The Student Engagement Team would like to welcome you back to school and wish you a great first week!

We are looking forward to supporting you throughout this school year. As a starting point, it is crucial to build positive, healthy relationships with students to support engagement and academic success throughout the school year.

We are excited to collaborate with you this school year. Thank you again for your commitment to the development of the whole child and creating safe, equitable learning environments for your students!

So where do we start?

There are multiple avenues to cultivate welcoming, positive, and collaborative learning environments. Here are a few suggestions from our team to start the year strong:

**Build a Welcoming Environment**

- Greet students as they enter your classroom with a friendly tone and a smile.
- Promote positive energy and a growth mindset.
- Make a personal connection with each student.

**Incorporate Respect Agreements**

Respect Agreements outline classroom expectations with input from students and teachers, thus building transparency, trust, and shared accountability.

**Check-In Using Mood Meters**

Check-in with your students to see how they’re feeling as they enter / exit your classroom.

The Mood Meter provides an opportunity to identify emotions, and share our levels of energy and pleasantness.
To deepen relationship-building, prioritize self-management skills, and maintain student engagement throughout the school year, we suggest incorporating these practices into your daily classroom routines:

**Lead Community Meetings (Consistently and Intentionally)**

Teachers can gain insight to provide needed supports for students while providing time / space for student voice. Everyone is equal in a community meeting.

Community Meetings are comprised of an opening round, values round, reflection round, and an optimistic round.

**Incorporate Calming Areas into Your Classroom**

Calming Areas provide a comfortable place for students to reflect on their feelings or manage stress on their own.

Teachers provide expectations for the using the calming area and guidance on how to use any specific materials.

Provide a timer for students to track their time and then return to learn.

**Engaging Practices**

Remember to apply intentional brain breaks, especially when learning new material, to focus and reset participation.

Incorporate student-centered thinking and social interactions by providing individual think time, pair discussions, and small group / whole class discussions.

**Optimistic Closures**

Provide formal closure to an activity or lesson by having students reflect on their learning, growth, and perseverance.

Share prompts that promote positivity and strengths-based thinking.