Even if you can't change the situation itself, you do have control over how you think about it... and yourself.
- 2. Willingness to take responsibility.** Though we're not at fault for everything that occurs in our lives, consistently blaming others for all your problems and misfortunes will only keep you stuck in the past. By maintaining ownership over what happens to you, you can be more proactive about taking the steps that lead to growth and change.
- 3. Your attitude towards failure.** Did things not go according to your plans or hopes? Think about what happened, identify the possible causes of your setbacks, and endeavor to address similar challenges differently in the future.
- 4. The words you choose.** If you regularly find yourself saying "I can't do that... I won't do that... I'll never be able to..." then challenge yourself to say "I can" and "I will" more frequently. By maintaining a more positive attitude that says "I can" and "I will" to opportunities, you open yourself to new experiences, and you'll increase your confidence and success.
- 5. The messages you absorb.** Devote your time to media that educate, encourage, or otherwise bring about growth and inspiration. Likewise, focus your attention on people with motivating and encouraging attitudes, and try not to let others' negative attitudes have an effect on your own.
- 6. Perspective beyond yourself.** Extend assistance, kindness, compassion, or just a helping hand to someone. Giving consideration to another person's needs can brighten their day, as well as yours.



Tips on Building Relationships Continued from page 1...

- 5. I make a point to have personal conversations with my students.** I know what is going on in their life because of the outlets I have for them to share, so it gives me something personal to talk about with them. I think this can significantly improve behavior as well. The [2x10 Strategy](#) is great to try with your more difficult students.
- 6. I try to make a connection to my students.** For example, I had a student added to my classroom mid-year who had some trouble transitioning. I knew this kid loved a particular basketball player, so I would seek out articles about this player and put them on his desk or find funny memes to share. The difference this made was amazing! His behavior improved and it was noticeable enough for my inclusion teacher to ask what had happened. This small connection went a long way.
- 7. I try to talk the talk and walk the walk.** My goal is for all of my students to know that I love and care about them. I am not only going to tell them, I am going to make an effort to show them by taking time to really listen, get to know them and, in the words of J.M. Barrie, I am going to make an effort to "always be a little kinder than necessary."

***YOUR CHANCE
TO WIN!***

PLEASE SEND YOUR ANSWER RESPONSE TO:

OAI@polk-fl.net

In what ways does developing positivity & hope in your students help them succeed in school?

Give an example of a student who has developed positivity & hope this year in your class.