

## GiveThx for Positive School Culture

**Students with a sense of belonging in school feel socially connected, supported, and respected. They trust their teachers and their peers, and they feel a sense of fit at school. They are confident that they are seen as a person of value.<sup>1</sup>**

GiveThx for Positive School Culture supports educators in addressing student mental health by establishing routines that facilitate a sense of belonging and reduce feelings of isolation and anxiety.

### How Does It Work?

Advisory programs in middle and high schools and class meeting time in elementary school provide perfect opportunities for establishing a positive school culture. Educators incorporate practices from the GiveThx School Culture Curriculum and use the GiveThx web-based app to promote the school wide practice of gratitude and to monitor and celebrate success.

- ♥ From **as little as 20 minutes a week** students and teachers practice gratitude together using research-validated lessons, practices, and digital tools.
- ♥ Educators use GiveThx Gratitude Practices to actively **improve mental health and wellbeing by creating community** and equitable, safe access to SEL and its benefits, such as self-esteem, belonging, and resilience.
- ♥ Educators and students **monitor, track, and celebrate skill development and progress** via a dashboard that measures a variety of SEL skills and supports personal and academic growth.

**“Using GiveThx has made me feel more confident in school and want to share more of my ideas.** This practice helps me feel safe and gives me comfort, knowing that I am part of a school environment that uplifts me.”

Ariela, 9th grade student



<sup>1</sup> from <https://mindsetscholarsnetwork.org/>

## GiveThx for Positive School Culture: Use Cases

Teachers and staff use GiveThx to help students feel connected, supported, and respected. GiveThx program routines facilitate a sense of belonging and nurture healthy relationships and behaviors to build **positive school culture**.



**Teacher Profile**  
Donovan Hall

7th and 8th grade teacher  
at Impact Academy,  
a public charter school  
in Hayward, California

**Where & When:** Classroom and advisory. 1-3 Thx notes per week, during one 5-10 minute synchronous session; 3 gratitude tasks per month

**Key Outcome:** Relationship Skills - "Over the course of the year, you see kids start to internalize the approach and become more comfortable sharing feedback and reaching out to each other. They give gratitude more often, and not just within the app. Students are even using it to resolve conflicts now."

**Favorite Part of Using GiveThx:** "I really appreciate reading kids' notes to each other over time, as they develop their language around their emotions. You can really see growth in their capacity and ability to express themselves."

“ Gratitude is one of the first ways that kids feel seen and recognized. GiveThx is a staple in our classroom to support belonging and make sure students feel valued. It has been a powerful tool in creating a positive culture where kids take care of other people and themselves. — Donovan Hall



**Principal Profile**  
Jennifer Koelling

Lazear Charter Academy,  
TK-8 public charter school  
in Oakland, California

**Where & When:** Advisory/Community Meeting. 2x month with occasional extra suggestions like "Gratituesday." Staff Meetings. 2x month as a "do now" at the start of meetings.

**Key Outcome:** Social Awareness - "Students are taking initiative to reach out to new students, welcome them, and send specific appreciations through GiveThx, such as, "I know you are new, and I am glad you are here."

**Favorite Part of Using GiveThx:** "Our middle schoolers are developing so many relationship and communication skills with GiveThx. I have seen huge improvements in how they communicate and are able to express their emotions with specificity and clarity."

“ Using GiveThx definitely feeds into the sense of connection at our school, and helping students and staff feel valued. — Jennifer Koelling

# GiveThx for Positive School Culture: Use Cases



## School Profile

Adams-Friendship  
Middle School

A public middle school,  
grades 5-8 in Adams  
County, Wisconsin

**Where & When:** Homeroom. 1x per week for a few minutes of general gratitude notes for all grades; specific tasks by grade 1x per month; weekly Friday staff Thx notes.

**Key Outcomes:** Social Awareness & Empathy - "GiveThx builds empathy and raises students' awareness of the impact they have on one another."

**Favorite Part of Using GiveThx:** "For facilitators, it's especially great to read the reflections that students write about themselves after getting a Thx note. We also appreciate that we can monitor notes and track data to better understand the culture of belonging and feedback at our school."

**“ It's so easy to use! We see and feel so much joy when giving and receiving Thx notes. — Evelyn Kabke, counselor**



## Teacher Profile

Teneya Rasmussen-  
Cramer

7th & 8th grade English  
and AVID teacher at Eagle  
Valley Middle School,  
a district middle school in  
Carson City, Nevada

**Where & When:** Classroom. 1x per week, general gratitude notes with some prompts and larger school campaigns.

**Key Outcomes:** Kindness & Responsibility. "GiveThx really helps to teach students how to be a good citizen, a good person, and a good community member."

**Favorite Part of Using GiveThx:** "GiveThx has been a wonderful program this past year. I love the positivity that it builds beyond my classroom, and really broadens to the whole school. And I love the structure it offers, which helps students understand how to develop their social emotional skills, like gratitude."

**“ GiveThx creates a beautiful, positive environment schoolwide. Kids see the value of it, and they like getting the notes, and being very intentional about who they send their notes to. When I read their reflections, and I see how much it impacts them and builds their confidence and sense of belonging in their classroom and at the school overall. — Teneya Rasmussen-Cramer**