



PORTRAIT OF A NEVADA LEARNER

Piloting the Portrait Case Study

School Name and District

Southside Elementary School, Elko County School District

Names of Individuals and Roles

Melinda Gomez, Kindergarten teacher

Audrey Karr, 4th grade teacher

Ashley Meadows, 4th grade teacher

Maria (Elsa) Spence, 1st grade teacher

Introduction

Our project was designed to open up conversations between teachers and students, teachers and teachers, and students to students. We wanted to reduce the amount of behaviors exhibited and support students before they were noticed by our PBIS system. Through this process, we went through many different forms of responses to emotions. We struggled with the main emotions to start with and we worked through how to introduce each emotion to the students. We want to teach our students to be independent from the things outside of their control and to be able to focus in school-essentially giving them a sense of belonging to something bigger than themselves.

Intended Impact

- Identifying and controlling emotions
- Strategies to support emotions
- Targeting students who struggle with more intense emotions
- Finding the good things
- Reducing the impact that one thing has on their whole day
- Teachers being honest with students
- Asking for what we need (Adults and students)
- Growing in our ability to support emotions
- Reducing teacher frustration by showing the cause early on

Project Work

We started with a broad idea of what we wanted our project to look like and had high expectations. As the project progressed, we then started focusing on the efficiency in the day to day for teachers. We also looked at formatting the responses from students regarding their emotions. We changed formats multiple times. Most of us found that paper/pencil was the easiest method, however, this reduced our ability to track progress and data over the weeks.

Next Steps

- Identify primary emotions and vocabulary to use throughout the school.
- Support staff and students in feeling statements to reduce negative behaviors and increase identification.

Lessons Learned

- The value of checking in everyday with students at the beginning and end of the day
- Validation of emotions greatly reduce the unknowns throughout the day
- The teacher expectation has reversed the role to students having high expectations and wanting to express their emotion without being asked.

Project Artifacts: Case Study Information

[Meadows write-up](#) - The emotional growth of a student and the teacher through common experiences and trauma.

[Gomez Write Up](#) - Building a larger social/emotional vocabulary bank to assist students in navigating their emotions.